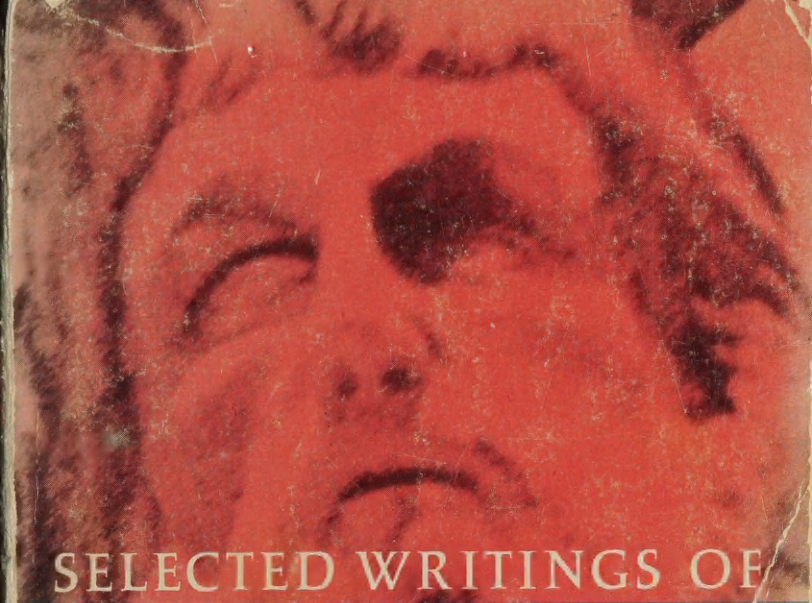




SELECTED WRITINGS OF

Saint Augustine

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EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

ROGER HAZELTON

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SELECTED
WRITINGS OF
 SAINT
UGUSTINE

Edited and with an Introduction by

ROGER HAZELTON

Meridian Books

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ROGER HAZLETON is Dean of the Graduate School of Theology at Oberlin College. He took his B.A. and B.D. degrees at Amherst and at Chicago Theological Seminary, his M.A. at the University of Chicago, and his doctorate at Yale. Professor Hazelton contributes to a number of periodicals and is the author of *The Root and Flower of Prayer*, *The God We Worship*, *Renewing the Mind*, *On Proving God*, *God's Way with Man*, and *New Accents in Theology*.

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PREFACE

The selections included in this volume are intended to show the reader St. Augustine at his representative best. They have been drawn, therefore, from many kinds of writing—letters, sermons, dialogues, meditations in which the manner of address is direct and personal, as well as scriptural expositions, doctrinal treatises, and larger works concerned with churchly or cultural issues. This wide variety might threaten the unity of the present volume were it not that Augustine keeps returning in his writings to several underlying themes which give a flexible consistency and an ordered development to his thought.

I have made use of these major themes in arranging the materials that follow, as the section headings will indicate. Under each of them I have sought to give a fair, rather full sampling of Augustine's total body of work. On the principle that such a volume as this ought to make readily available materials that have long remained all but buried in older sets, I have drawn heavily upon *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. However, I have not hesitated to employ the newer translations where this seemed clearly preferable, in the belief that both beginning and more advanced readers will find this welcome.

Those for whom the present volume is not a first introduction to the writings of St. Augustine will undoubtedly

miss some of their favorite passages; they may even wish to find fault with one or more of the excerpts chosen. I can only say in self-defense that in a very real sense the total bent of Augustine's faith and thought is manifest in everything he wrote, and also that I have tried to keep in mind the needs and interests of as many readers as possible. Since my purpose has not been to cull gems from this voluminous body of writing, but to let the Bishop of Hippo speak for himself as he argues, defines, exhorts, confesses, or prays, it has sometimes been necessary to include material that by present standards may seem contentious, uninspired, or overluxuriant. There is a price that must be paid by every reader who would enter into an author's world; it is the author who must be allowed to set the pace, frame the design, and follow his own lead. In the case of the African bishop and "doctor of grace," the reward is plainly worth the cost.

The discipline of making this selection has brought home again, more forcibly than before, the far-ranging intelligence of St. Augustine, the ease with which he moves from one problem or style into another, the indubitably personal accent of his language, and the determination—one might almost say the stubbornness—of his pursuit of truth in every sphere. I do not doubt that the reader will find in each section of this book passages that treat the matter under consideration with lively dialectical skill, rare eloquence, and a wisdom at once ample and penetrating.

It remains my pleasant duty to thank the publishers who have given their permission to reprint material included in this volume. Selections I, 1, 2; V, 3; and VII, 3, 5 are from *Augustine: Earlier Writings* and *Augustine: Confessions and Enchiridion*. Published 1955, The Westminster Press. By permission. Selections III, 4; IV, 2, 4, 5, 6; VI, 5; and VII, 1, 6 are from *The Fathers of the Church*, Volumes 2, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13 (*Writings of Saint Augustine*), for which permission has been granted by The Catholic University of America Press. Selections II, 2 and V, 4 are from *The Free Choice of the Will* (Peter Reilly Company). By permission of the Augustinian Fathers, Villanova University. All other selections are from *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*.

Roger Hazelton

INTRODUCTION

One hardly knows where to begin with St. Augustine. That is a tribute to his greatness, of course. The word "great" simply cannot be avoided where St. Augustine is concerned, because of the almost unparalleled largeness of his vision, the spaciousness of his style, and the radiant inclusiveness of his spirit. One may start anywhere in his writings, and before long one is involved with the author in great issues, walking, as it were, down long corridors of thought and looking into room after room of ardent, profound conviction.

The important thing, to be sure, is to get him read, which is the sole excuse for a book like this. St. Augustine is perfectly capable of introducing himself in the selection from his writings which is offered to the reader. And yet, things being what they are today, with so many pressures and demands upon our time and attention, people have to be beckoned and enticed into reading him. It is not enough to assert that he is a "classic" who ought to be read by any educated person, true as that is. He must be introduced as a man and a thinker who is strangely our contemporary and is capable of speaking pertinently about matters that mightily and ultimately concern us.

And fortunately that is exactly what St. Augustine is and does. His image of the world and man and God has

an amazing, almost breath-taking relevance to our own questionings and strivings. As the questions with which he is grappling are perennial, so the answers he proposes to them have an ever-present force and fascination for us. Indeed, it is just because he does not share many of our modern preoccupations and presuppositions that he can bring us all the more readily and quickly to the essentials of this matter of being human in a baffling world. His very distance in time from us is not so much a barrier in communication as it is a blessing in disguise, since it makes possible a sharing of Augustine's search for truth and God at a far deeper level than that provided by common vocabulary, opinions, or factual information. For truth about man's relationship to God does not rise and set with the cultural sun; it cannot be packaged as a period piece; it has an insistent way of bursting out of its historic envelope and making itself heard over and over again. Quite plainly it is this sort of truth with which we are confronted as we take up St. Augustine and read him.

And yet it is difficult to know where to start in making the acquaintance of this man and thinker whose writings stand out among the most commanding peaks in the entire range of human, and especially Christian, understanding. This is in part because Augustine's experience and reflection are so many-faceted and far-reaching; but the difficulty is also due to the fact that the Augustinian writings display a remarkable fluidity and wholeness, both of outlook and intention, which makes it impossible to arrange them in neat logical order. One may trace themes and chart emphases and pick out dominant chords, but that is really about all, unless one is willing to do violence to the quite unsystematic consistency of St. Augustine's mind itself. A happy consequence is that wherever the reader casts his net he is sure to be rewarded with perceptive insight and searching wisdom. If you do not believe this, simply try opening this book at random and see for yourself. Only let Augustine speak for himself and he will very soon be speaking to you and for you as well.

Nevertheless we must begin somewhere, and perhaps the best place is where he begins all his thinking, that is, with

God. In one of his earliest writings, the *Soliloquies*, he declares that there are only two things he desires to know—God and the soul, nothing more. The order is important. In one of the indexes to his works an English editor has made the following entry: “Knowledge—see *God*.” This is just as Augustine would have wished to have it. For all his anguished absorption with the human problem, and as a matter of fact because of it, he soon discovered that he had to begin with God, who had made his own beginning with man. Very early in his life Augustine discovered that he could not explain himself on his own terms. “Man,” he wrote in the *Confessions*, “is a great deep, and the hairs of his head are more easily numbered than the motions and affections of his heart.” Just so; and this truth about man means that he can only be understood in terms of his mysterious inwardness, which is his openness toward God, “higher than my topmost part and deeper than my deepest.” Man is precisely the sort of being who must find and give reasons for his own existence, but that existence is not capable of explaining itself without reference to its ground and goal in God.

For a long time, St. Augustine tried to escape this conclusion. He put himself under the tutelage of the Manichees, who “explained” man as the battleground of eternally warring principles of good and evil. He listened eagerly to the Skeptics, who simply denied the very possibility of reaching any kind of truth concerning man. And he consorted with the Neoplatonists, whose philosophy of Being never ceased to appeal to him and even to influence his own formulation of the Christian faith following his definitive conversion, but which could not win his whole and undivided assent. After his long, arduous pilgrimage through the intellectual alternatives which were open to him he came up with the discovery that “God is the meaning of human existence,” to quote a twentieth-century Christian philosopher, Nicholas Berdyaev. And that discovery, made only after he had fully explored other possible and available answers to his search for genuine selfhood, became thenceforth the anchorage and axiom of all his thinking. From this time forward God and Truth

were synonymous in thought and life alike. As he himself put it, after he had entered his inward being through reflective knowledge, and had passed in thought from bodies to the soul and again to reason, he arrived "in the flash of one trembling glance" at THAT WHICH IS. Call this, if you like, either mysticism or metaphysics; what is certain, however, is that it touches and embraces both. That fusion of love and knowledge, together with the tension it provokes, is one of the most characteristic features of Augustine's intellectual pilgrimage.

Thus we begin, in this arrangement of selections from his writings, with his view of God, first as eternal Creator, then as Orderer and Disposer of good and evil, and finally as self-revealing Trinity. In the passages chosen, two emphases stand out with unmistakable clarity. The first is that God the Truth is polar to the soul of man. Our search for selfhood is not a mere self-searching, even if this is where it has to start. For man is plainly the sort of being who implies and requires God. If he were living today, St. Augustine would undoubtedly find considerable support for his viewpoint in the very efforts that are made to comprehend the meaning of human existence by denying God. In the agonized obsession of some writers with the absence and silence of God, he would surely see not a mere vacuum but an aching void which pays its own odd, backhanded tribute to the very reality which it so strenuously denies.

A second emphasis in these passages is put upon the fact that God can never be conceived out of all relationship to human knowing, loving, or willing. One cannot define God first in abstract terms and then look around to see whether anything in human experience happens to fit that definition. St. Augustine would gladly accept the charge so often hurled at religious thinkers today, that they are "anthropomorphic" in their statements about God. And he might ask what else they could possibly be, or their critics either. Surely God cannot be described or comprehended except in some perspective growing out of human experience and interpretation. He cannot be known as if he were not known *by us*, or described coolly, objectively, as if he did

not matter to us. Again, what is remarkable in St. Augustine is his fusion of inquiry and involvement, of rational and deeply personal elements, of clarity and concern. He does precisely what we have been told hundreds of times by skeptical rationalists and dogmatic believers cannot be done. He really thinks, and thinks hard, about God while insisting that it is about God that his thinking shall be done. And he achieves this by virtue of his unshaken, steady conviction that as it takes God to account for man, so man cannot know God without being truly committed to God. As he writes in the most famous sentence of the *Confessions*, God has made us for himself so that our hearts are restless until they find their rest in him. That is to say that God has, as it were, defined himself by making possible our very seeking after him.

Much of the material in our first three sections is devoted to the age-old problems of eternity and time and of good and evil. St. Augustine's treatment of these topics, although it bears the signature of his own age upon its surface, is nevertheless decidedly pertinent to present-day viewpoints and forms of human experience. Here as always we find the great Christian thinker determined to understand the lesser in terms of the greater, the finite in terms of the infinite—and not the other way around. In these sections there is what may be called an existential confidence that truth may be found because it is by its very nature that which is assumed in all inquiry and interpretation. Even error and ignorance can be accounted for only if it is granted that there is a reality which they fail to reach or grasp. And for Augustine this is no mere assumption, either, but the axiom on which all his mature thought is founded and proceeds. We know that there is a reality beyond and yet within all our knowing, otherwise we should not even know that we do not know.

Such is St. Augustine's reason for repudiating skepticism, and it also provides him with a built-in defense against dogmatism. I must never suppose that I can get my mind clean around the ultimate truth which is God. If I did, it would simply not be God but merely my idea of God. Now while I must of course go on speaking and

thinking about God even in order to understand myself, I have no right to claim either certainty or finality for my experiences or formulations. Although I may be confident that I am in real touch with truth, this must not be permitted to become self-confidence without destroying the whole fabric and motive of my search for truth.

Against this background, strengthened by the Platonism that never altogether left him, Augustine approaches the problems of these first three sections. For example, eternity is by no means thought of as an indefinite prolonging of time; it is rather that which alone gives meaning to time. It is true that time, in common with all creation, retains a certain stubborn character of its own over against the eternal God. More than anything else, eternity is for Augustine God's own way of viewing the world, to which our human modes of time can offer only the feeblest and most halting analogies. While we must perforce understand eternity in light of our experience of temporal successiveness, since the creature has to see his world differently than does his Creator, we can be led by analyzing memory to see that there is unity as well as multiplicity, spontaneity as well as duration, in time; and it is this realization which provides us with a valid take-off point for understanding eternity as nothing more or less than God's own time.

A similar approach marks Augustine's treatment of good and evil in the world. In knowing something to be evil I already know that there is good, for evil is invariably the absence or corruption of the good. Hence my idea of the good is not some kind of compensation or wishful thinking, but is given in and with the knowledge of evil itself. I do not merely find goodness alongside of evil, but I cannot even manage to conceive evil except as the lack or need of the good. And goodness, whenever and wherever it is met, has something basically to do with God. St. Augustine's conception of cosmic order or Providence represents his thoroughgoing attempt to work out a viable philosophical alternative to a monistic view which would theoretically absorb all evil into good, and on the other hand, to a dualistic view which would leave good and evil staring at and struggling with each other on the metaphysical stage.

Goodness, he holds, is logically prior to evil but it is not the explanatory source of evil. Since evil is a form of being-not rather than of being, it can scarcely be laid at the door of God, who in Augustine's view is goodness itself.

On the doctrine of the Trinity St. Augustine has been most influential in the history of Christian thought. The selections which have been chosen to reveal his Trinitarian viewpoint deserve careful study, if only for that reason. But the reader will also find that they have considerable intrinsic worth. In them we find the Bishop of Hippo trying, as he says, to pick his way through a hard and obscure subject. The Trinity fascinated Augustine because it provided him with mysteries and problems which were worthy of his intellectual caliber. Although he wrote at a time when the main outlines of the doctrine had already been determined, he rethought the whole matter with a freshness and a penetration quite unparalleled in the history of the Church.

For Augustine, Trinity always means tri-unity, the three-fold operation of the one true God. This is why he finds psychological models so revealing. The human self is the same yet different, one yet many, in its functioning. It is the self as a whole that remembers, understands, and decides, but these activities are distinct expressions of its selfhood. By analogy, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are God's ways of being God. They are not parts of God, or chronological segments of the history of his dealing with the world and man, but God himself. It is important for the reader to realize that the doctrine which Augustine is expounding is designed to guard the unity of God within the thought of faith, not to compartmentalize or to serialize the divine being and acting. "All the works of the Trinity are indivisible," he writes.

At the same time we must be aware that personal analogies are always breaking down in our thought of God, and need to be supplemented by interpersonal ones. Here Augustine's treatment of the Trinity in terms of love becomes excitingly relevant. Love is between persons, yet is personally creative. Thus Augustine attempts to correct his own tendency to think of God as a single Mind. But when all

is said and done, he would insist that no analogy, or combination of analogies, can possibly do theological justice to nature and action of God. We see the things of faith in a glass darkly. And yet, we really do see. We cannot know what it is like to be God, but we must employ such hints and intimations as our experience of God can give us.

Turning now to the section of writings on the theme of faith and reason, we find Augustine at his theological best. From first to last he remains a Christian intellectual for whom the use of rational methods and conclusions is expected and required. Yet he is also a man of deep faith for whom God is not so much the end as the beginning of his reasoning search. Faith precedes reason because unless you believe you will not understand. Yet faith is "in order to knowledge"; and he believes not for the sake of believing but for the very purpose of understanding. One might say it in this way: faith is fully reasonable, but only when reason remains faithful.

Here once more we have Augustine trying to think together those dimensions of experience which are usually thought apart. He wishes to avoid the pitfalls of unreasoning dogmatism and uncommitted rationalism. This he achieves by virtue of his principle of faith seeking understanding, or, to put it just a bit differently, of the primacy of the will in all our knowing. According to him, all knowledge rests back on acknowledgment, and all our understanding is a veritable "standing-under." But the same truth can be put the other way around. Understanding, he tells us, is the reward of faith, even as faith is the condition *sine qua non* of true understanding. If you want to know, then believe; and the whole point of believing, or having faith, is to attain that wisdom which is always more but never less than reasoning.

Our next group of selections deals with the situation of man before God. In his diagnosis of the human condition St. Augustine speaks more clearly and persuasively to us today than at any other point in his writing. He knows, as we do, that man is in a very bad way, that he is his own worst enemy, and that the human picture is a dark and troubled one. It has taken the work of men like Freud and

Marx to bring home to us the essential accuracy of Augustine's diagnosis, and to provide us with a wealth of deeply disturbing details in documentation of it. People sometimes draw back in a kind of horror from the Augustinian view of human nature, but they do not thereby disqualify Augustine as a penetrating analyst; they only express their own myopic and sentimental optimism. There is no question that Augustine's verdict on man is predominantly negative; what needs to be remembered, however, is that it is put forward in profound self-knowledge and in Christian compassion for the true dignity and salvability of men. Here is neither a doctrinaire pessimism nor a stubborn evasion of man's self-deceiving and self-destroying capacities, but what we might term both a tragic realism and an unrelenting idealism about man.

Augustine traces the predicament of man to sin, which is a set or bent of the will toward self-centeredness, distorting his God-given nature and poisoning even the best and highest of human achievements. This sin is original, that is my own, and it is what I have in common with my fellow men. In terms of the Christian myth of the Fall, every man is his own Adam. Yet not even the pervasive presence of sin in Everyman can keep God from acting for his true and final good. God takes sin very seriously, and judges us precisely in forgiving us. The doctrine of predestination, so often misunderstood, is Augustine's way of expressing the fact that when God might in full justice condemn men to their own self-made hell, he chooses out of sheer goodness to save some instead. Not all, to be sure; but this again is not to say that God plays favorites, but rather that he wills to redeem men from the mess they have gotten themselves into and in mercy offers all mankind a way, a truth, and a life of blessed reunion and renewal.

The following section is made up of writing penned in the heat of the controversy with Pelagius on the relation of divine grace to human freedom—a controversy which absorbed St. Augustine for many years of his life as bishop. One of the most influential teachers of our generation has said that if you would really understand what a man believes you must know what he is fighting against. Although

we know the thought of Pelagius chiefly through the hostile eyes of Augustine, it is quite clear that what he objected to was the Pelagian view that there is a possibility of human perfection inherent in the very freedom of the will of man, since "we have implanted in us by God a possibility for acting in both directions," that is, for doing either good or evil. Augustine sees no reason to quarrel with Pelagius' contention that God has created man free to choose, but he emphatically denies that man is now free in this same sense of having the power of moral choice. We may think ourselves free, or act as if we were still free, but the truth of the matter is that what we term our freedom is actually a bondage to self-interest and self-determination. Man the creature has become in his sinful freedom less than free; he has in fact become not the ally but the enemy of God.

We should be wide of the mark if we supposed that the argument was concerned with a denial on the part of Pelagius of the grace of God acting upon and within our human freedom. The point is not that of deciding between the free will of man and the gracious action of God. Both men believe somehow in both, and what they are in conflict about is just how freedom in man is related to divine grace. Pelagius is a highly moral man; he wants to justify man's responsibility before God theologically; and he does this by insisting that man has it in himself, that is, in his free will, to do either what God commands or God forbids. God, according to Pelagius, is the author of man's freedom and must not be held accountable for the evil use man makes of it; it is up to man to decide for or against God by the power with which God has endowed him. If he fails to live up to his "potential" he can always try harder the next time, thanks to his God-given freedom.

All this has a strangely modern ring, doesn't it? How can Augustine deny what seems to most of us today so obviously true? But let us look more closely at the matter. The real point, says Augustine, is not power of choice itself (which he does not deny), but the power to do what is chosen. Freedom means not simply choosing but doing what is good. The question is not what is theoretically possible to man but what he actually does with his so-called

freedom. For Augustine, the power to choose lies with man—in this he agrees fully with Pelagius—but the power to do the good that is chosen lies with God, and is God's gracious gift to man. The freedom of the will lies deeper down than the power of choice; it is the power to fulfill the good, and this is always a gift of God's grace to our sin-ridden freedom. Without God, we can do no good thing. Augustine holds that God is not only the creator but the enabler and perfecter of our freedom. Hence it is not we who by virtue of free will co-operate with the divine grace, but the divine grace which co-operates with us in doing the good that we will. As Augustine puts it, "the first liberty of the will was to be able not to sin; the last was much greater—not to be able to sin"; and both are given by the grace of God. True freedom, therefore, is to will what God wills and to do what God wants done.

Section VII brings us to a group of writings on the nature and work of Jesus Christ. The first and fifth selections are brief letters on the incarnation and the second coming, respectively. The second and fourth excerpts are examples of Augustine's biblical exposition, meditative in form, upon the mystery of Christ's person in relation to God. Selections 3 and 6 are taken from two of Augustine's most "popular" treatises intended for the edification and instruction of church members.

All through these passages we see St. Augustine's profound stress upon the unity of Christ's own person and the unity of God revealed to him. It is made emphatically plain that the doctrine of the Trinity, as understood by Augustine, is not the statement of a divine plurality but of oneness and ultimate indivisibility in the being of God. The illustrations or analogies of divine action which are given are all indicative of this fundamental unity persisting throughout differences of function or action. Although we must acknowledge the twofold character of Christ, he cannot be distinguished into a human and a divine self, any more than a man can be divided into a soul and a body. So true is this that even Christ's weakness is the token of God's strength acting in him through the form of a servant; "even his infirmity," he writes, "was the consequence of his

power." In this way Augustine holds firmly together the fully human and fully divine in the person of the Christ, and such is probably the dominant impression to be gained from these passages.

Yet there can be little doubt that despite what St. Augustine says on this whole matter, his tendency is to magnify the divine element. Not only is Christ, according to this interpretation, in unmistakable ways subordinate to God and Father; he is also, as the object of Christian worship, a being who must be mediated to men, although he is confessed as fully human. This is not to accuse Augustine of the heresy of subordinationism; very often throughout these writings he condemns explicitly the various heresies that point in this direction. But it simply must be said that his thought is so fluid and so responsive to the promptings of deep personal devotion with respect to this whole problem that any rigid, propositional position is excluded. His authority, therefore, can be claimed, and it has been claimed, for a variety of opinions and dogmatic postures. While it is certainly clear that he intends to affirm both the completely human and the inescapably divine character of God's deed in Christ, it is also evident that St. Augustine belongs to no special party or particular group in defining it.

In regard to Christ's work, St. Augustine exhibits a similar flexibility. The scholastic, categorizing mind is hard put to it to locate his view among the historic alternatives. No tags or labels are readily available. What we have in these passages is certainly a viewpoint which is "orthodox" by intention, but which it is impossible to confine within any one traditional mode of statement. There are definite hints of the "ransom theory" of Christ's suffering on the cross, but equally hints of the so-called "moral theory" of the atonement. Perhaps the most characteristic of all Augustine's figures for understanding the redemption wrought by Christ is that of the physician or restorer who heals and renews the image of God in man, lost through sin, thus overcoming man's alienation from God.

In Section VIII we come to what may properly be called Augustine's theology of history. It is not surprising

that the Church should be at the center of his interest. But Augustine is too sophisticated and realistic a thinker to suppose that the Church is identical with the Kingdom of God, and too deeply versed in Scripture to regard the Church as anything less than the people of God's own covenant with man. Hence his thought moves, as always, between the poles of heaven and earth, between the Church as divinely purposed and as humanly conditioned. This may explain much of the tension we find in his writing, as he seeks to do justice both to the actual social organization and its ideal, God-ordained character, without either separating or confusing the two aspects.

Yet the Church for St. Augustine must be seen within the total perspective of human history; it is only the crucial instance of that mysterious and constant interaction between God and man which is the substance of which everything historical is made. The "two cities" of which Augustine speaks do not represent two different worlds, but two orderings of life within the one world. To be sure, there is the sharpest possible conflict between them. Mankind is viewed in the pages of *The City of God* as standing on a field of battle, torn between two loyalties, "heavenly and earthly, the self-denying love of God and the God-denying love of self" (E. R. Hardy). Even within the Christian Church this same conflict goes on inevitably, incessantly. It assumes not simply individual but also corporate form.

In St. Augustine's time a controversy was raging in North Africa over the purity of the Church. It is known in history as the Donatist controversy, getting its name from a schismatic bishop of Carthage who for forty years led the churches of Carthage. The movement named for him developed around the issue of rebaptism for those who under pressure of imperial persecution had fallen away from the faith but later sought to resume their fellowship within the Christian community. Should such persons be required to undergo a second baptism? If so, what does this mean regarding the validity of the first baptism? And can this sacrament be administered by ministers who are themselves suspected of disloyalty? The Donatists were rigorists who insisted upon the necessity of rebaptism and

were opposed to recognizing the validity of any sacraments performed by those called *traditores*. In their effort to restore purity to the Church, the Donatists separated themselves from the majority of Christians, whom they regarded as lax and overtolerant.

As might be expected, Augustine entered the fray against the Donatists, stressing again the mixed character of the actual Church, the difficulty of knowing just who is inside it, and the unquestioned validity of all sacraments properly performed. His work *On Baptism* is therefore a most significant expression of his view concerning the nature of the Church itself. He spends much time discussing the general respected viewpoint of Cyprian, denying the force of his opinion that baptism should be repeated in doubtful cases but commending Cyprian's dominant desire for preserving unity in the Church at whatever cost. Let both the grain and the weeds grow together until the harvest, he contends, since only God knows finally who belongs to Him in faith and who does not. Let charity and unity, then, be the rule in dealing with all issues; and let the Church be seen as truly catholic, that is, all-embracing in its outreach and concern, since it is the very work of God's love wrought of human stuff for a divine end.

In all the representative writings chosen for this selection, amidst the great variety of occasions and purposes that call them forth, it is to be hoped that the assertion made at the beginning of this Introduction will be justified. The greatness of St. Augustine consists above all in an unparalleled charity of mind and spirit which knows where man's true help is to be found and eagerly, profoundly leads us in that direction. No one ever realized more clearly that the Christian faith is a rejoicing in the truth, and that we enter into this truth only by the way of love.

I
GOD—
THE
ETERNAL
CREATOR

1. *The Soliloquies*

O God, Creator of the universe, give me first that I may pray aright, then that I may conduct myself worthily of being heard by thee, and finally that I may be set free by thee. God, by whom all things come into existence which by themselves would not exist; who permittest not to perish even that which destroys itself; who out of nothing didst create this world which the eyes of all perceive to be most beautiful; who doest no evil so that existence is good because it is thy work, who showest that evil is nothing to the few who take refuge in the truth; by whom the universe even with its sinister aspects is perfect; by whom there is no absolute disharmony because bad and good together harmonize; whom everything capable of loving loves consciously or unconsciously; in whom are all things yet so that thou art unharmed by the baseness, malice or error of any of thy creatures; who hast willed that none but the pure can know the truth; Father of Truth, of Wisdom, of the True and Perfect Life, of Beatitude, of the Good and Beautiful, of the Intelligible Light, Father of our awakening and of our illumination, of the sign by which we are admonished to return to thee.

Thee I invoke, O God, the Truth, in, by and through whom all truths are true; the Wisdom, in, by and through whom all are wise who are wise; the True and Perfect Life,

in, by and through whom live all who live truly and perfectly the Beatitude, in, by and through whom all the blessed are blessed; the Good and the Beautiful, in, by and through whom all good and beautiful things have these qualities; the Intelligible Light, in, by and through whom all intelligible things are illumined; whose kingdom is this whole world unknown to corporeal sense; whose kingdom gives the Law also to these mundane realms; from whom to be turned is to fall; to whom to be turned is to rise; in whom to abide is to stand fast; from whom to depart is to die; to whom to return is to revive; in whom to dwell is to live; whom no man loses unless he be deceived; whom no man finds unless he has been purified; whom to abandon is to perish; to reach out to whom is to love; to see whom is true possession. I invoke thee, O God, to whom faith calls us, hope lifts us, and charity unites us; by whom we overcome the enemy and are delivered from utter destruction, by whom we are admonished to awake; by whom we distinguish good from evil and shun evil and follow after good; by whom we yield not to adversities; our rightful Lord, whom we rightly serve; by whom we learn that those things are alien which once we thought were ours and that those things are ours which once we thought were alien; by whom we do not cleave to the delights and enticements of wicked men, and are delivered from becoming insignificant through attention to trifles; by whom our better part is not left subject to our lower part; by whom death is swallowed up in victory; who convertest us to thyself; who divestest us of what is not, that thou mayest clothe us with what is; who hearest and defendest us and leadest us into all truth; who speakest to us all good words and neither makest us nor allowest us to be made foolish; who recallest us to the Way, bringest us to the Door and causest it to be opened to them that knock; who givest us the Bread of Life and causest us to thirst after that water of which having drunk, we thirst no more; who reproveth the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment; by whom unbelievers do not distress us, and we repudiate the error of those who think that souls have no merit with thee; by whom we serve not the weak and beggarly elements. God,

who purgest us and preparest us for divine rewards, come propitiously to my aid.

In all that I say come to my aid, thou who art alone God, one substance eternal and true, where there is no strife, no confusion, no transition, no lack, no death, but absolute concord, absolute clearness, constancy, plenitude, life, where nothing is lacking, nothing redundant, and where he who begets and he who is begotten are one. God, whom all serve, and whom every good soul obeys; by whose laws the heavens rotate, the stars hold on their courses, the sun rules the day and the moon the night, and the whole world keeps the mighty constancy of things, so far as sensible matter permits, according to the order and recurrence of times—daily light alternates with darkness; monthly the moon waxes and wanes; yearly there is the succession of spring, summer, autumn, winter; over longer periods there is the perfection of the course of the sun, and in their vast circles the stars return to the place of their rising. God, by whose laws, established for ever, the unstable movement of mutable things is not permitted to be disordered, but is ever reduced to apparent stability by the reins which hold in the revolving ages; by whose laws the soul's will is free, and by unalterable necessity rewards are distributed to the good and punishments to the evil. God, from whom all good things flow down to us, and by whom all evil is warded off from us, above whom is nothing, outside of whom is nothing, without whom is nothing, under whom, in whom and with whom are all things; who hast made man in thine own image and similitude, which every one acknowledges who knows himself. Hear me, my God, my Lord, my King, my Father, my Cause, my Hope, my Riches, my Honour, my Home, my Fatherland, my Health, my Light, my Life. Hear me, hear me, in thine own way known to but few.

Now thee only I love; thee only I follow; thee only I seek; thee only am I ready to serve. Because thou alone are justly Lord, I desire to be under thy jurisdiction. Command, I beseech thee, as thou wilt, but heal and open my ears that I may hear thy voice. Heal and open my eyes that I may see thy beckoning. Drive madness from me that

I may recognize thee. Tell me whither I must go that I may behold thee; and I hope to do all that thou dost command. Receive, I pray, thy fugitive, most clement Father and Lord. Already I have been punished enough. Enough have I been the plaything of deceits. Receive me, thy servant, now fleeing these things, as they formerly received me, a stranger, when I was fleeing from thee. I perceive I must return to thee. Let thy door be opened to me when I knock. Teach me how to come to thee. I have nothing else but the will to come. I know nothing save that transient dying things are to be spurned, certain and eternal things to be sought after. This only I know, O Father, but how to come to thee I know not. Tell me. Show me. Provide for my journey. If those who take refuge in thee find thee by faith, give me faith; if by virtue, give me virtue; if by knowledge, give knowledge. Increase in me faith, hope and charity, O thou admirable and unequalled Goodness.

I come to thee, and how to come I ask thee again. For if thou dost leave a man he perishes. But thou dost not, for thou art the highest good which no man hath rightly sought and failed to find. Every man hath rightly sought to whom thou hast given the power to do so. Make me to seek thee, Father. Free me from error. As I seek thee, may nothing else substitute itself for thee. If I desire nothing else but thee, may I at last find thee, Father, I beseech thee. But if there be in me the desire for anything superfluous, do thou thyself cleanse me and make me fit to see thee. Concerning the health of this my mortal body, so long as it is of some use to me, or to those whom I love, I leave it to thee, most kind and wise Father, and I will pray for relief from the scourge wherewith thou dost now chasten me. Only I beseech thy most excellent clemency to convert me wholly to thyself, to allow nothing to gainsay me as I draw near to thee and to bid me while I bear and wear this mortal body to be pure, generous, just and prudent, a perfect lover and receiver of thy Wisdom and worthy to dwell in thy most blessed kingdom. Amen. Amen.

BOOK I, 2-6

2. *The Confessions*

“Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is thy power, and infinite is thy wisdom.”¹ And man desires to praise thee, for he is a part of thy creation; he bears his mortality about with him and carries the evidence of his sin and the proof that thou dost resist the proud. Still he desires to praise thee, this man who is only a small part of thy creation. Thou hast prompted him, that he should delight to praise thee, for thou hast made us for thyself and restless is our heart until it comes to rest in thee. Grant me, O Lord, to know and understand whether first to invoke thee or to praise thee; whether first to know thee or call upon thee. But who can invoke thee, knowing thee not? For he who knows thee may not invoke thee as another than thou art. It may be that we should invoke thee in order that we may come to know thee. But “how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe without a preacher?”² Now, “they shall praise the Lord who seek him,”³ for “those who seek shall find him,”⁴ and, finding him, shall praise him. I will seek thee, O Lord, and call upon thee. I call upon thee, O Lord, in my faith which thou hast given me, which thou hast inspired in me through the humanity of thy Son, and through the ministry of thy preacher.⁵

And how shall I call upon my God—my God and my Lord? For when I call on him I ask him to come into me. And what place is there in me into which my God can come? How could God, the God who made both heaven and earth, come into me? Is there anything in me, O Lord

1 Cf. Psalm 145:3 and Psalm 147:5.

2 Rom. 10:14.

3 Psalm 22:26.

4 Matt. 7:7.

5 A reference to Bishop Ambrose of Milan.

my God, that can contain thee? Do even the heaven and the earth, which thou hast made, and in which thou didst make me, contain thee? Is it possible that, since without thee nothing would be which does exist, thou didst make it so that whatever exists has some capacity to receive thee? Why, then, do I ask thee to come into me, since I also am and could not be if thou wert not in me? For I am not, after all, in hell—and yet thou art there too, for “if I go down into hell, thou art there.”⁶ Therefore I would not exist—I would simply not be at all—unless I exist in thee, from whom and by whom and in whom all things are. Even to, Lord; even so. Where do I call thee to, when I am already in thee? Or from whence wouldst thou come into me? Where, beyond heaven and earth, could I go that there my God might come to me—he who hath said, “I fill heaven and earth”?⁷

Since, then, thou dost fill the heaven and earth, do they contain thee? Or, dost thou fill and overflow them, because they cannot contain thee? And where dost thou pour out what remains of thee after heaven and earth are full? Or, indeed, is there no need that thou, who dost contain all things, shouldst be contained by any, since those things which thou dost fill thou fillest by containing them? For the vessels which thou dost fill do not confine thee, since even if they were broken, thou wouldst not be poured out. And, when thou are poured out on us, thou art not thereby brought down; rather, we are uplifted. Thou art not scattered; rather, thou dost gather us together. But when thou dost fill all things, dost thou fill them with thy whole being? Or, since not even all things together could contain thee altogether, does any one thing contain a single part, and do all things contain that same part at the same time? Do singulars contain thee singly? Do greater things contain more of thee, and smaller things less? Or, is it not rather that thou art wholly present everywhere, yet in such a way that nothing contains thee wholly?

What, therefore, is my God? What, I ask, but the Lord God? “For who is Lord but the Lord himself, or who is

⁶ Psalm 139:8.

⁷ Jer. 23:24.

God besides our God?"⁸ Most high, most excellent, most potent, most omnipotent; most merciful and most just; most secret and most truly present; most beautiful and most strong; stable, yet not supported; unchangeable, yet changing all things; never new, never old; making all things new, yet bringing old age upon the proud, and they know it not; always working, ever at rest; gathering, yet needing nothing; sustaining, pervading, and protecting; creating, nourishing, and developing; seeking, and yet possessing all things. Thou dost love, but without passion; art jealous, yet free from care; dost repent without remorse; art angry, yet remainest serene. Thou changest thy ways, leaving thy plans unchanged; thou recoverest what thou hast never really lost. Thou art never in need but still thou dost rejoice at thy gains; art never greedy, yet demandest dividends. Men pay more than is required so that thou dost become a debtor; yet who can possess anything at all which is not already thine? Thou owest men nothing, yet payest out to them as if in debt to thy creature, and when thou dost cancel debts thou lovest nothing thereby. Yet, O my God, my life, my holy Joy, what is this that I have said? What can any man say when he speaks of thee? But woe to them that keep silence—since even those who say most are dumb.

BOOK I, CHAPTERS 1-4

It is not with a doubtful consciousness, but one fully certain that I love thee, O Lord. Thou hast smitten my heart with thy Word, and I have loved thee. And see also the heaven, and earth, and all that is in them—on every side they tell me to love thee, and they do not cease to tell this to all men, "so that they are without excuse." Wherefore, still more deeply wilt thou have mercy on whom thou wilt have mercy, and compassion on whom thou wilt have compassion. For otherwise, both heaven and earth would tell abroad thy praises to deaf ears.

But what is it that I love in loving thee? Not physical beauty, nor the splendor of time, nor the radiance of the light—so pleasant to our eyes—nor the sweet melodies of the various kinds of songs, nor the fragrant smell of

⁸ Cf. Psalm 18:31.

flowers and ointments and spices; not manna and honey, not the limbs embraced in physical love—it is not these I love when I love my God. Yet it is true that I love a certain kind of light and sound and fragrance and food and embrace in loving my God, who is the light and sound and fragrance and food and embracement of my inner man—where that light shines into my soul which no place can contain, where time does not snatch away the lovely sound, where no breeze disperses the sweet fragrance, where no eating diminishes the food there provided, and where there is an embrace that no satiety comes to sunder. This is what I love when I love my God.

And what is this God? I asked the earth, and it answered, “I am not he”; and everything in the earth made the same confession. I asked the sea and the deeps and the creeping things, and they replied, “We are not your God; seek above us.” I asked the fleeting winds, and the whole air with its inhabitants answered, “Anaximenes was deceived; I am not God.” I asked the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars; and they answered, “Neither are we the God whom you seek.” And I replied to all these things which stand around the door of my flesh: “You have told me about my God, that you are not he. Tell me something about him.” And with a loud voice they all cried out, “He made us.” My question had come from my observation of them, and their reply came from their beauty of order. And I turned my thoughts into myself and said, “Who are you?” And I answered, “A man.” For see, there is in me both a body and a soul; the one without, the other within. In which of these should I have sought my God, whom I had already sought with my body from earth to heaven, as far as I was able to send those messengers—the beams of my eyes? But the inner part is the better part; for to it, as both ruler and judge, all these messengers of the senses report the answers of heaven and earth and all the things therein, who said, “We are not God, but he made us.” My inner man knew these things through the ministry of the outer man, and I, the inner man, knew all this—I, the soul, through the senses of my body. I asked the whole frame

of earth about my God, and it answered, "I am not he, but he made me."

Is not this beauty of form visible to all whose senses are unimpaired? Why, then, does it not say the same things to all? Animals, both small and great, see it but they are unable to interrogate its meaning, because their senses are not endowed with the reason that would enable them to judge the evidence which the senses report. But man can interrogate it, so that "the invisible things of him . . . are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."⁹ But men love these created things too much; they are brought into subjection to them—and, as subjects, are not able to judge. None of these created things reply to their questioners unless they can make rational judgments. The creatures will not alter their voice—that is, their beauty of form—if one man simply sees what another both sees and questions, so that the world appears one way to this man and another to that. It appears the same way to both; but it is mute to this one and it speaks to that one. Indeed, it actually speaks to all, but only they understand it who compare the voice received from without with the truth within. For the truth says to me, "Neither heaven nor earth nor anybody is your God." Their very nature tells this to the one who beholds them. "They are a mass, less in part than the whole." Now, O my soul, you are my better part, and to you I speak; since you animate the whole mass of your body, giving it life, whereas no body furnishes life to a body. But your God is the life of your life.

BOOK X, CHAPTER 6

How, then, do I seek thee, O Lord? For when I seek thee, my God, I seek a happy life. I will seek thee that my soul may live. For my body lives by my soul, and my soul lives by thee. How, then, do I seek a happy life, since happiness is not mine till I can rightly say: "It is enough. This is it." How do I seek it? Is it by remembering, as though I had forgotten it and still knew that I had forgotten it? Do I seek it in longing to learn of it as though it were some-

⁹ Rom. 1:20.

thing unknown, which either I had never known or had so completely forgotten as not even to remember that I had forgotten it? Is not the happy life the thing that all desire, and is there anyone who does not desire it at all? But where would they have gotten the knowledge of it, that they should so desire it? Where have they seen it that they should so love it? It is somehow true that we have it, but how I do not know.

There is, indeed, a sense in which when anyone has his desire he is happy. And then there are some who are happy in hope. These are happy in an inferior degree to those that are actually happy; yet they are better off than those who are happy neither in actuality nor in hope. But even these, if they had not known happiness in some degree, would not then desire to be happy. And yet it is most certain that they do so desire. How they come to know happiness, I cannot tell, but they have it by some kind of knowledge unknown to me, for I am very much in doubt as to whether it is in the memory. For if it is in there, then we have been happy once on a time—either of us individually or all of us in that man who first sinned and in whom also we all died and from whom we are all born in misery. How this is, I do not now ask; but I do ask whether the happy life is in the memory. For if we did not know it, we should not love it. We hear the name of it, and we all acknowledge that we desire the thing, for we are not delighted with the name only. For when a Greek hears it spoken in Latin, he does not feel delighted, for he does not know what has been spoken. But we are as delighted as he would be in turn if he heard it in Greek, because the thing itself is neither Greek nor Latin, this happiness which Greeks and Latins and men of all the other tongues long so earnestly to obtain. It is, then, known to all; and if all could with one voice be asked whether they wished to be happy, there is no doubt they would all answer that they would. And this would not be possible unless the thing itself, which we name "happiness," were held in the memory.

But is it the same kind of memory as one who having seen Carthage remembers it? No, for the happy life is not visible to the eye, since it is not a physical object. Is it the

sort of memory we have for numbers? No, for the man who has these in his understanding does not keep striving to attain more. Now we know something about the happy life and therefore we love it, but still we wish to go on striving for it that we may be happy. Is the memory of happiness, then, something like the memory of eloquence? No, for although some, when they hear the term eloquence, call the thing to mind, even if they are not themselves eloquent—and further, there are many people who would like to be eloquent, from which it follows that they must know something about it—nevertheless, these people have noticed through their senses that others are eloquent and have been delighted to observe this and long to be this way themselves. But they would not be delighted if it were not some interior knowledge; and they would not desire to be delighted unless they had been delighted. But as for a happy life, there is no physical perception by which we experience it in others.

Do we remember happiness, then, as we remember joy? It may be so, for I remember my joy even when I am sad, just as I remember a happy life when I am miserable. And I have never, through physical perception, either seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or touched my joy. But I have experienced it in my mind when I rejoiced; and the knowledge of it clung to my memory so that I can call it to mind, sometimes with disdain and at other times with longing, depending on the different kinds of things I now remember that I rejoiced in. For I have been bathed with a certain joy even by unclean things, which I now detest and execrate as I call them to mind. At other times, I call to mind with longing good and honest things, which are not any longer near at hand, and I am therefore saddened when I recall my former joy.

