



<County: Berkshire>

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<Text: Scale of Perfection>

<fol. 1ra>Gostly sistur in ihesu  
crist i pray þe þat  
in þe calling þe  
whilke our lord hath callud þe  
in his seruice . þ<sup>u</sup> holde þe payed  
and stande stedfastly þer-in tra  
ueland besely with alle þine  
myhtes of þi sowle . be grace of  
ihesu crist for to fulfullun in soth  
fastnesse of gode lyuyng þe stat  
whilk þ<sup>u</sup> hast takun in liknesse &  
in semyngg ; and als þ<sup>u</sup> hast for  
sakun þe werld als it were a  
ded man turned to our lord bo  
deli in syth of men ; ryht so þ<sup>t</sup>  
þin herte myhte ben as is wer~  
ded to alle erthely loues and dre  
des . turnud holy to our lord ie  
su crist . for wite þ<sup>u</sup> wel a bodely  
turnyng to god wyth-outen þe  
herte folwyng is bote a figur~  
and a liknesse of uertuse and  
no sethfastnesse . wherefore  
a+wrechud man or wumman is he  
or sche þ<sup>t</sup> leuyth alle þe inward  
ly kepyngg of hym self and scha  
pith hym with-oute-forth on  
ly a fourme and a liknesse of  
holynusse in habite . in speche and

in bodely werkes . byholdyngg  
 other mennes dedes . and demyng  
 here defawtes . wenyng hym self  
 to bene ouht . whan he is nouht  
 <fol. 1rb>and so bigylith hym self .  
 Do þow nouht so . but turne  
 þin herte with þi body princy  
 pali to god . and schape þe with  
 innen to his liknesse be mekenesse  
 & charite & othere gostly uertuse  
 and art þ<sup>u</sup> trewly turned to hym  
 J sey nouht þat þ<sup>u</sup> so lyhtly on  
 þe ferste day mayht ben tur  
 ned to hym in þi soule be ful  
 hede of uertuse as þ<sup>u</sup> may with  
 þi body ben closud in an hous  
 but þ<sup>t</sup> þ<sup>u</sup> scholdest knowe þe  
 cause of þi bodily enclosyngg  
 and þi body is enclosud fro  
 bodily conuersacyun of men riht  
 so þat þin herte myht ben enclo  
 sud fro flescly loues and dre  
 dis of alle erthely thyngges  
 and þ<sup>u</sup> myhtest þe betere comen  
 þur-to . J schal telle þe in þis li  
 tul wrytyng als me þinketh .  
 þou schalt undurstonde . þat  
 þer arn in holi+chirche two ma  
 ner of lyues als seynt grego  
 ri seith . in þe whilke cristene  
 men schullen be saued . On is i  
 clepud actyue . þ<sup>t</sup> other contem  
 platyue . with-uten on of þe  
 se two may þer no man ben saued .  
 Actyue lyf lith in loue  
 and charite schewud out  
 ward be gode bodely werkes .  
 <fol. 1va>in fulfultyng of godus comaun  
 demens . ande of þe seuene de

des of mercy bodily and gostly  
 to a mannus euen cristene ¶ þin  
 lyf longuth to alle werdli men  
 whilke hauen richesse and plen  
 te of werdely godus . and also  
 to alle othere whilke eyther ha  
 uen stat . office . or cure ouer oþur  
 men . and hauen godus for to  
 spenden . lerud or lewid . tempo  
 ral or spyritual . and generalli  
 alle wordli men þei arn boun  
 den to fulfulen up here myht  
 and here cunnyngg as resun and  
 discrecyun asketh . ¶ þise arn  
 werkes of actyf lyf either bode  
 ly or gostli . 3if he mykul haue  
 mikul do . 3if he litul haue . lesse  
 do . and 3if he nouht haue þat  
 he þan haue a goud wil . Also  
 a parti of actyf lyf lith in gret  
 bodili dedus wilke a man doth  
 to hym self . als gret fastyng  
 mykul wakyng . and other scha  
 rp penaunce doying for to sha  
 tise þe flesch with discreciun  
 for trespases by-forn done . and  
 by suich penaunce for to refrey  
 nun lustus and likynggus þer  
 of and maken hit buxum and  
 redy to þe wil of þe spyrite .  
 þe werkus þou þei bene actyue  
 þei helpun mykul and ordeynun  
 a man in þe bygynnyng to come  
 to contemplatyf lyf 3if þei ben  
 usud be discrecyun  
 Contemplatyf lyf lyth  
 in perfiht loue and cha  
 rite . felud inwardli be gostly uer  
 tuse . and be sothfast cnowyng