Where and when did I ever experience my happy life that I can call it to mind and love it and long for it? It is not I alone or even a few others who wish to be happy, but absolutely everybody. Unless we knew happiness by a knowledge that is certain, we should not wish for it with a will which is so certain. Take this example: If two men were asked whether they wished to serve as soldiers, one

of them might reply that he would, and the other that he would not; but if they were asked whether they wished to be happy, both of them would unhesitatingly say that they would. But the first one would wish to serve as a soldier and the other would not wish to serve, both from no other motive than to be happy. Is it, perhaps, that one finds his joy in this and another in that? Thus they agree in their wish for happiness just as they would also agree, if asked, in wishing for joy. Is this joy what they call a happy life? Although one could choose his joy in this way and another in that, all have one goal which they strive to attain, namely, to have joy. This joy, then, being something that no one can say he has not experienced, is therefore found in the memory and it is recognized whenever the phrase "a happy life" is heard.

Forbid it, O Lord, put it far from the heart of thy servant, who confesses to thee—far be it from me to think I am happy because of any and all the joy I have. For there is a joy not granted to the wicked but only to those who worship thee thankfully—and this joy thou thyself art. The happy life is this—to rejoice to thee, in thee, and for thee. This it is and there is no other. But those who think there is another follow after other joys, and not the true one. But their will is still not moved except by some image or shadow of joy.

Is it, then, uncertain that all men wish to be happy, since those who do not wish to find their joy in thee—which is alone the happy life—do not actually desire the happy life? Or, is it rather that all desire this, but because "the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh," so that they "prevent you from doing what you would," you fall to doing what you are able to do and are content with that? For you do not want to do what you cannot do urgently enough to make you able to do it.

Now I ask all men whether they would rather rejoice in truth or in falsehood. They will no more hesitate to answer, "in truth," than to say that they wish me to be happy. For a happy life is joy in the truth. Yet this is joy in thee, who art the Truth, O God my Light, "the health of my countenance and my God." All wish for this happy life;

all wish for this life which is the only happy one: joy in the truth is what all men wish.

I have had experience with many who wished to deceive, but not one who wished to be deceived. Where, then, did they ever know about this happy life, except where they knew also what the truth is? For they love it, too, since they are not willing to be deceived. And when they love the happy life, which is nothing else but joy in the truth, then certainly they also love the truth. And yet they would not love it if there were not some knowledge of it in the memory.

Why, then, do they not rejoice in it? Why are they not happy? Because they are so fully preoccupied with other things which do more to make them miserable than those which would make them happy, which they remember so little about. Yet there is a little light in men. Let them walk—let them walk in it, lest the darkness overtake them.

Why, then, does truth generate hatred, and why does thy servant who preaches the truth come to be an enemy to them who also love the happy life, which is nothing else than joy in the truth—unless it be that truth is loved in such a way that those who love something else besides her wish that to be the truth which they do love? Since they are unwilling to be deceived, they are unwilling to be convinced that they have been deceived. Therefore, they hate the truth for the sake of whatever it is that they love in place of the truth. They love truth when she shines on them; and hate her when she rebukes them. And since they are not willing to be deceived, but do wish to deceive, they love truth when she reveals herself and hate her when she reveals them. On this account, she will so repay them that those who are unwilling to be exposed by her she will indeed expose against their will, and yet will not disclose herself to them.

Thus, thus, truly thus: the human mind so blind and sick, so base and ill-mannered, desires to lie hidden, but does not wish that anything should be hidden from it. And yet the opposite is what happens—the mind itself is not hidden from the truth, but the truth is hidden from it. Yet even so, for all its wretchedness, it still prefers to re-

joice in truth rather than in known falsehoods. It will, then, be happy only when without other distractions it comes to rejoice in that single Truth through which all things else are true.

Behold how great a territory I have explored in my memory seeking thee, O Lord! And in it all I have still not found thee. Nor have I found anything about thee, except what I had already retained in my memory from the time I learned of thee. For where I found Truth, there found I my God, who is the Truth. From the time I learned this I have not forgotten. And thus since the time I learned of thee, thou hast dwelt in my memory, and it is there that I find thee whenever I call thee to remembrance, and delight in thee. These are my holy delights, which thou hast bestowed on me in thy mercy, mindful of my poverty.

◀ But where in my memory dost thou abide, O Lord? Where dost thou dwell there? What sort of lodging hast thou made for thyself there? What kind of sanctuary hast thou built for thyself? Thou hast done this honor to my memory to take up thy abode in it, but I must consider further in what part of it thou dost abide. For in calling thee to mind, I soared beyond those parts of memory which the beasts also possess, because I did not find thee there among the images of corporeal things. From there I went on to those parts where I had stored the remembered affections of my mind, and I did not find thee there. And I entered into the inmost seat of my mind, which is in my memory, since the mind remembers itself also—and thou wast not there. For just as thou art not a bodily image, nor the emotion of a living creature (such as we feel when we rejoice or are grief-stricken, when we desire, or fear, or remember, or forget, or anything of that kind), so neither art thou the mind itself. For thou art the Lord God of the mind and of all these things that are mutable; but thou abidest immutable over all. Yet thou hast elected to dwell in my memory from the time I learned of thee. But why do I now inquire about the part of my memory thou dost dwell in, as if indeed there were separate parts in it? Assuredly, thou dwellest in it, since I have remembered

thee from the time I learned of thee, and I find thee in my memory when I call thee to mind.

Where, then, did I find thee so as to be able to learn of thee? For thou wast not in my memory before I learned of thee. Where, then, did I find thee so as to be able to learn of thee—save in thyself beyond me. Place there is none. We go “backward” and “forward” and there is no place. Everywhere and at once, O Truth, thou guidest all who consult thee, and simultaneously answerest all even though they consult thee on quite different things. Thou answerest clearly, though all do not hear in clarity. All take counsel of thee on whatever point they wish, though they do not always hear what they wish. He is thy best servant who does not look to hear from thee what he himself wills, but who wills rather to will what he hears from thee.

Belatedly I loved thee, O Beauty so ancient and so new, belatedly I loved thee. For see, thou wast within and I was without, and I sought thee out there. Unlovely, I rushed heedlessly among the lovely things thou hast made. Thou wast with me, but I was not with thee. These things kept me far from thee; even though they were not at all unless they were in thee. Thou didst call and cry aloud, and didst force open my deafness. Thou didst gleam and shine, and didst chase away my blindness. Thou didst breathe fragrant odors and I drew in my breath; and now I pant for thee. I tasted, and now I hunger and thirst. Thou didst touch me, and I burned for thy peace.

When I come to be united to thee with all my being, then there will be no more pain and toil for me, and my life shall be a real life, being wholly filled by thee. But since he whom thou fillest is the one thou liftest up, I am still a burden to myself because I am not yet filled by thee. Joys of sorrow contend with sorrows of joy, and on which side the victory lies I do not know.

Woe is me! Lord, have pity on me; my evil sorrows contend with my good joys, and on which side the victory lies I do not know. Woe is me! Lord, have pity on me. Woe is me! Behold, I do not hide my wounds. Thou art the Physician, I am the sick man; thou art merciful, I need mercy. Is not the life of man on earth an ordeal? Who

is he that wishes for vexations and difficulties? Thou commandest them to be endured, not to be loved. For no man loves what he endures, though he may love to endure. Yet even if he rejoices to endure, he would prefer that there were nothing for him to endure. In adversity, I desire prosperity; in prosperity, I fear adversity. What middle place is there, then, between these two, where human life is not an ordeal? There is woe in the prosperity of this world; there is woe in the fear of misfortune; there is woe in the distortion of joy. There is woe in the adversities of this world—a second woe, and a third, from the desire of prosperity—because adversity itself is a hard thing to bear and makes shipwreck of endurance. Is not the life of man upon the earth an ordeal, and that without surcease?

My whole hope is in thy exceeding great mercy and that alone. Give what thou commandest and command what thou wilt. Thou commandest continence from us, and when I knew, as it is said, that no one could be continent unless God gave it to him, even this was a point of wisdom to know whose gift it was. For by continence we are bound up and brought back together in the One, whereas before we were scattered abroad among the many. For he loves thee too little who loves along with thee anything else that he does not love for thy sake, O Love, who dost burn forever and art never quenched. O Love, O my God, enkindle me! Thou commandest continence; give what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.

BOOK X, CHAPTERS 20-29

Is it possible, O Lord, that, since thou art in eternity, thou art ignorant of what I am saying to thee? Or, dost thou see in time an event at the time it occurs? If not, then why am I recounting such a tale of things to thee? Certainly not in order to acquaint thee with them through me; but, instead, that through them I may stir up my own love and the love of my readers toward thee, so that all may say, "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised." I have said this before and will say it again: "For love of thy love I do it." So also we pray—and yet Truth tells us, "Your Father knoweth what things you need

before you ask him." Consequently, we lay bare our feelings before thee, that, through our confessing to thee our plight and thy mercies toward us, thou mayest go on to free us altogether, as thou hast already begun; and that we may cease to be wretched in ourselves and blessed in thee—since thou hast called us to be poor in spirit, meak, mourners, hungering and athirst for righteousness, merciful and pure in heart. Thus, I have told thee many things, as I could find ability and will to do so, since it was thy will in the first place that I should confess to thee, O Lord my God—for "Thou art good and thy mercy endureth forever."

BOOK XI, CHAPTER 1

3. *The City of God*

Of all visible things, the world is the greatest; of all invisible, the greatest is God. But that the world is, we see; that God is, we believe. That God made the world, we can believe from no one more safely than from God Himself. But where have we heard Him? Nowhere more distinctly than in the Holy Scriptures, where His prophet said, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Was the prophet present when God made the heavens and the earth? No; but the wisdom of God, by whom all things were made, was there, and wisdom insinuates itself into holy souls, and makes them the friends of God and his prophets, and noiselessly informs them of His works. They are taught also by the angels of God, who always behold the face of the Father, and announce His will to whom it befits. Of these prophets was he who said and wrote, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And so fit a witness was he of God, that the same Spirit of God, who revealed these things to him, enabled him also so long before to predict that our faith also would be forthcoming.

But why did God choose then to create the heavens and earth which up to that time He had not made? If they who put this question wish to make out that the world is eternal and without beginning, and that consequently it has not been made by God, they are strangely deceived, and rave in the incurable madness of impiety. For, though the voices of the prophets were silent, the world itself, by its well-ordered changes and movements, and by the fair appearance of all visible things, bears a testimony of its own, both that it has been created, and also that it could not have been created save by God, whose greatness and beauty are unutterable and invisible. As for those who own, indeed, that it was made by God, and yet ascribe to it not a temporal but a creational beginning, so that in some scarcely intelligible way the world should always have existed a created world, they make an assertion which seems to them to defend God from the charge of arbitrary hastiness, or of suddenly conceiving the idea of creating the world as a quite new idea, or of casually changing His will, though he be unchangeable. But I do not see how this supposition of theirs can stand in other respects, and chiefly in respect of the soul; for if they contend that it is co-eternal with God, they will be quite at a loss to explain whence there has accrued to it new misery, which through a previous eternity had not existed. For if they said that its happiness and misery ceaselessly alternate, they must say, further, that this alternation will continue for ever; whence will result this absurdity, that, though the soul is called blessed, it is not so in this, that it foresees its own misery and disgrace. And yet, if it does not foresee it, and supposes that it will be neither disgraced nor wretched, but always blessed, then it is blessed because it is deceived; and a more foolish statement one cannot make. But if their idea is that the soul's misery has alternated with its bliss during the ages of the past eternity, but that now, when once the soul has been set free, it will return henceforth no more to misery, they are nevertheless of opinion that it has never been truly blessed before, but begins at last to enjoy a new and uncertain happiness; that is to say, they must acknowledge that some new thing, and that an

important and signal thing, happens to the soul which never in a whole past eternity happened it before. And if they deny that God's eternal purpose included this new experience of the soul, they deny that He is the Author of its blessedness, which is unspeakable impiety. If, on the other hand, they say that the future blessedness of the soul is the result of a new decree of God, how will they show that God is not chargeable with that mutability which displeases them? Further, if they acknowledge that it was created in time, but will never perish in time—that it has, like number, a beginning but no end—and that, therefore, having once made trial of misery, and been delivered from it, it will never again return thereto, they will certainly admit that this takes place without any violation of the immutable counsel of God. Let them, then, in like manner believe regarding the world that it too could be made in time, and yet that God, in making it, did not alter His eternal design.

Next, we must see what reply can be made to those who agree that God is the Creator of the world, but have difficulties about the time of its creation, and what reply, also, they can make to difficulties we might raise about the place of its creation. For, as they demand why the world was created then and no sooner, we may ask why it was created here where it is, and not elsewhere. For if they imagine infinite spaces of time before the world, during which God could not have been idle, in like manner they may conceive outside the world infinite realms of space, in which, if any one says that the Omnipotent cannot hold His hand from working, will it not follow that they must adopt Epicurus' dream of innumerable worlds? With this difference only, that he asserts that they are formed and destroyed by the fortuitous movements of atoms, while they will hold that they are made by God's hand, if they maintain that, throughout the boundless immensity of space, stretching interminable in every direction round the world, God cannot rest, and that the worlds which they suppose Him to make cannot be destroyed. For here the question is with those who, with ourselves, believe that God is spiritual, and the Creator of all existences but Himself. As

for others, it is a condescension to dispute with them on a religious question, for they have acquired a reputation only among men who pay divine honors to a number of gods, and have become conspicuous among the other philosophers for no other reason than that, though they are still far from the truth, they are near it in comparison with the rest. While these, then, neither confine in any place, nor limit, nor distribute the divine substance, but, as is worthy of God, own it to be wholly though spiritually present everywhere, will they perchance say that this substance is absent from such immense spaces outside the world, and is occupied in one only (and that a very little one compared with the infinity beyond), the one, namely, in which is the world? I think they will not proceed to this absurdity. Since they maintain that there is but one world, of vast material bulk, indeed, yet finite, and in its own determinate position, and that this was made by the working of God, let them give the same account of God's resting in the infinite times before the world as they give of His resting in the infinite spaces outside of it. And as it does not follow that God set the world in the very spot it occupies and no other by accident rather than by divine reason, although no human reason can comprehend why it was so set, and though there was no merit in the spot chosen to give it the precedence of infinite others, so neither does it follow that we should suppose that God was guided by chance when He created the world in that and no earlier time, although previous times had been running by during an infinite past, and though there was no difference by which one time could be chosen in preference to another. But if they say that the thoughts of men are idle when they conceive infinite places, since there is no place beside the world, we reply that, by the same showing, it is vain to conceive of the past times of God's rest, since there is no time before the world.

For if eternity and time are rightly distinguished by this, that time does not exist without some movement and transition, while in eternity there is no change, who does not see that there could have been no time had not some creature been made, which by some motion could give

birth to change—the various parts of which motion and change, as they cannot be simultaneous, succeed one another—and thus, in these shorter or longer intervals of duration, time would begin? Since then, God, in whose eternity is no change at all, is the Creator and Ordainer of time, I do not see how He can be said to have created the world after spaces of time had elapsed, unless it be said that prior to the world there was some creature by whose movement time could pass. And if the sacred and infallible Scriptures say that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, in order that it may be understood that He had made nothing previously—for if He had made anything before the rest, this thing would rather be said to have been made “in the beginning,”—then assuredly the world was made, not in time, but simultaneously with time. For that which is made in time is made both after and before some time—after that which is past, before that which is future. But none could then be past, for there was no creature by whose movements its duration could be measured. But simultaneously with time the world was made, if in the world’s creation change and motion were created, as seems evident from the order of the first six or seven days. For in these days the morning and evening are counted, until, on the sixth day, all things which God then made were finished, and on the seventh the rest of God was mysteriously and sublimely signalized. What kind of days these were it is extremely difficult, or perhaps impossible for us to conceive, and how much more to say!

BOOK XI, CHAPTERS 4, 5, 6

II
GOOD
AND EVIL

1. *Against the Epistle of Manichaeus*

The consideration we wish most to urge is the truth of the Catholic doctrine, if they can understand it, that God is the author of all natures. I urged this before when I said, I join with you in your condemnation of destructiveness, of blindness, of dense muddiness, of terrific violence, of perishableness, of the ferocity of the princes, and so on; join with me in commending form, classification, arrangement, harmony, unity of structure, symmetry and correspondence of members, provision for vital breath and nourishment, wholesome adaptation . . . and all the other things of the same kind. From this, if they would only think honestly, they would understand that it implies a mixture of good and evil, even in the region where they suppose evil to be alone and in perfection: so that if the evils mentioned were taken away, the good things will remain, without anything to detract from the commendation given to them; whereas, if the good things are taken away, no nature is left.

From this everyone sees, who can see, that every nature, as far as it is nature, is good; since in one and the same thing in which I found something to praise, and he found something to blame, if the good things are taken away, no nature will remain; but if the disagreeable things are taken away, the nature will remain unimpaired. Take from waters

their thickness and muddiness, and pure clear water remains; take from them the consistency of their parts, and no water will be left. If, then, after the evil is removed, the nature remains in a purer state, and does not remain at all when the good is taken away, it must be the good which makes the nature of the thing in which it is, while the evil is not nature, but contrary to nature. . . . It would be tedious to go through all the cases; but all who consider the subject free from party spirit must see that in their list of natures the disagreeable things mentioned are additions to the nature; and when they are removed, the natures remain better than before. This shows that the natures, as far as they are natures, are good; for when you take from them the good instead of the evil, no natures remain. . . .

CHAPTER 33 (36)

But perhaps you will say that these evils cannot be removed from the natures, and must therefore be considered natural. The question at present is not what can be taken away, and what cannot; but it certainly helps to a clear perception that these natures, as far as they are natures, are good, when we see that the good things can be thought of without these evil things, while without these good things no nature can be conceived. I can conceive of waters without muddy commotion; but without settled continuity of parts no material form is an object of thought or sensation in any way. Therefore even these muddy waters could not exist without the good which was the condition of their material existence. As to the reply that these evil things cannot be taken from such natures, I rejoin that neither can the good things be taken away. Why, then, should you call these things natural evils, on account of the evil things which you suppose cannot be taken away, and yet refuse to call them natural good things, on account of the good things which, as has been proved, cannot be taken away?

CHAPTER 34 (37)

You may next ask, as you usually do for a last resource, whence come these evils which I have said that I too disapprove of. I shall perhaps tell you, if you first tell me

whence are those good things which you too are obliged to commend, if you would not be altogether unreasonable. But why should I ask this, when we both acknowledge that all good things whatever, and how great soever, are from the one God, who is supremely good? You must therefore yourselves oppose Manichæus who has placed all these important good things which we have mentioned and justly commended—the continuity and agreement of parts in each nature, the health and vigor of the animated creatures—in an imaginary region of darkness, so as to separate them altogether from that God whom he allows to be the author of all good things. . . .

CHAPTER 34 (38)

For who can doubt that the whole of that which is called evil is nothing else than corruption? Different evils, indeed, may be called by different names; but that which is the evil of all things in which any evil is perceptible is corruption. So the corruption of an educated mind is ignorance; the corruption of a prudent mind is imprudence; the corruption of a just mind, injustice; the corruption of a brave mind, cowardice; the corruption of a calm, peaceful mind, cupidity, fear, sorrow, pride. Again, in a living body, the corruption of health is pain and disease; the corruption of strength is exhaustion; the corruption of rest is toil. Again, in any corporeal thing, the corruption of beauty is ugliness; the corruption of straightness is crookedness; the corruption of order is confusion; the corruption of entireness is disseverance, or fracture, or diminution . . . enough has been said to show that corruption does harm only as displacing the natural condition; and so, that corruption is not nature, but against nature. And if corruption is the only evil to be found anywhere, and if corruption is not nature, no nature is evil.

CHAPTER 35 (39)

But if, perchance, you cannot follow this, consider again, that whatever is corrupted is deprived of some good; for if it were not corrupted, it would be incorrupt; or if it could not in any way be corrupted, it would be incorruptible. Now, if corruption is an evil, both incorruption and incorruptibility must be good things. We are not, however,

speaking at present of incorruptible nature, but of things which admit of corruption, and which, while not corrupted, may be called incorrupt, but not incorruptible. That alone can be called incorruptible which not only is not corrupted, but also cannot in any part be corrupted. Whatever things, then, being incorrupt, but liable to corruption, begin to be corrupted, are deprived of the good which they had as incorrupt. Nor is this a slight good, for corruption is a great evil. And the continued increase of corruption implies the continued presence of good, of which they may be deprived.

Accordingly, the natures supposed to exist in the region of darkness must have been either corruptible or incorruptible. If they were incorruptible, they were in possession of a good than which nothing is higher. If they were corruptible, they were corrupted or not corrupted. If they were not corrupted, they were incorrupt, to say which of anything is to give it great praise. If they were corrupted, they were deprived of this great good of incorruption; but the deprivation implies the previous possession of the good they are deprived of; and if they possessed this good, they were not the perfection of evil, and consequently all the Manichean story is a falsehood.

CHAPTER 35 (40)

After thus inquiring what evil is, and learning that it is not nature, this, he might have escaped falling into the snare of these serious errors. Out of time and out of order, he began with inquiring into the origin of evil, without first asking what evil was; and so his inquiry led him only to the reception of foolish fancies, of which the mind, much fed by the bodily sense, with difficulty rids itself. Perhaps, then, someone, desiring no longer argument but delivery from error, will ask, Whence is this corruption which we find to be the common evil of good things which are not incorruptible? Such an inquirer will soon find the answer if he seeks for truth with great earnestness, and knocks reverently with sustained assiduity. For while man can use words as a kind of sign for the expression of his thoughts, teaching is the work of the incorruptible Truth itself, who is the one true, the one internal Teacher. He be-

came external also, that he might recall us from the external to the internal; and taking on himself the form of a servant, that he might bring down his height to the knowledge of those rising up to him, he condescended to appear in lowliness to the low. In his name let us ask, and through him let us seek mercy of the Father while making this inquiry. For to answer in a word the question, Whence is corruption? it is hence, because these natures that are capable of corruption were not begotten by God, but made by him out of nothing; and as we already proved that these natures are good, no one can say with propriety that they were not good as made by God. If it is said that God made them perfectly good, it must be remembered that the only perfect good is God himself, the maker of those good things.

CHAPTER 36 (41)

What harm, you ask, would follow if those things too were perfectly good? Still, should any one who admits and believes the perfect goodness of God the Father, inquire what source we should reverently assign to any other perfectly good thing, supposing it to exist, our only correct reply would be that it is of God the Father, who is perfectly good. And we must bear in mind that what is of him is born of him, and not made by him out of nothing, and that it is therefore perfectly, that is, incorruptibly, good like God himself. So we see that it is unreasonable to require that things made out of nothing should be as perfectly good as he who was begotten of God himself, and who is one as God is one, otherwise God would have begotten something unlike himself. Hence it shows ignorance and impiety to seek for brethren for this only-begotten Son through whom all good things were made by the Father out of nothing, except in this, that he condescended to appear as man. . . .

CHAPTER 37 (42)

But should we say, These things made out of nothing are not good things, but only God's nature is good, we shall be unjust to good things of great value. And there is impiety in calling it a defect in anything not to be what God is, and in denying a thing to be good because it is inferior to God.

Pray submit then, thou nature of the rational soul, to be somewhat less than God, but only so far less that after him nothing else is above thee. Submit, I say, and yield to him lest he drive thee still lower into depths where the punishment inflicted will continually detract more and more from the good which thou hast. Thou exaltest thyself against God, if thou art indignant at his preceding thee; and thou art very contumacious in thy thoughts of him if thou dost not rejoice unspeakably in the possession of this good, that he alone is above thee. This being settled as certain, thou art not to say, God should have made me the only nature; there should be no good thing after me. It could not be that the next good thing to God should be the last. And in this is seen most clearly how great dignity God conferred on thee, that he who in the order of nature alone rules over thee, made other things for thee to rule over. Nor be surprised that they are not now in all respects subject to thee, and that sometimes they pain thee; for thy Lord has greater authority over the things subject to thee than thou hast, as a master over the servants of his servants.

What wonder, then, if, when thou sinnest, that is, disobeyest thy Lord, the things thou before ruledst over are made instrumental in thy punishment? For what is so just, or what is more just than God? For this befell human nature in Adam, of whom this is not the place to speak. Suffice it to say, the righteous Ruler acts in character both in just rewards and in just punishments, in the happiness of those who live rightly, and in the penalty inflicted on sinners. Nor yet art thou left without mercy, since by an appointed distribution of things and times thou art called to return. Thus the righteous control of the supreme Creator extends even to earthly good things, which are corrupted and restored, that thou mightest have consolations mingled with punishments; that thou mightest both praise God when delighted by the order of good things, and mightest take refuge in him when tried by experience of evils. So, as far as earthly things are subject to thee, they teach thee that thou art their ruler; as far as they distress thee, they teach thee to be subject to thy Lord.

In this way, though corruption is an evil, and though it comes not from the Author of natures, but from their being made out of nothing, still, in God's government and control over all that he has made, even corruption is so ordered that it hurts only the lowest natures, for the punishment of the condemned, and for the trial and instruction of the returning, that they may keep near to the incorruptible God and remain incorrupt, which is our only good. . . . And you must not say, God did not make corruptible natures, for as far as they are natures, God made them; but as far as they are corruptible, God did not make them: for corruption cannot come from him who alone is incorruptible. If you can receive this, give thanks to God; if you cannot, be quiet and do not condemn what you do not yet understand, but humbly wait on him who is the light of the mind that thou mayest know. . . . And yet even the corruptions, though they have not their origin from God, are to be overruled by him in accordance with the order of inanimate things and the deserts of his intelligent creatures. Thus we say rightly that reward and punishment are both from God. For God's not making corruption is consistent with his giving over to corruption the man who deserves to be corrupted, that is, who has begun to corrupt himself by sinning, that he who has wilfully yielded to the allurements of corruption may, against his will, suffer its pains.

CHAPTER 38 (44)

But if anyone does not believe that corruption comes from nothing, let him place before himself existence and non-existence—one, as it were, on one side, and the other on the other (so to speak as not to outstrip the slow to understand); then let him set something, say the body of an animal, between them, and let him ask himself whether, while the body is being formed and produced, while its size is increasing, while it gains nourishment, health, strength, beauty, stability, it is tending, as regards its duration and permanence, to this side or that, to existence or non-existence. He will see without difficulty that even in the rudimentary form there is an existence, and that the more the body is established and built up in form, and figure, and

strength, the more does it come to exist, and so tend to the side of existence.

Then, again, let the body begin to be corrupted; let its whole condition be enfeebled, let its vigor languish, its strength decay, its beauty be defaced, its framework be sundered, the consistency of its parts give way and go to pieces; and let him ask now where the body is tending in this corruption, whether to existence or non-existence: he will not surely be so blind or stupid as to doubt how to answer himself, or as not to see that in proportion as anything is corrupted, in that proportion it approaches decrease. But whatever tends to decrease tends to non-existence. Since then we must believe that God exists immutably and incorruptibly, while what is called nothing is clearly altogether non-existent; and since, after setting before yourself existence and non-existence, you have observed that the more a visible object increases the more it tends towards existence, while the more it is corrupted the more it tends towards non-existence, why are you at a loss to tell regarding any nature what in it is from God, and what from nothing, seeing that visible form is natural, and corruption against nature? The increase of form leads to existence, and we acknowledge God as supreme existence; the increase of corruption leads to non-existence, we know that what is non-existent is nothing. Why, then, I say, are you at a loss to tell regarding a corruptible nature, when you have both the words *nature* and *corruptible*, what is from God, and what from nothing? And why do you inquire for a nature contrary to God, since, if you confess that he is the supreme existence, it follows that non-existence is contrary to him?

CHAPTER 40 (46)

You ask, Why does corruption take from nature what God has given to it? It takes nothing but where God permits; and he permits, in righteous and well-ordered judgment, according to the degrees of non-intelligent and the deserts of intelligent creatures. The word uttered passes away as an object of sense and perishes in silence, and yet the coming and going of these passing words make our speech, and the regular intervals of silence give pleasing

and appropriate distinction; and so it is with temporal natures which have this lowest form of beauty, that transition gives them being, and the death of what they give birth to gives them individuality. And if our sense and memory could rightly take in the order and proportions of this beauty, it would so please us that we should not dare to give the name of corruptions to those imperfections which give rise to the distinction. And when distress comes to us through their peculiar beauty, by the loss of beloved temporal things passing away, we both pay the penalty of our sins, and are exhorted to set our affection on eternal things.

CHAPTER 41 (47)

Let us then not seek in this beauty for what has not been given to it (and from not having what we seek for, this is the lowest form of beauty); and in that which has been given to it let us praise God, because he has bestowed this great good of visible form even on the lowest degree of beauty. And let us not cleave as lovers to this beauty, but as praisers of God let us rise above it; and from this superior position let us pronounce judgment upon it, instead of so being bound up in it as to be judged along with it. And let us hasten on to that God which has no motion in space or advancement in time, from which all natures in space and time receive their sensible being and their form. To see this good let us purify our heart by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." For the eyes needed in order to see this good are not those with which we see the light spread through space, which has part in one place and part in another instead of being all in every place. The sight and the discernment we are to purify is that by which we see, as far as is allowed in this life, what is just, what is pious, what is the beauty of wisdom. He who sees these things, values them far above the fullness of all regions in space, and finds that the vision of these things requires not the extension of his perception through distances in space, but its invigoration by an immaterial influence.

CHAPTER 42 (48)

And as this vision is greatly hindered by those fancies which are originated by the carnal sense, and are retained and modified by the imagination, let us abhor this heresy which has been left by faith in its fancies to represent the divine substance as extended and diffused through space, even though infinite space, and to cut short one side so as to make room for evil—not being able to perceive that evil is no nature, but against nature; and to beautify this very evil with such visible appearance and forms and consistency of parts prevailing in its several natures, not being able to conceive of any nature without those good things, that the evils found fault with in it are buried under a countless abundance of good things. CHAPTER 43 (49)

2. *The Free Choice of the Will, Book I*

EVODIUS. Tell me, I ask, whether God is the author of evil?

AUGUSTINE. If you make it clear about what evil you are inquiring I will tell you. For we speak of evil with a twofold meaning—one when we say that someone has done badly, the other when one suffers some evil.

E. I want to know about both (kinds of evil).

A. But, if you know or if you believe that God is good, and it is not right to believe otherwise, then God does no evil. Again, if we acknowledge that God is just, for to deny that is wrong too, then by consequence He rewards the good as He punishes the wicked. These punishments surely are bad for those who suffer them. Wherefore, if no one endures penalties unjustly, which we must believe because we believe that this universe is ruled by divine providence, it follows that God is in no way the author of that former kind of evil. Of this second kind He is the author.

E. Is there then another, the author of this evil, of which God is found not to be the author?

A. There is assuredly. For without an author evil could not exist. But if you ask who that one is, it can not be stated, because it is not some one individual. For anyone who is bad is the author of his own evil doing. If you are not sure on this point, then mark what was said above—that evil deeds are punished by God's justice. Indeed they would not be punished justly unless there were the will to do them.

E. I know not whether any one can sin who has not learned to sin. But if this be true, then who is that from whom we have learned to sin, I ask?

A. Do you esteem learning to be something good?

E. Who can dare to say that learning is something bad?

A. What if it is neither good nor bad?

E. To me it seems good.

A. Well, indeed; that is, if knowledge is given by learning, or if knowledge is awakened; and truly no one learns anything but by learning, or think you not so?

E. I think that by learning, good things only are learned.

A. See, therefore, whether evil things are not learned: for learning has its origin from the verb to learn.

E. Whence, therefore, are evil things done by men, if they are not learned?

A. Perhaps it is from this that man turns himself away from learning, that is, estranges himself from the fact of learning. But whether this or something else be true, this surely is evident—that learning is good, and because it is derived from the verb to learn, evil things can not be learned. For, if they are learned, they are contained in learning, and consequently learning will be not good: but learning, as you grant, is good, therefore evil things are not learned; and it is to no purpose that you ask who that is from whom we learn to do badly. Or, if evil things are learned, then they are learned to be avoided, not to be done. Whence it follows that to do evil is nothing other than to wander away from learning.

E. I think strongly that teachings are two; one by which we learn to do right, another by which we learn to do

wrong. But when you were asking whether learning is a good thing, the love of good itself took my attention, so that I looked at that learning which is of well doing, whence I answered that it is good. But now I am reminded that there is another learning, which beyond doubt I affirm to be evil, and it is for the author of that that I inquire.

A. Do you think, at any rate, that intelligence is a good thing?

E. So surely do I think intelligence to be good, that I can not see what in man is more excellent: and I would not say in any way that any understanding can be bad.

A. How then, if one does not understand when he is taught, can he seem to you to have learned?

E. No, not at all.

A. If, therefore, all understanding is good, and no one learns who understands not, everyone who learns does well: for everyone who learns understands; and everyone who understands does well. Therefore whosoever inquires for the author by whom we learn anything, inquires surely for the author by whom we do well. Wherefore, make an end now to your wanting to investigate some unknown evil teacher. For, if he is evil, he is not a teacher: if he is a teacher, he is not evil.

CHAPTER 1

E. Go ahead, now, since you force me to acknowledge that we learn not to do evil, tell me whence do we evil?

A. You touch upon that question now which stirred me strongly when I was a growing youth, which drove me, tired out, to associate with heretics [Manicheans] and threw me down. By which fall I was so hurt and buried by the piling up of silly fables, that, if the love of finding the truth had not obtained for me divine aid, I would have been unable to come out and to breathe the very first freedom of inquiry. And because action was taken with me perseveringly to free me from this question, I take action with you, following the same order by which I escaped. For God will be with us and He will make us understand what we have believed. For we are conscious truly that we hold the step prescribed by the prophet, who says: "Unless you believe you shall not understand." We believe

then that all things that are, are from one God; and yet that God is not the author of sin. But it unsettles the soul that if sins come from the souls which God has created, and these souls are from God how to explain that sin is not borne back upon God.

E. Now you have stated clearly what is painful for me to think. You have stated just what has forced me and drawn me to this study.

A. Have a manful mind, and believe what you believe. For nothing better is believed, even though the reason why it is may be not evident. Indeed to have the very highest esteem of God is most truly the beginning of piety. And any one who believes Him not almighty and not absolutely changeless, does not esteem Him to be supreme: The Creator also of all good things, which He more excellent transcends; the Ruler also most just of all things that He has made—and made unaided by any nature in creating, as if He Himself were not sufficient. Whence it follows that He created out of nothing. He did not however create from Himself, but conceived what is equal to Himself, Him whom we call the only Son of God, whom, when we endeavor to pronounce more clearly, we name the Power of God and the Wisdom of God by which He made out of nothing all things that are made. These things being established, God helping us, let us work for the understanding of that objective for which you are inquiring in this manner.

CHAPTER 2

You ask definitely whence we do evil. We must discuss first what evil-doing is. On which point you now state what this appears to you to be. But if you can not express this altogether briefly in words, then, by recounting evil deeds in particular, make your judgment known to me.

E. Adultery, homicide, sacrilege, to omit other things for the recounting of which time and memory are wanting—what man is there to whom these things will not be seen to be evil deeds?

A. Tell me then first, think you that adultery is wrong because the law forbids it?

E. No, surely, it is not wrong because it is forbidden by

law; but therefore is it forbidden by law because it is wrong.

A. What if someone were to oppose us, insisting upon the self-indulgence of adultery, and demanding why we judge this to be an evil worthy of condemnation? Think you that men eager not only to believe but also to understand must take refuge in the authority of the law? I believe indeed with you, and I believe most firmly, and I proclaim that it ought to be believed by all peoples and nations that adultery is evil. But we are endeavoring now to know also and to hold most firmly by understanding that which we have taken on trust. Think therefore as much as you can and tell me for what reason you know adultery to be wrong.

E. I know it to be evil because I would be unwilling to have it a fact verified in [the case of] my own wife. But whosoever does to another what he would not have done to himself, does evil.

A. What if the pleasure of someone is such that he offers his wife to another, and does this willingly, and is eager also to have the same license in regard to the wife of the other—does such one seem to you to do no evil?

E. Aye, he does the worst.

A. But by that rule he offends not, for he does not that which he would be unwilling to experience [from another]. Wherefore you must find another criterion by which to prove that adultery is bad.

E. To me it appears to be bad because I have seen men frequently convicted of this crime.

A. Why, have you not often seen men condemned for things rightly done? Not to send you afar to other books, look into history, recent now—that very history which excels by divine authority—how badly we must think of the apostles and of all the martyrs, if we are content to accept as a standard that condemnation is a sure proof of guilt, since they all were adjudged worthy of condemnation because of their confession—if, therefore, whatsoever is condemned is bad, it was bad at the time to believe in Christ and to confess the Faith itself. But if everything that

is condemned is not bad, find some other reason by which you can show that adultery is bad.

E. I find no way to answer you.

A. Perhaps therefore the desire in adultery is bad; but because you are searching for evil in the external act which can be seen, you experience difficulty. But in order that you may understand that the desire in adultery is evil, if it were verified that some one had not the opportunity of sinning with the wife of another, and yet it were made evident in some way that he desired to sin, and, if it were in his power, he would: he is not less guilty than if he were taken in the deed itself.

E. Nothing is more evident, and now I see that there is no need for a long explanation that I may be convinced about homicide and sacrilege and all sins whatsoever. For it is clear now that desire is dominant in every kind of evil doing.

CHAPTER 3

A. Do you know what this desire is called by another name—yearning?

E. Yes, I know.

A. Now, between this (yearning) and fear is there no difference, or think you that there is some difference?

E. Indeed, I judge that there is a very great difference between the two.

A. I believe that you so think for this reason, that yearning seeks for, fear flies from [its object].

E. So it is as you say.

A. What if someone were to kill a man, therefore, not for the desire of acquiring something, but because he feared that some evil come to him, will that one not be a homicide?

E. He will, yes; but that deed is not therefore without the dominant factor of desire. For he who, fearing, kills a man desires certainly to live without fear.

A. And do you think that living without fear is a small good?

E. It is a great good. But by no means can it come to that murderer by this deed.

A. I am not asking what may come to him, but what he desires: For surely he who desires life free from fear desires a good; therefore that desiring is not to be blamed, otherwise we shall blame all lovers of good. By consequence we must confess that there is the killing of a man in which that dominant note of a wrong desire is not found; and thus it will be untrue that in all sins the will must be dominant to make them bad: Either that, or there will be some killing of a man that may not be bad.

E. If the killing of a man is homicide, then that can be sometimes without sin. For when a soldier slays an enemy or, when a judge or the official of a judge puts a man to death; again, when a weapon comes from a hand with no will or purpose to kill, they seem to me not to sin when they kill a man.

A. I am agreed; but these are not usually called homicides. Answer, therefore, whether, when he who kills a master from whom he fears heavy punishments, you think such a one is to be classed among those who kill men so that they merit not the name of homicides.

E. I see a great difference here. For they either act according to law or they do nothing against the laws. But the deed of this latter no law approves.

A. Again you bring me back to authority. But you must remember that this problem is taken up by us now so that we may understand what we take on trust; but the laws we take on trust. This point, therefore, we must endeavor to understand, if, by any means, we can—whether the law which punishes such a deed, may not punish wrongly.

E. It does in no way punish wrongly, for it punishes him who knowing and willing slays a master, which none of the others does.

A. Do you not, then, remember that you said just a little time ago that in every evil deed the desire dominates, and by that it is evil?

E. I do remember surely.

A. How, did you not grant also that he who desires to live without fear has not a wrong desire?

E. I remember that too.

A. Since therefore the master is slain by the servant

under such a desire, he is not slain by reason of that blameful desire. Wherefore we have not yet found why that deed is evil. For it is agreed between us that all evil-doing is evil for this reason only that the desire is wrong, that is, the choosing is blameworthy.

E. This one seems to me now to be wrongly condemned, which indeed I would not dare to say if I had aught else to say.

A. Did you then prove to yourself only that this deed ought not to be punished before you considered whether this servant chose to be freed from the fear of his master in order to satisfy his own desires? The desire to live without fear is common indeed to all men, to good and to bad. But the difference is that good men direct their aims by turning their affections away from things which cannot be possessed without the fear of losing them: but the wrong-minded, in order to rest with security on the enjoying of such things, endeavor to remove impediments, and therefore they live a life that is guilty and criminal, and rather to be called death than life.

E. I come back to sense; and I am very glad that now I understand clearly what that guilty yearning is, which is called Libido, which now appears to be the love of those things which one can lose notwithstanding his own will.

CHAPTER 4

Well, let us therefore study now, if you will, to understand whether Libido dominates also in those things which we see too often done by way of superstition.

A. See whether this is not hurrying. For me the point to be considered first is whether an onrushing enemy or an assassin lying in wait may be killed with no wrong-headed desire (for the saving) of one's life, or for liberty or for purity.

E. How can I think that they act with no inordinate desire who fight for that which they can lose without desiring to lose it; or, if they cannot why go so far as the death of a man for that end?

A. Therefore the law is not just which grants the power to a wayfarer to kill a highway robber, so that he may not

be killed (by the robber); or which grants to anyone, a man or woman to slay an assailant attacking, if he can, before he or she is harmed. The soldier also is commanded by law to slay the enemy, for which slaying, if he objects, he will pay the penalty by imperial order. Shall we then dare to say that these laws are unjust, or more, that they are not laws? For to me a law that is not just appears to be no law.

E. I see that the law is secured well enough from such a charge. Indeed the law grants leave for lesser evils among the people whom it governs, so that greater evils may not be done. For that he be slain who lays plans to take the life of another is less hard than the death of him who is defending his own life. And acting against the chaste life of a man in opposition to his own will is much more evidently wrong than the taking of the life of him who so does violence by that one against whom the violence is done. Then again the soldier in slaying the enemy is the agent of the law, wherefore he does his duty easily with no wrong aim or purpose. Moreover the law itself which is made for the purpose of protecting the people can be convicted of no wrong will. Because he who passed the law, if he passed it by God's order, that is, if it is what eternal justice commands, could so do free of all wrong-headed purpose. If, however, he made the statute with some wrong aim, it does not follow that obeying such a law must be qualified as wrong-willed: because a law can be made also by one who is not himself good. [Thus, if some one, for example, possessed of tyrannical law-making power, were to take money from one to whose advantage it is, to pass a statute that is lawful for one to take a woman by force, not even for marriage, it follows not that such a law is bad because he who made the law is unjust and bought out by money.] That law therefore, which for the protection of citizens orders foreign force to be repulsed by the same force, can be obeyed without a wrong desire: and this same can be said of all officials who by right and by order are subject to any powers. But I see not how these men, while not held guilty by law, can be without fault: for the law does

not force them to kill, but leaves it in their power. It is free therefore for them to kill no one for those things which they can lose against their own will, which things therefore they ought not to love.

Concerning life indeed perhaps there may be a question as to whether life can by any means be taken away from the soul when this body is slain; but, if it can be taken, it must be of little worth; if it can not be taken then there is nothing to be feared.

Concerning chaste life then who doubts that chastity is fixed in the soul itself, for chastity is a virtue? Hence it can be taken away by no violent assailant. Whatsoever therefore that one who is slain was going to take away is not all in our power; wherefore I understand not how it is to be called our own. Wherefore again I do not blame the law which permits such aggressors to be slain: but by what reason I can defend those who slay them I do not see.

A. Much less can I see why you seek a defense for men whom no law holds to be guilty.

E. No law perhaps: but, that is, of laws which are apparent and which are read by men. But I know not whether they be held by some stronger and unseen law, that is, if there is nothing that is not governed by divine Providence. How indeed are they free of sin before Providence, who for those things which ought to be held of less worth are defiled by the killing of a man? It appears to me therefore that both that law which is written to rule the people permits these things rightly and that divine providence is vindicated. For this law of the people takes up those things to be sanctioned which are enough to maintain peace among men who are not trained in the laws, and so far as they can be controlled by man. But these faults have other fitting sanctions, from which it seems to me that Wisdom alone can exempt.