and feyth of god and gostly  
 thynges . þis lyf longuth spe  
 ciali to hem þe whilke fursa  
 ken for þe loue of god alle word  
 li riches . wurchipes and outward  
 besenesses . and holi 3yuen hem  
 bodi and soule up here myht  
 and here cunyng to þe seruice  
 of god by gostli ocupacyun .  
 Now þanne sithen it is so þat  
 þi stat askuth for to ben contem  
 platyue . for þat is þe ende and  
 þe entente of þine enclosyng  
 þat þ<sup>u</sup> myhtust more freli and  
 enterely 3iue þe to gostli ocupa  
 ciun þanne by-houeth þe for to  
 ben ryht besy bothen nyt and day  
 with trauayl of body and spi  
 rite for to comen to þat lyf als  
 ner as þu may be siche menes als  
 þou hopust were best to þe ¶ Ne  
 uerelese bi-for þ<sup>t</sup> i telle þe of þe  
 menes . j schal tellun þe furst  
 a litul more of þis lyf contem  
 platyf þ<sup>t</sup> þ<sup>u</sup> myht sumwhat seen  
 <fol. 2ra>what it is . and settun it als a  
 mark in þe sit of þi soule . wher  
 to þow schalt drawen in al þin  
 occupacyun .  
 COntemplatyue lyf hath  
 thre parties . þe firste  
 lyth in cnowing of god and gost  
 li þingus . getun be resun . be  
 techingge of man . and by stu  
 die in holi+wryt . with-ou~~ten~~ gost  
 li affecciu~~n~~ and inwardli sauur  
 felud by þe special 3ifte of þe ho  
 li+gost . þis party han speciali  
 summe lettred men & grete cler

kes whilke by longe studye  
 and trauayl in holi writ come  
 to this cnowyngge more or les  
 aftur þe sotulte of kyndeli wit  
 an continuance of studye up þe  
 general 3ifte þ<sup>t</sup> god 3yueþ ilke  
 man þ<sup>t</sup> hath use of resun . þis  
 knowyngg is good & may ben  
 callud a party of contemplaci  
 un . in als mykul als it is a  
 siht of sothfastnesse and a cnow  
 yngge of gostli thynggus .  
 Neuereþeles it is but a figu  
 re and a schadue of uerrey con  
 templacyun . for it hath no sauor  
 of gostli sauour in good no+in<?>  
 ne in þe werdli swetnesse of  
 loue whik may no man fele but  
 he be in mykul charite for þat  
 <fol. 2rb>is þe propre wil of our lord . to  
 þe whilk comet non alien<?> . but  
 this maner of knowyngg his  
 comene to gode & to badde . for  
 it may ben had with-ou<sup>ten</sup> cha  
 rite and þer-fore is it nouht  
 ueray contemplacyun . als of  
 ten sythes . heretikes . ypocry  
 tes and flesch leuynges men  
 han more swyche knowyngg  
 þan many<sup>[e]</sup> trewe cristene men .  
 and 3it hauen þis men no cha  
 rite . of þis maner of know  
 yngge spekith seynt poul þus .  
 <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 3if i hadde ful knowyngge  
 of alle thyng . and i knew  
 alle pryuites and i hadde no

charite . i am ryht nouht . Ne  
 uereþeles 3if þei þat hauen  
 þe knowyngg kepen hem  
 in mekenesse and charite .  
 swich as þei hauen and flen  
 werdli and flesscly synnus  
 up here myht . it is to hem  
 a good weye and a gret dis  
 posynge to verrey contempla  
 cyun . 3if þei desyrun & prayen  
 deuouteli aftur þe *grace* of þe  
 holi gost . Other men whilk  
 þat hauen this knowyngge  
 <fol. 2va>and turne hit in to pride and  
 wyn glori of hym self . or in to  
 couetyse and 3ernynge of wer  
 deli states . wurchippes & riches  
 nowt mekeli takynge it in prey  
 syng<sup>[el]</sup> of god ne charitably spen  
 dun it in þe profite of her eue  
 ne cristene summe of hem fallen  
 eythur in-to erroures and he  
 resises or in other opun sunnes  
 by þe whiche þei sclawdre hem  
 self and holy chirche . of þis know  
 yngge seith seynt poul thus .  
 <lat></lat>  
 knowyngh allon bolnyth up  
 þe herte to pride . but medle  
 it with charite and þanne tur  
 nuth it in to edificacyun . þis  
 knowyngge a-lone it his but  
 watir vnsauourly and cold .  
 And þerfore 3if þei þat hauen  
 it wolden mekely offren it up  
 to our lord and prayen hym  
 of his *grace* . he scholde with is  
 plesyng turne þe watur in  
 to wyn as he dede for þe pray

er of is modur at þe feste of  
 architiclyne . þ<sup>t</sup> is for to seyne .  
 he schulde turne þe unsauori  
 knowyngge in-to wisdom &  
 þe cold naked resun *in* to gost  
 li lyht of þe holi gost .  
 <fol. 2vb>þe secunde partie of con  
 templacyun lyht prinpa  
 li in affeccyun with-outen lyht  
 of undurstondyng of goste  
 li thyngus and þis is comoun  
 li of symple and vnlettred  
 men whilk 3yuen hem holi to  
 deuocyun and þis is felud *in* þis  
 manere . Whan a man or <sup>[a]</sup> wo  
 umman in meditacyun of good  
 felith feruour of loue and gost  
 li suetnesse by þe mynde of  
 his passyun or of ony of hise  
 werkes in his manhede or he  
 felith gret trust in þe gode  
 nesse and þe mercy of god or for  
 3euenesse of his synnes . and  
 for his grete 3iftes of grace or  
 ellus he felith drede in his affec  
 cyun wyth grete reuerence of þe  
 pryuey domus of good wilke  
 he seth nouht of his ryhtwis  
 nesse . or in prayer he felith þe  
 thout of his herte drawe vp fro  
 alle ertheli thyng<sup>[g]</sup>les streynud  
 to-gidere with alle þe myhtes  
 þer-of vp styngge to our lord  
 be feruent desyr and wyth gost  
 ly delite And neuereþeles *in*  
 that tyme he hath non opun  
 syht in vndurstondyng of  
 gostly thyngges ne of priueytees  
 <fol. 3ra>of holi wryt in special . but only

þat hym thynkuth for þe tyme  
 nothyng lykith hym so mykil  
 als for to prayen or thynkun  
 als he doth for sauour delit *and*  
 counfort þat he fynduth þere  
 in & 3ut can he nouht tellun  
 what it is . but he felith hit wel  
 for þer-of spryngen many sue  
 te teres brennyngge desyrus  
 and stille mournynggus ;  
 whilke scourun and clansun  
 þe herte fro al þe fulthe of syn  
 ne and makun it meltun *in* to  
 a wonderful suetnus of ihesu  
 cryst . buxum souple and re  
 di for to fulfulle al godus wil  
 le in so mykul þat hym thyn  
 keth he maketh no charge what  
 com of hym self be so þ<sup>t</sup> godus  
 wille were fulfillud . wyth suilk  
 many styryngges mo þan i *can*  
 or may seyn þis felyng may  
 nouht ben had with-uten gret  
 grace . and who so haue it for  
 þe tyme j hope þ<sup>t</sup> he is in chari  
 te whilk charite may nouht  
 ben lorn ne be lessud . thou þe  
 feruour þer-of pas a-wey but  
 be a dedli synne . and þ<sup>t</sup> is con  
 fortable . þis may be callud  
 þe secunde *party* of contempla  
 cyun . Neuereþeles þis party  
 <fol. 3rb>hath two degrees . þe lowere  
 degre of þis felyng men whilk  
 arn actyue may haue be *grace* .  
 when þen arn visitud of our  
 lord as myhteli and as feruent  
 ly als þei that 3euen hem ho  
 li to contemplatyf lyf ande



haue þis 3yfte . but it lestuth  
 nouht so longe . ¶ Also þis  
 felyngge in his feruour comyht  
 nouht alwey whan a man  
 wolde . hit comuth & goth als  
 he wile þat 3yueth it . and þer  
 fore who so haue it . meke hym  
 self and thank it god and ke  
 pe it pryue . but 3if it be to his  
 confessour other to sum othur  
 wys man . and holde it as longe  
 as he may with discrecyun . and  
 whan it is with-drawn dre  
 de nouht to mykul but stonde  
 in feyth & in meke hope with  
 pacient abydyngge til it come  
 a-geyn ¶ þis is a litul tast  
 yng of þe suetnesse of þe lo  
 ue of god of the whilke da  
 uid seyth thus in þe sautere .  
 <lat></lat>