A. This, your distinction, though it be initial only and imperfect, yet searching things high, I approve and praise. This law indeed, which is made to govern citizens is seen by you as yielding many points and leaving them unpunished, which points yet are taken care of by divine

Providence, and rightly so. And the things which it does are not therefore to be covered with reproach, because it has left some things undone.

CHAPTER 5

But let us examine, if you will, how far evil-doing is to be punished by the law which governs people in this life. Then (we shall find) what remains to be punished by divine Providence, by order inevitable and not known by man.

E. I am willing if only we can reach the limits of a problem so hard, for I think that this is unlimited.

A. [Aye—attend, then, with all your mind and trusting in piety enter upon the way of reasoning. For nothing is so hard and difficult as not to be made, by God's assistance, very plain and clear. Depending upon Him, therefore and praying for help from Him, let us study what we have begun.] First, then, tell me whether this law promulgated in written form is helpful to men living this life?

E. It is evident that it is helpful, for of men peoples and city-states are built up.

A. What, then, are men and peoples of the same kind as things, that cannot pass away or be changed, but remain everlasting altogether; or are they subject to change and to time?

E. Who can doubt that this kind is changeable and subject to time?

A. Therefore if the people are well ordered and thoughtful, and if they are very watchful of the common weal, in which everyone values private interest as less worth than the common good, is not the law made rightly by which it is permitted to the people to establish civil officials by whom their own welfare, that is, the public welfare is carried on?

E. Yes, surely.

A. If, furthermore, this same people, gradually spoiled, prefers private wealth to the public welfare, and holds voting for sale; and, bought over by those who love honors, were to hand over their own government into the hands of dishonored and shameless men: would it not be right again if some man of honor, who had the power were to take

away from this people the power of conferring honors in order to bring them back to the right judgment of a few men of honor or even of one?

E. That too would be right.

A. Since therefore these two laws appear so to be opposed to each other that one gives the power of granting honors to the people, the other takes away that power; and since this second is so constituted that both can by no means be in force simultaneously in the same state, shall we say that one of them is iniquitous and should never have been made?

E. By no means.

A. Shall we therefore call that law temporary, which, though it is just, may yet be changed justly in the course of time?

E. So we may call it.

A. How then—that law which is named supreme reason, which must always be obeyed, by which bad men merit an unhappy, good men merit a happy life, by which, moreover, that law which we have called temporary is rightly made and is rightly changed—can that law be seen to anyone understanding it, not to be changeless and eternal? Or can it be wrong at any time that the bad be unhappy, the good be happy; or that a well ordered and decent people organize a government for itself (fitting its own character), that a dissolute and wicked people should not have that power (to turn license into statute law)?

E. I see that that law is eternal and changeless.

A. I judge that you see also by consequence that there is nothing in this temporary law just and lawful that men have not derived from this eternal law. For if this people at one time granted honors in accord with justice, at another time also in accord with justice granted them not, this change is derived from that everlasting law, by which it is right for a well ordered people to grant honors; for a fickle populace not to grant them, or do you see it otherwise?

E. I am agreed.

A. In order, therefore, that I may explain briefly, so far as I can by means of words, a notion of the eternal law

which is impressed upon us—it is that law by which it is just that all things be most perfectly in order. If you think otherwise, speak out.

E. I have nothing to say against you speaking things true.

A. Since therefore this law is one, from which all temporary laws to rule men are made various, can it (the eternal law) be in any way made to vary?

E. I understand that it can not at all be changed. Indeed not any force nor any chance nor fault of things could ever be the cause so that it would not be just in the highest degree that all things be in order most perfect.

CHAPTER 6

A. Let us see then how man himself, in himself, is in order most perfect—for a people is made up of men united under one law: which law, as has been said, is temporary. Tell me now whether you are very sure that you are living.

E. What more certain?—I would answer.

A. How, then—can you know this, that to live is one thing, to know that one lives is another thing?

E. I know indeed that no one but one living knows that he lives. But whether every one living knows that he lives I do not know.

A. How I would wish that, as you believe, so also you could know that brute animals are without reason; quickly then could our conversation pass on from this question. But, because you say that you do not know, you enter upon a long explanation. And of such a quality is this point, so close the connection of reason, as I perceive the need of it to be, that we are not permitted, passing over this point, to go on to reach the things which we want to prove.

Tell me then, since we have often seen animals tamed by men, that is, not the body of the beast only, but the soul too so subject to man that it serves his will by a certain sense and habit; whether it seems to you possible at all that any beast, great in its beastliness or in body, or even in a sense very shrewd, could try in turn to make a

man subordinate to itself, since many beasts have the power by strength or by stealthy attack to destroy the body of the man.

E. By no means do I perceive how that can be done.

A. Well, truly. But tell me also, since it is evident that man is easily outdone by many of the brute animals in point of strength and other energies of the body, what thing is it in which man excels, so that no one of the beasts has command over him, while he has command over many of them? Is it perhaps that which we are wont to call reason or intelligence?

E. I find not other. For that by reason of which we are ranked ahead of brute animals is in the soul. If the animals were soulless then I might say that we are more excellent because we have a soul. But now, since they are animated, what better than reason can I name, that is not inherent in them, by reason of which they are subordinate to us; and which in us is inherent, so that we rank above them . . . what other more rightly can I name than reason?

A. See how easily, God helping, that is done which men think to be very difficult. For I confess to you this question is solved as I understand it, which I had thought would hold us as long perhaps as all the points discussed from the beginning of our disputation. Wherefore take now (this point) so that reasons following may be connected—for I believe that you are not ignorant of the fact that that which we say we know is not other than what we have perceived by reason.

E. So it is.

A. He, therefore, who knows that he lives, is not without reason.

E. That is logical.

A. But the brute animals live: and as has been seen, they have no reason.

E. That is evident.

A. See that you know, therefore, what you had answered that you do not know—whether everything that lives knows that it lives; though everything that knows itself to be living must by consequence live.

E. There is no doubt to me now (on this point). Go on

now to the point that you are proving: For I have learned well enough that it is one thing to live, quite another to know that one is living.

A. Which, then, of these two appears to you to be the more excellent?

E. Which think you, but the knowing of life?

A. Is the knowing of life seen to you as being better than life itself? Or do you understand perhaps that a certain higher and a more true life is knowing, which no one can know but he who understands? What then is understanding, but to live in a manner more enlightened and more perfect by the light of the mind itself? Wherefore, if I am not wrong, you have set forth, not something other than life, but a nobler life (that is proper to) a certain kind of life.

E. Very well indeed have you understood and explained my judgment: if that is knowledge, then (knowing) can never be evil.

A. By no means, I judge (can knowing be evil), unless in a figurative use, we speak of knowing as experience. For to experience is not always good, as to experience punishment: But how can that which is properly and distinctly named knowing be bad because it is acquired by reason and by intelligence?

E. I hold that difference too. Proceed to the other points.

CHAPTER 7

A. This is what I wish to say: Whatever that is by which man ranks before the brute animals, whether it is called mind or spirit, or more rightly both (for we find both in the Sacred Scriptures), if by reason of that man is lord and ruler over other things, then is it established (by that same reason) that he is in the most fittingly man. For we see that we have many points in common, not only with brute animals but with trees and growing plants. Indeed we see that it is given to the trees also to assimilate nourishments of the body, to grow, to generate, to be strong—trees which are counted on the lowest plane of life. But the brute animals, we perceive and know, can see and hear; and in smell and taste and touch they have organic

faculties generally more keen than we have. Add strength and the force and firmness of limbs, swiftness and great ease in the movement of the body, in all which things we are superior to some of them, to some we are equal, by some others we are outdone.

This kind of qualities yet surely is common to us with the beasts. Indeed to seek the delights of the body, to avoid what is hurtful is the whole action of brute animal life. Other certain things there are which seem not to belong to brute animals, and even in man they are not the highest points, as to joke and to laugh. Which point (of jesting and laughing) whosoever judges rightly of human nature, judges indeed that it is properly human, but on a very low plane. Then again the love of praise and display and the show of mastery, which things though not proper to brute animals, are yet not things by the desire of which we are to be judged superior to the brutes. For this desire, when it is not subordinate to reason, makes men unhappy. But no one has thought that he is to be ranked ahead of any one by reason of unhappiness. When reason is master in these movements of the soul therefore a man is to be said to be well ordered. For, where things higher are subordinate to things lower, there right order is not to be named, or even there is no order at all: or is that not clear to you?

E. It is clear.

A. When this reason, therefore, or this mind, or spirit, rules the unreasonable motions of the soul, then is that master in man, to which mastery is due by that law which we found to be eternal.

E. I understand and I follow.

CHAPTER 8

A. When therefore a man is so constituted and so ordered, does he not appear to you to be wise?

E. I know not what other man can be seen to me to be wise, if this one is not so seen.

A. I believe that you know this too, that men generally are unwise.

E. That too is established well enough.

A. But if the unwise man is the opposite to wise, since

we have found the wise man, you understand now logically also who is unwise.

E. To whom is it not evident that it is that one in whom mind does not have (exercise) power in the highest degree?

A. What, therefore, are we to say when a man is so qualified, that mind is wanting to him, or, though the mind be there, that it wants mastery?

E. That rather which you said last.

A. I would like very much to hear from you by what evidences you hold it proved that mind inherent in man does not exercise its dominion.

E. I would that you had the will to do those parts. For it is not easy for me to bear up what you are bringing out.

A. This at least is easy for you, to remember what you said a little time ago: how animals are tamed by men and serve them: which, in turn, men might suffer from the animals, as reason showed, if, in something, men were not of a higher order. But this something we found not in the body: since it appeared, then, to be in the soul we found not anything that it could be called other than reason, which we found later to be called also mind and spirit. But, if reason is one thing, mind another, it is evident surely that only mind can use reason; from which this is proved—that he who has reason can not be without a mind.

E. These things I remember well and hold them.

A. How, then. Do you believe this—that the masters of brute animals can be other than wise? For I call them wise whom truth orders so to be called, that is, those who have laid the risings of lust by the reign of the mind.

E. It is amusing to think those men such, whom commonly men call caretakers of animals, or even shepherds or herdsmen or horsemen, to whom all we see the animal subject, and by whose industry, untamed, it is made subject.

A. You, have, therefore, a very strong proof by which it is made clear that mind is inherent to man without (Complete) control. It is inherent in men because they do things such as cannot be done without mind. Yet mind reigns not (absolutely), for they are unwise; and it has

been acknowledged before that the reign of the mind can belong only to the wise.

E. It is puzzling how this was established by us in earlier arguments, and yet it did not come to mind to me how to answer.

CHAPTER 9

But let us now connect other points. It is proved indeed that the reign of the human mind is human wisdom; and also that it does not always reign.

A. Do you think that there is a desire stronger than that mind, to which, we acknowledge it, it was given by the eternal law to rule over desires? I indeed think not so at all. And it would not be in perfect order that powers less strong have command over the stronger. Wherefore, I think it must follow that mind is more powerful than desire from the very fact that it rules over desire rightly and justly.

E. I think so too.

A. Why, then, do we hesitate to prefer every virtue to every vice, so that virtue, as it is more noble and higher, may be also more firm and unconquered?

E. Who would hesitate?

A. Therefore no vicious soul overcomes a soul armed by virtue.

E. Very true.

A. I think, now, that you will not deny that any soul whatsoever is more noble and more powerful than every body.

E. No one denies that, who sees (which is easy) that a substance living is to be preferred to the non-living; or that what gives life (is preferred) to that which receives it.

A. Much less, therefore, does a body, of what quality soever it is, overcome a soul endowed by virtue.

E. That is very evident.

A. How this, now: Can a soul that is just and a mind that keeps its own empire, ever force from its citadel and subordinate to its own desire another mind, ruled by reason of equal equity and equal virtue?

E. Not at all: and that, not only because the excellence in each is the same, but also because the former (aggres-

sor) will fall from justice, and will become a vicious mind from the very fact that it endeavors to make the other fall, and it (the aggressor) will be, by consequence, less strong.

A. You understand well. Wherefore this remains for you to answer, if you can, whether it appears to you that there is anything more noble than a rational and wise mind.

E. Nothing, I think, but God.

A. That too is my judgment. But, because the problem is hard and it is not now asked pointedly so that it may come to understanding, though it is held by firmest faith, let us make a careful and accurate study of the whole question.

CHAPTER 10

For the present, then, we can be certain that whatever that nature is, which by right excels superior to the mind that is strong in virtue, it can in no way be unjust. Wherefore, even though it have the power, it will not force the mind to be subservient to desire.

E. There is no one surely that will not acknowledge that without hesitancy.

A. It follows, then, that it is on account of justice, that that thing, which is either equal to, or superior to a mind, whatever it is, does not make the mind subservient to desire: but what is inferior can not do so on account of weakness. Now, from the points which we agreed upon before, it follows that no other thing can make the mind to be a companion of desire but its own will and free choice.

E. I see that nothing follows more logically.

A. It remains to be made clear to you that it is in accordance with justice that it (the will) pays penalties for a sin so great.

E. I cannot oppose.

A. How then—is that penalty to be considered light where cupidity is made dominant, where it drags down the mind spoiled of its wealth of virtue, poor and needy, drawn in different ways, now approving as true things unreal, now even defending them; again rejecting what it had approved, and let rushing in upon other things not less untrue; now refusing assent and fearful generally of the

clearest reasonings, again despairing of a complete finding of the truth and clinging closely to the obscurities of (some) folly: now struggling for the light of understanding and again falling back in defeat—while in the meantime that tyrannic reign of cupidity holds sway, and, by fear on the one hand, desire on the other, keeps the soul of man and his whole life tossed restless in varying and contradictory moods, here by anxiety, there by empty and unreal delights: here by the dread of losing something that is loved, there by eagerness of acquiring what is not possessed, here by the pain of some injury done, there by the urge of a wrong to be avenged: on every side the greed to gather in, extravagance to waste, ambition to promise, pride to puff up, envy to annoy, sloth to cover over, wilfulness to wrangle, submissiveness to wrong, and what things else soever that are (the subject) of common experience in this reign of cupidity—can I believe then that this is not a penalty, which, as you see, all who cling not to wisdom, must endure?

E. A great penalty indeed do I judge this to be and very just, if one established on the high plane of wisdom should choose to descend from it to serve a (lower) desire. But whether anyone can be found who would so will (to descend), or does so will is not proved. For, though I believe that man was constituted by God so perfect, and placed in a state of happy life, that he fell by his own will to the hardships of (this) mortal life; yet while I hold this in firmest faith, I am not yet established in the understanding of it. On which point, if you think that a diligent study is for the present to be put off, you do so against my will.

CHAPTER 11

But what puzzles me most of all is why we suffer these very severe penalties, we, who surely are unwise, who never have been wise, so that we may not be said to have surrendered the stronghold of virtue to choose the servitude of desires, and therefore suffer these things—this I am not willing to have put off for another time, if you have the ability by reasoning to clear the obscurity.

A. You say this as though you had it clearly proved

that we never were wise. You mark the time indeed since we were born into this life. But because wisdom belongs to the soul there is a question of importance whether the soul, before its union with the body, may have lived another kind of life, or whether at any time it lived wisely. That is an unsolved problem, and must be studied in its own proper place. Yet that which we have in hand is not out of the way therefore, so that it may be cleared up so far as is possible.

I ask you then: Have we any will?

E. I do not know.

A. Do you want to know?

E. That too I know not.

A. Then ask me nothing more.

E. Why?

A. Because I ought not to give an answer, unless you have the will to know what you ask. Then again, unless you have a will to arrive at knowing, speaking to you about such things is out of order. Finally, unless you have a will that it be well with me, you cannot be my friend. Again surely, in reference to yourself, you must have seen that there is a will to be happy.

E. I confess: It can not be denied that we have a will. Go ahead now, let us see what you can make of it.

A. I will: but, again, tell me whether you think that you have a good will.

E. What is a good will?

A. A will by which we aim to live rightly and honestly, and thus come to supreme wisdom. See now whether you aim not to have a right and honest life. Either will strongly not to know, or dare to deny (therefore) that, when we will these things, we have not a good will.

E. I deny nothing of these, and therefore I confess not only that I have a will, but that I have a good will.

A. At what worth, I ask, do you prize this will? Do you judge, from any side, that wealth or honors or the delights of the body, or these all together are to be compared to it?

E. God forbid such wrong-minded madness.

A. Ought it not therefore to be a subject of joy not a little that we have in the soul something, that very good

will, I say, in comparison with which the things we have named are worthless—things for the acquiring of which we see many men refusing no labors, no perils (of life)?

E. It is a subject of joy, and very great joy.

A. How: They who experience not this joy, think you that they suffer a small loss of so great a good?

E. Aye—they suffer a very great loss.

A. You see therefore, as I think, that it is fixed in our will that we may either enjoy or we may want this one good so great and so real. For what is so fixed in the will as the will itself so ordered? Which, he who has (his will) so rightly ordered, has that surely which is to be ranked before all earthly rule and all the delights of the body. But who has not this right ordered will has not, by consequence, that one thing, which, higher than all others within our power, the will alone by itself can give. While therefore one may think himself to be very unhappy if he lose a fair name, great wealth and goods of the body; will you not hold him to be most unhappy, who, even though he abound in such things; which, while he clings to them, he may yet easily lose, and which he has not at the command of his will, yet wants a good will—the will which can not be acquired by these (material) means, the will which is a great good, which needs only to be willed in order to possess it?

E. Very true.

A. Rightly, therefore, and justly are men unwise, even though they never were wise (for that point is still uncertain and unproved), affected by this unhappiness.

E. I am agreed.

CHAPTER 12

A. Consider now whether Prudence appears to you to be a knowledge of things to be sought and things to be avoided.

E. It appears so.

A. How—is fortitude not that quality of soul by reason of which we bear hardships and all the losses of things not subject to our control?

E. So I think.

A. Moreover temperance is the (efficient) quality that

checks and controls the impulse for those things that are wrongly sought—or think you otherwise?

E. Indeed, you speak just so as I think.

A. Now, what shall we say that Justice is, but a virtue by which all things are returned to their own?

E. To me there is no other notion of Justice.

A. Whoever, therefore, having a good will, about the excellence of which we are talking now a long time, must in affection embrace this sole (Justice), than which he holds nothing more excellent, in this he must find pleasure, in this, finally, must be his delight and joy—considering this (Justice) and discerning its grandeur, and how it can not, against his own will, be forced or stolen from him, can we doubt that such a man is opposed to all things that are inimical to this one good (justice)?

E. It must follow logically that he is so opposed.

A. Shall we not hold him to be guided by prudence who sees that this good is to be sought and that things not consonant with it are to be shunned?

E. No one, it appears to me, can do this without prudence.

A. Right—but why not attribute to him fortitude also? For he may not love and esteem of very high worth all those things which are not within range of our power. (Such things) indeed are held dear by a wrong will, which wrong will he must resist as being hostile to his highest good. But because he loves not these things the loss of them grieves him not, and very truly he spurns them; for which, it has been said and granted, fortitude is necessary.

E. Let us grant (fortitude) then surely: for I see not how I can more truly call one strong than that one who bears in tranquil and self-controlled spirit the lack of those things, to acquire which or to hold which there is not in us the power fixed (by nature), which it is found that he must have.

A. See now whether we can take away from him temperance, since that is the virtue which controls desires. What indeed is so inconsistent with a good will as (uncontrolled) desire? From which you understand that logically this lover of his own good will, by all means, resists

and controls desires, and therefore that he is rightly called temperate.

E. Go ahead—I am agreed.

A. There remains justice, which, as I see, can not be wanting to this man (of good will). For he who has a good will and loves it, and, as has been seen, stands against those things which are harmful to a good will, can have ill will to no one. It follows therefore that he does injury to no one; which he only can do who gives to each one his, her, or its own. But that, I would say, belongs to Justice, as I think you recall, you have proved.

E. I recall truly—and I confess that in that man who values his own good will of great worth and loves it, all these four virtues described by you just now (I agreeing with you), are found.

A. What, then, prevents our granting that the life of this one is praiseworthy?

E. Nothing whatever. Even more—all (reasonings) approve, or, still more, compel us to grant this.

A. How now—Can you think in any way that an unhappy life is not to be avoided?

E. So indeed do I judge consistently, and I think nothing is more to be done.

A. But you think then that a fitting happiness is not to be shunned.

E. Even more, I hold that it is to be sought perseveringly.

A. The life, therefore, that is praiseworthy is not unhappy.

E. That follows, yes.

A. It is not difficult for you now, as I think, therefore, to be agreed to what follows—that that life, namely, is happy, which is not unhappy.

E. That is evident.

A. It is agreed then that that man is happy who is a lover of his own good will; and who spurns, as compared to it (the will) whatever else is said to be good, the loss of which can happen, even while the will to hold it remains.

E. Why not be agreed there where the points we granted above necessarily converge?

A. You understand well, but tell me now, is not the fact of loving one's own good will, and of esteeming it of high worth, as has been stated, itself too a good will?

E. You speak true.

A. But, if we judge that man (described) above to be happy, do we not judge him rightly to be unhappy who is of an opposite will?

E. Most justly so.

A. What is the cause therefore for thinking (even though we never before were wise) that there should be any doubt that it is by will that we live and merit a worthy and happy life, by will we live and deserve a life that is disgraceful and unhappy?

E. I confess that we have reached this point by way of realities (principles) which are certain and not at all to be denied.

A. See again another point: For I believe you hold in memory what we declared to be a good will—that, I think, was said to be a good will, by which we endeavor to live justly and honestly.

E. So I remember.

A. If then we love that good will we embrace it also by a good will, and we rank its worth before all things that we can not retain just because we have the will to retain. By consequence, those virtues, as reason taught, dwell in our soul, to have which (virtues) is itself right and honest living. From which it is established that whosoever has the will to live rightly and honestly, if he has the will to will this rather than the will for fleeting goods, he attains a reality so great, with such ease, that having what he has willed is nothing other for him than the fact itself to will.

E. Truly, I declare to you, I hardly restrain myself from shouting in delight by reason of (this) good so great raised up for me suddenly and founded on a fact so easy—(to will).

A. But this joy itself, which springs from the attaining of this good, when it lifts up the soul peacefully, quietly

and consistently, is itself said to be happy life; unless you think that living happily is other than rejoicing in goods true and certain.

E. I think so.

CHAPTER 13

A. Rightly—but think you not that every man by all means wills and desires a happy life?

E. Who doubts that every man (so) wills?

A. Why then do not all men attain it? For we had stated and it was agreed between us that by the will men merit a happy life, by the will also (they deserve) an unhappy life; and what they so merit that they get (the object willed). But now a conflict (I know not what) has risen, and, unless we watch carefully, it proceeds to unsettle our reasoning above so cautious and so solid. For how does any one suffer an unhappy life by reason of his will, since no one at all wills to live unhappily? Or how does man acquire a happy life by means of will, since so many are unhappy, and all have the will to be happy? Does it perhaps come from this that it is one thing to will rightly, or to will wrongly; quite another thing to merit something by a good will, or a bad will? For they who are happy (who, it follows, must be good) are not therefore happy because they willed to live happily, for that the wicked also willed; but they are happy because they willed to live rightly, which the wicked did not will. Wherefore it is not a wonder that unhappy men obtain not what they will, that is, a happy life. For they will not that which is concomitant with a happy life, without which no one is worthy of a happy life, without which no one attains it, that is, right living. For this that eternal law, to the study of which it is now time to return, has made firm by changeless stability, so that there is merit in the will, but in happiness and in unhappiness are reward and punishment. Therefore when we say that men are unhappy by reason of will, we say not that they will to be unhappy, but that they are in that will where unhappiness must follow, even though they be unwilling. Wherefore it is not inconsistent with the reasoning above: that all men will to be happy, and yet (some) cannot (be happy): because they will not live rightly, to

which fact alone a happy life is due: unless you have something to say against these points.

E. I indeed have nothing to oppose. CHAPTER 14

E. But let us see how these points are related to the question above about two laws.

A. Very well—but tell me first whether he who loves to live rightly, and who is so delighted by right living that it is not only right for him, but sweet and delightful—tell me whether that man loves this law and holds it very dear—the law, that is, by which a happy life is given to a good will, unhappiness to a bad will?

E. He loves it surely and strongly; for it is following that law that he so lives.

A. Now, when he loves that law does he love something changeable and temporal, or something constant and everlasting?

E. Something everlasting surely and changeless.

A. How this—can they, who persevering in a wrong will, are yet eager to be happy, love that law by which unhappiness is deservedly the return of merit?

E. They do not love it, I think.

A. Do they then love nothing else?

E. Assuredly, they love many things—those things, namely, in the acquiring and the retaining of which that wrong will perseveres.

A. I judge that you say that material wealth, honors, passing pleasures and the beauty of the body and all such things are what they who desire can fail to attain, or what they can lose, notwithstanding their will to retain.

E. They are the very things.

A. Since you see these things subject to the turnings of time, do you think that they are (also) eternal?

E. Who, even completely void of mind, could think that?

A. Since therefore it is evident that some men are lovers of things temporal; and it is agreed that there are two laws, one eternal, the other temporal, which of these (classes of men) think you are subordinate to the eternal, which to the temporal law?

E. I think what you ask is clear on the surface: I think

indeed that those blessed ones, on account of the love of things eternal, act under the eternal law; but on the unhappy I think the temporal law is imposed.

A. You judge rightly, so long as you hold securely proved that which reason has now clearly shown—that they who serve the temporal can not be free from the eternal, from which (the eternal) we say that things that are just and that are justly varied are derived—but they who adhere to the eternal law by a good will (as it is apparent you understand well enough) do not need the temporal.

E. I hold what you say.

A. The eternal law therefore orders our love to be turned away from things temporal, and commands it, purified, to turn to things eternal.

E. It does so order truly.

A. What then think you that the temporal law orders but that men may by right possess those things which can be said to belong to us for time, when men by cupidity cling to them—but that right (that is) by which peace and human fellowship are maintained, so far as can be in such things? But the things (so ordered) are, first, this body and what are called its goods, as unimpaired health, the keenness of the organic senses, strength, beauty, and possibly other things, some necessary for the fine arts, and therefore valued of more worth, some of less value. Then there is liberty, which (when it is) true, indeed, belongs only to the blessed and to those who cling to the eternal law: But I mention here that liberty by reason of which men think themselves free who have no human masters, and which they desire who wish to be freed from human masters. Next then parents, brethren, wife (husband) children, kindred, relatives, friends and whoever are united to us by some link of necessity. After them the city-state which is wont to be held in the place of a parent, honors too and praise, and what is called popular esteem. Finally money, under which one term are comprised all things of which we are the owners, and over which we are seen to have the power of selling and dominion.

Of all these things it is difficult to say and long to explain

how that law distributes (giving) to each one his own, and for our purpose it is not at all necessary. For it is enough to see that the power of this law in its exercise does not extend beyond this—that it removes and takes away those things, or any one of those things (temporal goods) from him whom it punishes. By fear therefore it compels, and it bends and forces to the end which is its aim, the spirit of the unhappy men for the government of whom it is adapted.

Indeed while they fear to lose these (temporal goods) they keep a certain measure in using them, a measure fitted to the bond of the State—such a State (the civil order) as can be constituted by men of this quality. But when these things (temporal) are loved the sin is not punished (by civil law). It is punished only when wrongly they are taken away from others (by outward act).

Wherefore see whether we have reached now that point where you thought the argument was incomplete. For we had planned to study how far that law, by which people on earth and States are governed, has the right to be enforced.

E. I see we have reached that point.

A. You see this therefore also—that if those things which can be taken away from one against his will were not loved, there would be no penalty, whether by reason of the injury done, or by the sanction of the law imposed by men.

E. That I see too.

A. Since therefore one uses badly, another rightly, those same things; and he who makes the bad use clings to them by love and is involved, that is, is subject to things which ought to be subordinate to him; thus making for himself goods, for which same goods, by a right ordering and use, he ought to be the good. And he who uses these things rightly can show that they are goods indeed, but, not for him, because they do not make him good, or make him better, but they are by him made (good and of higher worth). And therefore he is not attached to them by love, and he may not make them as members of (informed by)

his spirit, which is done by loving them; lest, when they shall begin to be cut off, they may hurt by reason of pain and of weakening. But let him carry himself completely above them, prepared both to have them and to be ruler over them; and yet still more, prepared to love them and not to have them.

Since therefore these things are so, do you think that silver and gold are to be blamed on account of avaricious men, or that food is to be blamed on account of gluttons, or wine on account of drunkards, or the womanly form on account of those who are guilty of fornication and adultery, and, in this way, the other points, particularly when you see that a physician uses fire well (to cauterize), and a poisoner employs bread for the purpose of crime?

E. It is most true that things themselves are not to be blamed, but men who make bad use of them. CHAPTER 15

A. Rightly—but as we have begun to see now what is the force of the eternal law and how far the temporal law may go in enforcing itself; it is found also that there are two classes of things, eternal and temporal, and two classes of men, those who follow and love things eternal, and those who follow and love things temporal clearly distinct; and that the mind is deposed from the stronghold of mastery and of right order by no other thing but the will: and it is clear that not anything (external) is to be blamed when someone uses it wrongly, but that one himself, who so makes a wrong use.

Since these points are proved—let us get back, if you will, to the question proposed at the beginning of this study, and let us see whether that question is answered. For we had begun to ask what is wrongdoing, and for the answer to that question we have said all that has been said. Wherefore it is in order now to note and to consider whether wrongdoing is aught else than to pursue things temporal and things which are sense-perceived, through the body, the least excellent part of man—to pursue these things as great and marvelous, neglecting things eternal which the mind enjoys by itself, which the mind perceives

by itself; and, loving which, it cannot lose. For in this one class all wrongdoing, that is, all sins seem to me to be included. But I wait to know how this appears to you.

E. It is so as you say, and I am agreed that all sins are contained in this one kind: when one is turned away from things divine and truly everlasting, and is turned to things changeful and uncertain. Which things though they are arranged rightly in their own order, and though they complete a certain beauty their own; yet to be made subordinate in pursuing them is the mark of a wrong and disordered mind—that mind, which by divine order and law is superior to them, placed over them to draw them to its own purpose.

And that problem—whence do we wrong? It seems to me is now made clear—the problem which we had begun to study after the question—whence is wrongdoing? For, if I mistake not, reason has shown that we do wrong from a free choice of will. But I ask whether a free choice itself, by which we are proved to have a power to sin, should have been given to us by Him who made us. For it is clear that if we were without free will we would not sin, and in this way it is to be feared that God may be adjudged the author of our evil-doing.

A. Fear that not at all. But that we may study this more carefully another time is to be taken. For this exposition wants measure and a limit, where I would have you believe that the door is to be opened for the study of things great and (as yet) not clear. When we shall have begun to come into the depths of these things, God directing us, you shall judge what difference there is between this disputation and the things which follow, how they are more excellent, not only in the keenness of the study of them, but in the majesty of realities and clearness of light. Let only piety be with us, so that, divine providence permitting, we may hold and complete the course which we have begun.

E. I yield to your will, and to your will I join my own in judgment and in desire.

III
THE
TRINITY

1. *On the Trinity*

All those Catholic expounders of the divine Scriptures, both Old and New, whom I have been able to read, who have written before me concerning the Trinity, Who is God, have purposed to teach according to the Scriptures this doctrine, that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit intimate a divine unity of one and the same substance in an indivisible equality; and therefore that they are not three Gods, but one God: although the Father hath begotten the Son, and so He who is the Father is not the Son; and the Son is begotten by the Father, and so He who is the Son is not the Father; and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but only the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, Himself also co-equal with the Father and the Son, and pertaining to the unity of the Trinity. Yet not that this Trinity was born of the Virgin Mary, and crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven, but only the Son. Nor, again, that this Trinity descended in the form of a dove upon Jesus when He was baptized;¹ nor that, on the day of Pentecost, after the ascension of the Lord, when "there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind,"² the same Trinity "sat upon each

¹ Matt. 3:16.

² Acts 2:2, 4.

of them with cloven tongues like as of fire," but only the Holy Spirit. Nor yet that this Trinity said from heaven, "Thou art my Son,"³ whether when He was baptized by John, or when the three disciples were with Him in the mount,⁴ or when the voice sounded, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again";⁵ but that it was a word of the Father only, spoken to the Son; although the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as they are indivisible, so work indivisibly. This is also my faith since it is the Catholic faith.

BOOK I, CHAPTER 4 (7)

Since, then, we were not fit to take hold of things eternal, and since the foulness of sins weighed us down, which we had contracted by the love of temporal things, and which were implanted in us as it were naturally from the root of mortality, it was needful that we should be cleansed. But cleansed we could not be, so as to be tempered together with things eternal, except it were through things temporal, wherewith we were already tempered together and held fast. For health is at the opposite extreme from disease; but the intermediate process of healing does not lead us to perfect health, unless it has some congruity with the disease. Things temporal that are useless merely deceive the sick; things temporal that are useful take up those that need healing, and pass them on healed, to things eternal. And the rational mind, as when cleansed it owes contemplation to things eternal; so, when needing cleansing, owes faith to things temporal. One even of those who were formerly esteemed wise men among the Greeks has said, The truth stands to faith in the same relation in which eternity stands to that which has a beginning. And he is no doubt right in saying so. For what we call temporal, he describes as having had a beginning. And we also ourselves come under this kind, not only in respect to the body, but also in respect to the changeableness of the soul. For that is not properly called eternal which undergoes any degree of change. Therefore in so far as

³ Mark 1:11.

⁴ Matt. 17:5.

⁵ John 12:28.

we are changeable, in so far we stand apart from eternity. But life eternal is promised to us through the truth, from the clear knowledge of which, again, our faith stands as far apart as mortality does from eternity. We then now put faith in things done in time on our account, and by that faith itself we are cleansed; in order that when we have come to sight, as truth follows faith, so eternity may follow upon mortality. And therefore, since our faith will become truth, when we have attained to that which is promised to us who believe: and that which is promised us is eternal life; and the Truth (not that which shall come to be according as our faith shall be, but that truth which is always, because in it is eternity—the Truth then) has said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent”:⁶ when our faith by seeing shall come to be truth, then eternity shall possess our now changed mortality. And until this shall take place, and in order that it may take place—because we adapt the faith of belief to things which have a beginning, as in things eternal we hope for the truth of contemplation, lest the faith of mortal life should be at discord with the truth of eternal life—the Truth itself, co-eternal with the Father, took a beginning from earth,⁷ when the Son of God so came as to become the Son of man, and to take to Himself our faith, that He might thereby lead us on to His own truth, who so undertook our mortality as not to lose His own eternity. For truth stands to faith in the relation in which eternity stands to that which has a beginning. Therefore, we must needs so be cleansed, that we may come to have such a beginning as remains eternal, that we may not have one beginning in faith, and another in truth. Neither could we pass to things eternal from the condition of having a beginning unless we were transferred, by union of the eternal to ourselves through our own beginning, to His own eternity. Therefore our faith has in some measure now followed thither, whither He in whom we have believed has ascended; born, dead, risen again, taken up. Of these

⁶ John 17:3.

⁷ Psalm 85:11.

four things, we knew the first two in ourselves. For we know that men both have a beginning and die. But the remaining two, that is, to be raised, and to be taken up, we rightly hope will be in us, because we have believed them done in Him. Since, therefore, in Him that, too, which had a beginning has passed over to eternity, in ourselves also it will so pass over, when faith shall have arrived at truth. For to those who thus believe, in order that they might remain in the word of faith, and being thence led on to the truth, and through that to eternity, might be freed from death, He speaks thus: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." And as though they would ask, With what fruit? He proceeds to say, "And ye shall know the truth." And again, as though they would say, Of what good is truth to mortal men? "And the truth," He says, "shall make you free."⁸ From what, except from death, from corruption, from changeableness? Since truth remains immortal, incorrupt, unchangeable. But true immortality, true incorruptibility, true unchangeableness, is eternity itself.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 18

Behold, then, why the Son of God was sent; nay, rather behold what it is for the Son of God to be sent. Whatever things they were which were wrought in time, with a view to produce faith, whereby we might be cleansed so as to contemplate truth, in things that have a beginning, which have been put forth from eternity, and are referred back to eternity: these were either testimonies of this mission, or they were the mission itself of the Son of God. But some of these testimonies announced Him beforehand as to come, some testified that He had come already. For that He was made a creature by whom the whole creation was made, must needs find a witness in the whole creation. . . . And unless there were such testimonies as should seem to be great to those who are lowly, it would not be believed that He being great should make men great, who as lowly was sent to the lowly. For the heaven and the earth and all

⁸ John 8:31, 32.

things in them are incomparably greater works of the Son of God, since all things were made by Him, then the signs and the portents which broke forth in testimony of Him. But yet men, in order that, being lowly, they might believe these great things to have been wrought by Him, trembled at those lowly things, as if they had been great.

“When, therefore, the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law”;⁹ to such a degree lowly, that He was “made”; in this way therefore sent, in that He was made. If, therefore, the greater sends the less, we, too, acknowledge Him to have been made less; and in so far less, in so far as made; and in so far made, in so far as sent. For “He sent forth His Son made of a woman.” And yet, because all things were made by Him, not only before He was made and sent, but before all things were at all, we confess the same to be equal to the sender, whom we call less, as having been sent. In what way, then, could He be seen by the fathers, when certain angelical visions were shown to them, before that fullness of time at which it was fitting He should be sent, and so before He was sent, at a time when not yet sent He was seen as He is equal with the Father? For how does He say to Philip, by whom He was certainly seen as by all the rest, and even by those by whom He was crucified in the flesh, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also”; unless because He was both seen and yet not seen? He was seen, as He had been made in being seen; He was not seen, as by Him all things were made. Or how does He say this too, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him,”¹⁰ at a time when He was manifest before the eyes of men; unless because He was offering that flesh, which the Word was made in the fullness of time, to be accepted by our faith; but was keeping back the Word itself, by whom all things were made, to

⁹ Gal. 4:4.

¹⁰ John 14:9, 21.

be contemplated in eternity by the mind when cleansed by faith?

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 19

But if the Son is said to be sent by the Father on this account, that the one is the Father, and the other the Son, this does not in any manner hinder us from believing the Son to be equal, and consubstantial, and co-eternal with the Father, and yet to have been sent as Son by the Father. Not because the one is greater, the other less; but because the one is Father, the other Son; the one begetter, the other begotten; the one, He from whom He is who is sent; the other, He who is from Him who sends. For the Son is from the Father, not the Father from the Son. And according to this manner we can now understand that the Son is not only said to have been sent because "the Word was made flesh,"¹¹ but therefore sent that the Word might be made flesh, and that He might perform through His bodily presence those things which were written; that is, that not only is He understood to have been sent as man, which the Word was made but the Word, too, was sent that it might be made man; because He was not sent in respect to any inequality of power, or substance, or anything that in Him was not equal to the Father; but in respect to this, that the Son is from the Father; not the Father from the Son; for the Son is the Word of the Father, which is also called His wisdom. What wonder, therefore, if He is sent, not because He is unequal with the Father, but because He is "a pure emanation issuing from the glory of the Almighty God"? For there, that which issues, and that from which it issues, is of one and the same substance. For it does not issue as water issues from an aperture of earth or of stone, but as light issues from light. For the words, "For she is the brightness of the everlasting light," what else are they than, she is light of everlasting light? For what is the brightness of light, except light itself? and so co-eternal with the light, from which the light is. But it is preferable to say, "the brightness of light," rather than "the light of light"; lest that which issues should be thought to be darker than that from which it issues. For when one hears of the

¹¹ John 1:3, 18, 14.

brightness of light as being light itself, it is more easy to believe that the former shines by means of the latter, than that the latter shines less. But because there was no need of warning men not to think that light to be less which begat the other (for no heretic ever dared say this, neither is it to be believed that any one will dare to do so), Scripture meets that other thought, whereby that light which issues might seem darker than that from which it issues; and it has removed this surmise by saying, "It is the brightness of that light," namely, of eternal light, and so shows it to be equal. For if it were less, then it would be its darkness, not its brightness; but if it were greater, then it could not issue from it, for it could not surpass that from which it is educed. Therefore, because it issues from it, it is not greater than it is; and because it is not its darkness, but its brightness, it is not less than it is: therefore it is equal. Nor ought this to trouble us, that it is called a pure emanation issuing from the glory of the Almighty God, as if itself were not omnipotent, but emanation from the Omnipotent; for soon after it is said of it, "And being but one, she can do all things." But who is omnipotent, unless He who can do all things? It is sent, therefore, by Him from whom it issues; for so she is sought after by him who loved and desired her. "Send her," he says, "out of Thy holy heavens, and from the throne of Thy glory, that, being present, she may labor with me"; that is, may teach me to labor (heartily) in order that I may not labor (irksomely). For her labors are virtues. But she is sent in one way that she may be with man; she has been sent in another way that she herself may be man. For, "entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets"; so she also fills the holy angels, and works all things fitting for such ministries by them. But when the fullness of time was come, she was sent,¹² not to fill angels, nor to be an angel, except in so far as she announced the counsel of the Father, which was her own also; nor, again, to be with men or in men, for this too took place before, both in the fathers and in the prophets; but that the Word itself should be made flesh, that is, should be made man. In which future mystery,

¹² Gal. 4:4.

when revealed, was to be the salvation of those wise and holy men also, who, before He was born of the Virgin, were born of women; and in which, when done and made known, is the salvation of all who believe, and hope, and love. For this is "the great mystery of godliness, which was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angles, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."¹³

Therefore the Word of God is sent by Him, of whom He is the Word; He is sent by Him, from whom He was begotten; He sends who begot, that is sent which is begotten. And He is then sent to each one when He is apprehended and perceived by each, in so far as He can be apprehended and perceived, in proportion to the comprehension of the rational soul, either advancing towards God or already perfect in God. The Son, therefore, is not properly said to have been sent in that He is begotten of the Father; but either in that the Word made flesh appeared to the whence He says, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world";¹⁴ or in that from time to time, He is perceived by the mind of each, according to the saying, "Send her, that, being present with me, she may labor with me." What then is born from eternity is eternal, "for it is the brightness of the everlasting light"; but what is sent from time to time, is that which is apprehended by each. But when the Son of God was made manifest in the flesh, He was sent into this world in the fullness of time, made of a woman. "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God" (since "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not"), it "pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe,"¹⁵ and that the Word should be made flesh, and dwell among us.¹⁶ But when from time to time He comes forth and is perceived by the mind of each, He is said indeed to be sent, but not into this world; for He does not appear sensibly, that is, He does not present Himself

¹³ I Tim. 3:16.

¹⁴ John 16:28.

¹⁵ I Cor. 1:21.

¹⁶ John 1:5, 14.

to the corporeal senses. For we ourselves, too, are not in this world, in respect to our grasping with the mind as far as we can that which is eternal; and the spirits of all the righteous are not in this world, even of those who are still living in the flesh, in so far as they have discernment in things divine. But the Father is not said to be sent, when from time to time He is apprehended by any one, for He has no one of whom to be, or from whom to proceed; since Wisdom says, "I come out of the mouth of the Most High," and it is said of the Holy Spirit, "He proceedeth from the Father,"¹⁷ but the Father is from no one.

As, therefore, the Father begat, the Son is begotten; so the Father sent, the Son was sent. But in like manner as He who begat and He who was begotten, so both He who sent and He who was sent, are one, since the Father and the Son are one. So also the Holy Spirit is one with them, since these three are one. For as to be born, in respect to the Son, means to be from the Father; so to be sent, in respect to the Son, means to be known to be from the Father. And as to be the gift of God in respect to the Holy Spirit, means to proceed from the Father; so to be sent, is to be known to proceed from the Father. Neither can we say that the Holy Spirit does not also proceed from the Son, for the same Spirit is not without reason said to be the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. Nor do I see what else He intended to signify, when He breathed on the face of the disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."¹⁸ For that bodily breathing, proceeding from the body with the feeling of bodily touching, was not the substance of the Holy Spirit, but a declaration by a fitting sign, that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son. For the veriest of madmen would not say, that it was one Spirit which He gave when He breathed on them, and another which He sent after His ascension.¹⁹ For the Spirit of God is one, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, the Holy Spirit, who worketh all in all.²⁰ But that He was given

¹⁷ John 15:26.

¹⁸ John 20:22.

¹⁹ Acts 2:1-4.

²⁰ I Cor. 12:6.

twice was certainly a significant economy, which we will discuss in its place, as far as the Lord may grant. That then which the Lord says, "Whom I will send unto you from the Father,"²¹ shows the Spirit to be both of the Father and of the Son; because, also, when He had said, "Whom the Father will send," He added also, "in my name."²² Yet He did not say, Whom the Father will send from me, as He said, "Whom I will send unto you from the Father," showing, namely, that the Father is the beginning of the whole divinity, or if it is better so expressed, deity. He, therefore, who proceeds from the Father and from the Son, is referred back to Him from whom the Son was born. And that which the evangelist says, "For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified";²³ how is this to be understood, unless because the special giving or sending of the Holy Spirit after the glorification of Christ was to be such as it had never been before? For it was not previously none at all, but it had not been such as this. For if the Holy Spirit was not given before, wherewith were the prophets who spoke filled? Whereas the Scripture plainly says, and shows in many places, that they spake by the Holy Spirit. Whereas, also, it is said of John the Baptist, "And he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb."²⁴ And his father Zacharias is found to have been filled with the Holy Ghost, so as to foretell such things of the Lord, whom she bearing in her womb.²⁵ And Simeon and Anna were filled with the Holy Spirit, so as to acknowledge the greatness of the little child Christ.²⁶ How, then, was "the Spirit not yet given, since Jesus was not yet glorified," unless because that giving, or granting, or mission of the Holy Spirit was to have certain speciality of its own in its very advent, such as never was before? For we read nowhere that men spoke in tongues which they did not know, through the Holy Spirit coming upon them; as happened then, when it

²¹ John 15:26.

²² John 14:26.

²³ John 7:39.

²⁴ Luke 1:15.

²⁵ Luke 1:41-79.

²⁶ Luke 2:25-58.

was needful that His coming should be made plain by visible signs, in order to show that the whole world, and all nations constituted with different tongues, should believe in Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit, to fulfill that which is sung in the Psalm, "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard; their sound is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." ²⁷

Therefore man was united and in some sense commingled with the Word of God so as to be One Person, when the fullness of time was come, and the Son of God, made of a woman, was sent into this world, that He might be also the Son of man for the sake of the sons of men.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 20

If then I am asked, in what manner either words or sensible forms and appearances were wrought before the incarnation of the Word of God, which should prefigure it as about to come, I reply that God wrought those things by the angels; and this I have also shown sufficiently, as I think, by testimonies of the Holy Scriptures. And if I am asked how the incarnation itself was brought to pass, I reply that the Word of God itself was made flesh, that is, was made man, yet not turned and changed into that which was made; but so made, that there should be there not only the Word of God and the flesh of man, but also the rational soul of man, and that this whole should both be called God on account of God, and man on account of man. And if this is understood with difficulty, the mind must be purged by faith, by more and more abstaining from sins, and by doing good works, and by praying with the groaning of holy desires; that by profiting through the divine help, it may both understand and love.

But now, as I think, it has been sufficiently shown, that the Son is not therefore less because He is sent by the Father, nor the Holy Spirit less because both the Father sent Him and the Son. For these things are perceived to be laid down in the Scriptures, either on account of the visible

²⁷ Psalm 19:3, 4.

creature; or rather on account of commending to our thoughts the emanation (within the Godhead); but not on account of inequality, or imparity, or unlikeness of substance; since, even of God the Father had willed to appear visibly through the subject creature, yet it would be most absurd to say that He was sent either by the Son, whom He begot, or by the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from Him.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 21

Wherefore let us hold this above all, that whatsoever is said of that most eminent and divine loftiness in respect to itself, is said in respect to substance, but that which is said in relation to anything, is not said in respect to substance, but relatively; and that the effect of the same substance in Father and Son and Holy Spirit is that whatsoever is said of each in respect to themselves, is to be taken of them, not in the plural in sum, but in the singular. For as the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, which no one doubts to be said in respect to substance, yet we do not say that the very supreme Trinity itself is three Gods, but one God. So the Father is great, the Son great, and the Holy Spirit great; yet not three greats, but one great. For it is not written of the Father alone, as they perversely suppose, but of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, "Thou art great: Thou art God alone."²⁸ And the Father is good, the Son good, and the Holy Spirit good; yet not three goods, but one good, of whom it is said, "None is good, save one, that is, God." For the Lord Jesus, lest He should be understood as man only by him who said, "Good Master," as addressing a man, does not therefore say, There is none good, save the Father alone; but, "None is good, save one, that is, God"²⁹ For the Father by Himself is declared by the name of Father; but by the name of God, both Himself and the Son and the Holy Spirit, because the Trinity is one God. But position, and condition, and places, and times, are not said to be in God properly but metaphorically and through similitudes.

²⁸ Psalm 86:10.

²⁹ Luke 18:18, 19.

For He is both said to dwell between the cherubims,³⁰ which is spoken in respect to position; and to be covered with the deep as with a garment,³¹ which is said in respect to condition; and "Thy years shall have no end,"³² which is said in respect of time; and, "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there,"³³ which is said in respect to place. And as respects action (or making), perhaps it may be said most truly of God alone, for God alone makes and Himself is not made. Nor is He liable to passions as far as belongs to that substance whereby He is God. So the Father is omnipotent, the Son omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit is omnipotent; yet not three omnipotents, but one omnipotent: "For of Him are all things, and through Him are all things, and in Him are all things; to whom be glory." Whatever, therefore, is spoken of God in respect to Himself, is both spoken singly of each person, that is, of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and together of the Trinity itself, not plurally but in the singular. For inasmuch as to God it is not one thing to be, and another thing to be great, but to Him it is the same thing to be, as it is to be great; therefore, as we do not say three essences, so we do not say three greatnesses, but one essence and one greatness. I say essence, which in Greek is called *οὐσία*, and which we call more usually substance.

They indeed use also the word *hypostasis*; but they intended to put a difference, I know not what, between *οὐσία* and *hypostasis*: so that most of ourselves who treat these things in the Greek language, are accustomed to say, *μίαν οὐσίαν, τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις* or, in Latin, one essence, three substances.

BOOK V, CHAPTER 8

But because with us the usage has already obtained, that by essence we understand the same thing which is understood by substance; we do not dare to say one essence, three substances, but one essence or substance and three persons: as many writers in Latin, who treat of these things,

³⁰ Psalm 80:1.

³¹ Psalm 104:6.

³² Psalm 102:27.

³³ Psalm 139:8.

and are of authority, have said, in that they could not find any other more suitable way by which to enunciate in words that which they understood without words. For, in truth, as the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, and that Holy Spirit who is also called the gift of God is neither the Father nor the Son, certainly they are three. And so it is said plurally, "I and my Father are one." ³⁴ For He has not said, "*is one*," as the Sabellians say, but, "*are one*." Yet, when the question is asked, "What three?" human language labors altogether under great poverty of speech. The answer, however, is given, three "persons," not that it might be spoken, but that it might not be left unspoken.

BOOK V, CHAPTER 9

But what is love or charity, which divine Scripture so greatly praises and proclaims, except the love of good? But love is *of* some one that loves, and *with* love something is loved. Behold, then, there are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. What, then, is love, except a certain life which couples or seeks to couple together some two things, namely, him that loves, and that which is loved? And this is so even in outward and carnal loves. But that we may drink in something more pure and clear, let us tread down the flesh and ascend to the mind. What does the mind love in a friend except the mind? There, then, also are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. It remains to ascend also from hence and to seek those things which are above, as far as is given to man. But here for a little while let our purpose rest, not that it may think itself to have found already what it seeks; but just as usually the place has first to be found where anything is to be sought, while the thing itself is not yet found, but we have only found already where to look for it; so let it suffice to have said thus much, that we may have as it were, the hinge of some starting-point, whence to weave the rest of our discourse.

BOOK VIII, CHAPTER 10

We certainly seek a trinity—not any trinity, but that Trinity which is God, and the true and supreme and only

³⁴ John 10:30.

God. Let my hearers then wait, for we are still seeking. And no one justly finds fault with such a search, if at least he who seeks that which either to know or to utter is most difficult, is steadfast in the faith. But whosoever either sees or teaches better, finds fault quickly and justly with any one who confidently affirms concerning it. "Seek God," he says, "and your heart shall live;" ³⁵ and lest any one should rashly rejoice that he has, as it were, apprehended it, "Seek," he says, "His face evermore." ³⁶ And the apostle: "If any man," he says, "think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of Him." ³⁷ He has not said, "has known Him," which is dangerous presumption, but "is known of Him." So also in another place, when he had said, "But now after that ye have known God"; immediately correcting himself, he says, "or rather are known of God." ³⁸ And above all in that other place, "Brethren," he says, "I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press in purpose toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." ³⁹ Perfection in this life, he tells us, is nothing else than to forget those things which are behind, and to reach forth and press in purpose toward those things which are before. For he that seeks has the safest purpose (who seeks), until that is taken hold of whither we are tending, and for which we are reaching forth. But that is the right purpose which starts from faith. For a certain faith is in some way the starting-point of knowledge; but a certain knowledge will not be made perfect, except after this life, when we shall see face to face.⁴⁰ Let us therefore be thus minded, so as to know that the disposition to seek the truth is more safe than that which presumes things unknown to be known. Let us there-

³⁵ Psalm 69:32.

³⁶ Psalm 105:4.

³⁷ I Cor. 8:2.

³⁸ Gal. 4:19.

³⁹ Phil. 3:13-15.

⁴⁰ I Cor. 13:12.

fore so seek as if we should find and so find as if we were about to seek. For "when a man hath done, then he beginneth." ⁴¹ Let us doubt without unbelief of things to be believed; let us affirm without rashness of things to be understood: authority must be held fast in the former, truth sought out in the latter. As regards this question, then, let us believe that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one God, the Creator and Ruler of the whole creature; and that the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Spirit either the Father or the Son, but a trinity of persons mutually interrelated, and a unity of an equal essence. And let us seek to understand this, praying for help from Himself, whom we wish to understand; and as much as He grants, desiring to explain what we understand with so much pious care and anxiety, that even if in any case we say one thing for another, we may at least say nothing unworthy. As, for the sake of example, if we say anything concerning the Father that does not properly belong to the Father, or does belong to the son, or to the Holy Spirit, or to the Trinity itself; and if anything of the Son which does not properly suit with the Son, or at all events which does suit with the Father, or with the Holy Spirit, or with the Trinity; or if, again, anything concerning the Holy Spirit, which is not fitly a property of the Holy Spirit, yet is not alien from the Father, or from the Son, or from the one God the Trinity itself. Even as now our wish is to see whether the Holy Spirit is properly that Love which is most excellent; which if He is not, either the Father is love, or the Son, or the Trinity itself; since we cannot withstand the most certain faith and weighty authority of Scripture, saying, "God is love." ⁴² And yet we ought not to deviate into profane error, so as to say anything of the Trinity which does not suit the Creator, but rather the creature, or which is feigned outright by mere empty thought.

BOOK IX, CHAPTER 1

And this being so, let us direct our attention to those three things which we fancy we have found. We are not

⁴¹ Eccles. 18:7.

⁴² I John 4:16.

yet speaking of heavenly things, nor yet of God the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, but of that inadequate image, which yet is an image, that is man; for our feeble mind perhaps can gaze upon this more familiarly and more easily. Well then, when I, who make this inquiry, love anything, there are three things concerned—myself, and that which I love, and love itself. For I do not love love, except I love a lover; for there is no love where nothing is loved. Therefore there are three things—he who loves, and that which is loved, and love. But what if I love none except myself? Will there not then be two things—that which I love, and love? For he who loves and that which is loved are the same when any one loves himself; just as to love and to be loved, in the same way, is the very same thing when any one loves himself. Since the same thing is said, when it is said, he loves himself, and he is loved by himself. For in that case to love and to be loved are not two different things: just as he who loves and he who is loved are not two different persons. But yet, even so, love and what is loved are still two things. For there is no love when any one loves himself, except when love itself is loved. But it is one thing to love one's self, another to love one's own love. For love is not loved, unless as already loving something; since where nothing is loved there is no love. Therefore there are two things when any one loves himself—love, and that which is loved. For then he that loves and that which is loved are one.

Whence it seems that it does not follow that three things are to be understood wherever love is. For let us put aside from the inquiry all the other many things of which a man consists; and in order that we may discover clearly what we are now seeking, as far as in such a subject is possible, let us treat of the mind alone. The mind, then, when it loves itself, discloses two things—mind and love. But what is to love one's self, except to wish to help one's self to the enjoyment of self? And when any one wishes himself to be just as much as he is, then the will is on a par with the mind, and the love is equal to him who loves. And if love is a substance, it is certainly not body, but spirit; and the mind also is not body, but spirit. Yet love and mind

are not two spirits, but one spirit; nor yet two essences, but one: and yet here are two things that are one, he that loves and love; or, if you like so to put it, that which is loved and love. And these two, indeed, are mutually said relatively. Since he who loves is referred to love, and love to him who loves. For he who loves, loves with some love, and love is the love of some one who loves. But mind and spirit are not said relatively, but express essence. For mind and spirit do not exist because the mind and spirit of some particular man exists. For if we subtract the body from that which is man, which is so called with the conjunction of body, the mind and spirit remain. But if we subtract love, then there is no one that loves. And therefore, in so far as they are mutually referred to one another, they are two; but whereas they are spoken in respect to themselves, each are spirit, and both together also are one spirit; and each are mind, and both together one mind. Where, then is the trinity? Let us attend as much as we can, and let us invoke the everlasting light, that He may illuminate our darkness, and that we may see in ourselves, as much as we are permitted, the image of God.

BOOK IX, CHAPTER 2

2. *Sermons on New Testament Lessons*

Let us see then if haply we cannot find something in the creature whereby we may prove that some three things are exhibited separately whose operation is yet inseparable. But whither shall we go? To the heaven, to dispute of the sun and moon and stars? To the earth, to dispute of shrubs, and trees, and animals which fill the earth? Or of the heaven and the earth itself, which contain all the things that are in heaven and earth? How long, O man, wilt thou roam over the creation? Return unto thyself, see, consider, ex-

amine thine own self. Thou art searching among the creatures for some three things which are separately exhibited, whose operation is yet inseparable; if then thou art searching for this among the creatures, search for it first in thine own self. For thou art not other than a creature. It is a resemblance thou art searching for. Wouldest thou search for it among the cattle? For of God it was thou wast speaking, when thou wast in search for this resemblance. Thou wast speaking of the Trinity of Majesty ineffable, and because thou didst fail in contemplating the Divine Nature, and with becoming humility didst confess thine infirmity, thou didst come down to human nature; there then pursue thine enquiry. Wilt thou make thy search among the cattle, in the sun, or the stars? What of these was made after the image and likeness of God? Thou mayest search in thine own self for something more excellent than all these. For God made man after His own image and likeness. Search then in thine own self, if haply the image of the Trinity bear not some vestige of the Trinity. And what is this image? It is an image very different from its model; yet different as it is, it is an image and a likeness notwithstanding, not indeed in the same way as the Son is the Image, being the Same Which the Father is. For an image is in one sort in a son, and in another in a mirror. There is great difference between them. Thine image in thy son is thine own self, for the son is by nature what thou art: in substance the same as thou, in person other than thou. Man then is not an image as the Only-begotten Son is, but made after a sort of image and likeness. Let him then search for something in himself, if so be he may find it, even for some three things which are exhibited separately, whose operation is yet inseparable. I will search, and do ye search with me. I will not search in you, but do ye search in yourselves, and I in myself. Let us search in concert, and in concert discuss our common nature and substance.

See, O man, and consider whether what I am saying be true. Hast thou a body and flesh? I have, you say. For how am I in this place that I now occupy, and how do I move from place to place? How do I hear the words of one who

is speaking, but by the ears of my body? How do I see the mouth of him who is speaking, but by the eyes of my body? It is plain then that thou hast a body, no need is there to trouble oneself about so plain a matter. Consider then another point, consider what it is that acts through this body. For thou hearest by means of the ear, but it is not the ear that hears. There is something else within which hears by means of the ear. Thou seest by means of the eye—examine this eye. What! Hast thou acknowledged the house, and paid no regard to him that inhabiteth it? Doth the eye see by itself? Is it not another that sees by means of the eye? I will not say, that the eye of a dead man, from whose body it is plain the inhabitant hath departed, sees not, but any man's eye who is only thinking of something else, sees not the form of the object that is before him. Look then into thine inner man. For it is there rather that the resemblance must be sought for of some three things which are exhibited separately, whose operation is yet inseparable. What then is in thy mind? Peradventure if I search, I find many things there, but there is something very nigh at hand, which is understood more easily. What then is in thy soul? Call it to mind, reflect upon it. For I do not require that credit should be given me in what I am about to say; if thou find it not in thyself, admit it not. Look inward then; but first let us see what had escaped me, whether man be not the image, not of the Son only, or of the Father only, but of the Father and the Son, and so consequently of course of the Holy Ghost also. The words in Genesis are, "Let Us made man after Our own image and likeness."⁴³ So then the Father doth not act without the Son, nor the Son without the Father. "Let Us make," not, "I will make," or "Make thou," or "Let him make," but, "Let Us make after," not "thine image," or "mine," but, "after Our image."

I am asking, I am speaking, remember, of a distant resemblance. So let no one say, See what he has compared to God! I have warned you of this already, and by anticipation have both put you on your guard, and have guarded myself. The two are indeed very far removed from

⁴³ Gen. 1:26.

each other, as the lowest from the Highest, as the changeable from the Unchangeable, the created from the Creator, the human nature from the Divine. Lo! I apprise you of this at first, that no one may say ought against me, because there is so great a difference in the things whereof I am about to speak. Lest then while I am asking for your ears, ye should any of you be getting ready your teeth, remember I have undertaken merely to show that there are some three things which are separately exhibited, whose operation is yet inseparable. How like or how unlike these things are to the Almighty Trinity is no concern of mine at present; but in the very creatures of the lowest order, and subject to change, we do find three things which may be separately exhibited, whose operation is yet inseparable. O carnal imagination! Obstinate, unbelieving conscience! Why as concerning that ineffable Majesty dost thou doubt as to that thing, which thou canst discover in thine own self? For I ask thee, O man, hast thou memory? If not, how hast thou retained what I have said? But perhaps thou hast forgotten already what I said but a little while ago. Yet these very words, "I said"—these two syllables, thou couldest not retain except by memory. For how shouldest thou know they were two, if as the second sounded thou hadst forgotten the first? But why do I dwell longer on this? Why am I so urgent? Why do I so press conviction? For thou hast memory; it is plain. I am searching then for something else. Hast thou understanding? "I have," you will say. For hadst thou not memory, thou couldest not retain what I said; and hadst thou not understanding, thou couldest not comprehend what thou hast retained. Thou hast then this as well as the other. Thou recallest thine understanding unto that which thou dost retain within, and so thou seest it, and by seeing art fashioned into that state as to be said to know. But I am searching for a third thing. Memory thou hast, whereby to retain what is said; and understanding thou hast, whereby to understand what is retained; but as touching these two, I ask again of thee, Hast thou not with thy will retained and understood? Undoubtedly, with my will, you will say. So then thou hast will.

These are the three things which I promised I would bring home to your ears and minds. These three things are in thee, which thou canst number, but canst not separate. These three then, memory, understanding, and will—these three, I say, consider how they are separately exhibited, yet is their operation inseparable.

The Lord will be my present help, and I see that He is present to help me; by your understanding what I say, I see that He is present to help me. For I perceive by these your voices how that you have understood me, and I surely trust that He will still assist us, that you may comprehend the whole. I promised to show you three things which are separately exhibited whose operation is yet inseparable. See then; I did not know what was in thy mind, and thou showedest me by saying, "Memory." This world, this sound, this expression came forth from thy mind to mine ears. For before that, thou hadst the silent idea of this memory, but thou didst not express it. It was in thee, but it had not yet come to me. But in order that that which was in thee might be passed on to me, thou didst express the very word, that is, "Memory." I heard it, I heard these three syllables in the word, "Memory." It is a noun, a word of three syllables, it sounded, and came to my ear, and impressed a certain idea on my mind. The sound has passed away, but the word whereby the idea was conveyed, and the idea itself, remains. But I ask, when thou didst pronounce this word, "Memory," thou seest certainly that it has reference to the memory only. For the other two things have their own proper names. For one is called "the understanding," and the other, "the will," not the "memory," but that one alone is called "memory." Nevertheless, whereby didst thou work in order to express this, in order to produce these three syllables? This word which has reference to the memory only, both memory was engaged in producing in thee, that thou mightest retain what thou saidst, and understanding, that thou mightest know what thou retainedst, and will, that thou mightest give expression to what thou knewest. Thanks be to the Lord our God! He hath helped us, both you and me. For I tell you the truth, beloved, that I undertook the examina-

tion and explanation of this subject with exceeding fear. For I was afraid lest haply I might gladden the spirit of the more enlarged in mind, and inflict on the slower capacities an afflictive weariness. But now I see both by the attention with which you have heard, and the quickness with which you have understood me, that you have not only caught what I have said, but that you have anticipated my words. Thanks be to the Lord!

See then, henceforth I speak in all security of that which you have already understood; I am inculcating no unknown lesson, but am only conveying to you by recapitulation what you have already received. Now, of these three things, one only has yet been named and expressed; "Memory" is the name of only one of those three, yet all the three concurred in producing the name of this single one of the three. The single word "memory" could not be expressed, but by the operation of the will, and the understanding, and the memory. The single word "will" could not be expressed, but by the operation of the memory and the understanding and the will. What I promised, then, I think has been explained, that which I have pronounced separately, I conceived inseparable. The three together have produced each one of these, but yet this one which the three have produced has reference not to the three but to one. The three together have produced the word "memory," but this word has reference to none but the memory only. The three together have produced the word "understanding," but it has reference to none but the understanding only. The three together have produced the word "will," but it has reference to none but the will only. So the Trinity concurred in the formation of the Body of Christ, but it belongs to none but Christ only. The Trinity concurred in the formation of the Dove from heaven; but it belongs to none but the Holy Spirit only. The Trinity formed the Voice from heaven, but this Voice belongs to none but the Father only.

Let no one then say to me, no one with unfair cavils try to press upon my infirmity, saying, "which then of these three, which you have shown to be in our mind or soul, which of them answers to the Father, that is, so to

say, to the likeness of the Father, which of them to that of the Son, and which of them to that of the Holy Ghost?" I cannot say—I cannot explain this. Let us leave somewhat to meditation and to silence. Enter into thine own self; separate thyself from all tumult. Look into thine inner self; see if thou have there some sweet retiring place of conscience, where there may be no noise, no disputation, no strife, or debates; where there will be not a thought of dissensions, and obstinate contention. Be meek to hear the word, that so thou mayest understand. Perhaps thou mayest soon have to say, "Thou wilt make me hear of joy and gladness, and my bones shall rejoice," ⁴⁴ the bones, that is, which are *humbled*, not those that are lifted up.

It is enough, then, that I have shown that there are some three things which are exhibited separately, whose operation is yet inseparable. If thou hast discovered this in thine own self; if thou hast discovered it in man; if thou hast discovered it in a being that walketh on the earth, and beareth about a frail "body," which weigheth down the soul"; believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit may be exhibited separately, by certain visible symbols, by certain forms borrowed from the creatures, and still their operation be inseparable. This is enough. I do not say that "memory" is the Father—the "understanding" the Son—and "will" the Spirit; I do not say this; let men understand it how they will. I do not venture to say this. Let us reserve the greater truths for those who are capable of them: but, infirm as I am myself, I convey to the infirm only what is according to our powers. I do not say that these things are in any sort to be equalled with the Holy Trinity, to be squared after an analogy; that is, a kind of exact rule of comparison. This I do not say. But what do I say? See. I have discovered in thee three things, which are exhibited separately, whose operation is inseparable; and of these three, every single name is produced by the three together; yet does not this name belong to the three, but to some one of the three. Believe then in the Trinity, what thou canst not see, if in thyself thou hast heard, and seen, and retained it. For what is in thine own

⁴⁴ Psalm 51:8.

self thou canst know: but what is in Him who made thee, whatever it be, how canst thou know? And if thou shalt be ever able, thou art not able yet. And even when thou shalt be able, wilt thou be able so to know God, as He knoweth Himself? Let then this suffice you, beloved: I have said all I could; I have made good my promise as ye required. As to the rest which must be added, that your understanding may make advancement, this seek from the Lord.

SERMON II (17-23)

3. On the Gospel of St. John

The words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He had addressed to the Jews, so regulating His discourse that the blind saw not, and believers' eyes were opened, are these, which have been read to-day from the holy Gospel: "Then said the Jews, Who art thou?" Because the Lord had said before, "If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins."⁴⁵ To this accordingly they rejoined, "Who art thou?" as if seeking to know on whom they ought to believe, so as not to die in their sin. He replied to those who asked Him: "Who art thou?" by saying, "The beginning, for (so) also I speak to you." If the Lord has called Himself the beginning, it may be inquired whether the Father also is the beginning. For if the Son who has a Father is the beginning, how much more easily must God the Father be understood as the beginning, who has indeed the Son whose Father He is, but has no one from whom He Himself proceedeth? For the Son is the Son of the Father, and the Father certainly is the Father of the Son; but the Son is called God of God—the Son is called Light of Light; the Father is called Light, but not, of Light—the Father is called God, but not, of God. If, then, God of God, Light

⁴⁵ John 8:25, 24.

of Light, is the beginning, how much more easily may we understand as such that Light, from whom the Light (cometh), and God, of whom is God? It seems, therefore, absurd, dearly beloved, to call the Son the beginning, and not to call the Father the beginning also.

But what shall we do? Are there, then, two beginnings? Let us beware of saying so. What then? if both the Father is the beginning and the Son the beginning, how are there not two beginnings? In the same way that we call the Father God, and the Son God, and yet say not that there are two Gods; and yet He who is the Father is not the Son, He who is the Son is not the Father; and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, is neither the Father nor the Son. Although, then, as Catholic ears have been taught in the bosom of mother Church, neither He who is the Father is the Son, nor He who is the Son is the Father, nor is the Holy Spirit, of the Father and of the Son, either the Son or the Father, yet we say not that there are three Gods; although, if we are asked of each apart, we must, of whichever we are questioned, confess that He is God.

But all this seems absurd to those who drag up familiar things to a level with things little known, visible things with invisible, and compare the creature to the Creator. For unbelievers sometimes question us and say: Whom you call the Father, do you call him God? We answer, God. Whom you call the Son, do you call him God? Whom you call the Holy Spirit, do you call him God? We answer, God. Then, say they, are the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit three Gods? We answer, No. They are confounded, because they are not enlightened; they have their heart shut up, because they want the key of faith. Let us then, brethren, by an antecedent faith that heals the eye of our heart, receive without obscurity what we understand—and what we understand not, believe without hesitation; let us not quit the foundation of faith in order to reach the summit of perfection. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God: and yet He is not the Father who is the Son, nor He the Son who is the Father, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, is

neither the Father nor the Son. The Trinity is one God. The Trinity is one eternity, one power, one majesty—three, but not (three) Gods. Let not the reviler answer me: “Three what, then? For,” he adds, “if there are three, you must say, three what?” I reply: The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. “See,” he says, “you have named three; but express what the three are?” Nay, count them yourself; for I make out three when I say, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. For the Father is God as respects Himself, but (He is) the Father as respects the Son; the Son is God as respects Himself, but He is the Son as regards the Father.

What I say you may gather from daily analogies. So it is with one man and another, if the one be a father, the other his son. He is man as regards himself, but a father as regards his son; and the son man as respects himself, but a son as respects his father. For father is a name given relatively, and so with son; but these are two men. And certainly God the Father is Father in a relative sense, that is, in relation to the Son; and God the Son is Son relatively, that is, in relation to the Father; but not as the former are two men are these two Gods. Why is it not so here? Because that belongs to one sphere and this to another; for this is divine. There is here something ineffable which cannot be explained in words, that there should both be, and not be, number. For see if there appear not a kind of number, Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost—the Trinity. If three, three what? Here number fails. And so God neither keeps apart from number, nor is comprehended by number. Because there are three, there is a kind of number. If you ask three what, number ceases. . . . When you have begun to reflect, you begin to number; when you have numbered, you cannot tell what you have numbered. The Father is Father, the Son is Son, the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit. What are these three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? Are They not three Gods? No. Are They not three Almighty? No. Not three Creators of the World? No. Is the Father then almighty? Manifestly almighty. And is the Son then not almighty? Clearly the Son is also almighty. And is the Holy Spirit

then not almighty? He, too, is almighty. Are there then three Almighty? No; only one Almighty. Only in Their relation to each other do They suggest number, not in Their essential existence. For though God the Father is, as respects Himself, God along with the Son and the Holy Spirit, there are not three Gods; and, though as respects Himself He is omnipotent, as well as the Son and the Holy Spirit, there are not three omnipotents; for in truth He is the Father not in respect to Himself, but to the Son; nor is the Son so in respect to Himself, but to the Father; nor is the Spirit so as regards Himself, in as far as He is called the Spirit of the Father and of the Son I have no name to give the three, save the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, one Almighty. And so one beginning.

Take an illustration from the Holy Scriptures, whereby you may in some measure comprehend what I am saying. After our Lord Jesus Christ rose again, and was pleased to ascend into heaven, at the end of ten days He sent from thence the Holy Spirit, by whom those who were present in that one chamber were filled, and began to speak in the languages of all nations. The Lord's murderers, terrified by the miracle, were pricked to the heart and sorrowed; sorrowing, were changed; and being changed, believed. There were added to the Lord's body, that is, to the number of believers, three thousand people. And so also by the working of another miracle there were added other five thousand. A considerable community was created, in which all, receiving the Holy Spirit, by whom spiritual love was kindled, were by their very love and fervor of spirit welded into one, and began in the very unity of fellowship to sell all that they had, and to lay the price at the apostles' feet, that distribution might be made to every one as each had need. And the Scripture says this of them, that "they were of one soul and one heart toward God."⁴⁶ Give heed then, brethren, and from this acknowledge the mystery of the Trinity, how it is we say, There is both the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and yet there is one God. See! There were so many thousands of these, and yet there

⁴⁶ Acts 4:32.

was one heart; there were so many thousands, and one soul. But where? In God. How much more so God Himself? Do I err at all in word when I call two men two souls, or three men three souls, or many men many souls? Surely I speak correctly. Let them approach God, and one soul belongs to all. If by approaching God many souls by love become one soul, and many hearts one heart, what of the very fountain of love in the Father and Son? Is it not still more so here that the Trinity is one God? For thence, of that Holy Spirit, does love come to us, as the apostle says: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."⁴⁷ If then the love of God, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, makes many souls one soul, and many hearts one heart, how much rather are the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, one God, one light, and one beginning?

Let us hear, then, the Beginning who speaks to us: "I have," said He, "many things to say of you and to judge." See, now He says, "I have many things to say of you and to judge." But, "I do not judge" is one thing: "I have to judge" is another; for He had come to save the world, not to judge the world.⁴⁸ In saying, "I have many things to say of you and to judge," He speaks of the future judgment. For therefore did He ascend, that He may come to judge the living and the dead. No one will judge more justly than He who was unjustly judged. "Many things," said He, "have I to say of you and to judge; but He that sent me is true." See how the Son, His equal, gives glory to the Father. For He sets us an example, and says as it were in our hearts: O believer, if thou hearest my gospel, the Lord thy God saith to thee, when I, in the beginning God the Word with God, equal with the Father, co-eternal with Him that begat, give glory to Him whose Son I am, how canst thou be proud before Him, whose servant thou art?

"I have many things," He said, "to say of you and to judge: but He that sent me is true"; as if He had said, Therefore I judge the truth, because, as the Son of the

⁴⁷ Rom. 5:5.

⁴⁸ John 12:47.

True One, I am the truth. The Father true, the Son the truth—which do we account the greater? Let us reflect, if we can, which is the greater, the True One or the Truth. Take some other instances. Is a pious man, or piety, the more comprehensive? Surely piety itself; for the pious is derived from piety, not piety from the pious. For piety may still exist, though he who was pious became impious. He has lost his piety, but has taken nothing from piety itself. What also of comely and comeliness? Comeliness is more than comely; for comeliness gives existence to the comely, not the comely to comeliness. And so of chaste and chastity. Chastity is clearly something more than chaste. For if chastity had no existence, one would have no ground to be chaste; but though one may refuse to be chaste, chastity remains entire. If then the term piety implies more than the term pious, comeliness more than comely, chastity than chaste, shall we say that the Truth is more than the True One? If we say so, we shall begin to say that the Son is greater than the Father. For the Lord Himself says most distinctly, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”⁴⁹ Therefore, if the Son is the truth, what is the Father but what the Truth Himself says, “He that sent me is true”? The Son is the truth, the Father true. I inquire which is the greater, but find equality, for the true Father is true not because He contained a part of that truth, but because He begat it entire.

I see I must speak more plainly. And, not to detain you long, let me treat only of this point today. When I have finished what, with God’s help, I wish to say, my discourse shall close. I have said this, then, to enlist your attention. Every soul, as being a thing, is mutable; and although a great creature, yet a creature; though superior to the body, yet made. Every soul, then, since it is changeable—that is, sometimes believes, sometimes disbelieves; at one time wishes, at another time refuses; at one time is adulterous, at another chaste; now good, and again wicked—is changeable. But God is that which is, and so has retained as his own peculiar name, “I am who am.”⁵⁰ Such

⁴⁹ John 14:6.

⁵⁰ Ex. 3:14.

also is the Son, when He says, "If ye believe not that I am"; and thereto pertains also, "Who art thou? The Beginning" (ver. 25). God therefore is unchangeable, the soul changeable. When the soul receives from God the elements of its goodness it becomes good by participation, just as by participation thine eye seeth. For it sees not when the light is withdrawn, while so long as it shares in the light it sees. Since then by participation the soul is made good, if *it* changes and becomes bad, the goodness remains that made it good. For there is a goodness of which it partook when good; and when it has turned to evil, that goodness continues entire. If the soul fall away and become evil, there is no lessening of goodness; if it return and become good, that goodness is not enlarged. Thine eye participates in this light, and thou seest. Is it shut? Then thou hast not diminished the light. Is it open? Thou hast not increased the light. By this illustration, brethren, understand that if the soul is pious, there is piety with God, of which the soul is partaker; if the soul is chaste, there is chastity with God, of which it partakes; if it is good, there is goodness with God, of which it partakes; if it is true, there is truth with God, of which the soul is partaker. Whereof if the soul is no partaker, every man is false;⁵¹ and if every man may be false, no man is true of himself. But the true Father is true of Himself, for he begat the truth. It is one thing to say, That man is true, for he has taken in the truth: it is another, God is true, for He begat the Truth. See then how God is true—not by participating in, but by generating the Truth. I see you have understood me, and am glad. Let this suffice you today. The rest, according as He gives it, we shall expound when the Lord pleases.

TRACTATE XXXIX

⁵¹ Psalm 116:11.

4. *The City of God*

There is, accordingly, a good which is alone simple, and therefore alone unchangeable, and this is God. By this Good have all others been created, but not simple, and therefore not unchangeable. "Created," I say—that is, made, not begotten. For that which is begotten of the simple Good is simple as itself, and the same as itself. These two we call the Father and the Son; and both together with the Holy Spirit are one God; and to this Spirit the epithet Holy is in scripture, as it were, appropriated. And He is another than the Father and the Son, for He is neither the Father nor the Son. I say "another," not "another thing," because He is equally with them the simple Good, unchangeable and co-eternal. And this Trinity is one God; and none the less simple because a Trinity. For we do not say that the nature of the good is simple, because the Father alone possesses it, or the Son alone, or the Holy Ghost alone; nor do we say, with the Sabellian heretics, that it is only nominally a Trinity, and has no real distinction of persons; but we say it is simple, because it is what it has, with the exception of the relation of the persons to one another. For, in regard to this relation, it is true that the Father has a Son, and yet is not Himself the Son; and the Son has a Father, and is not Himself the Father. But, as regards Himself, irrespective of relation to the other, each is what He has; thus, He is in Himself living, for He has life, and is Himself the life which He has.

It is for this reason, then, that the nature of the Trinity is called simple, because it has not anything which it can lose, and because it is not one thing and its contents another, as a cup and the liquor, or a body and its color, or the air and the light or heat of it, or a mind and its wisdom. For none of these is what it has: the cup is not liquor,

nor the body color, nor the air light and heat, nor the mind wisdom. And hence they can be deprived of what they have, and can be turned or changed into other qualities and states, so that the cup may be emptied of the liquid of which it is full, the body be discolored, the air darken, the mind grow silly. The incorruptible body which is promised to the saints in the resurrection cannot, indeed, lose its quality of incorruption, but the bodily substance and the quality of incorruption are not the same thing. For the quality of incorruption resides entire in each several part, not greater in one and less in another; for no part is more incorruptible than another. The body, indeed, is itself greater in whole than in part; and one part of it is larger, another smaller, yet is not the larger more incorruptible than the smaller. The body, then, which is not in each of its parts a whole body, is one thing; incorruptibility, which is throughout complete, is another thing—for every part of the incorruptible body, however unequal to the rest otherwise, is equally incorrupt. For the hand, e.g., is not more incorrupt than the finger because it is larger than the finger; so, though finger and hand are unequal, their incorruptibility is equal. Thus, although incorruptibility is inseparable from an incorruptible body, yet the substance of the body is one thing, the quality of incorruption another. And therefore the body is not what it has. The soul itself, too, though it be always wise (as it will be eternally when it is redeemed), will be so by participating in the unchangeable wisdom, which it is not; for though the air be never robbed of the light that is shed abroad in it, it is not on that account the same thing as the light. I do not mean that the soul is air, as has been supposed by some who could not conceive a spiritual nature; but, with much dissimilarity, the two things have a kind of likeness, which makes it suitable to say that the immaterial soul is illumined with the immaterial light of the simple wisdom of God, as the material air is irradiated with material light, and that, as the air, when deprived of this light, grows dark (for material darkness is nothing else than air wanting light), so the soul, deprived of the light of wisdom, grows dark.

According to this, then, those things which are essentially and truly divine are called simple, because in them quality and substance are identical, and because they are divine, or wise, or blessed in themselves, and without extraneous supplement. In Holy Scripture, it is true, the Spirit of wisdom is called "manifold" because it contains many things in it; but what it contains it also is, and it being one is all these things. For neither are there many wisdoms, but one, in which are untold and infinite treasures of things intellectual, wherein are all invisible and unchangeable reasons of things visible and changeable which were created by it. For God made nothing unwittingly; not even a human workman can be said to do so. But if He knew all that He made, He made only those things which He had known. Whence flows a very striking but true conclusion, that this world could not be known to us unless it existed, but could not have existed unless it had been known to God.

BOOK XI, CHAPTER 10

We believe, we maintain, we faithfully preach, that the Father begat the Word, that is, Wisdom, by which all things were made, the only-begotten Son, one as the Father is one, eternal as the Father is eternal, and, equally with the Father, supremely good; and that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit alike of Father and of Son, and it Himself consubstantial and co-eternal with both; and that this whole is a Trinity by reason of the individuality of the persons, and one God by reason of the indivisible divine substance, as also one Almighty by reason of the indivisible omnipotence; yet so that, when we inquire regarding each singly, it is said that each is God and Almighty; and, when we speak of all together, it is said that there are not three Gods, nor three Almighties, but one God Almighty; so great is the indivisible unity of these Three, which requires that it be so stated. But, whether the Holy Spirit of the Father, and of the Son, who are both good, can be with propriety called the goodness of both, because He is common to both, I do not presume to determine hastily. Nevertheless, I would have less hesitation in saying that He is the holiness of both, not as if He

were a divine attribute merely, but Himself also the divine substance, and the third person in the Trinity. I am the rather emboldened to make this statement, because, though the Father is a spirit, and the Son a spirit, and the Father holy, and the Son holy, yet the third person is distinctively called the Holy Spirit, as if He were the substantial holiness consubstantial with the other two. But if the divine goodness is nothing else than the divine holiness, then certainly it is a reasonable studiousness, and not presumptuous intrusion, to inquire whether the same Trinity be not hinted at in an enigmatical mode of speech, by which our inquiry is stimulated, when it is written who made each creature, and by what means, and why. For it is the Father of the Word who said, Let there be. And that which was made when He spoke was certainly made by means of the Word. And by the words, "God saw that it was good," it is sufficiently intimated that God made what was made not from any necessity, nor for the sake of supplying any want, but solely from His own goodness, i.e., because it was good. And this is stated after the creation had taken place, that there might be no doubt that the thing made satisfied the goodness on account of which it was made. And if we are right in understanding that this goodness is the Holy Spirit, then the whole Trinity is revealed to us in the creation. In this, too, is the origin, the enlightenment, the blessedness of the holy city which is above among the holy angels. For if we inquire whence it is, God created it; or whence its wisdom, God illumined it; or whence its blessedness, God is its bliss. It has its form by subsisting in Him; its enlightenment by contemplating Him; its joy by abiding in Him. It is; it sees; it loves. In God's eternity is its life; in God's truth its light, in God's goodness its joy.

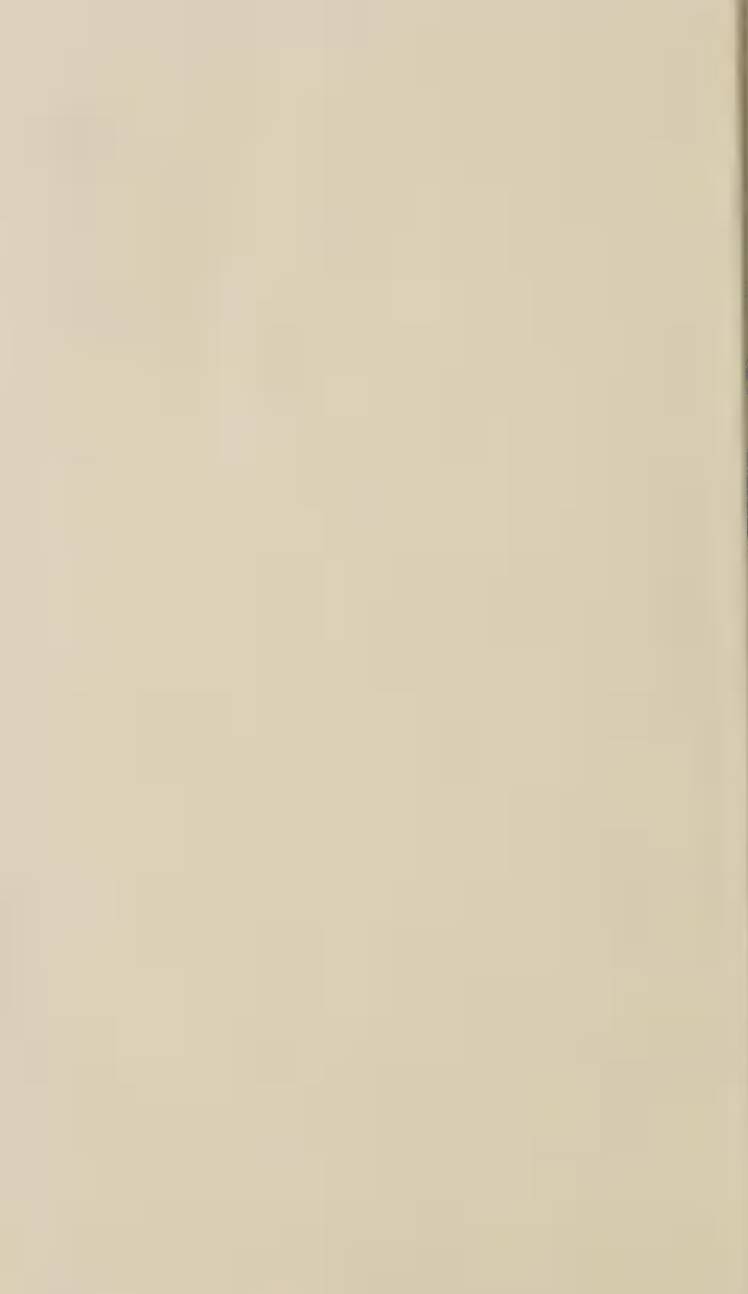
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IV
FAITH
AND
REASON



1. *On the Predestination of the Saints*

St. Paul says, "Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God."¹ Let them give attention to this, and well weigh these words, who think that the beginning of faith is of ourselves, and the supplement of faith is of God. For who cannot see that thinking is prior to believing? For no one believes anything unless he has first thought that it is to be believed. For however suddenly, however rapidly, some thoughts fly before the will to believe, and this presently follows in such wise as to attend them, as it were, in closest conjunction, it is yet necessary that everything which is believed should be believed after thought has preceded; although even belief itself is nothing else than to think with assent. For it is not every one who thinks that believes, since many think in order that they may not believe; but everybody who believes, thinks—both thinks in believing, and believes in thinking. Therefore in what pertains to religion and piety (of which the apostle was speaking), if we are not capable of thinking anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, we are certainly not capable of believing anything as of ourselves, since we cannot do this without thinking; but our sufficiency, by which we begin to believe, is of God. Where-

¹ I Cor. 7:25.

fore, as no one is sufficient for himself, for the beginning or the completion of any good work whatever—and this those brethren of yours, as what you have written intimates, already agree to be true, whence, as well in the beginning as in the carrying out of every good work, our sufficiency is of God—so no one is sufficient for himself, either to begin or to perfect faith; but our sufficiency is of God. Because if faith is not a matter of thought, it is of no account; and we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.