Tastuþ and se3e suetnusse  
 of our lord . But þe heyere  
 degre of þis party may nouht  
 ben had and holden but of hem  
 þ<sup>t</sup> arn in gret reste of body &  
 <fol. 3va>of sowle . þe whilke be grace of  
 iesu cryst an longe trauayle  
 bodili or gostli felen reste of her  
 te and clennus in consciencie .  
 so that hem like no thyng so my  
 kul for to done als to sittun stil  
 le in reste of body and for to  
 alwey preyen to god and thyn  
 kun on oure lord and for to thyn  
 kun sum tyme on þe blissede  
 name of ihesu . whilk is mad conn  
 fortable and delitable to hem  
 þat þei ben mynde þer-of felen

hem fed in here affeccyun and  
 nouht onli of that name . but  
 alle othere manere prayeres .  
 as þe . *pater noster* . or þe Aue . or ymp  
 nus . or psalmus . and othere  
 deuout seyngus of holi chur  
 che arn turnud as it were in  
 to gostly myrthe and suete *song*  
 by þe whilke þei arn confortud  
 and strencthud a-geynus alle  
 synnus & mykul releued of bo  
 dily dise . of this degre spekith  
 seynt powle thus . <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 Be 3e nouht drunkun wyth  
 wyn but be 3e fulfullud of þe  
 <fol. 3vb>holy gost . seyingge to 3oure  
 self in ympnis & psalmis & gost  
 ly songgus syngyng<sup>[g]</sup>le & psal  
 myngge in 3owre hertes to our  
 lord . who so haueth þis grace  
 kepe hym self in lownesse and  
 he be ay desyryngge for to komen  
 to more knowyngge and felyng  
 to god in þe þredde parti of *con*  
 templacyun . Thridde party  
 of contemplacyun whilk is *par*  
 fyht as it may ben . here lithe bo  
 then in cognicoun & in affecciu  
 þat is for to seyn in knowing  
 and in parfyht louyng of god  
 and þ<sup>t</sup> is whan a mannes soule  
 first is clensud from alle þe  
 filthe of synne and is refour  
 med to fulhede of vertuse to þe

ymage of ihesu . and aftur whan  
 he is uisytud is taken up fro  
 alle ertheli and flescly affeccio  
 nis . fro veyn thoutes & vayn  
 ymagenyngges of alle bodli cre  
 atures and als it were mykul  
 rauesschud of þe bodli wittus  
 and þanne be grace of þe holi+gost  
 is illumyned for to sen be undur  
 stondyngg sothfastnesse whil  
 ke is god and also gostly thyn  
 gus with a softe swete brennyngg  
 loue in hym so parfytli þat  
 it be rauysschyngg of þis loue  
 <fol. 4ra>þe sowle is onud as for þe ty  
 me and confourmed to þe y  
 mage of the trynite . þe by  
 gynnyngg of this contempla  
 cyun may be felid in þis  
 lyf . but þe fulhede þer-of is kept  
 in þe blisse of heuene . of þis  
 onyngg & confourmyngge  
 to our lord . spekith seynt poul  
 þus <lat></lat>  
 þat is for to sayn . who so by  
 rauysschingg of loue is fest  
 nud to god . þanne god and a  
 soule arn nouht two . but bo  
 the one . nouht in flesh but *in*  
 on spyrit . & sotheli in þis onyng  
 is þe maryage mad by-tuyx  
 god & þe sowle . whilke schal  
 neuere ben broke . Þe other  
 party may ben called brennyng  
 loue in deuocyun . but þis is  
 brennyngge loue in cotempla  
 cyun þat is lowere . þis is þe  
 heyere . þ<sup>t</sup> is þe suettere to þe  
 bodyli felyngg . þis is þe suet

tere to þe gostli felyng . for it  
 is more inward . more gostly .  
 more wurthi & more wundurful  
 ly . for þis is veraly a tastyngg  
 and als it were a syht of he  
 uenly ioie . nouht clerly . but  
 half in myrknes . whik schal  
 ben fulfillud & openly clerud  
 <fol. 4rb>in þe blisse of heuene as seynt  
 poul seyth <lat></lat>

<lat></lat>

we se now god in a myrrour  
 as it were in myrknes . but  
 in heuene schal we se opynli  
 face to face . þis is the illumy  
 nacyun of vndurstondyngge  
 in delitis of louyngg as dauid  
 seiht in þe sauter <lat></lat>

<lat></lat>

My nyht is my lyht . in my de  
 lytus . þe oþer party is mylk  
 of childrun . þis is holy mete  
 for parfyt men . whilke hauen  
 a-sayed wittus to cnowen gode  
 fro þe euele as seynt poul seyht .