CHAPTER 5

2. Letter 120

God forbid that He should hate in us that faculty by which He made us superior to all other living beings. Therefore, we must refuse so to believe as not to receive or seek a reason for our belief, since we could not believe at all if we did not have rational souls. So, then, in some points that bear on the doctrine of salvation, which we are not yet able to grasp by reason—but we shall be able to sometime—let faith precede reason, and let the heart be cleansed by faith so as to receive and bear the great light of reason; this is indeed reasonable. Therefore the Prophet said with reason: “If you will not believe, you will not understand”;² thereby he undoubtedly made a distinction between these two things and advised us to believe first so as to be able to understand whatever we believe. It is, then, a reasonable requirement that faith precede reason, for, if this requirement is not reasonable, then it is contrary to reason, which God forbid. But, if it is reasonable that faith precede a certain great reason which cannot yet be grasped, there is no doubt that, however slight the reason which proves this, it does precede faith.

That is why the Apostle warns us that we ought to be

² Isa. 7:9.

ready to give an answer to anyone who asks us a reason for our faith and hope,³ since, if an unbeliever asks me a reason for my faith and hope, and I see that he cannot accept it until he believes, I give him that very reason, so that he may see how absurd it is for him to ask a reason for things which he cannot grasp until he believes. But, if a believer asks a reason that he may understand what he believes, his mental ability is to be considered and then, when the reason for his faith has been given according to it, he may draw as much understanding as he can, more if he is capable of more, less if he is less capable, but with the provision that, to the extent that he attains to the fullness and perfection of knowledge, he does not withdraw from the way of faith. On this point the Apostle says: "And if in anything you be otherwise minded, this also God will reveal to you; nevertheless whereunto we are come, let us walk in the same."⁴ If, then, we are faithful now, we shall attain to the way of faith, and, if we do not leave it, we shall unfailingly come not only to a great understanding of incorporeal and unchanging things, such as cannot be reached by all in this life, but even to the height of contemplation, which the Apostle calls "face to face".⁵ For, some have very little knowledge, yet by walking with great perseverance in the way of faith they attain to that most blessed contemplation; whereas others, although they know even now what the invisible, unchanging, and incorporeal nature is, and what way leads to the abode of such happiness, cannot attain to it because the way, which is Christ crucified, seems foolish to them, and they refuse to withdraw to the innermost chamber of that repose by whose light their mind is stunned as by a far-shining radiance.

There are, however, some things which we are not able to believe when we hear them, because we do not apply our faith to them, yet when a reason for them is given, we recognize it as true. Thus, none of the miracles of God is believed by infidels because the reason for them is not

³ I Pet. 3:15.

⁴ Phil. 3:15, 16.

⁵ I Cor. 13:12.

evident; as a matter of fact, there are things for which no reason can be given, but that does not mean there is none, for God made nothing in the universe without reason. Of certain of His wonderful works it is better sometimes for the reason to be hidden; otherwise, our minds, weighed down with weariness, might hold them cheap if we had knowledge of their causes. There are others, and they are many, who are more impressed by wonder at the objects than by a knowledge of their causes, and, when miracles cease to be wonderful, they have to be roused to faith in the invisible by visible wonders. Thus they may be cleansed and purified by charity, and may return to the point they had left when they ceased to wonder, through familiarity with truth. In the theatre, men wonder at the rope-dancer, and take pleasure in the musicians: in the former case, the difficulty of the act rouses awe; in the latter, pleasure sustains and nourishes them.

I should like to say these things to rouse your faith to a love of understanding to which true reason leads the mind and for which faith prepares it. For, that reasoning which argues about the Trinity, which is God, that the Son is not co-eternal with the Father, or that He is of another substance, and that the Holy Spirit is unlike Him in some way and therefore inferior, and that reasoning which claims that the Father and the Son are of one and the same substance, but that the Holy Spirit is of another, are to be avoided and detested, not because they are reasoning but because they are false reasoning; for, if the reasoning were true, it would surely not go wrong. Therefore, just as you ought not to give up all speech because there is false speech, so you ought not to turn against all reasoning because there is false reasoning. I would say the same of wisdom: that wisdom is not to be avoided because there is also false wisdom, to which Christ crucified is foolishness, though He is "the power of God and the wisdom of God," and, therefore, "by the foolishness of our preaching it pleased God to save them that believe; for the foolishness of God is wiser than men." ⁶ This truth could not be made acceptable to some of the philosophers and orators

6 I Cor. 1:18, 24, 21, 25.

who followed a way that was not the true one, but an imitation of the true one, and who deceived themselves and others on it. But by others it could be accepted, and to those who could accept it Christ crucified was neither a stumbling-block nor foolishness: among them are those that are called, both Jews and Greeks, "to whom he is the power of God and the wisdom of God."⁷ In this way, that is, in the faith of Christ crucified, those who were able by the grace of God to embrace His upright code of conduct, even though they are called Philosophers or orators, certainly confessed with humble piety that the fishermen who preceded them were far superior to themselves, both in the steadfast strength of their belief, and in the unerring truth of their understanding. For, when they had learned that the foolish and weak things of the world had been chosen for this purpose that the wise and strong things might be confounded, and when they understood that their own wisdom was folly and their strength weakness, they were confounded for their own salvation and made foolish and weak, that by the foolish and weak thing of God, which is wiser and stronger than men, they might be chosen among the foolish and weak things and might become truly wise and effectually strong.⁸

But the devout believer is ashamed of any but the truest reasoning; therefore, let us not be slow to overthrow a sort of idolatry which the frailty of human thought is prone to set up in our hearts, in consequence of our customary dealing with visible things, and let us not make bold to believe that the Trinity, which we worship as invisible, incorporeal, and unchangeable, is like three great living objects, which though immense and beautiful, are bounded by the proper limits of their own spaces, touching each other because they are ranged close together, either with one of them in the middle, so as to separate the two joined to it on either side, or in the fashion of a triangle, with each one touching the other two, and none separated from any. Let us not believe, either, that the huge mass of these three great Persons, which are limited on how-

⁷ I Cor. 1:24.

⁸ I Cor. 1:27, 29, 25.

ever large a scale from above and below and round about, have a single godhead as if it were a fourth person, not like any one of them, whereas it is common to all as the divinity of all and in all, and wholly in each one; through which sole Godhead the same Trinity is said to be God. And we must not believe that His three Persons are nowhere but in heaven, while that Divinity is not in any one place but is present everywhere, and for that reason it would be right to say that God is in heaven and on earth, because of the Godhead which is everywhere and is common to the Three, but it would not be right to say that the Father is on earth or the Son or the Holy Spirit, since the abode of this Trinity is only in heaven. When true reasoning begins to break down that train of carnal thought, that vain imagining, with His interior help and light—since He does not dwell in our hearts with such idols—we make haste to shatter them and, so to speak, to shake our faith free of them, so that we do not allow even the dust of such fancies to remain there.

Therefore, should we not listen in vain to what is true, unless faith which clothes us with piety had preceded reason, through whose outward argument, together with the light of truth within us, we are roused to perceive that these idols are false? Thus, when faith acts in its own sphere, reason following after finds something of what faith was seeking, and true reason is to be preferred to false reason because it makes us understand what we believe, but faith in things not yet understood is undoubtedly even more to be preferred. It is better to believe in something true but not yet seen, than to take the false thing one sees for true. For, faith has its own eyes with which it sees, so to speak, that what it does not yet see is true, and with which it most certainly sees that it does not yet see what it believes. Moreover, he who now understands by a true reasoning what he only believed a while ago is emphatically to be preferred to the one who wishes to understand now what he believes, but, if he does not also have a desire for the things which are to be understood, he considers them an object of belief only, and he fails to grasp the advantage of faith, for a devout faith does not

wish to be without hope and without charity. So, then, a faithful man ought to believe what he does not yet see, so as to hope for and love the fulfillment of vision.

As a matter of fact, we hold things visible but past by faith alone, since there is no hope of seeing again what has slipped away with time. They are regarded as finished and gone by, as it is expressed in the words: "Christ died once for our sins, and rose again and dieth now no more: death shall no more have dominion over him."⁹ The things which are not yet in existence, but are to come, such as the resurrection of our spiritual bodies, are believed in such wise that we hope to see them, but they cannot be experienced now. And of the things which are such that they are neither past nor future, but remain forever, some are invisible, like justice and wisdom, and some are visible, like the Body of Christ, now immortal. But, "the invisible things are clearly seen, being understood,"¹⁰ and in that way they are also seen in a special and appropriate manner. And, when they are seen, they are much more certain than the objects of the bodily sense, but they are said to be visible because they cannot, in any way, be seen by these mortal eyes. On the other hand, those living things which are visible and perpetual can be seen even by these mortal eyes, if they are made manifest; as the Lord showed Himself to the disciples after His Resurrection, and even after His Ascension, to the Apostle Paul and to the deacon Stephen.

Therefore, we believe in those visible and perpetual things in such wise that, even if they are not manifested to us, we hope we shall see them some day, and we do not make an effort to understand them by reasoning and thought, except that we make a distinction in our thought between these visible things and invisible ones, and we imagine to ourselves in thought what they are like, although we know quite well that they are not known to us. Thus, I think in one way of Antioch, a city unknown to me, and in another way of Carthage, which I do know; my mind makes an image of the former but recalls the latter.

⁹ I Pet. 3:18.

¹⁰ Rom. 1:20.

There is, however, no doubt in my mind that my belief about the former is based on the evidence of numerous witnesses, but about the latter on my own sense-impressions. Nevertheless, we do not form an image of justice and wisdom or anything else of this sort, in any other way, but we see them differently; we behold these invisible qualities by a simple intellectual attention of the mind and reason, without any forms or physical bulk, without any features or appearance of parts, without any locality, whether limited or of unbounded space. The light itself by which we distinguish all this, by which we are made aware of what we believe without knowing it, that we hold as objects of knowledge, what physical shape we recall, what one we imagine, what the sense-organ perceives, what the mind imagines in the likeness of a body, what is present to the intellect as certain yet totally unlike any physical object, this light by which all these mental acts are differentiated, is not diffused in any special place, like the brilliance of this sun or of any physical light, and does not illumine our mind as if it were a visible brightness, but it shines invisibly and indescribably, yet intelligibly, and it is as certain a fact itself as are the realities which we see as certain by means of it.

We have, then, three classes of objects which are seen: the first, of material things, such as heaven and earth and everything the physical sense-organ perceives or experiences in them; the second, of representations of material things, such as those we picture to ourselves in thought by means of our imagination, whether we behold them inwardly as remembered or as imagined objects. In this class are visions, such as occur either in sleep or in some state of ecstasy, and are presented in these spatial dimensions. The third class is different from both the former, and consists of things which are not corporeal and have no corporeal representation: for example, wisdom, which is perceived by the understanding and by whose light all these other things are correctly estimated. But, in which class we are to believe that the Trinity, which we wish to know about, is included? Obviously, in some one of them or in none. If in some one, it must be the one which is superior to

the other two, namely, the one in which wisdom is included. But, if His gift is in us, and if it is a lesser thing than that supreme and unchangeable wisdom which is said to be of God—I suppose we should not rate the giver as lower than his gift—if some of His light is in us and is called our wisdom, in so far as we can grasp anything of Him, “through a glass in a dark manner,” then we must distinguish that wisdom from all material objects and from all representations of material objects.

But, if the Trinity is not to be included in any of those classes, and if it is so far invisible that it is not seen by the mind, we have no reason at all to believe that it is like either material objects or the representations of material objects. It is not in the beauty of its shape nor in its immensity that it surpasses material things, but in the difference and complete dissimilarity of its nature. It is also remote from any comparison with our spiritual goods, such as wisdom, justice, charity, chastity, and other like qualities, which we certainly do not value for their physical size, nor do we endow them in our thoughts with bodily shapes, but, when we understand them properly, we behold them by the light of our mind without bodily attributes or any likeness of bodily attributes. How much more, then, must we refrain from any comparison of physical qualities and dimensions in thinking of the Trinity! But the Apostle is witness that our mind is not to shrink away from it entirely, when he says: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also and divinity.”¹¹ Consequently, since the same Trinity created both body and soul, it is evidently superior to both. And, if the soul so considered, especially the human, rational, and intellectual soul, which was made in His image, does not elude our thoughts and understanding; if, by mind and understanding, we are able to grasp its excellence, which is to say, the mind itself and the understanding, it will not perhaps be unreasonable for us to try to raise our soul to the understanding of its Creator, with His help. But, if it fails in that and falls back on itself, let

¹¹ Rom. 1:20.

it be satisfied with devout faith, as long as it is a wanderer from the Lord, until He acts to fulfill His promise in man, as the Apostle says: "Who is able to do all things more abundantly than we desire or understand." ¹²

3. *On the Trinity*

For knowledge also has its own good measure, if that in it which puffs up, or is wont to puff up, is conquered by love of eternal things, which does not puff up, but, as we know, edifieth.¹³ Certainly without knowledge the virtues themselves, by which one lives rightly, cannot be possessed, by which this miserable life may be so governed that we may attain to that eternal life which is truly blessed.

Yet action, by which we use temporal things well, differs from contemplation of eternal things; and the latter is reckoned to wisdom, the former to knowledge. For although that which is wisdom can also be called knowledge, as the apostle too speaks, where he says, "Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known";¹⁴ when doubtless he meant his words to be understood of the knowledge of the contemplation of God, which will be the highest reward of the saints; yet where he says, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit,"¹⁵ certainly he distinguishes without doubt these two things, although he does not there explain the difference, nor in what way one may be discerned from the other. But having examined a great number of passages from the Holy Scriptures, I find it written in the Book of Job, that holy man being the speaker, "Behold, piety, that is wisdom; but to depart from

¹² Eph. 3:20.

¹³ I Cor. 8:1.

¹⁴ I Cor. 13:12.

¹⁵ I Cor. 12:8.

evil is knowledge.”¹⁶ In thus distinguishing, it must be understood that wisdom belongs to contemplation, knowledge to action. For in this place he meant by piety the worship of God, which in Greek is called *θεοσέβεια*. For the sentence in the Greek MSS. has that word. And what is there in eternal things more excellent than God, of whom alone the nature is unchangeable? And what is the worship of Him except the love of Him, by which we now desire to see Him, and we believe and hope that we shall see Him; and in proportion as we make progress, see now through a glass in an enigma, but then in clearness? For this is what the Apostle Paul means by “face to face.” This is also what John says, “Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”¹⁷ Discourse about these and the like subjects seems to me to be the discourse itself of wisdom. But to depart from evil, which Job says is knowledge, is without doubt of temporal things. Since it is in reference to time (and this world) that we are in evil, from which we ought to abstain that we may come to those good eternal things. And therefore, whatsoever we do prudently, boldly, temperately, and justly, belongs to that knowledge or discipline wherewith our action is conversant in avoiding evil and desiring good; and so also, whatsoever we gather by the knowledge that comes from inquiry, in the way of examples either to be guarded against or to be imitated, and in the way of necessary proofs respecting any subject, accommodated to our use.

When a discourse then relates to these things, I hold it to be a discourse belonging to knowledge, and to be distinguished from a discourse belonging to wisdom, to which those things belong, which neither have been, nor shall be, but are; and on account of that eternity in which they are, are said to have been, and to be, and to be about to be, without any changeableness of times. For neither have they been in such way as that they should cease to be, nor are they about to be in such way as if they were

¹⁶ Job 28:8.

¹⁷ John 3:2.

not now; but they have always had and always will have that very absolute being. And they abide, but not as if fixed in some place as are bodies; but as intelligible things in incorporeal nature, they are so at hand to the glance of the mind, as things visible or tangible in place are to the sense of the body. And not only in the case of sensible things posited in place, there abide also intelligible and incorporeal reasons of them apart from local space; but also of motions that pass by in successive times, apart from any transit in time, there stand also like reasons, themselves certainly intelligible, and not sensible. And to attain to these with the eye of the mind is the lot of few; and when they are attained as much as they can be, he himself who attains to them does not abide in them, but is as it were repelled by the rebounding of the eye itself of the mind, and so there comes to be a transitory thought of a thing not transitory. And yet this transient thought is committed to the memory through the instructions by which the mind is taught; that the mind which is compelled to pass from thence, may be able to return thither again, although, if the thought should not return to the memory and find there what it had committed to it, it would be led thereto like an uninstructed person, as it had been led before, and would find it where it had first found it, that is to say, in that incorporeal truth, whence yet once more it may be as it were written down and fixed in the mind. For the thought of man, for example, does not so abide in that incorporeal and unchangeable reason of a square body, as that reason itself abides: if, to be sure, it could attain to it at all without the phantasy of local space. Or if one were to apprehend the rhythm of any artificial or musical sound, passing through certain intervals of time, as it rested without time in some secret and deep silence, it could at least be thought as long as that song could be heard; yet what the glance of the mind, transient though it was, caught from thence, and, absorbing as it were into a belly, so laid up in the memory, over this it will be able to ruminate in some measure by recollection, and to transfer what it has thus learned into systematic knowledge. But if this has been blotted out by absolute forgetfulness, yet once again,

under the guidance of teaching, one will come to that which had altogether dropped away, and it will be found such as it was.

BOOK XII, CHAPTER 14

And hence that noble philosopher Plato endeavored to persuade us that the souls of men lived even before they bare these bodies; and that hence those things which are learnt are rather remembered as having been known already, than taken into knowledge as things new. For he has told us that a boy, when questioned I know not what respecting geometry, replied as if he were perfectly skilled in that branch of learning. For being questioned step by step and skillfully, he saw what was to be seen, and said that which he saw. But if this had been a recollecting of things previously known, then certainly every one, or almost every one, would not have been able so to answer when questioned. For not every one was a geometrician in the former life, since geometricians are so few among men that scarcely one can be found anywhere. But we ought rather to believe, that the intellectual mind is so formed in its nature as to see those things, which by the disposition of the Creator are subjoined to things intelligible in a natural order, by a sort of incorporeal light of a unique kind; as the eye of the flesh sees things adjacent to itself in this bodily light, of which light it is made to be receptive, and adapted to it. For none the more does this fleshly eye, too, distinguish black things from white without a teacher, because it had already known them before it was created in this flesh. Why, lastly, is it possible only in intelligible things that any one properly questioned should answer according to any branch of learning, although ignorant of it? Why can no one do this with things sensible, except those which he has seen in this his present body, or has believed the information of others who knew them, whether somebody's writings or words? For we must not acquiesce in their story, who assert that the Samian Pythagoras recollected some things of this kind, which he had experienced when he was previously here in another body; and others tell yet of others, that they experienced something of the same sort in their minds: but it may be con-

jectured that these were untrue recollections, such as we commonly experience in sleep, when we fancy we remember, as though we had done or seen it, what we never did or saw at all; and that the minds of these persons, even though awake, were affected in this way at the suggestion of malignant and deceitful spirits, whose care it is to confirm or to sow some false belief concerning the changes of souls, in order to deceive men. This, I say, may be conjectured from this, that if they really remembered those things which they had seen here before, while occupying other bodies, the same thing would happen to many, nay to almost all; since they suppose that as the dead from the living, so, without cessation and continually, the living are coming into existence from the dead; as sleepers from those that are awake, and those that are awake from them that sleep.

If therefore this is the right distinction between wisdom and knowledge, that the intellectual cognizance of eternal things belongs to wisdom, but the rational cognizance of temporal things to knowledge, it is not difficult to judge which is to be preferred or postponed to which. But if we must employ some other distinction by which to know these two apart, which without doubt the apostle teaches us are different, saying, "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit"; still the difference between those two which we have laid down is a most evident one, in that the intellectual cognizance of eternal things is one thing, the rational cognizance of temporal things another; and no one doubts but that the former is to be preferred to the latter. As then we leave behind those things which belong to the outer man, and desire to ascend within from those things which we have in common with beasts, before we come to the cognizance of things intelligible and supreme, which are eternal, the rational cognizance of temporal things presents itself.

BOOK XII, CHAPTER 15

4. *On Faith in Things Unseen*

There are some who think that the Christian religion ought to be ridiculed rather than upheld. The reason for this is that in it, not the thing which may be seen is set forth, but faith in things which are not seen is imposed upon men. For the sake of refuting those who, prudent in their own opinion, seem to be opposed to believing what they cannot see, we surely have not the power to present to the eyes of men the divine truths which we believe. Yet, we do show the minds of men that even those things which are not seen ought to be believed. Now, as regards those whom folly has made so servile to the eyes of the body that they do not think they ought to believe anything which they do not perceive through those eyes, they ought, in the first place, to be reminded of how many things there are which cannot be seen with such eyes—things which they not only believe, but also actually know.

These things are innumerable in our mind itself, whose nature is invisible—to say nothing of other things, like the very faith by which we believe, or the thought process by which we know either that we believe something or that we do not believe it, although it may be entirely outside the realm of those eyes. What is there so bare, so clear, what so certain to the interior vision of our minds? How, therefore, must we not believe what we do not see with our bodily eyes, when we perceive beyond any doubt either that we believe or do not believe where we cannot employ the eyes of the body?

But, they say, we have no need to learn through the eyes of the body those things which are in the mind, since by the mind itself we can perceive them. Moreover, what you say we should believe you neither show us exteriorly, that we may acquire knowledge of them through our bodily

eyes, nor are they within the mind, that we may perceive them by thought. It is, they say, just as if a man were ordered to believe, if only he could see the object of belief presented before him. Therefore, surely we ought to believe some temporal things also, which we do not see, that we may also deserve to see the eternal things which we believe.

But, whoever you are who will not believe except what you see, with your bodily eyes you surely see bodies present to you; your affections and thoughts present to you, because they are in your own mind, you see with that mind. Tell me, I ask you, with what eyes do you see your friend's will toward you? For, no will can be seen with bodily eyes. Or, indeed, do you also see in your mind that which is taking place in the mind of another? But, if you do not see it, how do you, on your part, requite his loving kindness, if you do not believe what you cannot see?

Or, perhaps you will say that you see the will of another through his deeds? Then you will see acts and hear words, but of your friend's will you will believe that which cannot be seen or heard. The will is not color or figure that may be impressed upon the eyes; nor is it a sound or formula that may strike upon the ears; nor, indeed, is it yours to be felt by the affection of your heart. It follows, therefore, that, although it is not seen or heard or grasped inwardly by you, it is believed. Otherwise, your life would be left barren of any friendship, or love bestowed upon you would not be paid back by you in turn.

What, then, becomes of that statement of yours that you ought to believe only what you see either exteriorly with the body or interiorly with the mind? Lo, verily, out of your heart you believe in a heart that is not yours, and you place faith where you do not focus the glance of either your body or your mind. You discern your friend's countenance by means of your body; you discern your faith by means of your mind; but your friend's faith is not appreciated by you, unless there is in you a reciprocating faith, by which you may believe what you do not see in him. It certainly is possible, too, for a man to deceive by feigning kindness and by cloaking malice. He even may

not plan to do harm—still, by expecting some advantage from you, he simulates love because he does not possess it.

But, you say that you believe in a friend whose heart you cannot see because you have tested him in your trials and learned of what mind he was toward you in your dangers when he did not fail you. Does it seem to you, then, that we ought to desire affliction so that the love of our friends toward us may be proved? For, no one will be happy with the surest of friends unless through adversity he has been unhappy; so that, indeed, he may not enjoy the love of another by experience unless he is tortured with grief and fear. And how is it possible, then, for the sake of having true friends, to desire such happiness, which only unhappiness can prove, and not, rather, to fear it? It is true that we can have a friend even in prosperity, but he is proved more surely in adversity.

CHAPTER 1

But, surely, to prove your friend you would not submit yourself to your dangers if you did not believe. And since you thus submit yourself that you may prove him, you believe before you prove. Certainly, if we ought not to believe in things not seen, we still believe in the hearts of friends though these hearts be not yet truly tried; when we have proved them as good by our misfortunes, we still believe their kindness toward us rather than see it. It is only because our faith is so great that we decide, not inconsistently, that we see with its eyes, as it were, what we believe, since we ought to believe for this reason that we cannot see.

If this faith in human affairs is removed, who will not mark how great will be their disorder and what dreadful confusion will follow? For, who will be cherished by anyone in mutual charity, since love itself is invisible, if what I do not see I ought not to believe? Friendship, then, will wholly perish, since it rests upon nothing more than mutual love. What of this will one be able to receive from another, if it shall be believed that nothing of it can be shown? Furthermore, when friendship perishes, neither the bonds of marriage nor of relationship and affinity will be

retained in the mind, because in these, also, there surely is a friendly spirit of harmony. Then a husband and wife will not be able to have mutual affection, since they do not believe that there is any love, inasmuch as love cannot be seen. Nor will they desire to have children, for they do not believe that the children will return their love. And, if the children should be born and grow up, the parents themselves will love their own much less, and they will not see love for themselves in their children's hearts because love is invisible—if things unseen are believed, not by praiseworthy faith but by blameworthy rashness.

What shall I say, now, of the other relationships—of brothers, sisters, sons-in-law, fathers-in-law, and of those joined by any sort of blood-relationship or affinity—if charity is uncertain and good will suspected; both the will of parents by their children and the children's feelings, likewise, by their parents; and if due kindness is not rendered, because it is not thought to be due, since that which is not seen in another is believed not to exist? Furthermore, this caution is not appropriate, but rather odious, when we do not believe that we are loved because we do not see the love of those who love us, and when we, on our part, do not return love to others because we think we do not owe them mutual love. To such a degree are human affairs disturbed, if we should not believe what we do not see, that they would be completely overturned if we should refuse belief to all the inner dispositions of men which we cannot see with certainty.

I will not mention how much those, who rebuke us for believing what we do not see, themselves believe of rumor, or history, or about places where they themselves have never been; nor how in these instances they do not say: "We do not believe because we have not seen." Because, if they say this, they are compelled to admit that they are uncertain about their own parents. For, even on this point they have believed by reports of others—who, in turn, are unable to demonstrate the fact because the event is already in the past. Men retain no consciousness of that time, and yet, without any hesitation they give agreement to what others say about it. Yet, if this should not be done, a faith-

less lack of reverence toward parents would necessarily follow, while a rashness in placing belief in those things which we can not see is seemingly avoided. CHAPTER 2

Therefore, when we do not believe what we cannot see, concord will perish and human society itself will not stand firm. How much more, then, ought faith to be placed in divine things, even if they are not seen. If this faith is not applied, it is not the friendship of some men which is violated, but the very essence of religion itself, so that the very depth of misery results. CHAPTER 3 (4)

5. On the Advantage of Believing

But now consider, you will say, whether in religion we ought to believe. For even if we concede that it is one thing to believe, another to be credulous, it does not follow that there is no fault in believing in religious matters. What if it be a fault to believe and to be credulous, as it is to be drunk and to be a drunkard? One who holds this view as certain, it seems to me, could have no friend. For, if it is base to believe anything, either he acts basely who believes a friend, or, in not believing a friend at all, I do not see how he can call either him or himself a friend. Here you will perhaps say: I grant that at times we have to believe something; now, explain how in religion it is not base to believe before one knows. I shall do so, if I can. Therefore, I ask you which you consider the more serious fault: to transmit religion to one unworthy or to believe what is said by those who transmit it? If you do not understand whom I am speaking of as unworthy, I mean one who approaches it with hypocrisy in his heart. You grant, as I think, that it is much more blameworthy to reveal whatever sacred secrets there are to such a man than to believe religious men who make some affirmation about religion itself. For

no other answer would be becoming to you. So now, suppose that he is present who is going to transmit religion to you; how will you convince him that you approach with the right spirit, and that there is no guile or deceit in you as far as this matter is concerned? You will say with your own good conscience that there is no deceit in you, and you will assert this with what words you can, but still with words. For as a man you would not be able to reveal to a man the inner recesses of your soul so as to be completely known. But if he said: Yes, I believe you; is it not fairer that you also believe me, if I hold any truth, since you are about to receive and I am about to bestow a benefit on you?—what answer shall we give, save that you must believe?

But, you say, would it not be better for you to give me the reason so that I might follow, wherever it should lead, without any rashness? Perhaps it would be. Since it is so important that you must come to the knowledge of God by reason, do you think that all men are capable of grasping the reasons by which the human mind is led to understand the divine, or are many capable, or just a few? A few I think, you say. Do you believe that you belong to this number? It is not my place, you say, to answer this. Therefore, you think he should believe you in this, also. And this, of course, he does. Please remember that he has already twice believed you when you said something uncertain, and that you are willing not even once to believe him when he advises you on religious matters. But suppose that it is so, and that you are approaching with the right attitude to receive religion, and so are one of the few men capable of understanding the reasons by which the divine power is known with certainty—what then? Do you think that the rest of men, who have not been endowed with so serene a nature, should be denied religion? Or should they be brought gradually by certain steps to those innermost mysteries? You see clearly which way is the more religious. For neither can it seem to you that any man whatever, in his eagerness for so great a thing, should in any way be deserted or rejected. But you will agree, will you not, that unless he first believes that he will arrive at the [goal] which he has set for himself, and shows the

mind of a suppliant, obeying certain important and necessary precepts, and completely purging himself by a certain way of life, he will not in any other way attain to that which is pure truth? Surely you agree. What then about those (and I now believe that you belong to this class) who can very easily, with sure reasoning, accept the divine mysteries? Will it hinder them at all if they come the way which those who believe first of all come? I think not. But still, you say, what need is there for them to delay? Because, if by so doing they will in no way harm themselves, yet they will harm others by their example. For there is scarcely anyone who has a just estimate of his own powers. He who thinks too little of himself should be roused, while he who thinks too much should be checked, the former that he may not be crushed by despair, the latter that he may not be carried on headlong in his boldness. And this is easily done even if those who are strong enough to fly are forced for a little while, in order not to incite anyone to danger, to walk on a way that is also safe for others. This is the foresight of true religion; this has been divinely commanded; this has been handed down to our blessed forefathers; this has been kept even to our own day. To desire to pervert and disturb it is nothing else than to seek a sacrilegious way to the true religion. As to those who do this, even if their desires are granted, they cannot arrive whither they intend. For, whatever kind of excellent ability they may have, unless God is present, they creep along the ground. And He is then present when those who tend toward God have at heart the interests of human society. No surer way to heaven can be found than this step. And I, indeed, cannot resist this reasoning, for how can I say that we should believe nothing without knowledge? For there is also no friendship at all unless something is believed which cannot be demonstrated by positive reasoning. Masters, without any fault on their part, often believe the stewards in their service. But in religion what can be more unjust than that the ministers of God should be willing to believe us when we promise sincerity, while we are unwilling to believe them when they issue precepts? Lastly, what can be a more healthful way

than first to become fitted for the reception of truth by believing those things which have been divinely appointed for preparing and cultivating the mind in advance? Or, if you are already perfectly fitted, [what can be more healthful than] to go the round-about way where it is safest to enter, rather than to be a source of danger to yourself and an example of rashness to others?

CHAPTER 10

Therefore, it now remains to consider in what way these men are not to be followed who promise to guide us by means of reason. For we have already said how we can, without fault, follow those who order us to believe; but to these sponsors of reason some men think that they can come, not only without censure, but even with some measure of praise. But this is not so, for there are [only] two [classes of] persons in religion who are praiseworthy: the one consists of those who have already found out, and whom one necessarily judges most blessed; the other, of those who are seeking very studiously and in the most correct way. The first kind, then, is already in actual possession, while the other kind is on the way, by which, finally one is most sure to arrive. There are three other kinds of men, definitely worthy of censure and aversion. One consists of those who have opinions, that is, those who think that they know what they do not know; another is made up of those who realize that they do not know, but do not seek in such a way as to find; the third, of those who neither think they know nor wish to seek. There are likewise three things bordering on each other, as it were, in the minds of men which are worthy of distinction: understanding, belief, and opinion. And if these are considered separately, the first is always without fault; the second is at times faulty; and the third is never without fault. For the understanding of deep and honorable, nay even divine, matters is a blessed thing. The understanding of superfluous things, however, is not harmful, but perhaps the learning was harmful in that it took up the time of necessary matters. And as to harmful matters themselves, the misery is not in the failure to understand them, but in the doing or suffering them. For, if someone should under-

stand how an enemy can be slain without any danger to himself, he is not guilty through the understanding itself, but through the evil desire. And, if this desire is absent, what can be said to be more innocent? But belief is then blameworthy, either when something is believed about God which is unworthy of Him, or when, in the case of man, such belief is too readily held. But in other matters, if anyone believes something, but with the understanding that he does not know it, there is no fault. For I believe that wicked conspirators were once put to death through the valor of Cicero, and yet, I not only do not know this, but I even know for sure that there is no way in which I can know it. But opinion is very base for two reasons: both in that he who has convinced himself that he already knows cannot learn (even if it were possible for the thing to be learned), and the very rashness is of itself a sign of a mind ill disposed. For, even if anyone thinks he knows that fact which I mentioned about Cicero, although nothing prevents him from learning it (for the matter itself cannot be held through knowledge), still, because he does not understand that there is much difference between grasping something by the sure reason of the mind, which we call understanding, and entrusting it, with profit, to tradition or writing for posterity to believe, he surely errs; and no error is without its baseness. What we understand, accordingly, we owe to reason; what we believe, to authority; and what we have an opinion on, to error. But everyone who understands also believes, and everyone who has an opinion believes, too; but not everyone who believes understands, and no one who merely has an opinion understands. Therefore, if these three capabilities be referred to the five kinds of men which we have mentioned previously, that is, the two classes deserving approval (which we put first), and the other three faulty, we find that the first class, consisting of the blessed, believes truth itself, but the second, made up of those who seek after and love truth, believes authority; in both these classes, belief is praiseworthy. In the first of the faulty kinds, that is, in those who think they know what they do not know, there is surely faulty credulity. The other two

objectionable kinds believe nothing, that is, those who seek truth with no hope of finding it, and those who do not seek it at all. And this is true only of things which refer to some system of knowledge. For in other activities of life, I truly know not how a man can believe nothing. Although even among those who say that in practice they follow the more probable, they yet prefer to seem unable to know rather than unable to believe. For who does not believe what he approves of? Or how is it that what they follow, if it is not approved of, is probable? Truth, therefore, has two kinds of adversaries: the one consisting of those who oppose only knowledge, not faith; the other, of those who reject both; yet I truly do not know whether they can be found in the (normal) activities of man. We have said this in order to understand that, by retaining our faith in those things which we do not yet grasp, we have been set free from the rashness of such as have opinions. For those who say that we are to believe nothing, except what we know, are on their guard against the one name of opinion, which, one must admit, is a low and wretched one. But if they consider carefully that there is a very great difference between, on the one hand, thinking one knows and, on the other, believing, under the influence of some authority, what one realizes he does not know, they would surely avoid errors and the charge of inhumanity and pride.

CHAPTER 11

For, I ask, if what is not known need not be believed, how are children to be subject to their parents? And how are they to love with mutual affection those whom they do not believe to be their own parents? For this cannot in any way be known through reason, but is believed of the father on the authority of the mother; but, as to the mother herself, it is not she, for the most part, that is believed, but midwives, nurses, and servants. For cannot she from whom a son can be stolen and another substituted, having been deceived herself, deceive others? Yet we believe, and we believe without any doubt, what we admit we cannot know. For who would not see that, unless this were so, filial devotion, the most sacred bond of the

human race, would be violated by a most grievous sin of pride? For who, no matter how crazy he were, should think one ought to be blamed for fulfilling his duties to those whom he believed to be his parents, even though they were not? Who, on the other hand, has not judged that man deserving of exile who perhaps loved his real parents very little, lest he might love counterfeit parents? Many examples can be cited which show that absolutely nothing would remain intact in human society if we should determine to believe only what we can grasp by perception.

But, now, listen to something I trust you will more easily accept. When the matter at stake is religion, that is, the worship and knowledge of God, those men are less to be followed who forbid us to believe and readily promise reason. For no one is in doubt that all men are either fools or wise. Now, I call wise not the gifted and witty, but those in whom there is, in as far as it can be in man, a knowledge, grasped with surety, both of man and of God, and a life and habits in accord with this knowledge. But others, whatever may be their skills or lack of skills, whether their way of life is approved of or not, I would count in the number of the fools. Since this is so, what man of average intelligence has not clearly seen that it will be more useful and healthful for the fools to obey the precepts of the wise than to live according to their own judgement? For, every deed, if it is not rightly done, is a sin; nor can one in any way do rightly what does not proceed from right reason. Moreover, right reason is virtue itself. For, to what human being is virtue readily at hand save to the wise man? The wise man alone, therefore, does not sin. And every fool, then, sins save in those acts in which he obeys the wise man. From right reason, then, such acts spring, nor is a fool to be considered, so to say, master of his own deed, since he is as it were the instrument and agency of the wise man. Therefore, if it is better for all men not to sin than to sin, surely all fools would live better lives if they were subservient to the wise. And, if no one doubts that this is true in matters of lesser import, as, for instance, in buying or tilling a field, in marrying a wife, in acknowledg-

ing and bringing up children, and even in the control of household property, it is all the more true in religion. In the case of human events, fine distinctions can be made more readily than in the case of divine; and in things more sacred and extraordinary, we sin so much the more impiously and dangerously in that we owe them greater service and devotion. You see, therefore, that nothing remains to us, as long as we are fools, if our hearts are set on a good and religious life, except to seek out the wise; by obeying them, we can become less conscious of and eventually escape altogether the foolishness which dominates us as long as it remains within us.

CHAPTER 12

Here, again, a very difficult question arises. For how will we fools be able to find a wise man? Even if only a few dare to claim this title openly, yet many do so indirectly by so differing among themselves on those very things in the knowledge of which wisdom consists, that either none of them is necessarily wise, or but one. But when the fool tries to find out who that one is, I do not at all see how he can clearly distinguish and know him. For there are no signs whatever by which one can recognize something, unless he knows the thing itself of which these are the signs. And, of course, the fool does not know wisdom. For, though one is allowed in the case of gold and silver and other things of that kind to recognize them, at sight, without possessing them, not so can wisdom be seen by the mental eye of one who lacks it. Whatever we touch by bodily sense is offered to us from without, and that is why we can distinguish with our eyes things foreign to us, though we ourselves possess nothing of them or of their kind. But what is grasped with the intellect is within the mind, and having it is equivalent to seeing. But the fool lacks wisdom; accordingly, he does not know wisdom, nor can he see it with his eyes, for he cannot see it without possessing it, nor can he have it and be a fool. He does not, therefore, know it, and, not knowing it, he cannot recognize it elsewhere. Accordingly as long as anyone is a fool, he cannot be completely sure of finding a wise man

through whom, if he obey him, he can be freed from so grievous an evil as foolishness.

For this immense difficulty in our search for religion, then, only God can supply the remedy. And, unless we believe that He exists and assists human souls, we ought not even look for the true religion itself. For what, I pray, do we desire to investigate with such great effort? What do we wish to reach? At what do we want to arrive? Is it to that which we believe does not exist and does not pertain to us? Nothing is more perverse than such an attitude. Though you would not be so bold as to ask me a favor (at least you would do so impudently), unless you believed that I would grant it, yet you come asking to find a religion, while at the same time you think that either God does not exist, or, if He does exist, that He has no care of us. What if the matter is so important that it cannot be found unless it be sought out diligently, and that with all our might? What if the extreme difficulty of finding is an exercise for the mind of the inquirer, leading to the full grasp and diffusion of the discovery? For what is more joyful and familiar to our eyes than the light of day? And yet, after prolonged darkness men cannot suffer or endure it. What is more beneficial than food and drink to a body worn out with illness? But we see that convalescents are restrained and checked so that they may not venture to give themselves over to the full plates of the healthy, and thus use food itself in such a way as to fall back into the disease which was depriving them of it. I am speaking of convalescents. Again, as to the sick themselves, do we not urge them to take something? In this, surely, they would not obey us at so great discomfort if they did not believe that they were going to recover. When, then, will you give yourself to this burdensome and laborious investigation? When will you venture to impose on yourself as much care and concern as the matter deserves, if you do not believe that the object of your search exists? Rightly, then, has it been set down by the majestic teaching of Catholicism that prospective converts should be convinced of [the value of] faith before all else.

6. *Letter 160*

Perfect reason is that which exhibits the knowledge of all things and especially of the things of eternity, which are comprehended by the intellect. This reason is eternal, it must be eternal, and reason itself teaches that the eternal is that which has neither beginning nor end nor change nor variation. Reason must be eternal, then, not only because it teaches and demonstrates what is eternal, but much more because eternity itself could not exist without reason; it would not be eternity, I think, if reason itself were not eternal. Secondly, reason itself demonstrates that God exists, or must necessarily exist, and that it must be that He cannot be other than God. Evidently, then, whether there are persons who know this or not, since God is eternal, it cannot be doubted that reason is eternal, since it observes that God must necessarily exist, and thus it proves that it is co-eternal with Him.

There are, however, some truths which reason must take for granted, so that reason precedes and the effect follows of a happening which reason shows in the future, as for example, when the world was made, reason held that there might be a world. Therefore, reason existed before the world. Therefore, too, the things which reason knew were to happen were subsequent to reason, so that reason was first, and afterward came the making of the world. Now, then, since reason shows that God exists or must necessarily exist, what are we to suppose before Him so that God could exist? Do we suppose reason before God as reason before the world, or God before reason, since it is absolutely improbable that God should exist without reason? For, if God is eternal, it is through reason that He is and is eternal, and reason is, then, God or of God, as reason itself teaches. But, if reason is God, it demonstrates

that God is reason, and these can be coeval and co-eternal. Reason itself shows that for God to be such is not possible if He is not God. But, if reason is removed—a forbidden thing to say—there will be no God if there is no reason to prove that God must necessarily exist. God therefore is, since the reason of Him is that He should be. Since there is a God, without doubt there is reason which teaches that He is.

What, then, if it can be said, is first in God: reason or God? But, God will not exist unless reason exists to teach that God must necessarily exist; there will be no reason if there is no God. Therefore, there is neither first nor last. This divine nature possesses somehow and at the same time both reason and God. One begets one: either reason begets God or God begets reason. But, perhaps reason and God might be said to be subordinate or in a subordinate state? God and reason are one in one. It is well said that God begets reason because reason shows that God exists. God is known by reason as the Son by the Father, and reason is known by God as the Father by the Son. For reason itself with God is God. God was never at any time without reason, or reason without God. God exists, then, if reason exists, and the Son exists if the Father exists. Consequently, if reason is removed—to say what it is forbidden to say—then not even God exists, for through reason His act and operation by which He is God also exist. Let us repeat the same arguments. If there was no reason, there was no God; if there is no God, there was no reason. Reason, then, and God are an eternal fact; God and reason are likewise an everlasting fact. But the joining and uniting of reason to God and of God to reason, of the Father to the Son and of the Son to the Father, show forth their beginnings, so to speak, and the causes of their existence, because one cannot exist without the other. Words fail, and what is said is only said to ward off silence. But are we to say that God is the source of reason or reason the source of God, since there can be no fruit without root, nor is the root anything without fruit? Let us draw a comparison, so as to form some idea of God: in the grain of wheat there exists a principle of fertility

which keeps it from being unproductive; but, if there were no grain of wheat, the principle would have nothing from which to produce its effect.

Therefore, since reason which is God either manifests that God is reason or reason is God, the one, so to speak, manifesting the other; and the Father is not manifested except by the Son, and the Son is not manifested except by the Father, so that the Father is seemingly in silence when we come to the Father by the Son, and the Son is seemingly in silence when we come to the Son by the Father; and if one is in some way hidden, the other is manifest in such wise that the one manifesting Himself manifests the other, also, and that one cannot be known while the other remains unknown, we have undertaken an exceedingly toilsome and difficult task in trying to comprehend something about God in spite of our lack of comprehension. Nevertheless, as none of the things which exist are intelligible or knowable without some external appearance, so it is much more true that nothing is known without the Son, that is, without reason. What more? Was the Father irrational at any time, being bereft of reason? Who would dare say it? Therefore, it must be known by reason that God is One of one, or One in one and at the same time One, because God is One and love must necessarily reside in Him, because reason itself teaches that it must always possess love, or God commands that love is always to be made manifest.

V
THE
HUMAN
CONDITION
AND ITS
REMEDY

1. *Sermon 37*

If any one in a city had some bodily sickness, and there was in that place some very skilful physician who was an enemy to the sick man's powerful friends; if any one, I say, in a city were labouring under some dangerous bodily sickness; and there was in the same city a very skilful physician, an enemy as I said, of the sick man's powerful friends, and they were to say to their friend, "Do not call him in, he knows nothing"; and they were to say this, not from any judgment of their mind, but through dislike of him; would he not for his own safety's sake remove from him the groundless assertions of his powerful friends, and with whatever offence to them, in order that he might live but a few days longer, call that physician in, whom common report had given out as most skilful to drive away the disease of his body? Well, the whole race of mankind is sick, not with diseases of the body, but with sin. There lies one great patient from East to West throughout the world. To cure this great patient came the Almighty Physician down. He humbled Himself even to mortal flesh, as it were to the sick man's bed. Precepts of health He gives, and is despised; they who do observe them are delivered. He is despised, when powerful friends say, "He knows nothing." If He knew nothing, His power would not fill the nations. If He knew nothing, He would not have been,

before He was with us. If He knew nothing, He would not have sent the Prophets before Him. Are not those things which were foretold of old, fulfilled now? Does not this Physician prove the power of His art by the accomplishment of His promises? Are not deadly errors overturned throughout the whole world; and by the threshing of the world lusts subdued? Let no one say, "The world was better aforetime than now; ever since the Physician began to exercise His art, many dreadful things we witness here." Marvel not at this. Before that any were in course of healing, the Physician's residence seemed clean of blood; but now rather as seeing what thou dost, shake off all vain delights, and come to the Physician, it is the time of healing, not of pleasure.

Let us then think, brethren, of being cured. If we do not yet know the Physician, yet let us not like frenzied men be violent against Him, or as men in a lethargy turn away from Him. For many through this violence have perished, and many have perished through sleep. The frenzied are they who are made mad for want of sleep. The lethargic are they who are weighed down by excessive sleep. Men are to be found of both these kinds. Against this Physician it is the will of some to be violent, and forasmuch as He is Himself sitting in heaven, they persecute His faithful ones on earth. Yet even such as these He cureth. Many of them having been converted from enemies have become friends, from persecutors have become preachers. Such as these were the Jews, whom, though violent as men in frenzy against Him while He was here, He healed, and prayed for them as He hung upon the Cross. For He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."¹ Yet many of them when their fury was calmed, their frenzy as it were got under, came to know God, and Christ. When the Holy Ghost was sent after the Ascension, they were converted to Him whom they crucified, and as believers drunk in the Sacrament His Blood, which in their violence they shed.

SECTIONS 13, 14

¹ Luke 23:34.

2. *Of the Morals of the Catholic Church*

How then, according to reason, ought man to live? We all certainly desire to live happily; and there is no human being but assents to this statement almost before it is made. But the title happy cannot, in my opinion, belong either to him who has not what he loves, whatever it may be, or to him who has what he loves if it is hurtful, or to him who does not love what he has, although it is good in perfection. For one who seeks what he cannot obtain suffers torture, and one who has got what is not desirable is cheated, and one who does not seek for what is worth seeking for is diseased. Now in all these cases the mind cannot but be unhappy, and happiness and unhappiness cannot reside at the same time in one man; so in none of these cases can the man be happy. I find, then, a fourth case, where the happy life exists—when that which is man's chief good is both loved and possessed. For what do we call enjoyment but having at hand the objects of love? And no one can be happy who does not enjoy what is man's chief good, nor is there any one who enjoys this who is not happy. We must then have at hand our chief good, if we think of living happily.

We must now inquire what is man's chief good, which of course cannot be anything inferior to man himself. For whoever follows after what is inferior to himself, becomes himself inferior. But every man is bound to follow what is best. Wherefore man's chief good is not inferior to man. Is it then something similar to man himself? It must be so, if there is nothing above man which he is capable of enjoying. But if we find something which is both superior to man, and can be possessed by the man who loves it,

who can doubt that in seeking for happiness man should endeavor to reach that which is more excellent than the being who makes the endeavor? For if happiness consists in the enjoyment of a good than which there is nothing better, which we call the chief good, how can a man be properly called happy who has not yet attained to his chief good? Or how can that be the chief good beyond which something better remains for us to arrive at? Such, then, being the chief good, it must be something which cannot be lost against the will. For no one can feel confident regarding a good which he knows can be taken from him, although he wishes to keep and cherish it. But if a man feels no confidence regarding the good which he enjoys, how can he be happy while in such fear of losing it?

Let us then see what is better than man. This must necessarily be hard to find, unless we first ask and examine what man is. I am not now called upon to give a definition of man. The question here seems to me to be—since almost all agree, or at least, which is enough, those I have now to do with are of the same opinion with me, that we are made up of soul and body—What is man? Is he both of these? Or is he the body only, or the soul only? For although the things are two, soul and body, and although neither without the other could be called man (for the body would not be man without the soul, nor again would the soul be man if there were not a body animated by it), still it is possible that one of these may be held to be man, and may be called so. What then do we call man? Is he soul and body, as in a double harness, or like a centaur? Or do we mean the body only, as being in the service of the soul which rules it, as the word lamp denotes not the light and the case together, but only the case, yet it is on account of the light that it is so called? Or do we mean only the mind, and that on account of the body which it rules, as horseman means not the man and the horse, but man only, and that as employed in ruling the horse? This dispute is not easy to settle; or, if the proof is plain, the statement requires time. This is an expenditure of time and strength which we need not incur. For whether the name man belongs to both, or only to the soul, the chief

good of man is not the chief good of the body; but what is the chief good either of both soul and body, or of the soul only, that is man's chief good.

Now if we ask what is the chief good of the body, reason obliges us to admit that it is that by means of which the body comes to be in its best state. But of all the things which invigorate the body, there is nothing better or greater than the soul. The chief good of the body, then, is not bodily pleasure, not absence of pain, not strength, not beauty, not swiftness, or whatever else is usually reckoned among the goods of the body, but simply the soul. For all the things mentioned the soul supplies to the body by its presence, and, what is above them all, life. Hence I conclude that the soul is not the chief good of man, whether we give the name of man to soul and body together, or to the soul alone. For as, according to reason, the chief good of the body is that which is better than the body, and from which the body receives vigor and life, so whether the soul itself is man, or soul and body both, we must discover whether there is anything which goes before the soul itself, in following which the soul comes to the perfection of good of which it is capable in its own kind. If such a thing can be found, all uncertainty must be at an end, and we must pronounce this to be really and truly the chief good of man.

If, again, the body is man, it must be admitted that the soul is the chief good of man. But clearly, when we treat of morals—when we inquire what manner of life must be held in order to obtain happiness—it is not the body to which the precepts are addressed, it is not bodily discipline which we discuss. In short, the observance of good *customs* belongs to that part of us which inquires and learns, which are the prerogatives of the soul; so, when we speak of attaining to virtue, the question does not regard the body. But if it follows, as it does, that the body which is ruled over by a soul possessed of virtue is ruled both better and more honorably, and is in its greatest perfection in consequence of the perfection of the soul which rightfully governs it, that which gives perfection to the soul will be man's chief good, though we call the body man.

For if my coachman, in obedience to me, feeds and drives the horses he has charge of in the most satisfactory manner, himself enjoying the more of my bounty in proportion to his good conduct, can any one deny that the good condition of the horses, as well as that of the coachman, is due to me? So the question seems to me to be not, whether soul and body is man, or the soul only, or the body only, but what gives perfection to the soul; for when this is obtained, a man cannot but be either perfect, or at least much better than in the absence of this one thing.

Following after God is the desire of happiness; to reach God is happiness itself. We follow after God by loving Him; we reach Him, not by becoming entirely what He is, but in nearness to Him, and in wonderful and immaterial contact with Him, and in being inwardly illuminated and occupied by His truth and holiness. He is light itself; we get enlightenment from Him. The greatest commandment, therefore, which leads to happy life, and the first, in this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind." For to those who love the Lord all things issue in good. Hence Paul adds shortly after, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor virtue, nor things present, nor things future, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."² If, then, to those who love God all things issue in good, and if, as no one doubts, the chief or perfect good is not only to be loved, but to be loved so that nothing shall be loved better, as is expressed in the words, "With all thy soul, with all thy heart, and with all thy mind," who, I ask, will not at once conclude, when these things are all settled and most surely believed, that our chief good which we must hasten to arrive at in preference to all other things is nothing else than God? And then, if nothing can separate us from His love, must not this be surer as well as better than any other good?

But let us consider the points separately. No one separates us from this by threatening death. For that with which we love God cannot die, except in not loving God;

² Rom. 8:38, 39.

for death is not to love God, and that is when we prefer anything to Him in affection and pursuit. No one separates us from this in promising life; for no one separates us from the fountain in promising water. Angels do not separate us; for the mind cleaving to God is not inferior in strength to an angel. Virtue does not separate us; for if what is here called virtue is that which has power in this world, the mind cleaving to God is far above the whole world. Or if this virtue is perfect rectitude of our mind itself, this in the case of another will favor our union with God, and in ourselves will itself unite us with God. Present troubles do not separate us; for we feel their burden less the closer we cling to Him from whom they try to separate us. The promise of future things does not separate us; for both future good of every kind is surest in the promise of God, and nothing is better than God Himself, who undoubtedly is already present to those who truly cleave to Him. Height and depth do not separate us; for if the height and depth of knowledge are what is meant, I will rather not be inquisitive than be separated from God; nor can any instruction by which error is removed separate me from Him, by separation from whom it is that any one is in error. Or if what is meant are the higher and lower parts of this world, how can the promise of heaven separate me from Him who made heaven? Or who from beneath can frighten me into forsaking God, when I should not have known of things beneath but by forsaking Him? In short, what place can remove me from His love, when He could not be all in every place unless He were contained in none?

“No other creature,” he says, separates us. O man of profound mysteries! He thought it not enough to say, no creature: but he says no other creature; teaching that that with which we love God and by which we cleave to God, our mind, namely, and understanding, is itself a creature. Thus the body is another creature; and if the mind is an object of intellectual perception, and is known only by this means, the other creature is all that is an object of sense, which as it were makes itself known through the eyes, or ears, or smell, or taste, or touch, and this must be inferior to what is perceived by the intellect alone. Now, as God

also can be known by the worthy, only intellectually, exalted though He is above the intelligent mind as being its Creator and Author, there was danger lest the human mind, from being reckoned among invisible and immaterial things, should be thought to be of the same nature with Him who created it, and so should fall away by pride from Him to whom it should be united by love. For the mind becomes like God, to the extent vouchsafed by its subjection of itself to Him for information and enlightenment. And if it obtains the greatest nearness by that subjection which produces likeness, it must be far removed from Him by that presumption which would make the likeness greater. It is this presumption which leads the mind to obedience to the laws of God, in the desire to be sovereign, as God is.

The farther, then, the mind departs from God, not in space, but in affection and lust after things below Him, the more it is filled with folly and wretchedness. So by love it returns to God a love which places it not along with God, but under Him. And the more ardor and eagerness there is in this, the happier and more elevated will the mind be, and with God as sole governor it will be in perfect liberty. Hence it must know that it is a creature. It must believe what is the truth—that its Creator remains ever possessed of the inviolable and immutable nature of truth and wisdom, and must confess, even in view of the errors from which it desires deliverance, that it is liable to folly and falsehood. But then again, it must take care that it be not separated by the love of the other creature, that is, of this visible world, from the love of God Himself, which sanctifies it in order to lasting happiness. No other creature, then—for we are ourselves a creature—separates us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We ought then to love God, the Trinity in unity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; for this must be said to be God Himself, for it is said of God, truly and in the most exalted sense, "Of whom are all things, by whom are all things, in whom are all things." Those are Paul's words. And what does he add? "To Him be glory."³ All this is exactly true.

³ Rom. 11:36.

He does not say, To them; for God is one. And what is meant by, To Him be glory, but to Him be chief and perfect and widespread praise? For as the praise improves and extends, so the love and affection increases in fervor. And when this is the case, mankind cannot but advance with sure and firm step to a life of perfection and bliss. This, I suppose, is all we wish to find when we speak of the chief good of man, to which all must be referred in life and conduct. For the good plainly exists; and we have shown by reasoning, as far as we were able, and by the divine authority which goes beyond our reasoning, that it is nothing else but God Himself. For how can any thing be man's chief good but that in cleaving to which he is blessed? Now this is nothing but God, to whom we can cleave only by affection, desire, and love.

CHAPTERS 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 14

3. *Enchiridion*

We must now inquire about the meaning of what was said most truly by the apostle concerning God, "Who willeth that all men should be saved." ⁴ For since not all—not even a majority—are saved, it would indeed appear that the fact that what God willeth to happen does not happen is due to an embargo on God's will by the human will.

Now, when we ask for the reason why not all are saved, the customary answer is: "Because they themselves have willed it." But this cannot be said of infants, who have not yet come to the power of willing or not willing. For, if we could attribute to their wills the infant squirmings they make at baptism, when they resist as hard as they can, we would then have to say that they were saved against their will. But the Lord's language is clearer when, in the Gospel, he reproveth the unrighteous city: "How often," he saith,

⁴ I Tim. 2:4.

"would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks, and you would not." ⁵ This sounds as if God's will had been overcome by human wills and as if the weakest, by not willing, impeded the Most Powerful so that he could not do what he willed. And where is that omnipotence by which "whatsoever he willed in heaven and on earth, he has done," if he willed in heaven and on earth, he has done," if he willed to gather the children of Jerusalem's together, and did not do so? Or, is it not rather the case that, although Jerusalem did not will that her children be gathered together by him, yet, despite her unwillingness, God did indeed gather together those children of hers whom he would? It is not that "in heaven and on earth" he hath willed and done some things, and willed other things and not done them. Instead, "all things whatsoever he willed, he hath done."

CHAPTER XXIV (97)

Furthermore, who would be so impiously foolish as to say that God cannot turn the evil wills of men—as he willeth, when he willeth, and where he willeth—toward the good? But, when he acteth, he acteth through mercy; when he doth not act, it is through justice. For, "he hath mercy on whom he willeth; and whom he willeth, he hardeneth." ⁶

Now when the apostle said this, he was commending grace, of which he had just spoken in connection with the twin children in Rebecca's womb: "Before they had yet been born, or had done anything good or bad, in order that the electing purpose of God might continue—not through works but through the divine calling—it was said of them, 'The elder shall serve the younger.'" ⁷ Accordingly, he refers to another prophetic witness, where it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau have I hated." ⁸ Then, realizing how what he said could disturb those whose understanding could not penetrate to this depth of grace, he adds: "What therefore shall we say to this? Is there unrighteousness in God? God forbid!" ⁹ Yet it does seem unfair that, without

⁵ Matt. 23:37.

⁶ Rom. 9:18.

⁷ Rom. 9:11, 12.

⁸ Cf. Mal. 1:2, 3 and Rom. 9:13.

⁹ Rom. 9:14.

any merit derived from good works or bad, God should love the one and hate the other. Now, if the apostle had wished us to understand that there were future good deeds of the one, and evil deeds of the other—which God, of course, foreknew—he would never have said “not of good works” but rather “of *future* works.” Thus he would have solved the difficulty; or, rather, he would have left no difficulty to be solved. As it is, however, when he went on to exclaim, “God forbid!”—that is, “God forbid that there should be unfairness in God”—he proceeds immediately to add (to prove that no unfairness in God is involved here), “For,” he says to Moses, “‘I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will show pity to whom I will show pity.’”¹⁰ Now, who but a fool would think God unfair either when he imposes penal judgment on the deserving or when he shows mercy to the undeserving? Finally, the apostle concludes and says, “Therefore, it is not a question of him who wills nor of him who runs but of God’s showing mercy.”¹¹

Thus both the twins were “by nature children of wrath,”¹² not because of any works of their own, but because they were both bound in the fetters of damnation originally forged by Adam. But He who said, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,” loved Jacob in unmerited mercy, yet hated Esau with merited justice. Since this judgment (of wrath) was due them both, the former learned from what happened to the other that the fact that he had not, with equal merit, incurred the same penalty gave him no ground to boast of his own distinctive merits—but, instead, that he should glory in the abundance of divine grace, because “it is not a question of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God’s showing mercy.”¹³ And, indeed, the whole visage of Scripture and, if I may speak so, the lineaments of its countenance, are found to exhibit a mystery, most profound and salutary, to admon-

¹⁰ Rom. 9:15.

¹¹ Rom. 9:15.

¹² Eph. 2:3.

¹³ Rom. 9:16.

ish all who carefully look thereupon "that he who glories, should glory in the Lord." ¹⁴

Now, after the apostle had commended God's mercy in saying, "So then, there is no question of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God's showing mercy," next in order he intends to speak also of his judgment—for where his mercy is not shown, it is not unfairness but justice. For with God there is no injustice. Thus, he immediately added, "For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I raised you up, that I may show through you my power, and that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.'" Then, having said this, he draws a conclusion that looks both ways, that is, toward mercy and toward judgment: "Therefore," he says, "he hath mercy on whom he willeth, and whom he willeth he hardeneth." He showeth mercy out of his great goodness; he hardeneth out of no unfairness at all. In this way, neither does he who is saved have a basis for glorying in any merit of his own; nor does the man who is damned have a basis for complaining of anything except what he has fully merited. For grace alone separates the redeemed from the lost, all having been mingled together in the one mass of perdition, arising from a common cause which leads back to their common origin. But if any man hears this in such a way as to say: "Why then does he find fault? For who resists his will?"—as if to make it seem that man should not therefore be blamed for being evil *because* God "hath mercy on whom he willeth and whom he willeth he hardeneth"—God forbid that we should be ashamed to give the same reply as we see the molded object say to the molder, "Why have you made me like this?" Or is not the potter master of his clay, to make from the same mass one vessel for honorable, another for ignoble use?"

There are some stupid men who think that in this part of the argument the apostle had no answer to give; and, for lack of a reasonable rejoinder, simply rebuked the audacity of his gainsayer. But what he said—"O man, who are you?"—has actually great weight and in an argument like this recalls man, in a single word, to consider the limits

¹⁴ I Cor. 1:31; cf. Jeremiah 9:24.

of his capacity and, at the same time, supplies an important explanation.

For if one does not understand these matters, who is he to talk back to God? And if one does understand, he finds no better ground even then for talking back. For if he understands, he sees that the whole human race was condemned in its apostate head by a divine judgment so just that not even if a single member of the race were ever saved from it, no one could rail against God's justice. And he sees that those who are saved had to be saved on such terms that it would show—by contrast with the greater number of those not saved but simply abandoned to their wholly just damnation—what the whole mass deserved and to what end God's merited judgment would have brought them, had not his undeserved mercy interposed. Thus every mouth of those disposed to glory in their own merits should be stopped, so that "he that glories may glory in the Lord."¹⁵

CHAPTER XXV (98, 99)

These are "the great works of the Lord, well-considered in all his acts of will"¹⁶—and so wisely well-considered that when his angelic and human creation sinned (that is, did not do what he willed, but what it willed) he could still accomplish what he himself had willed and this through the same creaturely will by which the first act contrary to the Creator's will had been done. As the Supreme Good, he made good use of evil deeds, for the damnation of those whom he had justly predestined to punishment and for the salvation of those whom he had mercifully predestined to grace.

For, as far as they were concerned, they did what God did not will that they do, but as far as God's omnipotence is concerned, they were quite unable to achieve their purpose. In their very act of going against his will, his will was thereby accomplished. This is the meaning of the statement, "The works of the Lord are great, well-considered in all his acts of will"—that in a strange and ineffable fashion even that which is done against his will is not done without

¹⁵ I Cor. 1:31.

¹⁶ Psalm 110:2.

his will. For it would not be done without his allowing it—and surely his permission is not unwilling but willing—nor would he who is good allow the evil to be done, unless in his omnipotence he could bring good even out of evil.

Sometimes, however, a man of good will wills something that God doth not will, even though God's will is much more, and more certainly, good—for under no circumstances can it ever be evil. For example, it is a good son's will that his father live, whereas it is God's good will that he should die. Or, again, it can happen that a man of evil will can will something that God also willeth with a good will—as, for example, a bad son wills that his father die and this is also God's will. Of course, the former wills what God doth not will, whereas the latter does will what God willeth. Yet the piety of the one, though he wills not what God willeth, is more consonant with God's will than is the impiety of the other, who wills the same thing that God willeth. There is a very great difference between what is fitting for man to will and what is fitting for God—and also between the ends to which a man directs his will—and this difference determines whether an act of will is to be approved or disapproved. Actually, God achieveth some of his purposes—which are, of course, all good—through the evil wills of bad men. For example, it was through the ill will of the Jews that, by the good will of the Father, Christ was slain for us—a deed so good that when the apostle Peter would have nullified it he was called "Satan" by him who had come in order to be slain.¹⁷ How good seemed the purposes of the pious faithful who were unwilling that the apostle Paul should go to Jerusalem, lest there he should suffer the things that the prophet Agabus had predicted!¹⁸ And yet God had willed that he should suffer these things for the sake of the preaching of Christ, and for the training of a martyr for Christ. And this good purpose of his he achieved, not through the good will of the Christians, but through the ill will of the Jews. Yet they were more fully his who did not will what he willed than were those who were willing instruments of his purpose—

¹⁷ Matt. 16:23.

¹⁸ Acts 21: 10-12.

for while he and the latter did the very same thing, he worked through them with a good will, whereas they did his good will with their ill will.

But, however strong the wills either of angels or of men, whether good or evil, whether they will what God willeth or will something else, the will of the Omnipotent is always undefeated. And this will can never be evil, because even when it inflicts evils, it is still just; and obviously what is just is not evil. Therefore, whether through pity "he hath mercy on whom he willeth," or in justice "whom he willeth, he hardeneth," the omnipotent God never doth anything except what he doth will, and doth everything that he willeth.

CHAPTER XXVI (100, 101, 102)

Accordingly, when we hear and read in sacred Scripture that God "willeth that all men should be saved,"¹⁹ although we know well enough that not all men are saved, we are not on that account to underrate the fully omnipotent will of God. Rather, we must understand the Scripture, "Who will have all men to be saved," as meaning that no man is saved unless God willeth his salvation: not that there is no man whose salvation he doth not will, but that no one is saved unless He willeth it. Moreover, his will should be sought in prayer, because if he willeth, then what he willeth must necessarily be. And, indeed, it was of prayer to God that the apostle was speaking when he made that statement. Thus, we are also to understand what is written in the Gospel about Him "who enlighteneth every man."²⁰ This means that there is no man who is enlightened except by God.

In any case, the word concerning God, "who will have all men to be saved," does not mean that there is no one whose salvation he doth not will—he who was unwilling to work miracles among those who, he said, would have repented if he had wrought them—but by "all men" we are to understand the whole of mankind, in every single group into which it can be divided: kings and subjects; nobility and plebeians; and the high and the low; the learned and

¹⁹ I Tim. 2:4.

²⁰ John 1:9.

unlearned; the healthy and the sick; the bright, the dull, and the stupid; the rich, the poor, and the middle class; males, females, infants, children, the adolescent, young adults and middle-aged and very old; of every tongue and fashion, of all the arts, of all professions, with the countless variety of wills and minds and all the other things that differentiate people. For from which of these groups doth not God will that some men from every nation should be saved through his only-begotten Son our Lord? Therefore, he doth save them since the Omnipotent cannot will in vain, whatsoever he willeth.

Now, the apostle had enjoined that prayers should be offered "for all men" ²¹ and especially "for kings and all those of exalted station," ²² whose worldly pomp and pride could be supposed to be a sufficient cause for them to despise the humility of the Christian faith. Then, continuing his argument, "for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior" ²³—that is, to pray even for such as these(kings)—the apostle, to remove any warrant for despair, added, "Who willeth that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." ²⁴ Truly, then, God hath judged it good that through the prayers of the lowly he would deign to grant salvation to the exalted—a paradox we have already seen exemplified. Our Lord also useth the same manner of speech in the Gospel, where he saith to the Pharisees, "You tithe mint and rue and every herb." ²⁵ Obviously, the Pharisees did not tithe what belonged to others, nor all the herbs of all the people of other lands. Therefore, just as we should interpret "every herb" to mean "every kind of herb," so also we can interpret "all men" to mean "all kinds of men." We could interpret it in any other fashion, as long as we are not compelled to believe that the Omnipotent have willed anything to be done which was not done. "He hath done all things in heaven and earth, whatsoever he willed," ²⁶ as Truth sings of him,

²¹ I Tim. 2:1.

²² I Tim. 2:2.

²³ I Tim. 2:3.

²⁴ I Tim. 2:4.

²⁵ Luke 11:42.

²⁶ Psalm 135:6.

and surely he hath not willed to do anything that he hath not done. There must be no equivocation on this point.

CHAPTER XXVII (103)

Consequently, God would have willed to preserve even the first man in that state of salvation which he was created and would have brought him in due season, after the begetting of children, to a better state without the intervention of death—where he not only would have been unable to sin, but would not have had even the will to sin—if he had foreknown that man would have had a steadfast will to continue without sin, as he had been created to do. But since he did foreknow that man would make bad use of his free will—that is, that he would sin—God prearranged his own purpose so that he could do good to man, even in man's doing evil, and so that the good will of the Omnipotent should be nullified by the bad will of men, but should nonetheless be fulfilled.

Thus it was fitting that man should be created, in the first place, so that he could will both good and evil—not without reward, if he willed the good; not without punishment, if he willed the evil. But in the future life he will not have the power to will evil; and yet this will not thereby restrict his free will. Indeed, his will will be much freer, because he will then have no power whatever to serve sin. For we surely ought not to find fault with such a will, nor say it is no will, or that it is not rightly called free, when we so desire happiness that we not only are unwilling to be miserable, but have no power whatsoever to will it.

And, just as in our present state, our soul is unable to will unhappiness for ourselves, so then it will be forever unable to will iniquity. But the ordered course of God's plan was not to be passed by, wherein he willed to show how good the rational creature is that is able not to sin, although one unable to sin is better. So, too, it was an inferior order of immortality—but yet it was immortality—in which man was capable of not dying, even if the higher order which is to be is one in which man will be incapable of dying.

Human nature lost the former kind of immortality through the misuse of free will. It is to receive the latter through grace—though it was to have obtained it through merit, if it had not sinned. Not even then, however, could there have been any merit without grace. For although sin had its origin in free will alone, still free will would not have been sufficient to maintain justice, save as divine aid had been afforded man, in the gift of participation in the immutable good. Thus, for example, the power to die when he wills it is in a man's own hands—since there is no one who could not kill himself by not eating (not to mention other means). But the bare will is not sufficient for maintaining life, if the aids of food and other means of preservation are lacking.

Similarly, man in paradise was capable of self-destruction by abandoning justice by an act of will; yet if the life of justice was to be maintained, his will alone would not have sufficed, unless He who made him had given him aid. But, after the Fall, God's mercy was even more abundant, for then the will itself had to be freed from the bondage in which sin and death are the masters. There is no way at all by which it can be freed by itself, but only through God's grace, which is made effectual in the faith of Christ. Thus, as it is written, even the will by which "the will itself is prepared by the Lord"²⁷ so that we may receive the other gifts of God through which we come to the Gift eternal—this too comes from God.

Accordingly, even the life eternal, which is surely the wages of good works, is called a *gift* of God by the apostle. "For the wages of sin," he says, "is death; but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."²⁸ Now, wages for military service are paid as a just debit, not as a gift. Hence, he said "the wages of sin is death," to show that death was not an unmerited punishment for sin but a just debit. But a gift, unless it be gratuitous, is not grace. We are, therefore, to understand that even man's merited goods are gifts from God, and when life eternal is given

²⁷ Prov. 8:35.

²⁸ Rom. 6:23.

through them, what else do we have but “grace upon grace returned”? ²⁹

Man was, therefore, made upright, and in such a fashion that he could either continue in that uprightness—though not without divine aid—or become perverted by his own choice. Whichever of these two man had chosen, God’s will would be done, either by man or at least *concerning* him. Wherefore, since man chose to do his own will instead of God’s, God’s will *concerning* him was done; for, from the same mass of perdition that flowed out of that common source, God maketh “one vessel for honorable, another for ignoble use”;³⁰ the ones for honorable use through his mercy, the ones for ignoble use through his judgment; lest anyone glory in man, or—what is the same thing—in himself.

CHAPTER XXVIII (104, 105, 106, 107)

4. *The Free Choice of the Will, Book II*

God therefore made all natures, not only those that were to persevere in virtue and justice, but those too that in future were to sin. He made them, not so that they should sin; but, whether they willed to sin or not to sin, to be the ornament of the universe. For if there were no souls in the created universe of such quality that they could, if they willed not to sin, attain to the highest in the order of creation; could also, if they chose to do wrong, be made weak and fall—if this quality of creature were not made—something would be lacking to creation, by the absence of which, the stability of things and connected order would be out of harmony.

²⁹ Cf. John 1:16.

³⁰ Rom. 9:21.

Natures of this quality are the most excellent and holy and sublime creatures of the celestial or supercelestial powers, whom God alone rules, to whom the whole world is subject. Without the offices of these just and perfect creatures the universe cannot be. Again, if creatures did not exist, which might choose to sin or not to sin, the order of the universe would not be less, though even so, something would be wanting. Rational human souls then in their work are unequal to these higher creatures: but by reason of nature (spirit) they are equal. Than which yet there are many lower grades; and yet the grades of all creatures constituted by the supreme God are to be praised.

That therefore is the nature of the more sublime office, which not only if it existed not, but also if it chose to sin, would make less the order of the universe. This is the nature of lower energy, which only on condition that it did not exist, not on condition of its doing wrong, would detract from the (integrity of) the universe.

To that former (spirit) nature is given the power, its own proper work, of holding all things (in order), which power cannot be wanting to order. And this nature does not therefore persevere in good will because it was given this work, but therefore was it given because by Him who gave it, it was foreseen to persevere.

And yet (this spirit nature) holds not all things by its own majesty, but by allegiance to Him and obeying the order of Him *from whom and by whom and in whom are all things that are made*.³¹ To this (spirit nature) not sinning was given the power most eminent indeed of containing all things, yet not to it alone, but with it, to that nature that was foreknown to sin in future. For spirit natures surely have a way of uniting forces without mass accumulation, and of disuniting without diminution: so that the former would not be aided in the ease of its action when the latter was united with it; nor was its action more difficult, when the other by sin gave up its work. For spiritual creatures can be united or disunited, not by reason of space or bulk of bodies, but by harmony or by differ-

31 Rom. 11:36.

ence of affections, though individually they may have bodies assigned.

But in the lower and mortal bodies the soul, after sin, rules not its own body in order, in all things according to its will, but as the laws of the universe permit. And such a soul is not therefore inferior to a celestial body, to which body, even earthly bodies are subordinate. For the cloth garment of a condemned slave is much inferior to the garment of the well deserving slave, who is in the high esteem of his master. But the slave himself is more worth than any precious garment because the slave is a man.

This therefore (the pure spirit nature), loyal to God, and in a celestial body, by angelic power also beautifies and rules a body of earth, as He orders, whose design the spirit nature sees in ways that cannot be described. But the other (human spirit) burdened by a mortal frame, with difficulty regulates the very thing within, by which it is weighed down; and yet, so far as it can, it beautifies: but upon other things, lying without, it acts as it can from without by energy that is much impaired.

CHAPTER 11

Hence we gather logically that nothing would have been wanting to the perfect ornament of this lowest level of corporeal creation if that spirit nature had not chosen to sin. Because that which can govern the whole can also govern a part; but that which has less power can not therefore govern what is more ample. Thus a perfect physician can cure a skin infection also; but it follows not that he who can take care of a skin infection can therefore heal the whole man.

The sure reasoning then, if it is examined, by which it is made evident that there must be a creature that would not sin, a creature, that is, that has not the will to sin, that same reasoning also pronounces this—That that creature abstains from sin by free will; and that, not forced, it does not sin; of its own choice it sins not.

However, even though that spirit creature should sin (though it has not sinned as God foresaw that it would not sin); yet if it should sin, God's power of indescribable

might would be sufficient to rule this universe, so that, giving to all things what is fitting and right, He would permit nothing in his whole created empire to go wrong, or to be out of order. Because, whether by no power created for this He ruled the world, or if all the angelic nature had revolted against his laws by sin, He would still rule the world most fittingly and in complete order by force of his own majesty. And it follows not that there was ill will to the spiritual creature (in Him) who made also the corporeal creature far less excellent than even the spiritual creature that sins—He made this corporeal creature in such bounteous goodness that no man reasonably looking upon the earth and sky and all visible natures, governed in their own proper planes, formed and fixed in order—no man, so reasonably looking, can believe that the maker of all is other than God; no man that will not confess that He is to be praised beyond our power to express. Or, if there is no more excellent ordering of things than that in which angelic power by the excellency of its nature and the goodness of will rules in the disposition of the universe, even though all Angels had sinned, they could not be the cause of a defect of power to the Creator of Angels for the right ruling of His own empire.

For the goodness of God, or the power of God would not be lacking, as if by defect or by difficulty, to create others to take the place which the former by sin had left. Nor could the spirit creature, if it were made reprobate for its demerits, in what number soever, prevent the ordinance which excludes those who have deserved condemnation. Whithersoever, therefore, our consideration turns itself, it finds God to be praised beyond the power of human expression—God the All-Good Maker and the All-Just Ruler of the World.

Finally, leaving the contemplation of the beauty of things to those who can see by divine appointment; and, not trying, by means of words, to direct to things unspeakable those who can not see; yet, on account of talking men or weak men, or unbelieving men, let us work out this very important problem by way of a short abridgment.

Every nature that can be made less good is itself good: and every nature when it is depraved is less good. For either depravity hurts it not, then it is not depraved; or, if it is depraved, then depravity hurts it: and, if it hurts, then it makes the good of it somewhat less, and leaves it less good. For if it deprives it completely of all good quality, whatever remains of it can not now be depraved, because there will be no good quality in it, by the taking away of which, depravity can hurt. But that which depravity can not hurt, can not be depraved.

Furthermore, the nature which can not be depraved (or corrupted) is incorruptible. That nature, therefore (which is most unreasonable to say) is by corruption made incorrupt. Wherefore, what is most truly said, follows—all nature in so far as it is nature, is good. For if it is a nature incorruptible, it will be more excellent than a corruptible nature: but, if it is corruptible, then, just so long as it is a subject of corruption, it becomes less good—it is beyond doubt (objectively) good. But every nature is either corruptible or incorruptible. Therefore every nature is good. I call nature here what is usually named substance. Every substance therefore either is God, or from God; because every good either is God, or is from God.

These things being proved and established as the beginning of our reasoning, note what I shall say—Every rational nature, created with free choice of will, if it perseveres unto the enjoying of the supreme and changeless good, is beyond doubt to be praised: and every rational nature that tends to persevere is also to be praised: but every one that perseveres not, and is unwilling so to act as to persevere, in so far as it is not there (in the enjoyment of the supreme and changeless good), and so far as it does not act to be there, is to be blamed.

If therefore the rational nature which is made is to be praised, no one doubts that He is to be praised who made it. And, if (the creature) is reproached no one doubts that in the reproach of the thing made the Maker is praised. When therefore we reproach the rational creature, because it has not the will to enjoy the supreme and changeless good, that is, its Creator, we most assuredly, praise Him.

How great the good therefore, and how much beyond expression is He to be declared good by all tongues, how much to be studied above all thought, how much to be praised, who is the Creator of all, without the approving of whom we can neither be praised nor blamed. For we can be blamed because we remain not in Him, only for this one reason—Because our great and first and supreme good is to remain in Him. Whence then is this, but from the fact that He is the unspeakable good? What then can be found in our sins for the reproach of Him, when the reproach of our sins is meaningless, unless it is in praise of Him?

Then again, in things themselves that are blamed, the object of blame is not the person, but the fault. But the fault of no one is blamed but of that one whose nature is good—the object of praise. For either what you blame is according to nature, then it is not a fault; and you are to be corrected, so that you may know rightly what is to be blamed, rather than that which you wrongly blame: or, if it is a fault that you blame, then it must be contrary to nature, so that it can rightly be blamed.

For every vice (or fault), from very fact that it is vice (or a fault) is opposed to nature. For if it does not hurt nature it is not a fault; but, if it is therefore a fault because it hurts nature, then it is a fault just because it is opposed to nature.

If however a nature is impaired, not by its own fault, but by fault of another, it is wrongly blamed: then we must find out whether that nature, by whose fault another nature could be spoiled, was or was not impaired by its own fault. But what is the fact of being impaired other than the fact of being spoiled by fault?

Furthermore, the nature that is unspoiled is without fault; but that, by the fault of which another nature is spoiled, surely has fault. That nature therefore by whose fault another nature can be spoiled, is first faulty in itself, and earlier (in order of time and of logic) it is spoiled by its own fault. From which it follows that every fault is opposed to nature—opposed to the nature even of that thing to which the fault belongs.

Wherefore, since in anything whatsoever, nothing is blamed but fault, and a fault is because it is opposed to the nature of that thing of which the fault is, it follows that the fault of no thing is rightly blamed, but that thing, the nature of which is praised. For what rightly displeases you in a fault is only because it spoils what pleases you in nature.

CHAPTER 13

This also remains to be seen—Whether it can be said truthfully that any nature is spoiled by the fault of another nature with no addition of its own fault. For if the nature which approaches to spoil another nature by its fault, finds nothing that can be spoiled, it does not spoil that nature. But, if it does find (what is spoilable), it works the spoiling of it by reason of its own united fault. For the more powerful is not spoiled by the less powerful, if he has not the will to be spoiled. But, if he has a will to be spoiled, then he begins to be spoiled by his own fault before he is spoiled by fault of another. For the same reason equal by equal nature can not be spoiled, if it has not the will to be spoiled. For any nature whatsoever that approaches with fault to spoil another nature without fault, by that very fact approaches not as equal, but as less strong, by reason of its own fault. But if the more powerful spoils the less strong, it is either by the fault of both, if it is by the wrong will of both, or it is by fault of the stronger, if that is of such outstanding nature, that even when it is faulty, it outranks the less strong which it spoils.

Who indeed would reproach the fruits of the earth because men use them not well; and spoiled by their own faults, they spoil the fruits by misusing them to excess: while yet it would be the note of a crazy man to hold: that the nature of man, even spoiled by fault, is not more, excellent and more powerful than any unspoiled fruits?

Again it may be that a nature more powerful spoils one less strong, and that this is the fault of neither one, if, that is, we call that fault which deserves blame. But who will presume to blame the man who seeks from his fruits nothing other than the supplements of nature; or, seeking the same fruits, because they are spoiled in the use of his

food? Usually indeed such use is not said to be a spoiling, because spoiling is peculiarly a term of fault. This too can be noted in other things; because generally a more potent nature, in the process of supplying its wants, spoils one that is lower, whether in the order of justice, where fault is proved, from which rule the Apostle has said: *If any man spoil the temple of God, him will God destroy*,³² or in the order of changeful things, one absorbing the other, in accordance with most fitting laws, given to every part of the universe, in proportion to the native energy of each one.

Thus if the sun by its glare were to spoil the eyes of some one, in the measure of nature too weak for the light, the sun is not to be thought of as changing the eyes to supply their want of light (power), or to act by reason of any fault of its own. Nor, again, are the eyes themselves to be blamed, because they so yielded to their owner as to be opened against the light, and (by consequence) are impaired for light itself (in normal use).

Of all spoilings therefore, that spoiling only is to be blamed, which is faulty. Others are not even to be called spoiling; or surely (because they are not faulty), they can not be deserving of blame. For blame itself, because it corresponds to fault only, that is, it is fitting and due to fault, is believed to have drawn from that fact the structure of the word, so that *vituperatio* is built up from *vitium*.

But a fault, as I had begun to say, is not bad for any other reason than that it is opposed to the nature of the thing itself, of which it is the fault. Whence it is clear, that that same thing whose fault is blamed, is praiseworthy by reason of its nature. So that we may acknowledge that absolutely the very blaming of faults is the praise of nature, that is, or those natures whose faults are blamed.

Truly because a fault is opposed to nature, so much is added to the malice of faults as is taken away from the integrity of natures. When therefore you blame a fault, you are logically praising that, the integrity of which you desire: But to what does integrity belong, but to nature? For nature complete, not only merits no blame, but, in its

own kind, is worthy of praise. What therefore you may have seen wanting to the perfection of nature you call a fault; bearing witness evidently, that that pleases, which, by blaming its imperfection, you would have to be perfect.

CHAPTER 14

If therefore the blaming of faults suggests the beauty and the worth of those very natures of which they are faults, how much more is God, the Maker of all natures, to be praised, even in the faults of those natures—because from Him they hold the fact that they are natures; and, so far are they faulty, as they depart from the art of Him by whom they were made; and blame is found in them rightly just so far as the one who blames sees the art by which they were made, so that he may blame in them what he does not see there (departure from the standard).

And if the art by which all things are made is this—The supreme and changeless wisdom of God, that truly and supremely *is*, as it *is*. See, then, whither that tends which departs from it. What defect, then, would be worthy of blame, if the voluntary defect were free from blame?

Mark now, I ask, whether you would blame rightly that which is as it ought to be. I think not. But you would blame rightly what is not as it ought to be. But no one owes what he has not received. And to whom does one owe? And the things which are delivered in settling accounts are delivered to the one who had kept the account. And anything of credit to rightful successors, is paid to those who by right succeed to the creditors. Otherwise it would not be a payment, but a release or a surrender, or whatever else those transactions are called.

Wherefore of all temporal things which are placed in this order of things, so that the future can not succeed to the past without making it less, in order that the whole beauty of all times may be completed—in all this order of things it is more unreasonable for us to say that things ought not to fail. For so much as they have received, so much they do, and so much they return to Him, to whom they owe the fact that they are in so far as they are.

He indeed who is discontented because these things

fail ought to take note of his own speech, this very sentence which makes the complaint, if he judges it to be fair and proceeding from prudence. If someone is delighted by one particle of speech so far as it refers to sound, and will not have it pass on to give place for the rest, so that a sentence may be built up by passing and succeeding parts, such a one will be judged to be a quality of mind peculiarly unsound.

In those things therefore which fail or are deficient because they have been given limited being only, so that all in proper order may complete integral time, no one finds fault or blames defect or failure. Because no one can say (reasonably): "It ought to remain," while, in fact, it can not pass the proper limits given to it.

In rational creatures, however, in whom all beauty, whether they sin or do not sin, is terminated in ways most fitting; either there are no sins, which is most unreasonable (in the face of facts—for he sins at any rate, hypothetically, who condemns as sins, things that are not sins); or sins are not to be blamed, which is not less absurd. Things that are not rightly done are praised (in process of this sophistry), and the whole attention of the human mind begins to be unsteady, and human life is subverted. On the other hand that which is done rightly, as it ought to be done, will be blamed, and a damnable, or to speak less harshly, a miserable habit of mind, will begin its course—or, again, if reason, fundamentally right, compels, as it does compel us to blame sins and whatever is rightly reproached, then it is reproached just because it is not as it ought to be. Ask, now, what a nature that is sinful ought to do—you will find the answer—right action. Ask to whom this is due—you will find the answer—God, from whom nature received the power to do right when it wills so to do; from Him too it holds the fact that it is unhappy, when it does not right, that it is happy, when it does right.