<lat></lat>

<lat></lat>

<lat></lat>

þe werkyngg & þe ful vse  
 of þis 3ift may no man haue  
 but 3if he be first reformed  
 to þe liknesse of ihesu . be fulhe  
 de of vertus . ne þer may no  
 man leuyng in flesch redeli  
 haue hit contynuly in is fulhe  
 de an in þe ouer passyngge  
 but by tymes . whan he is vi  
 sytud and als J conceyued  
 of þe wrytyngge of holy men .

hit is a wel schort tyme for  
 sone aftur he fallith in to a  
 <fol. 4va>sobrete of bodily felyngh and  
 þis werk maketh charite þus  
 as i vndurstonde seith seynt  
 poul of hym self <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>

wherer we ouerpas oure bodili wit  
 tus to god in contemplacyun  
 or we arn more sobre to 3ow  
 be bodily felyngg . þe charite of  
 cryst sterith us . of þis parti of  
 contemplacyun and of confour  
 myngg to god spekith seynt  
 poul opunly thus <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>  
 <lat></lat>

An þis þus mykel for to seyn  
 seynt poul in þe persone of  
 hym self & perfite men seith þ<sup>us</sup>  
 we first reformud be vertuse þe  
 face of oure sowle vnhelud be  
 opunyggh of þe gostly eye  
 be-haldun as in a myroure he  
 uenli ioy ful schapun and onud  
 to þe ymage of our lord fro  
 bryhtede of feyht in to bryhted  
 of blessud loue . and al þis is  
 wrouht by þe spirit of our lord .  
 In a mannus soule als seynt poul  
 seyth . þis party of contemplacyun  
 god 3eueth where þ<sup>t</sup> he wole to  
 <fol. 4vb>lerud & to lewed to men and to  
 wymmen occupyd in prelacy and  
 to solitari also . but it is speci  
 ali nouht comune . And also

þow a man whilk is actyue haue  
 þe 3ift þer-of be a special grace . ne  
 uereþeles þe ful vse þer-of as i  
 hope may no man haue but he  
 be solitarie and in lyf contem  
 platyue . Be þis þ<sup>t</sup> i haue seyð  
 may þ<sup>u</sup> sumwhat undurstondun  
 that visions & reuelacions of  
 eny maner spirit in bodely ape  
 ryng or in ymagyn<sup>ing</sup> slepyng  
 or wakyng . or ellus in any oþur  
 felyng in þe bodyli wittus made  
 as it were gosteli eythur *in* sown  
 nyngg of þe ere or sauouryng  
 in þe mouhth or smyllyng at  
 þe nose . or ellus in feliab<sup>le</sup>  
 hete als it wer fy<sup>le</sup>r glowyng  
 and wermynggh þe brest or  
 any oþur party of þe body . or  
 eny thyng þ<sup>t</sup> may ben felud be  
 bodily wit þow it be neuere so  
 comfortable and likyng arn  
 nouht uerayli contemplacyun  
 ne þei arn but symple & secun  
 dari þou þei ben gode *in* regard  
 of gostli vertuse . ne of þis gost  
 ly knowyng and louyng of god  
 for in vertuse and in knowyng  
 of god w<sup>t</sup> loue is no disceyt .  
 <fol. 5ra>but alle suylke manere of felyng  
 ges moun ben gode wrouht be  
 a good angel and þei mowen  
 be disseyuable feynud be a wic  
 kud angel whan he transfigu  
 ruth hym to an angel of lyht .  
 wherfore sethen þei mown bo  
 þe ben good & euele . it semeth  
 wel þ<sup>t</sup> þey arn nouht þe beste .  
 ffor wite þ<sup>u</sup> wel þ<sup>t</sup> the deuel may



whan he hath leue feyne in bo  
dili felyng þe liknesse of þe sa  
me thynges whilk a good *an*  
gel may werkun . for as a good  
aungel comyth whith lyht so  
kan þe deuel & so of þe other  
wittus . who so hadde felud  
bothe he chorde tellun whilke  
werun wi<sup>[c]</sup>kud w<sup>[h]</sup>ilke werun go  
de . but he þ<sup>t</sup> neuere felith neith*ur*  
on no ellus . but þe on may  
lihtli be disseyued .