The soul is not permitted not to pay its debt (of right action), because no one rises superior to the laws of the Almighty Creator. Either the soul gives back what it has received by the right using of it, or it pays back by losing

what it was unwilling to use rightly. Therefore, if it does not give back by doing justice, it will give back by suffering misery, because in one term and the other is expressed this word—debt (moral obligation). What has been said could also be expressed in this way: If he pays not by *doing* what he ought, he will pay by *suffering* what he ought.

But these two are not separated by any interval of time, so that one may do what he ought not at one time, and suffer what he ought at another time. The universal beauty is not marred by even a point of time, so that the dishonor of sin is (in God's design) never without the just adornment of its penalty. But whatever is now sanctioned by law unseen is kept unto future judgment for manifestation, and for the (full) sense of unhappiness. For as he, who wakes not, sleeps; so, whosoever does not what he ought, without interval (of time), suffers what he ought; because the beauty of justice is so great that no one can depart from it but to (his own) unhappiness. In all failures therefore (of the rational creature), either they did not receive beyond the fact that they fail, and there is no fault (of the Creator); just as in their being, while they receive no more than what they are, there is no fault: or they have not the will to be, that which, if they did will, they received so that they could be (willing): and because that is good (the object of the will), if they will it not, it is guilt.

CHAPTER 15

But God owes nothing to any one, because He is over all things without recompense. And if some one shall say that something is owing to the merits of men; there surely was no obligation that they should *be*: Man then was not, to whom anything could be owing. And yet what merit is it to be converted to Him from whom you have your being; so that by Him you may be better from whom you have the very fact what you are?

What then do you put forward so that you may demand what is owing; since, if you are not willing to be converted to Him, it is not loss to Him, but to you, He is loss, without whom, you would not be—He by whom you are so made, that unless you return to Him that which from Him

you are, you will be, not nothing, but you will be not happy? All things therefore are owing to Him. First, whatsoever they are, is owing, in so far as they are natures. Then, the natures which have received the power to will, owe what, if they will they can be, better; and that, by will, they ought to be. No one therefore is guilty from that which he has not received: but, from the fact that he does not what he ought to do, he is guilty. But, if one has received a free will and sufficient power, he owes the right use of the free will.

But when one does not what he ought to do, it is no fault of the Maker, and it may be His praise; because he who owes suffers, and in the fact that he is blamed for not doing what he ought, He, to whom it is due, is praised.

If then you are praised in seeing what you ought to do, since you see this obligation only in the immutable truth (the natural light of reason), how much more is He to be praised who commands you to have a right will; and has given you the power (to choose); and permits not the wrong choice of the will to go unpunished? "If then (it is objected) everyone owes what he has received, and man is so made that he sins necessarily, then he owes this fact that he sins. Therefore when he sins, he does what he ought to do."

But, saying this is impious, if no one is forced by his own nature to sin; and no other nature forces him. For no one sins, when he experiences that which he wills not. Indeed, if he suffers according to justice, he sins not in that which unwillingly he experiences; but in that he sins which he has done willingly, which, if he did not will, he would not experience according to justice. But, if unjustly he suffers, how does he sin? For, not the suffering of a thing contrary to justice, but the doing of something contrary to justice is sin. But, if no one is forced to sin, whether in accord with his own nature, or constrained by the nature of another, it follows that he sins by his own will.

If you, then, would attribute this to the Maker, you will excuse the sinner (his fault): who, if he is defended rightly, has not sinned, because he has done nothing beyond what is instituted by the Maker: there is nothing therefore

that you can attribute to the Maker (by way of a fault). Let us therefore praise the Maker, if the sinner is justly defended, he is not a sinner: Therefore praise the Creator. But if the sinner can not be defended, then he is a sinner in just so far as he has turned himself from the Creator—therefore, praise the Creator.

I find not therefore, and altogether I affirm that it cannot be found, how our sins can be attributed to our Creator and our God; because I find that He is to be praised, not only in the fact that He punishes sin, but that sins then are facts when we turn away from his truth.

E. I accept and most heartily approve, and I agree that it is altogether true that in no way can it be shown that our sins can be attributed rightly to our Creator.

CHAPTER 16

VI
GRACE
AND
FREEDOM

1. On Nature and Grace

Man's nature, indeed, was created at first faultless and without any sin; but that nature of man in which every one is born from Adam, now wants the Physician, because it is not sound. All good qualities, do not doubt, which it still possesses in its make, life, senses, intellect, it has of the Most High God, its Creator and Maker. But the flaw, which darkens and weakens all those natural goods, so that it has need of illumination and healing, it has not contracted from its blameless Creator—but from that original sin, which it committed by free will. Accordingly, criminal nature has its part in most righteous punishment. For, if we are now newly created in Christ, we were, for all that, children of wrath, even as others, “but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by whose grace we were saved.”¹

CHAPTER 3

This grace, however, of Christ, without which neither infants nor adults can be saved, is not rendered for any merits, but is given *gratis*, on account of which it is also called *grace*. “Being justified,” says the apostle, “freely through His blood.”² Whence they, who are not liberated

¹ Eph. 2:4, 5.

² Rom. 3:24.

through grace, either because they are not yet able to hear or because they are unwilling to obey; or again because they did not receive, at the time when they were unable on account of youth to hear, that bath of regeneration, which they might have received and through which they might have been saved, are indeed justly condemned; because they are not without sin, either that which they have derived from their birth, or that which they have added from their own misconduct. "For all have sinned"—whether in Adam or in themselves—"and come short of the glory of God." ³

CHAPTER 4

The entire mass, therefore, incurs penalty; and if the deserved punishment of condemnation were rendered to all, it would without doubt be righteously rendered. They, therefore, who are delivered therefrom by grace are called, not vessels of their own merits, but "vessels of mercy." But of whose mercy, if not His who sent Christ Jesus into the world to save sinners, whom He foreknew, and fore-ordained, and called, and justified, and glorified? ⁴ Now, who could be so madly insane as to fail to give ineffable thanks to the Mercy which liberates whom it would? The man who correctly appreciated the whole subject could not possibly blame the justice of God in wholly condemning all men whatsoever.

CHAPTER 5

"Well, be it so," says he [Pelagius], "I agree"; he testifies to the fact that all were sinners. He says, indeed, what they have been, not that they might not have been something else. "Wherefore," he adds, "if all men could be proved to be sinners, it would not by any means prejudice our own definite position, in insisting not so much on what men are, as on what they are able to be." He is right for once to allow that no man living is justified in God's sight. He contends, however, that this is not the question, but that the point lies in the possibility of a man's not sinning—on which subject it is unnecessary for us to take ground against him; for, in truth, I do not much care about ex-

³ Rom. 3:23.⁴ Rom. 8:29, 30.

pressing a definite opinion on the question, whether in the present life there ever have been, or now are, or ever can be, any persons who have had, or are having, or are to have, the love of God so perfectly as to admit of no addition to it (for nothing short of this amounts to a most true, full, and perfect righteousness). For I ought not too sharply to contend as to when, or where, or in whom is done that which I confess and maintain can be done by the will of man, aided by the grace of God. Nor do I indeed contend about the actual possibility, forasmuch as the possibility under dispute advances with the realization in the saints, their human will being healed and helped; whilst "the love of God," as fully as our healed and cleansed nature can possibly receive it, "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us." ⁵

In a better way, therefore, is God's cause promoted (and it is to its promotion that our author professes to apply his warm defence of nature) when He is acknowledged as our Savior no less than as our Creator, than when His succour to us as Savior is impaired and dwarfed to nothing by the defence of the creature, as if it were sound and its resources entire.

CHAPTER 49

What he says, however, is true enough, "that God is as good as just, and made man such that he was quite able to live without the evil of sin, if only he had been willing." For who does not know that man was made whole and faultless, and endowed with a free will and a free ability to lead a holy life? Our present inquiry, however, is about the man whom "the thieves" left half dead on the road, and who, being disabled and pierced through with heavy wounds, is not so able to mount up to the heights of righteousness as he was able to descend therefrom; who moreover, if he is now in "the inn," is in process of cure. God therefore does not command impossibilities; but in His command He counsels you both to do what you can for yourself, and to ask His aid in what you cannot do. Now, we should see whence comes the possibility, and whence the impossibility. This man

⁵ Rom. 5:5.

says: "That proceeds not from a man's will which he can do by nature." I say: A man is not righteous by his will if he can be by nature. He will, however, be able to accomplish by remedial aid what he is rendered incapable of doing by his flaw.

CHAPTER 50

But why need we tarry longer on general statements? Let us go into the core of the question, which we have to discuss with our opponents solely, or almost entirely, on one particular point. For inasmuch as he says that "as far as the present question is concerned, it is not pertinent to inquire whether there have been or now are any men in this life without sin, but whether they had or have the ability to be such persons"; so, were I even to allow that there have been or are any such, I should not by any means therefore affirm that they had or have the ability, unless justified by the grace of God through our Lord "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." For the same faith which healed the saints of old now heals us—that is to say, faith "in the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,⁶—faith in His blood, faith in His cross, faith in His death and resurrection. As we therefore have the same spirit of faith, we also believe, and on that account also speak.

CHAPTER 51

Let us, however, observe what our author answers, after laying before himself the question wherein he seems indeed so intolerable to Christian hearts. He says: "But you will tell me this is what disturbs a great many—that you do not maintain that it is by the grace of God that a man is able to be without sin." Certainly this is what causes us disturbance; this is what we object to him. He touches the very point of the case. This is what causes us such utter pain to endure it; this is why we cannot bear to have such points debated by Christians, owing to the love which we feel towards others and towards themselves. Well, let us hear how he clears himself from the objectionable character of the question he has raised. "What blindness of ignorance," he exclaims, "what sluggishness of an unin-

⁶ 1 Tim. 2:5.

structed mind, which supposes that that is maintained and held to be without God's grace which it only hears ought to be attributed to God!" Now, if we knew nothing of what follows this outburst of his, and formed our opinion on simply hearing these words, we might suppose that we had been led to a wrong view of our opponents by the spread of report and by the asseveration of some suitable witnesses among the brethren. For how could it have been more pointedly and truly stated that the possibility of not sinning, to whatever extent it exists or shall exist in man, ought only to be attributed to God? This too is our own affirmation. We may shake hands.

CHAPTER 52

Well, are there other things to listen to? Yes, certainly; both to listen to, and correct and guard against. "Now, when it is said," he says, "that the very ability is not at all of man's will, but of the Author of nature,—that is, God—how can that possibly be understood to be without the grace of God which is deemed especially to belong to God?" Already we begin to see what he means; but that we may not lie under any mistake, he explains himself with greater breadth and clearness: "That this may become still plainer, we must," says he, "enter on a somewhat fuller discussion of the point. Now we affirm that the possibility of anything lies not so much in the ability of a man's will as in the necessity of nature." He then proceeds to illustrate his meaning by examples and similes. "Take," says he, "for instance, my ability to speak. That I am able to speak is not my own; but that I do speak is my own—that is, of my own will. And because the act of my speaking is my own, I have the power of alternative action—that is to say, both to speak and to refrain from speaking. But because my ability to speak is not my own, that is, is not of my own determination and will, it is of necessity that I am always able to speak; and though I wished not to be able to speak, I am unable, nevertheless, to be unable to speak, unless perhaps I were to deprive myself of that member whereby the function of speaking is to be performed." Many means, indeed, might be mentioned whereby, if he wish it, a man may deprive himself of the

possibility of speaking, without removing the organ of speech. If, for instance, anything were to happen to a man to destroy his voice, he would be unable to speak, although the members remained; for a man's voice is of course no member. There may, in short, be an injury done to the member internally, short of the actual loss of it. I am, however, unwilling to press the argument for a word; and it may be replied to me in the contest, "Why, even to injure is to lose." But yet we can so contrive matters, by closing and shutting the mouth with bandages, as to be quite incapable of opening it, and to put the opening of it out of our power, although it was quite in our own power to shut it while the strength and healthy exercise of the limbs remained.

CHAPTER 53

Now how does all this apply to our subject? Let us see what he makes out of it. "Whatever," says he, "is fettered by natural necessity is deprived of determination of will and deliberation." Well, now, here lies a question; for it is the height of absurdity for us to say that it does not belong to our will that we wish to be happy, on the ground that it is absolutely impossible for us to be unwilling to be happy, by reason of some indescribable but amiable coercion of our nature; nor dare we maintain that God has not the will but the necessity of righteousness, because He cannot will to sin.

CHAPTER 54

Mark also what follows. "We may perceive," says he, "the same thing to be true of hearing, smelling, and seeing—that to hear, and to smell, and to see is of our own power, while the ability to hear, and to smell, and to see is not of our own power, but lies in a natural necessity." Either I do not understand what he means, or he does not himself. For how is the possibility of seeing not in our own power, if the necessity of not seeing is in our own power because blindness is in our own power, by which we can deprive ourselves, if we will, of this very ability to see? How, moreover, is it in our own power to see whenever we will, when, without any loss whatever to our natural structure of body in the organ of sight, we are unable, even

though we wish, to see—either by the removal of all external lights during the night, or by our being shut up in some dark place? Likewise, if our ability or our inability to hear is not in our own power, but lies in the necessity of nature, whereas our actual hearing or not hearing is of our own will, how comes it that he is inattentive to the fact that there are so many things which we hear against our will, which penetrate our sense even when our ears are stopped, as the creaking of a saw near to us, or the grunt of a pig? Although the said stopping of our ears shows plainly enough that it does not lie within our own power not to hear so long as our ears are open; perhaps, too, such a stopping of our ears as shall deprive us of the entire sense in question proves that even the ability not to hear lies within our own power. As to his remarks, again, concerning our sense of smell, does he not display no little carelessness when he says “that it is not in our own power to be able or to be unable to smell, but that it is in our own power”—that is to say, in our free will—“to smell or not to smell?” For let us suppose some one to place us, with our hands firmly tied, but yet without any injury to our olfactory members, among some bad and noxious smells; in such a case we altogether lose the power, however strong may be our wish, not to smell, because every time we are obliged to draw breath we also inhale the smell which we do not wish.

CHAPTER 55

“Inasmuch,” says he, “as not to sin is ours, we are able to sin and to avoid sin.” What, then, if another should say: “Inasmuch as not to wish for unhappiness is ours, we are able both to wish for it and not to wish for it”? And yet we are positively unable to wish for it. For who could possibly wish to be unhappy, even though he wishes for something else from which unhappiness will ensue to him against his will? Then again, inasmuch as, in an infinitely greater degree, it is God’s not to sin, shall we therefore venture to say that He is able both to sin and to avoid sin? God forbid that we should ever say that He is able to sin! For He cannot, as foolish persons suppose, therefore fail to be almighty, because He is unable to die, or be-

cause He cannot deny Himself. What, therefore, does he mean? By what method of speech does he try to persuade us on a point which he is himself loath to consider? For he advances a step further, and says: "Inasmuch as, however, it is not of us to be able to avoid sin; even if we were to wish not to be able to avoid sin, it is not in our power to be unable to avoid sin." It is an involved sentence, and therefore a very obscure one. It might, however, be more plainly expressed in some way as this: "Inasmuch as to be able to avoid sin is not of us, then, whether we wish it or do not wish it, we are able to avoid sin!" He does not say, "Whether we wish it or do not wish it, we do not sin"—for we undoubtedly do sin, if we wish—but yet he asserts that, whether we will or not, we have the capacity of not sinning—a capacity which he declares to be inherent in our nature. Of a man, indeed, who has his legs strong and sound, it may be said admissibly enough, "Whether he will or not he has the capacity of walking"; but if his legs be broken, however much he may wish, he has not the capacity. The nature of which our author speaks is corrupted. "Why is dust and ashes proud?" ⁷ It is corrupted. It implores the Physician's help. "Save me, O Lord," ⁸ is its cry; "Heal my soul." ⁹ it exclaims. Why does he check such cries so as to hinder future health, by insisting, as it were, on its present capacity? CHAPTER 57

Observe also what remark he adds, by which he thinks that his position is confirmed: "No will," says he, "can take away that which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature." Whence then comes that utterance: "So then ye cannot do the things that ye would"? ¹⁰ Whence also this: "For what good I would, that I do not; but what evil I hate, that do I"? ¹¹ Where is that capacity which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature? See, it is human beings who do not what they will; and it is about

⁷ Eccles. 10:9.

⁸ Psalm 12:1.

⁹ Psalm 61:4.

¹⁰ Gal. 55:17.

¹¹ Rom. 7:15.

not sinning, certainly, that he was treating—not about not flying, because it was men, not birds, that formed his subject. Behold, it is man who does not the good which he would, but does the evil which he would not: “To will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good is not present.”¹² Where is the capacity which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature? For whomsoever the apostle represents by himself, if he does not speak these things of his own self, he certainly represents a man by himself. By our author, however, it is maintained that our human nature actually possesses an inseparable capacity of not at all sinning. Such a statement, however, even when made by a man who knows not the effect of his words (but this ignorance is hardly attributable to the man who suggests these statements for unwary though God-fearing men), causes the grace of Christ to be “made of none effect,”¹³ since it is pretended that human nature is sufficient for its own holiness and justification. CHAPTER 58

In order, however, to escape from the odium wherewith Christians guard their salvation, he parries their question when they ask him, “Why do you affirm that man without the help of God’s grace is able to avoid sin?” by saying, “The actual capacity of not sinning lies not so much in the power of will as in the necessity of nature. Whatever is placed in the necessity of nature undoubtedly appertains to the Author of nature, that is, God. How then,” says he, “can that be regarded as spoken without the grace of God which is shown to belong in an especial manner to God?” Here the opinion is expressed which all along was kept in the background; there is, in fact, no way of permanently concealing such a doctrine. The reason why he attributes to the grace of God the capacity of not sinning is, that God is the Author of nature, in which, he declares, this capacity of avoiding sin is inseparably implanted. Whenever He wills a thing, no doubt He does it; and what He wills not, that He does not. Now,

¹² Rom. 7:18.

¹³ I Cor. 1:17.

wherever there is this inseparable capacity, there cannot accrue any infirmity of the will; or rather, there cannot be both a presence of will and a failure in "performance."¹⁴ This, then, being the case, how comes it to pass that "to will is present, but how to perform that which is good" is not present? Now, if the author of the work we are discussing spoke of that nature of man, which was in the beginning created faultless and perfect, in whatever sense his dictum be taken, "that it has an inseparable capacity"—that is, so to say, one which cannot be lost—then that nature ought not to have been mentioned at all which could be corrupted, and which could require a physician to cure the eyes of the blind, and restore in that capacity of seeing which had been lost through blindness. For I suppose a blind man would like to see, but is unable; but, whenever a man wishes to do a thing and cannot, there is present to him the will, but he has lost the capacity. CHAPTER 59

2. On the Spirit and the Letter

Do we then by grace make void free will? God forbid! Nay, rather we establish free will. For even as the law by faith, so free will by grace, is not made void, but established.¹⁵ For neither is the law fulfilled except by free will; but by the law is the knowledge of sin, by faith the acquisition of grace against sin, by grace the healing of the soul from the disease of sin, by the health of the soul freedom of will, by free will the love of righteousness, by love of righteousness the accomplishment of the law. Accordingly, as the law is not made void, but is established through faith, since faith procures grace whereby the law is fulfilled; so free will is not made void through grace, but is established, since grace cures the will whereby righteous-

¹⁴ Rom. 8:9.

¹⁵ Rom. 3:31.

ness is freely loved. . . . How is it then that miserable men dare to be proud, either of their free will, before they are freed, or of their own strength, if they have been freed? They do not observe that in the very mention of free will they will pronounce the name of liberty. But "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."¹⁶ If, therefore, they are the slaves of sin, why do they boast of free will? For by what a man is overcome, to the same is he delivered as a slave. But if they have been freed, why do they vaunt themselves as if it were by their own doing, and boast, as if they had not received? Or are they free in such sort that they do not choose to have Him for their Lord who says to them: "Without me ye can do nothing";¹⁷ and "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"?¹⁸

CHAPTER 52

Some one will ask whether the faith itself, in which seems to be the beginning either of salvation, or of that series leading to salvation which I have just mentioned, is placed in our power. We shall see more easily, if we first examine with some care what "our power" means. Since, then, there are two things—will and ability; it follows that not every one that has the will has therefore the ability also, nor has every one that possesses the ability the will also; for as we sometimes will what we cannot do, so also we sometimes can do what we do not will. From the words themselves when sufficiently considered, we shall detect, in the very ring of the terms, the derivation of volition from willingness, and of *ability* of ableness. Therefore, even as the man who wishes has volition, so also the man who can has ability. But in order that a thing may be done by ability, the volition must be present. For no man is usually said to do a thing with ability if he did it unwillingly. Although, at the same time, if we observe more precisely, even what a man is compelled to do unwillingly, he does, if he does it, by his volition; only he is said to be an unwilling agent, or to act against his will, be-

¹⁶ II Cor. 3:17.¹⁷ John 15:5.¹⁸ John 8:36.

cause he would prefer some other thing. He is compelled, indeed, by some unfortunate influence, to do what he does under compulsion, wishing to escape it or to remove it out of his way. For if his volition be so strong that he prefers not doing this to not suffering that, then beyond doubt he resists the compelling influence, and does it not. And accordingly, if he does it, it is not with a full and free will, but yet it is not without will that he does it; and inasmuch as the volition is followed by its effect, we cannot say that he lacked the ability to do it. If, indeed, he willed to do it, yielding to compulsion, but could not, although we should allow that a coerced will was present, we should yet say that ability was absent. But when he did not do the thing because he was unwilling, then of course the ability was present, but the volition was absent, since he did it not, by his resistance to the compelling influence. Hence it is that even they who compel, or who persuade, are accustomed to say, Why don't you do what you have in your ability, in order to avoid this evil? While they who are utterly unable to do what they are compelled to do, because they are supposed to be able usually to answer by excusing themselves, and say, I would do it if it were in my ability. What then do we ask more, since we call that ability when to the volition is added the faculty of doing? Accordingly, every one is said to have that in his ability which he does if he likes, and does not if he dislikes.

CHAPTER 53

But it remains for us briefly to inquire, whether the will by which we believe be itself the gift of God, or whether it arise from that free will which is naturally implanted in us? If we say that it is not the gift of God? we must then incur the fear of supposing that we have discovered some answer to the apostle's reproachful appeal: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"¹⁹—even some such an answer as this: "See, we have the will to believe, which we did not receive. See in what we glory—even in what we did not receive!"

19 I Cor. 4:7.

If, however, we were to say that this kind of will is nothing but the gift of God, we should then have to fear lest unbelieving and ungodly men might not unreasonably seem to have some fair excuse for their unbelief, in the fact that God has refused to give them this will. Now this that the apostle says, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His own good pleasure," ²⁰ belongs already to that grace which faith secures, in order that good works may be within the reach of man—even the good works which faith achieves through the love which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. If we believe that we may attain this grace (and of course believe voluntarily), then the question arises, whence we have this will?—Of from nature, why it is not at everybody's command, since the same God made all men? if from God's gift, then again, why is not the gift open to all, since "He will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth"? ²¹

CHAPTER 57

Let us then, first of all, lay down this proposition, and see whether it satisfies the question before us: that free will, naturally assigned by the Creator to our rational soul, is such a neutral power, as can either incline towards faith, or turn towards unbelief. Consequently a man cannot be said to have even that will with which he believes in God, without having received it; since this rises at the call of God out of the free will which he received naturally when he was created. God no doubt wishes all men to be saved and to come into the knowledge of the truth; but yet not so as to take away from them free will, for the good or the evil use of which they may be most righteously judged. This being the case, unbelievers indeed do contrary to the will of God when they do not believe His gospel; nevertheless they do not therefore overcome His will, but rob their own selves of the great, nay, the very greatest, good, and implicate themselves in penalties of punishment, destined to experience the power of Him in punishments whose mercy in His gifts they despised. Thus God's will is

²⁰ Phil. 2:13.

²¹ I Tim. 2:4.

for ever invincible; but it would be vanquished, unless it devised what to do with such as despised it, or if these despisers could in any way escape from the retribution which He has appointed for such as they. Suppose a master, for example, who should say to his servants, I wish you to labour in my vineyard, and, after your work is done, to feast and take your rest; but who, at the same time, should require any who refused to work to grind in the mill ever after. Whoever neglected such a command would evidently act contrary to the master's will; but he would do more than that—he would vanquish that will, if he also escaped the mill. This, however, cannot possibly happen under the government of God. Whence it is written, "God hath spoken once," that is, irrevocably, although the passage may refer also to His one only Word.²² He then adds what it is which He had irrevocably uttered, saying: "Twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God. Also unto Thee, O Lord, doth mercy belong: because Thou wilt render to every man according to his work."²³ He therefore will be guilty unto condemnation under God's power, who shall think too contemptuously of His mercy to believe in Him. But whosoever shall put his trust in Him, and yield himself up to Him, for the forgiveness of all his sins, for the cure of all his corruption, and for the kindling and illumination of his soul by His warmth and light, shall have good works by his grace; and by them he shall be even in his body redeemed from the corruption of death, crowned, satisfied with blessings—not temporal, but eternal—above what we can ask or understand.

CHAPTER 58

²² John 1:1.²³ Psalm 62:11, 12.

3. *On Grace and Free Will*

The Pelagians think that they know something great when they assert that "God would not command what He knew could not be done by man." Who can be ignorant of this? But God commands some things which we cannot do, in order that we may know what we ought to ask of Him. For this is faith itself, which obtains by prayer what the law commands. He, indeed, who said, "If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments," did in the same book of Ecclesiasticus afterwards say, "Who shall give a watch before my mouth, and a seal of wisdom upon my lips, that I fall not suddenly thereby, and that my tongue destroy me not." Now he had certainly heard and received these commandments: "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile."²⁴ Forasmuch, then, as what he said is true: "If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments," why does he want a watch to be given before his mouth, like him who says in the Psalm, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth"?²⁵ Why is he not satisfied with God's commandment and his own will; since, if he has the will, he shall keep the commandments? How many of God's commandments are directed against pride! He is quite aware of them; if he will, he may keep them. Why, therefore, does he shortly afterwards say, "O God, Father and God of my life, give me not a proud look"? The law had long ago said to him, "Thou shalt not covet";²⁶ let him then only will, and do what he is bidden, because, if he has the will, he shall keep the commandments. Why, therefore, does he afterwards say, "Turn away from me concupiscence"? Against luxury, too, how many commandments has God enjoined! Let a man observe them; because, if he

²⁴ Psalm 34:13.

²⁵ Psalm 141:3.

²⁶ Ex. 20:17.

will, he may keep the commandments. But what means that cry to God, "Let not the greediness of the belly nor lust of the flesh take hold on me!"? Now, if we were to put this question to him personally, he would very rightly answer us and say, From that prayer of mine, in which I offer this particular petition to God, you may understand in what sense I said, "If thou wilt, thou mayest keep the commandments." For it is certain that we keep the commandments if we will; but because the will is prepared by the Lord, we must ask of Him for such a force of will as suffices to make us act by the willing. It is certain that it is we that *will* when we will, but it is He who makes us will what is good, of whom it is said (as he has just now expressed it), "The will is prepared by the Lord." ²⁷ Of the same Lord it is said, "The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and his way doth He will." ²⁸ Of the same Lord again it is said, "It is God who worketh in you, even to will!" ²⁹ It is certain that it is we that act when we act; but it is He who makes us act, by applying efficacious powers to our will.

CHAPTER 32

He, therefore, who wishes to do God's commandment, but is unable, already possesses a good will, but as yet a small and weak one; he will, however, become able when he shall have acquired a great and robust will. When the martyrs did the great commandments which they obeyed, they acted by a great will—that is, with great love. Of this love the Lord Himself thus speaks: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." ³⁰ In accordance with this, the apostle also says, "He that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law. For this: Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." ³¹ Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore

²⁷ Prov. 7:35.

²⁸ Psalms 37:23.

²⁹ Phil. 2:13.

³⁰ John 15:13.

³¹ Lev. 19:18.

love is the fulfilling of the law.”³² This love the Apostle Peter did not yet possess, when he for fear thrice denied the Lord. “There is no fear in love,” says the Evangelist John in his first Epistle, “but perfect love casteth out fear.”³³ But yet, however small and imperfect his love was, it was not wholly wanting when he said to the Lord, “I will lay down my life for Thy sake”;³⁴ for he supposed himself able to effect what he felt himself willing to do. And who was it that had begun to give him his love, however small, but He who prepares the will, and perfects by His co-operation what He initiates by His operation? Forasmuch as in beginning He works in us that we may have the will, and in perfecting works with us when we have the will. On which account the apostle says, “I am confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”³⁵ He operates, therefore, without us, in order that we may will; but when we will, and so will that we may act, He co-operates with us. We can, however, ourselves do nothing to effect good works of piety without Him either working that we may will, or co-working when we will. Now, concerning His working that we may will, it is said: “It is God which worketh in you, even to will.”³⁶ While of His co-working with us, when we will and act by willing, the apostle says, “We know that in all things there is co-working for good to them that love God.”³⁷ What does this phrase, “all things,” mean, but the terrible and cruel sufferings which affect our condition? That burden, indeed, of Christ, which is heavy for our infirmity, becomes light to love. For to such did the Lord say that His burden was light, as Peter was when he suffered for Christ, not as he was when he denied Him.

CHAPTER 33

³² Rom. 13:8-10.³³ I John 4:18.³⁴ John 13:37.³⁵ Phil. 1:6.³⁶ Phil. 2:13.³⁷ Rom. 8:28.

4. *On Rebuke and Grace*

The first man had not that grace by which he should never will to be evil; but assuredly he had that in which if he willed to abide he would never be evil, and without which, moreover, he could not by free will be good, but which, nevertheless, by free will he could forsake. God, therefore, did not will even him to be without His grace, which He left in his free will; because free will is sufficient for evil, but is too little for good, unless it is aided by Omnipotent Good. And if that man had not forsaken that assistance of his free will, he would always have been good; but he forsook it, and he was forsaken. Because such was the nature of the aid, that he could forsake it when he would, and that he could continue in it if he would; but not such that it could be brought about that he would. This first is the grace which was given to the first Adam; but more powerful than this is that in the second Adam. For the first is that whereby it is effected that a man may have righteousness if he will; the second, therefore, can do more than this, since by it it is even effected that he will, and will so much, and love with such ardour, that by the will of the Spirit he overcomes the will of the flesh, that lusteth in opposition to it. Nor was that, indeed, a small grace by which was demonstrated even the power of free will, because man was so assisted that without this assistance he could not continue in good, but could forsake this assistance if he would. But this latter grace is by so much the greater, that it is too little for a man by its means to regain his lost freedom; it is too little, finally, not to be able without it either to apprehend the good or to continue in good if he will, unless he is also *made to will*.

At that time, therefore, God had given to man a good will, because in that will He had made him, since He had made him upright. He had given help without which he could not continue therein if he would; but that he should will, He left in his free will. He could therefore continue if he would, because the help was not wanting whereby he could, and without which he could not, perseveringly hold fast the good which he would. But that he willed not to continue is absolutely the fault of him whose merit it would have been if he had willed to continue; as the holy angels did, who, while others fell by free will, themselves by the same free will stood, and deserved to receive the due reward of this continuance—to wit, such a fulness of blessing that by it they might have the fullest certainty of always abiding in it. If, however, this help had been wanting, either to angel or to man when they were first made, since their nature was not made such that without the divine help it could abide if it would, they certainly would not have fallen by their own fault, because the help would have been wanting without which they could not continue. At the present time, however, to those to whom such assistance is wanting, it is the penalty of sin; but to those to whom it is given, it is given of grace, not of debt; and by so much the more is given through Jesus Christ our Lord to those to whom it has pleased God to give it, that not only we have that help without which we cannot continue even if we will, but, moreover, we have so great and such a help as to *will*. Because by this grace of God there is caused in us, in the reception of good and in the persevering hold of it, not only to be able to do what we will, but even to will to do what we are able. But this was not the case in the first man; for the one of these things was in him, but the other was not. For he did not need grace to receive good, because he had not yet lost it; but he needed the aid of grace to continue in it, and without this aid he could not do this at all; and he had received the ability if he would, but he had not the will for what he could; for if he had possessed it, he would have persevered. For he could persevere if he would; but that he would not was the result of free will, which at that time was in such wise

free that he was capable of willing well and ill. For what shall be more free than free will, when it shall not be able to serve sin? And this should be to man also as it was made to the holy angels, the reward of deserving. But now that good deserving has been lost by sin, in those who are delivered that has become the gift of grace which would have been the reward of deserving.

CHAPTER 32

On which account we must consider with diligence and attention in what respect those pairs differ from one another—to be able not to sin, and not to be able to sin; to be able not to die, and not to be able to die; to be able not to forsake good, and not to be able to forsake good. For the first man was able not to sin, was able not to die, was able not to forsake good. Are we to say that he who had such a free will could not sin? Or that he to whom it was said, “If thou shalt sin thou shalt die by death,” could not die? Or that he could not forsake good, when he would forsake this by sinning, and so die? Therefore the first liberty of the will was *to be able not to sin*, the last will be much greater, *not to be able to sin*; the first immortality was to be able not to die, the last will be much greater, not to be able to die; the first was the power of perseverance, to be able not to forsake good—the last will be the felicity of perseverance, not to be able to forsake good. But because the last blessings will be preferable and better, were those first ones, therefore, either no blessings at all, or trifling ones?

CHAPTER 33

Moreover, the aids themselves are to be distinguished. The aid without which a thing does not come to pass is one thing, and the aid by which a thing comes to pass is another. For without food we cannot live; and yet although food should be at hand, it would not cause a man to live who should will to die. Therefore the aid of food is that without which it does not come to pass that we live, not that by which it comes to pass that we live. But, indeed, when the blessedness which a man has not is given him, he becomes at once blessed. For the aid is not only that without which that does not happen, but also with

which that does happen for the sake of which it is given. Wherefore this is an assistance both by which it comes to pass, and without which it does not come to pass; because on the one hand, if blessedness should be given to a man, he becomes at once blessed; and, on the other, if it should never be given he will never be so. But food does not of necessity cause a man to live, and yet without it he cannot live. Therefore to the first man, who, in that good in which he had been made upright, had received the ability not to sin, the ability not to die, the ability not to forsake that good itself, was given the aid of perseverance—not that by which it should be brought about that he should persevere, but that without which he could not of free will persevere. But now to the saints predestinated to the kingdom of God by God's grace, the aid of perseverance that is given is not such as the former, but such that to them perseverance itself is bestowed; not only so that without that gift they cannot persevere, but, moreover, so that by means of this gift they cannot help persevering. For not only did He say, "Without me ye can do nothing,"³⁸ but He also said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."³⁹ By which words He showed that He had given them not only righteousness, but perseverance therein. For when Christ thus ordained them that they should go and bring forth fruit, and that their fruit should remain, who would dare to say, It shall not remain? Who would dare to say, Perchance it will not remain? "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance";⁴⁰ but the calling is of those who are called according to the purpose. When Christ intercedes, therefore, on behalf of these, that their faith should not fail, doubtless it will not fail unto the end. And thus it shall persevere even unto the end; nor shall the end of this life find it anything but continuing.

CHAPTER 34

38 I John 15:5.

39 John 15:16.

40 Rom. 11:29.

5. Letter 217

Since, therefore, by the favor of Christ, we are Catholic Christians:

We know that children not yet born have done nothing either good or evil in their own life, nor have they any merits of any previous life, which no individual can have as his own; that they come into the miseries of this life; that their carnal birth according to Adam involves them at the instant of nativity in the contagion of the primal death; that they are not delivered from the penalty of eternal death, which a just verdict passing from one lays upon all, unless they are born again in Christ through grace.

We know that the grace of God is given neither to children nor to adults according to their merits.

We know that in adults it is given for separate acts.

We know that it is not given to all men, and, where it is given, not only is it not given as a reward for good deeds, but it is not even given as a reward for good will in those to whom it is given, as is plainly evident in the case of children.

We know that, when it is not given, it is withheld by a just judgment of God.

We know that "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done whether it be good or evil," ⁴¹ not according to what he would have done if he had lived longer.

We know that even children will receive either good or evil according to what they have done in the body. For they have done it, not by themselves but through those who answer for them when they are said to renounce the Devil

⁴¹ Rom. 14:10; II Cor. 5:10.

and to believe in God. For this reason they are counted in the number of the faithful, as being referred to in the statement of the Lord when He said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Therefore, those who do not receive this sacrament are subject to what follows: "But he that believeth not shall be condemned."⁴² Consequently even those, as I said, who die at that tender age are judged according to what they have done in the body, that is, in the time they have been in the body, when they believed or did not believe through the mouths and hearts of those who carried them when they were baptized or were not baptized, when they ate the flesh of Christ or did not eat it, when they drank His Blood or did not drink it—according to these things which they have done in the body, not according to what they would have done if they had lived longer in this world.

We know that the dead who die in the Lord are blessed, and they have no concern with what they would have done if they had lived a longer time.

We know that those who believe in the Lord from their own heart do this of their own will and free choice.

We know that we who now believe act with an upright faith when we pray to God for those who refuse to believe, that they may will to do so.

We know that when some of these do believe we are accustomed, as we ought, to thank God uprightly and sincerely for this as a blessing from Him.

You recognize, I think, that among these things which I said we know I have not intended to enumerate everything which belongs to the Catholic faith but only those points which have to do with this question of the grace of God: whether this grace precedes or follows the will of man. That is, I wanted to explain more fully whether it is given to us because we will or whether God effects through it that we should will. If, then, you also, my brother, hold with us that those twelve statements of what I said we know belong to the correct Catholic faith, I give thanks to God, which certainly I could not truthfully do unless your holding them were a result of the grace of God; and if you do

⁴² Mark 16:16.

hold them, there is not a single difference left between us on this matter.

To run over these twelve with a brief explanation, how can grace follow the merit of the human will when it is given even to infants who cannot yet will or not will? How can the merits of the will even in adults be said to precede grace, if grace, in order to be truly grace, is not given according to our merits? Pelagius himself had such fear of this statement that he did not hesitate to condemn those who say that the grace of God is given according to our merits, lest he should be condemned by Catholic judges. How can the grace of God be identified with the nature of free will or with the law and doctrine when Pelagius himself repudiated that statement, thereby admitting without question that the grace of God is given to separate acts, especially in those who enjoy the use of free will?

How is it possible to say that all men would have received it if those to whom it is not given did not reject it of their own will, since "God will have all men to be saved,"⁴³ when there are many children to whom it is not given and many die without it, although they have no will opposed to it? Sometimes, even, their parents are in great desire and haste, with the ministers willing and ready, but as God does not will it, it is not given to them, and they die suddenly before it is given, although all haste was made for them to receive it? From this it is clear that those who resist this clear truth do not in the least understand the meaning of the saying that "God will have all men to be saved," when so many are not saved, not because they do not will it, but because God does not, which is evident without any shadow of doubt in the case of children. But, just as that saying: "In Christ all shall be made alive"⁴⁴ although so many are punished with eternal death—means that all who receive eternal life receive it only in Christ, so also the saying, "God will have all men to be saved"—although He wills that so many should not be saved—means surely that all who are saved would not be so without His will, and if there is any other possible way of understand-

⁴³ I Tim. 2:4.

⁴⁴ I Cor. 15:22.

ing those words of the Apostle, it cannot contradict this most evident truth by which we see that so many men are not saved because God does not will it, although men do.

How can the human will deserve to have grace given to it, if it is given freely to those to whom it is given, that it may be truly grace? What weight can the merits of the human will have in the matter, when those to whom this grace is not given differ by no merit, by no act of will, from those to whom it is given, but share with them the same just reason for receiving it, yet it is not given through a just judgment of God—for “there is no injustice with God”?⁴⁵ Thus those to whom it is given are to understand how freely it is given to them, when it could equally justly be withheld, since it is justly withheld from those who have the same claim to it.

How is it possible to attribute to anything but the grace of God the will not only to believe, but also to persevere to the end, when the very end of this life depends on the power of God, not of man, and God could certainly bestow on one who would not persevere the blessing of hurrying him out of the body, “lest wickedness should alter his understanding”? For man will not receive either good or evil except according to what he has done in the body, not according to what he would have done if he had lived longer.

How can anyone say that the grace of God is not given to some children, but is given to others, destined to die, because God foresees the future will which they would have had if they had lived, when each one receives either good or evil, as the Apostle has defined, according to what he has done in the body, not according to what he would have done if he had remained longer in the body? How can men be judged according to the future will which, it is said, they would have had if they had been longer detained in the flesh, when Scripture says: “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord”? Undoubtedly, their happiness is neither certain nor secure if God will also judge the things they have not done, but which they would have done if they had had a more extended life. So, also, he who is carried off “lest wickedness should alter his understanding”

⁴⁵ Rom. 9:14.

receives no benefit, because he pays the penalty for that very wickedness from which, when it threatened him, he has probably been removed; and we should not rejoice over those who, as we know, have died in upright faith and a good life, because they may be judged according to some wicked deeds which they would perhaps have committed if they had lived. Those who have ended their life in unbelief and depraved morals should not be a subject of grief and detestation to us, because, perhaps, if they had lived they would have done penance and lived religiously, and so should be judged by this. In that the whole book *On Mortality* by the most blessed martyr Cyprian is to be censured and rejected, for in it his entire contention is that we know we should give thanks for the faithful who die a good death because they are taken away from the temptations of this life and will henceforth abide in assured blessedness. But since this is not false and the dead who die in the Lord certainly are blessed, there should be only mockery and execration for the erroneous opinion that men are to be judged according to their future will—which dying men will not have.

How can they say that it is a denial of the free choice of the will to admit that every man who believes in God in his heart believes only through his own free will, when those who attack the grace of God through which the will is free to choose and do good are, rather, the ones who attack the freedom of the will? How can they say that the fulfillment of the words of Scripture: "The will is prepared by the Lord," ⁴⁶ is accomplished by the law of God and the doctrine of the Scriptures and not, rather, by the secret prompting of the grace of God, when we pray to God with upright faith that those who contradict that same doctrine and refuse to believe may be willing to believe?

How can God wait on the will of men that they to whom He gives grace may forestall Him, when we give Him thanks—not without good reason—for those to whom He has advanced mercy, although they did not believe in Him and persecuted His doctrine with an evil will; whom He has converted to Himself with omnipotent ease, and whom

⁴⁶ Prov. 8:35.

from unbelievers He has made willing believers? Why give Him thanks for this if He has not done it? Why do we glorify Him in proportion to the joy we feel for those who had refused to believe but who have become believers, if the human will is not changed for the better by divine grace? The Apostle Paul says: "I was unknown by face to the Churches of Judea which are in Christ, but they had heard only that he who persecuted us in times past doth now preach the faith which once he impugned; and they magnified God in me."⁴⁷ Why did they magnify God if God, in the goodness of His grace, had not converted the heart of that man to Himself, when, as he himself admits, he had "obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful" to that faith which once he impugned? And by that word which he used, whom, if not God, does he declare to have wrought this great good? What is the meaning of "they magnified God" except "they pronounced God great in"? But how could they pronounce God great if He had not wrought that great deed of Paul's conversion, and how could He have done it but by changing his unwillingness into willingness to believe?

Assuredly, it is clear from those twelve statements—and you will not be allowed to deny that they form part of Catholic belief—that we confess the effect of them, separately and together, is to establish that the will of man is forestalled by the grace of God and that it is prepared by grace rather than rewarded in receiving it.

⁴⁷ Gal. 1:22-24.

VII
CHRIST—WORD
OF GOD
AND LORD
OF MAN

1. Letter 11

Here, then, is what I think about the mystery of the Incarnation, which the religion in which we are both steeped proposes to us as an object of knowledge and belief; that it was accomplished for our salvation. I have selected this question, not as the easiest of all, or the one I was best able to answer, but as the one that seemed to me more worthy than others of thought and attention. For, those questions which arise on matters of this world seem to me to have no bearing on the achievement of happiness; even if it gives us pleasure to search into them, it is to be feared that time is spent on them which ought to be devoted to better things.

Therefore, in regard to this present question, of God becoming man: in the first place, I am surprised at your finding it hard to understand why the Son is said to have become man, and not the Father or even the Holy Spirit. For, according to the Catholic faith, the Trinity is proposed to our belief and believed—and even understood by a few saints and holy persons—as so inseparable that whatever action is performed by It must be thought to be performed at the same time by the Father and by the Son and by the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the Father does not do anything which the Son and the Holy Spirit do not also do; the Son does not do anything which the Father and

the Holy Spirit do not also do; nor does the Holy Spirit do anything which the Father and the Son do not also do. From this it seems to follow that the whole Trinity became man, for, if the Son took on human nature and the Father and the Holy Spirit did not, They no longer act jointly. Why, then, in our mysteries and our sacred rites is the Incarnation celebrated as if attributed to the Son? This is a very deep question, and so difficult and of such great import that it cannot be solved in a sentence, nor can its proof be wholly satisfying. Nevertheless, when I write anything to you, I venture rather to outline than to develop what is in my mind, leaving you to work it out for yourself, according to your own gifts of mind, as well as what you know of me through our long friendship.

There is no nature, my dear Nebridius, and certainly no substance, which does not possess and show forth these three characteristics: first, that it should be; second, that it should be this or that; third, that it should continue to be what it is, as far as it is able. The first shows us the very cause of nature from which all things come; the second shows us the appearance (species) in which all things are fashioned and in a certain manner formed; the third shows a certain continuance, so to speak, in which all things are maintained. But, if it could happen that something should be, and should not be this or that, and that it should be, and should be what it is as long as it remains in its own genus, or that it should be this or that, but should not be nor remain in its own genus as far as it is able, or that it should remain in its own genus according to the powers of its genus, but nevertheless should not be, or should not be this or that, then, indeed, it could happen that in that Trinity one of the Persons would do something without the other Persons. But, if you perceive that it inevitably follows that whatever is must forthwith be this or that, and must remain in its own genus, as far as it is able, then the Three perform no act except jointly. I see that I have thus far treated the part of this question of which the solution is difficult, but I wanted to make known to you briefly—if I have done what I wanted—what

subtlety of understanding is needed in dealing with the inseparability of the Trinity according to Catholic truth.

Now learn how it is possible for that which moves not to move the mind. That distinguishing characteristic which is properly attributed to the Son refers to a system of life and to a sort of art, if we can rightly use this word in such matters, and also to the understanding by which the mind is formed in its thought about things. Therefore, since it has been brought about by the Incarnation that a certain method of living and example of precept has been conveyed to us under the majesty and clarity of His teachings, it is not without reason that this whole operation is attributed to the Son. For, in many things, which I leave to your prudent consideration, although many truths are implied, there is something which stands out and which rightly demands for itself special notice. Just as, in those three sorts of questions, if one were to ask whether a thing exists, there is implied also the question of what it is, for it certainly cannot exist unless it is something; and, likewise, there is implied whether it is to be approved or disapproved, for, whatever it is, it is worthy of some esteem; so, too, when one asks what it is, there is necessarily implied both that it exists and that it deserves some consideration; the same consequence follows if one asks what sort of thing it is, for it is certainly something. Thus, all these arguments are inseparably joined together, but the question does not take its name from all of them, but according to the intention of the questioner. Therefore, a way of life was necessary for men that they might be thoroughly versed in it and formed according to it. Now, as to what is accomplished in men by that rule of life, are we to say that it does not exist or is not to be desired? First we propose to know on what we may construct an argument, and on what ground we may stand. That is why a certain rule and standard of reasoning had first to be proved. This has been accomplished by that dispensation of the Incarnation, which is properly to be attributed to the Son, so that there proceeds from the Father Himself, as from the single principle from whom are all things, both un-

derstanding through the Son, and a certain interior and ineffable sweetness and delight in that understanding (outlasting and looking down upon all mortal things), which is rightly ascribed to the Holy Spirit as gift and attribute. Therefore, although all these operations occur with the most complete union and inseparability, they nevertheless had to be proved separately, by reason of our weakness through which we have fallen from unity into multiplicity. For, no one raises another to the place where he is, without stooping somewhat to the place where the other is. You now have a letter which may not solve your difficulty on this point, but will, perhaps, set your own thoughts on a firm foundation, so that you may complete the argument with that genius which is so well known to me, and continue with that tender devotion to which we must cling, above all.

2. On the Gospel of St. John

In the four Gospels, or rather in the four books of the one Gospel, Saint John the apostle, not undeservedly in respect of his spiritual understanding compared to the eagle, has elevated his preaching higher and far more sublimely than the other three; and in this elevating of it he would have our hearts likewise lifted up. For the other three evangelists walked with the Lord on earth as with a man; concerning His divinity they have said but little; but this evangelist, as if he disdained to walk on earth, just as in the very opening of his discourse he thundered on us, soared not only above the earth and above the whole compass of air and sky, but even above the whole army of angels and the whole order of invisible powers, and reached to Him by whom all things were made; saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This was in the beginning with God. All things

were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made." To this so great sublimity of his beginning all the rest of his preaching well agrees; and he has spoken concerning the divinity of the Lord as none other has spoken. What he had drunk in, the same he gave forth. For it is not without reason that it is recorded of him in this very Gospel, that at supper he reclined on the Lord's bosom. From that breast then he drank in secret; but what he drank in secret he gave forth openly, that there may come to all nations not only the incarnation of the Son of God, and His passion and resurrection, but also what He was before His incarnation, the only Son of the Father, the Word of the Father, co-eternal with Him that begat, equal with Him by whom He was sent; but yet in that very sending made less, that the Father might be greater.

Whatever, then, you have heard stated in lowly manner concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, think of that economy by which He assumed flesh; but whatever you hear, or read, stated in the Gospel concerning Him that is sublime and high above all creatures, and divine, and equal and coeternal with the Father, be sure that this which you read appertains to the form of God, not to the form of the servant. For if you hold this rule, you who can understand it (inasmuch as you are not all able to understand it, but you are all bound to trust it)—if, I say, you hold this rule, as men walking in the light, you will fight against the calumnies of heretical darkness without fear. For there have not been wanting those who, in reading the Gospel, followed only those testimonies that concern the humility of Christ, and have been deaf to those which have declared His divinity; deaf for this reason, that they may be full of evil words. There have likewise been some, who, giving heed only to those which speak of the excellency of the Lord, even though they have read of His mercy in becoming man for our sakes, have not believed the testimonies, but accounted them false and invented by men; contending that our Lord Jesus Christ was only God, not also man. Some in this way, some in that; both in error. But the Catholic faith, holding from both the truths which each holds and preaching the truth which each believes, as

both understood that Christ is God and also believed Him to be man: for each is written and each is true. Shouldst thou assert that Christ is only God, thou deniest the medicine whereby thou wast healed: shouldst thou assert that Christ is only man, thou deniest the power whereby thou wast created. Hold therefore both. O faithful soul and Catholic heart, hold both, believe both, faithfully confess both. Christ is both God and also man. How is Christ God? Equal with the Father, one with the Father. How is Christ man? Born of a virgin, taking upon Himself mortality from man, but not taking iniquity.

“Because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.” If He is with Thee, how has He sent Thee? And has He sent Thee, and yet is He also with Thee? Is it so that having been sent, Thou hast not departed from Him? And didst thou come to us, and yet abide there? How is this to be believed, how apprehended? To these two questions I answer: Thou sayest rightly, how is it to be apprehended; how believed, thou sayest not rightly. Rather, for that reason is it right to believe it, because it is not immediately to be apprehended; for if it were a thing to be immediately apprehended, there would be no need to believe it, because it would be seen. It is because thou dost not apprehend that thou believest; but by believing thou art made capable of apprehending. For if thou dost not believe, thou wilt never apprehend, since thou wilt remain less capable. Let faith then purify thee, that understanding may fill thee. “My judgment is true,” saith He, “because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.” Therefore, O Lord our God, Jesus Christ, Thy sending is Thy incarnation. So I see, so I understand: in short, so I believe, in case it may smack of arrogance to say, so I understand. Doubtless the Lord Jesus Christ is even here; rather, *was* here as to His flesh, *is* here now as to His Godhead: He was both with the Father and had not left the Father. Hence, in that He is said to have been sent and to have come to us, His incarnation is set forth to us, for the Father did not take flesh.

For there are certain heretics called Sabellians, who are also called Patripassians, who affirm that it was the Father

Himself that had suffered. Do not thou so affirm, O Catholic; for if thou wilt be a Patripassian, thou wilt not be sane. Understand, then, that the incarnation of the Son is termed the sending of the Son; and do not believe that the Father was incarnate, but do not yet believe that He departed from the incarnate Son. The Son carried flesh, the Father was with the Son. If the Father was in heaven, the Son on earth, how was the Father with the Son? Because both Father and Son were everywhere: for God is not in such manner in heaven as not to be on earth. Hear him who would flee from the judgment of God, and found not a way to flee by: "Whither shall I go," saith he, "from Thy Spirit; and whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I ascend up into heaven; Thou art there." The question was about the earth; hear what follows: "If I descend unto hell, Thou art there." If, then, He is said to be present even in hell, what in the universe remains where He is not present? For the voice of God with the prophet is, "I fill heaven and earth." Hence He is everywhere, who is confined by no place. Turn not thou away from Him, and He is with thee. If thou wouldst come to Him, be not slow to love; for it is not with feet but with affections thou runnest. Thou comest while remaining in one place, if thou believest and lovest. Wherefore He is everywhere; and if everywhere, how not also with the Son? Is it so that He is not with the Son, while, if thou believest, He is even with thee?

How, then, is His judgment true, but because the Son is true? For this He said: "And if I judge, my judgment is true; because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Just as if He had said, "My judgment is true," because I am the Son of God. How dost Thou prove that Thou art the Son of God? "Because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Blush, Sabellian; thou hearest the *Son*, thou hearest the *Father*. Father is Father, Son is Son. He said not, I am the Father, and I the same am the Son; but He saith, "I am not alone." Why art Thou not alone? Because the Father is with me. "I am, and the Father that sent me"; thou hearest, "I am, and He that sent me." Lest thou lose sight of the person, distinguish the

persons. Distinguish by understanding, do not separate by faithlessness; lest again, fleeing as it were Charybdis, thou rush upon Scylla. For the whirlpool of the impiety of the Sabellians was swallowing thee, to say that the Father is the same who is Son: just now thou hast learned, "I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Thou dost acknowledge that the Father is Father, and that the Son is Son; thou dost rightly acknowledge: but do not say the Father is greater, the Son is less; do not say, the Father is gold, the Son is silver. There is one substance, one Godhead, one co-eternity, perfect equality, no unlikeness.

For if thou only believe that Christ is another, not the same person that the Father is, but yet imagine that in respect of His nature He is somewhat different from the Father, thou hast indeed escaped Charybdis, but thou hast been wrecked on the rocks of Scylla. Steer the middle course, avoid each of the two perilous sides. Father is Father, Son is Son. Thou sayest now, Father is Father, Son is Son: thou hast fortunately escaped the danger of the absorbing whirl; why wouldst thou go unto the other side to say, the Father is this, the Son that? The Son is another person than the Father is, this thou sayest rightly; but that He is different in nature, thou sayest not rightly. Certainly the Son is another person, because He is not the same who is Father; and the Father is another person, because He is not the same who is Son: nevertheless, they are not different in nature, but the self-same is both Father and Son. What means the self-same? God is one. Thou hast heard, "Because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me": hear how thou mayest believe Father and Son; hear the Son Himself, "I and the Father are one." He said not, I am the Father; or, I and the Father *is* one person; but when He says, "I and the father are one," hear both, both the *one*, *unum*, and the *are*, *sumus*, and thou shalt be delivered both from Charybdis and from Scylla. In these two words, in that He said *one*, He delivers thee from Arius; in that He said *are*, He delivers thee from Sabellius. If *one*, therefore not diverse; if *are*, therefore both Father and Son. For He would not say *are* of one person; but, on the other hand, He would not say *one* of

diverse. Hence the reason why He says, "my judgment is true," is, that thou mayest hear it briefly, because I am the Son of God. But I would have thee in such wise believe that I am the Son of God, that thou mayest understand that the Father is with me: I am not Son in such manner as to have left Him; I am not in such manner here that I should not be with Him; nor is He in such manner there as not to be with me: I have taken to me the form of a servant, yet have I not lost the form of God; therefore He saith, "I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me."

TRACTATE XXXVI, 1, 2, 7, 8, 9

3. *Enchiridion*

Thus it was that the human race was bound in a just doom and all men were children of wrath. Of this wrath it is written: "For all our days are wasted; we are ruined in thy wrath; our years seem like a spider's web." ¹ Likewise Job spoke of this wrath: "Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble." ² And even the Lord Jesus said of it: "He that believes in the Son has life everlasting, but he that believes not does not have life. Instead, the wrath of God abides in him." ³ He does not say, "It will come," but, "It now abides." Indeed every man is born into this state. Wherefore the apostle says, "For we too were by nature children of wrath even as the others." ⁴ Since men are in this state of wrath through original sin—a condition made still graver and more pernicious as they compounded more and worse sins with it—a Mediator was required; that is to say, a Reconciler who by offering a unique sacrifice, of which all the sacrifices of the Law and the Prophets were

¹ Psalm 90:9.

² Job 14:1.

³ John 3:36.

⁴ Eph. 2:3.

shadows, should allay that wrath. Thus the apostle says, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, even more now being reconciled by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him."⁵ However, when God is said to be wrathful, this does not signify any such perturbation in him as there is in the soul of a wrathful man. His verdict, which is always just, takes the name "wrath" as a term borrowed from the language of human feelings. This, then, is the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord—that we are reconciled to God through the Mediator and receive the Holy Spirit so that we may be changed from enemies into sons, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."⁶

It would take too long to say all that would be truly worthy of this Mediator. Indeed, men cannot speak properly of such matters. For who can unfold in cogent enough fashion this statement, that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,"⁷ so that we should then believe in "the only Son of God the Father Almighty, born of the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin." Yet it is indeed true that the Word was made flesh, the flesh being assumed by the Divinity, not the Divinity being changed into flesh. Of course, by the term "flesh" we ought here to understand "man," an expression in which the part signifies the whole, just as it is said, "Since by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified,"⁸ which is to say, no *man* shall be justified. Yet certainly we must say that in that assumption nothing was lacking that belongs to human nature.

But it was a nature entirely free from the bonds of all sin. It was not a nature born of both sexes with fleshly desires, with the burden of sin, the guilt of which is washed away in regeneration. Instead, it was the kind of nature that would be fittingly born of a virgin, conceived by His mother's faith and not her fleshly desires. Now if in his being born, her virginity had been destroyed, he would

⁵ Rom. 5:9, 10.

⁶ Rom. 8:14.

⁷ John 1:14.

⁸ Rom. 3:20.

not then have been born of a virgin. It would then be false (which is unthinkable) for the whole Church to confess him "born of the Virgin Mary." This is the Church which, imitating his mother, daily gives birth to his members yet remains virgin. Read, if you please, my letter on the virginity of Saint Mary written to that illustrious man, Volusianus, whom I name with honor and affection.

Christ Jesus, Son of God, is thus both God and man. He was God before all ages; he is man in this age of ours. He is God because he is the Word of God, for "the Word was God."⁹ Yet he is man also, since in the unity of his Person a rational soul and body is joined to the Word.

Accordingly, in so far as he is God, he and the Father are one. Yet in so far as he is man, the Father is greater than he. Since he was God's only Son—not by grace but by nature—to the end that he might indeed be the fullness of all grace, he was also made Son of Man—and yet he was in the one nature as well as in the other, one Christ. "For being in the form of God, he judged it not a violation to be what he was by nature, the equal of God. Yet he emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant,"¹⁰ yet neither losing nor diminishing the form of God. Thus he was made less and remained equal, and both these in a unity as we said before. But he is one of these because he is the Word; the other, because he was a man. As the Word, he is the equal of the Father; as a man, he is less. He is the one Son of God, and at the same time Son of Man; the one Son of Man, and at the same time God's Son. These are not two sons of God, one God and the other man, but *one* Son of God—God without origin, man with a definite origin—our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this the grace of God is supremely manifest, commended in grand and visible fashion; for what had the human nature in the man Christ merited, that it, and no other, should be assumed into the unity of the Person of the only Son of God? What good will, what zealous strivings, what good works preceded this assumption by which

⁹ John 1:1.

¹⁰ Phil. 2:6, 7.

that particular man deserved to become one Person with God? Was he a man before the union, and was this singular grace given him as to one particularly deserving before God? Of course not! For, from the moment he began to be a man, that man began to be nothing other than God's Son, the only Son, and this because the Word of God assuming him became flesh, yet still assuredly remained God. Just as every man is a personal unity—that is, a unity of rational soul and flesh—so also is Christ a personal unity: Word and man.

Why should there be such great glory to a human nature—and this undoubtedly an act of grace, no merit preceding it—unless it be that those who consider such a question faithfully and soberly might have here a clear manifestation of God's great and sole grace, and this in order that they might understand how they themselves are justified from sins by the selfsame grace which made it so that the man Christ had no power to sin? Thus indeed the angel hailed his mother when announcing to her the future birth: "Hail," he said, "full of grace." And shortly thereafter, "You have found favor with God."¹¹ And this was said of her, that she was full of grace, since she was to be mother of her Lord, indeed the Lord of all. Yet, concerning Christ himself, when the Evangelist John said, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," he added, "and we beheld his glory, a glory as of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth."¹² When he said, "The Word was made flesh," this means, "Full of grace." When he also said, "The glory of the only begotten of the Father," this means, "Full of truth." Indeed it was Truth himself, God's only-begotten Son—and, again, this not by grace but by nature—who, by grace, assumed human nature into such a personal unity that he himself became the Son of Man as well.

This same Jesus Christ, God's one and only Son our Lord, was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. Now obviously the Holy Spirit is God's gift, a gift that is itself equal to the Giver; wherefore the Holy Spirit is God

¹¹ Luke 1:28-30.

¹² John 1:14.

also, not inferior to the Father and the Son. Now what does this mean, that Christ's birth in respect to his human nature was of the Holy Spirit, save that this was itself also a work of grace?

For when the Virgin asked of the angel the manner by which what he announced would come to pass (since she had known no man), the angel answered: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you; therefore the Holy One which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God."¹³ And when Joseph wished to put her away, suspecting adultery (since he knew she was not pregnant by him), he received a similar answer from the angel: "Do not fear to take Mary as your wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"¹⁴—that is, "What you suspect is from another man is of the Holy Spirit."

Are we, then, to say that the Holy Spirit is the Father of Christ's human nature, so that as God the Father generated the Word, so the Holy Spirit generated the human nature, and that from both natures Christ came to be one, Son of God the Father as the Word, Son of the Holy Spirit as man? Do we suppose that the Holy Spirit is his Father through begetting him of the Virgin Mary? Who would dare to say such a thing? There is no need to show by argument how many absurd consequences such a notion has, when it is so absurd in itself that no believer's ear can bear to hear it. Actually, then, as we confess our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God from God yet born as man of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, there is in each nature (in both the divine and the human) the only Son of God the Father Almighty, from whom proceeds the Holy Spirit.

How, then, do we say that Christ is born of the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit did not beget him? Is it because he made him? This might be, since through our Lord Jesus Christ—in the form of God—all things were made. Yet in so far as he is man, he himself was made, even as the apostle says: "He was made of the seed of David ac-

¹³ Luke 1:35.

¹⁴ Matt. 1:20.

ording to the flesh.”¹⁵ But since that creature which the Virgin conceived and bore, though it was related to the Person of the Son alone, was made by the whole Trinity—for the works of the Trinity are not separable—why is the Holy Spirit named as the One who made it? Is it, perhaps, that when any One of the Three is named in connection with some divine action, the whole Trinity is to be understood as involved in that action? This is true and can be shown by examples, but we should not dwell too long on this kind of solution.

For what still concerns us is how it can be said, “Born of the Holy Spirit,” when he is in no wise the Son of the Holy Spirit? Now, just because God made this world, one could not say that the world is the son of God, or that it is “born” of God. Rather, one says it was “made” or “created” or “founded” or “established” by him, or however else one might like to speak of it. So, then, when we confess, “Born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,” the sense in which he is not the Son of the Holy Spirit and yet is the son of the Virgin Mary, when he was born both of him and of her, is difficult to explain. But there is no doubt as to the fact that he was not born from him as Father as he was born of her as mother.

Consequently we should not grant that whatever is born of something should therefore be called the son of that thing. Let us pass over the fact that a son is “born” of a man in a different sense than a hair is, or a louse, or a maw worm—none of these is a son. Let us pass over these things, since they are an unfitting analogy in so great a matter. Yet it is certain that those who are born of water and of the Holy Spirit would not properly be called sons of the water by anyone. But it does make sense to call them sons of God the Father and of Mother Church. Thus, therefore, the one born of the Holy Spirit is the son of God the Father, not of the Holy Spirit.

What we said about the hair and the other things has this much relevance, that it reminds us that not everything which is “born” of something is said to be “son” to him from which it is “born.” Likewise, it does not follow that

¹⁵ Rom. 1:3.

those who are called sons of someone are always said to have been born of him, since there are some who are adopted. Even those who are called "sons of Gehenna" are not born of it, but have been destined *for* it, just as the sons of the Kingdom are destined for that.

Wherefore, since a thing may be "born" of something else, yet not in the fashion of a "son," and conversely, since not everyone who is called son is born of him whose son he is called—this is the very mode in which Christ was "born" of the Holy Spirit (yet not as a son), and of the Virgin Mary as a son—this suggests to us the grace of God by which a certain human person, no merit whatever preceding, at the very outset of his existence, was joined to the Word of God in such a unity of person that the selfsame one who is Son of Man should be Son of God, and the one who is Son of God should be Son of Man. Thus, in his assumption of human nature, grace came to be natural to that nature, allowing no power to sin. This is why grace is signified by the Holy Spirit, because he himself is so perfectly God that he is also called God's Gift. Still, to speak adequately of this—even if one could—would call for a very long discussion.

Since he was begotten and conceived in no pleasure of carnal appetite—and therefore bore no trace of original sin—he was, by the grace of God (operating in a marvelous and ineffable manner), joined and united in a personal unity with the only-begotten Word of the Father, a Son not by grace but by nature. And although he himself committed no sin, yet because of "the likeness of sinful flesh" ¹⁶ in which he came, he was himself called sin and was made a sacrifice for the washing away of sins.

Indeed, under the old law, sacrifices for sins were often called sins.¹⁷ Yet he of whom those sacrifices were mere shadows was himself actually made sin. Thus, when the apostle said, "For Christ's sake, we beseech you to be reconciled to God," he straightway added, "Him, who knew no sin, he made to be sin for us that we might be made to be the righteousness of God in him."¹⁸ He does

¹⁶ Rom. 8:3.

¹⁷ Hos. 4:8.

¹⁸ II Cor. 5:20, 21.

not say, as we read in some defective copies, "He who knew no sin did sin for us," as if Christ himself committed sin for our sake. Rather, he says, "He (Christ) who knew no sin, he (God) made to be sin for us." The God to whom we are to be reconciled hath thus made him the sacrifice for sin by which we may be reconciled.

He himself is therefore sin as we ourselves are righteousness—not our own but God's, not in ourselves but in him. Just as he was sin—not his own but ours, rooted not in himself but in us—so he showed forth through the likeness of sinful flesh, in which he was crucified, that since sin was not in him he could then, so to say, die to sin by dying in the flesh, which was "the likeness of sin." And since he had never lived in the old manner of sinning, he might, in his resurrection, signify the new life which is ours, which is springing to life anew from the old death in which we had been dead to sin.

This is the meaning of the great sacrament of baptism, which is celebrated among us. All who attain to this grace die thereby to sin—as he himself is said to have died to sin because he died in the flesh, that is, "in the likeness of sin"—and they are thereby alive by being reborn in the baptismal font, just as he rose again from the sepulcher. This is the case no matter what the age of the body.

For whether it be a newborn infant or a decrepit old man—since no one should be barred from baptism—just so, there is no one who does not die to sin in baptism. Infants die to original sin only; adults, to all those sins which they have added, through their evil living, to the burden they brought with them at birth.

But even these are frequently said to die to sin, when without doubt they die not to one but to many sins, and to all the sins which they have themselves already committed by thought, word, and deed. Actually, by the use of the singular number the plural number is often signified, as the poet said, "And they fill the belly with the armed warrior," although they did this with many warriors. And in our own Scriptures we read: "Pray therefore to the Lord that he may take from us the serpent."¹⁹ It does not say

¹⁹ Num. 21:7.

“serpents,” as it might, for they were suffering from many serpents. There are, moreover, innumerable other such examples.

Yet, when the original sin is signified by the use of the plural number, as we say when infants are baptized “unto the remission of sins,” instead of saying “unto the remission of sin,” then we have the converse expression in which the singular is expressed by the plural number. Thus in the Gospel, it is said, of Herod’s death, “For they are dead who sought the child’s life”;²⁰ it does not say, “He is dead.” And in Exodus: “They made,” (Moses) says “to themselves gods of gold,” when they had made one calf. And of this calf, they said: “These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought you out of the land of Egypt,”²¹ here also putting the plural for the singular.

Still, even in that one sin—which “entered into the world by one man and so spread to all men,”²² and on account of which infants are baptized—one can recognize a plurality of sins, if that single sin is divided, so to say, into its separate elements. For there is pride in it, since man preferred to be under his own rule rather than the rule of God; and sacrilege too, for man did not acknowledge God; and murder, since he cast himself down to death; and spiritual fornication, for the integrity of the human mind was corrupted by the seduction of the serpent; and theft, since the forbidden fruit was snatched; and avarice, since he hungered for more than should have sufficed for him—and whatever other sins that could be discovered in the diligent analysis of that one sin.

It is also said—and not without support—that infants are involved in the sins of their parents, not only of the first pair, but even of their own, of whom they were born. Indeed, that divine judgment, “I shall visit the sins of the fathers on their children,”²³ definitely applies to them before they come into the New Covenant by regeneration. This covenant was foretold by Ezekiel when he said that the sons should not bear their fathers’ sins, nor the proverb

²⁰ Matt. 2:20.

²¹ Ex. 32:4.

²² Rom. 5:12.

²³ Deut. 5:9.

any longer apply in Israel, "Our fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." ²⁴

This is why each one of them must be born again, so that he may thereby be absolved of whatever sin was in him at the time of birth. For the sins committed by evil-doing after birth can be healed by repentance—as, indeed, we see it happen even after baptism. For the new birth (regeneratio) would not have been instituted except for the fact that the first birth (generatio) was tainted—and to such a degree that one form of even a lawful wedlock said, "I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins did my mother nourish me in her womb." ²⁵ Nor did he say "in iniquity" or "in sin," as he might have quite correctly; rather, he preferred to say "iniquities" and "sins," because, as I explained above, there are so many sins in that one sin—which has passed into all men, and which was so great that human nature was changed and by it brought under the necessity of death—and also because there are other sins, such as those of parents, which, even if they cannot change our nature in the same way, still involve the children in guilt, unless the gracious grace and mercy of God interpose.

But, in the matter of the sins of one's other parents, those who stand as one's forebears from Adam down to one's own parents, a question might well be raised: whether a man at birth is involved in the evil deeds of all his forebears, and their multiplied original sins, so that the later in time he is born, the worse estate he is born in; or whether, on this very account, God threatens to visit the sins of the parents as far as—but no farther than—the third and fourth generations, because in his mercy he will not continue his wrath beyond that. It is not his purpose that those not given the grace of regeneration be crushed under too heavy a burden in their eternal damnation, as they would be if they were bound to bear, as original guilt, all the sins of their ancestors from the beginning of the human race, and to pay the due penalty for them. Whether yet another solution to so difficult a problem might or might not be

²⁴ Ezek. 18:2.

²⁵ Psalm 51:5.

found by a more diligent search and interpretation of Holy Scripture, I dare not rashly affirm.

That one sin, however, committed in a setting of such great happiness, was itself so great that by it, in one man, the whole human race was originally and, so to say, radically condemned. It cannot be pardoned and washed away except through "the one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," ²⁶ who alone could be born in such a way as not to need to be reborn.

They were not reborn, those who were baptized by John's baptism, by which Christ himself was baptized.²⁷ Rather, they were *prepared* by the ministry of this forerunner, who said, "Prepare a way for the Lord," ²⁸ for Him in whom alone they could be reborn.

For his baptism is not with water alone, as John's was, but with the Holy Spirit as well. Thus, whoever believes in Christ is reborn by that same Spirit, of whom Christ also was born, needing not to be reborn. This is the reason for the Voice of the Father spoken over him at his baptism, "Today have I begotten thee," ²⁹ which pointed not to that particular day on which he was baptized, but to that "day" of changeless eternity, in order to show us that this Man belonged to the personal Unity of the Only Begotten. For a day that neither begins with the close of yesterday nor ends with the beginning of tomorrow is indeed an eternal "today."

Therefore, he chose to be baptized in water by John, not thereby to wash away any sin of his own, but to manifest his great humility. Indeed, baptism found nothing in him to wash away, just as death found nothing to punish. Hence, it was in authentic justice, and not by violent power, that the devil was overcome and conquered: for, as he had most unjustly slain Him who was in no way deserving of death, he also did most justly lose those whom he had justly held in bondage as punishment for their sins. Wherefore, He took upon himself both baptism and death, not out of a piteous necessity but through his own free act of showing

²⁶ I Tim. 2:5.

²⁷ Matt. 3:13.

²⁸ Luke 3:4; Isa. 40:3.

²⁹ Psalm 2:7; Heb. 5:5.

mercy—as part of a definite plan whereby One might take away the sin of the world, just as one man had brought sin into the world, that is, the whole human race.

There is a difference, however. The first man brought sin into the world, whereas this One took away not only that one sin but also all the others which he found added to it. Hence, the apostle says, “And the gift (of grace) is not like the effect of the one that sinned: for the judgment on that one trespass was condemnation: but the gift of grace is for many offenses, and brings justification,”³⁰ Now it is clear that the one sin originally inherited, even if it were the only one involved, makes men liable to condemnation. Yet grace justifies a man for many offenses, both the sin which he originally inherited in common with all the others and also the multitude of sins which he has committed on his own.

However, when he (the apostle) says, shortly after, “Therefore, as the offense of one man led all men to condemnation, so also the righteousness of one man leads all men to the life of justification,”³¹ he indicates sufficiently that everyone born of Adam is subject to damnation, and no one, unless reborn of Christ, is free from such a damnation.

And after this discussion of punishment through one man and grace through the Other, as he deemed sufficient for that part of the epistle, the apostle passes on to speak of the great mystery of holy baptism in the cross of Christ, and to do this so that we may understand nothing other in the baptism of Christ than the likeness of the death of Christ. The death of Christ crucified is nothing other than the likeness of the forgiveness of sins—so that in the very same sense in which the death is real, so also is the forgiveness of our sins real, and in the same sense in which his resurrection is real, so also in us is there authentic justification.

He asks: “What, then, shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?”³²—for he had previously

³⁰ Rom. 5:16.

³¹ Rom. 5:18.

³² Rom. 6:1.

said, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." ³³

And therefore he himself raised the question whether, because of the abundance of grace that follows sin, one should then continue in sin. But he answers, "God forbid!" and adds, "How shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" ³⁴ Then, to show that we are dead to sin, "Do you not know that all we who were baptized in Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" ³⁵

If, therefore, the fact that we are baptized into the death of Christ shows that we are dead to sin, then certainly infants who are baptized in Christ die to sin, since they are baptized into his own death. For there is no exception in the saying, "All we who are baptized into Christ Jesus are baptized into his death." And the effect of this is to show that we are dead to sin.

Yet what sin do infants die to in being reborn except that which they inherit in being born? What follows in the epistle also pertains to this: "Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death; that, as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life. For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also united with him in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we are dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more; death has no more dominion over him. For the death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives unto God. So also, reckon yourselves also to be dead to sin, but alive unto God through Christ Jesus." ³⁶

Now, he had set out to prove that we should not go on sinning, in order that thereby grace might abound, and had said, "If we have died to sin, how then shall we go on

³³ Rom. 5:20.

³⁴ Rom. 6:2.

³⁵ Rom. 6:3.

³⁶ Rom. 6:4-11.

living in it?" And then to show that we were dead to sin, he had added, "Know you not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Thus he concludes the passage as he began it. Indeed, he introduced the death of Christ in order to say that even he died in sin. To what sin, save that of the flesh in which he existed, not as sinner, but in "the likeness of sin" and which was, therefore, called by the name of sin? Thus, to those baptized into the death of Christ—into which not only adults but infants as well are baptized—he says, "So also you should reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

Whatever was done, therefore, in the crucifixion of Christ, his burial, his resurrection on the third day, his ascension into heaven, his being seated at the Father's right hand—all these things were done thus, that they might not only signify their mystical meanings but also serve as a model for the Christian life which we lead here on the earth. Thus, of his crucifixion it was said, "And they that are Jesus Christ's have crucified their own flesh with the passions and lusts thereof";³⁷ and of his burial, "For we are buried with Christ by baptism into death"; of his resurrection, "Since Christ is raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also should walk with him in newness of life"; of his ascension and session at the Father's right hand: "But if you have risen again with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."³⁸

Now what we believe concerning Christ's future actions, since we confess that he will come again from heaven to judge the living and the dead, does not pertain to this life of ours as we live it here on earth, because it belongs not to his deeds already done, but to what he will do at the close of the age. To this the apostle refers and goes on to add, "When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, you shall then also appear with him in glory."³⁹

³⁷ Gal. 5:24.

³⁸ Col. 3:1-3.

³⁹ Col. 3:4.

There are two ways to interpret the affirmation that he "shall judge the living and the dead." On the one hand, we may understand by "the living" those who are not yet dead but who will be found living in the flesh when he comes; and we may understand by "the dead" those who have left the body, or who shall have left it before his coming. Or, on the other hand, "the living" may signify "the righteous," and "the dead" may signify "the unrighteous"—since the righteous are to be judged as well as the unrighteous. For sometimes the judgment of God is passed upon the evil, as in the word, "But they who have done evil "shall come forth to the resurrection of judgment."⁴⁰ And sometimes it is passed upon the good, as in the word, "Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me in thy strength."⁴¹ Indeed, it is by the judgment of God that the distinction between good and evil is made, to the end that, being freed from evil and not destroyed with the evildoers, the good may be set apart at his right hand.⁴² This is why the psalmist cried, "Judge me, O God," and, as if to explain what he had said, "and defend my cause against an unholy nation."⁴³

CHAPTER X-XIV

4. *Sermons on New Testament Lessons*

All ye who are looking for a man's many words, understand the One Word of God, "In the beginning was the Word."⁴⁴ Now, "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth."⁴⁵ But, "The Word was," since we have heard, "In the beginning God made." Acknowledge we in

⁴⁰ John 5:29.⁴¹ Psalm 54:1.⁴² Matt. 25:32, 33.⁴³ Psalm 43:1.⁴⁴ John 1:1.⁴⁵ Gen. 1:1.

Him the Creator; for Creator is He who made; and the creature what He made. For no creature which was made "was," as God the Word "was," by whom it was made, always. Now when we heard "The Word was," with whom was It? We understand the Father who did not make nor create the Same Word, but begat Him. For, "In the beginning God made heaven and the earth." Whereby made He them? "The Word was, and the Word was with God"; but what kind of Word? Did it sound and so pass away? Was it a mere thought, and motion of the mind? No. Was it suggested by memory, and uttered? No. What kind of Word then? Why dost thou look for many words from me? "The Word was God." When we hear, "The Word was God," we do not make a second God; but we understand the Son. For the Word is the Son of God. Lo, the Son, and What but God? For "The Word was God." What the Father? God of course. If the Father is God and the Son God, do we make two Gods? God forbid. The Father is God, the Son God; but the Father and the Son One God. For the Only Son of God was not made, but born. "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth"; but the Word was of the Father. Was the Word therefore made by the Father? No. "All things were made by Him." If by Him all things were made, was He too made by Himself? Do not imagine that He by whom thou hearest all things were made was Himself made among all things. For if He were made Himself, all things were not made by Him, but Himself was made among the rest. You say, "He was made"; what, by Himself? Who can make himself? If then He was made, how by Him were all things made? See, Himself too was made, as you say, not I, for that He was begotten, I do not deny. If then you say that He was made, I ask by what, by whom? By Himself? Then He "was," before He was made, that He might make Himself. But if all things were made by Him, understand that He was not Himself made. If thou are not able to understand, believe, that thou mayest understand. Faith goes before; understanding follows after; since the Prophet says, "Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand." "The Word was." You say falsely; nowhere do you read this. But I do read for you, "In the

beginning was the Word." What look you for before the beginning? But if you should be able to find anything before the beginning, this will be the beginning. He is mad who looks for anything before the beginning. What then doth he say was before the beginning? "In the beginning was the Word."

But you will say, "The Father both 'was,' and was before the Word." What are you looking for? "In the beginning was the Word." What you find, understand; seek not for what you are not able to find. Nothing is before the beginning. "In the beginning was the Word." The Son is the Brightness of the Father. Of the Wisdom of the Father, which is the Son, it is said, "For He is the brightness of the Everlasting Light." Are you seeking for a Son without a Father? Give me a light without brightness. If there was a time when the Son was not, the Father was a light obscure. For how was He not an obscure Light, if It had no brightness? So then the Father always, the Son always. If the Father always, the Son always. Do you ask of me, whether the Son were born? I answer, "born." For He would not be a Son if not born. So when I say, the Son always was, I say in fact was always born. And who understands, "Was always born"? Give me an eternal fire, and I will give thee an eternal brightness. We bless God who hath given to us the holy Scriptures. Be ye not blind in the brightness of the light. Brightness is engendered of the Light. Brightness is coeternal with the Light that engenders It. The Light always, its Brightness always. It begat Its Own Brightness; but was it ever without Its Brightness? Let God be allowed to beget an eternal Son. I pray you hear of whom we are speaking; hear, mark, believe, understand. Of God are we speaking. We confess and believe the Son coeternal with the Father. But you will say, "When a man begets a Son, he that begets is the elder, and he that is begotten the younger." It is true; in the case of men, he that begets is the elder, and he that is begotten, the younger, and he arrives in time to his father's strength. But why, save that whilst the one grows, the other grows old? Let the father stand still a while, and in his growing the son will follow on him, and you will see him equal. But see, I

give you whereby to understand this. Fire engenders a coeval brightness. Among men you only find sons younger, fathers older; you do not find them coeval: but as I have said, I show you brightness coeval with its parent fire. For fire begets brightness, yet is it never without brightness. Since then you see that the brightness is coeval with its fire, suffer God to beget a Coeternal son. Whoso understandeth, let him rejoice: but whoso understandeth not, let him believe. For the word of the Prophet cannot be disannulled; "Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand."

That our Lord Jesus Christ in seeking lost men was made Man, our preaching has never withholden, and your faith has ever retained; and moreover, that this our Lord, who for our sakes was made Man, was always God with the Father, and always will be, yea rather always Is; for where there is no succession of time, there is no "hath been" and "will be." For that of which it is said, "it hath been," is now no more; that of which it is said, "it will be," is not yet; but He always is, because He truly "is," that is, is unchangeable. For the Gospel lesson has just now taught us a high and divine mystery. For this beginning of the Gospel St. John poured forth, for that he drank it in from the Lord's breast. For ye remember, that it has been very lately read to you, how that this St. John the Evangelist lay in the Lord's bosom. And wishing to explain this clearly, he says, "On the Lord's breast"; that we might understand what he meant, by "in the Lord's bosom." For what, think we, did he drink in who was lying on the Lord's breast? Nay, let us not think but drink; for we too have just now heard what we may drink in.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. If the Word had been made (for made indeed that was not by which all things were made); if the Word had been made, the Scripture would have said, "In the beginning God made the Word"; as it is said in Genesis, "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth." God then did not in the beginning make the Word; because, "In the beginning was the Word." This Word which was in the beginning, where was It? Follow on, "And the Word was with God." But from our daily hearing

the words of men we are wont to think lightly of this name of "Word." In this case do not think lightly of the Name of "Word"; "The Word was God. The same," that is the Word "was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made."

Extend your hearts, help the poverty of my words. What I shall be able to express, give ear to; on what I shall not be able to express, meditate. Who can comprehend the abiding Word? All our words sound, and pass away. Who can comprehend the abiding Word, save He who abideth in Him? Wouldest thou comprehend the abiding Word? Do not follow the current of the flesh. For this flesh is indeed a current; for it has none abiding. As it were from a kind of secret fount of nature men are born, they live, they die; or whence they come, or whither they go, we know not. It is a hidden water, till it issues from its source; it flows on, and is seen in its course; and again it is hidden in the sea. Let us despise this stream flowing on, running, disappearing, let us despise it. "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of flesh is as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, the flower falleth away." Wouldest thou endure? "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

But in order to succour us, "The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us." What is, "The Word was made Flesh"? The gold became grass. It became grass for to be burned; the grass was burned, but the gold remained; in the grass It perisheth not, yea, It changed the grass. How did It change it? It raised it up, quickened it, lifted it up to heaven, and placed it at the right Hand of the Father. But that it might be said, "And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us," let us recollect awhile what went before. "He came unto His Own, and His Own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." "To become," for they "were" not; but he "was" Himself in the beginning. "He gave them" then "power to become the sons of God, to them that believe in His Name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." ⁴⁶ Lo, born they are, in whatever age of the flesh

⁴⁶ John 1:11-14.

they may be; ye see infants; see and rejoice. Lo, they are born; but they are born of God. Their mother's womb is the water of baptism.

Let no man in poorness of soul entertain this conceit, and turn over such most beggarly thoughts in his mind, and say to himself, "How 'in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: all things were made by Him'; and lo, 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us'?" Hear why it was done. "To those" we know "who believed on Him He hath given power to become the sons of God." Let not those then to whom He hath given power to become the sons of God, think it impossible to become the sons of God. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Do not imagine that it is too great a thing for you to become the sons of God; for your sakes He became the Son of man, who was the Son of God. If He was made, that He might be less, who was more; can He not bring it to pass, that of that less which we were, we may be something more? He descended to us, and shall not we ascend to Him? For us He accepted our death, and shall He not give us His Life? For thee He suffered thy evil things, and shall He not give thee His good things?

"But how," one will say, "can it be, that the Word of God, by whom the world is governed, by whom all things both were, and are created, should contract Himself into the womb of a Virgin; should abandon the world, and leave the Angels, and be shut up in one woman's womb?" Thou skillest not to conceive of things divine. The Word of God (I am speaking to thee, O man, I am speaking to thee of the omnipotence of the Word of God) could surely do all, seeing that the Word of God is omnipotent, at once remain with the Father, and come to us; at once in the flesh come forth to us, and lay concealed in Him. For He would not the less have been, if He had not been born of flesh. He "was" before His own flesh; He created His Own mother. He chose her in whom He should be conceived, He created her of whom He should be created: Why marvellest thou? It is God of whom I am speaking to thee: "The Word was God."

I am treating of the Word, and perchance the word of men may furnish somewhat like; though very unequal, far distant, in no way comparable, yet something which may convey a hint to you by way of resemblance. Lo, the word which I am speaking to you, I have had previously in my heart: it came forth to thee, yet it has not departed from me; that began to be in thee, which was not in thee; it continued with me when it went forth to thee. As then my word was brought forth to thy sense, yet did not depart from my heart; so That Word came forth to our senses, yet departed not from His Father. My word was with me, and it came forth into a voice: the Word of God was with the Father, and came forth into Flesh. But can I do with my voice that which He could do with His Flesh? For I am not master of my voice as it flies; He is not only master of His Flesh, that It should be born, live, act; but even when dead He raised It up, and exalted unto the Father the Vehicle as it were in which He came forth to us. You may call the Flesh of Christ a Garment, you may call It a Vehicle, and as perchance Himself vouch-safed to teach us, you may call It His Beast; for on this beast He raised him who had been wounded by robbers; lastly, as He said Himself more expressly, you may call It a Temple; This Temple knows death no more, Its seat is at the right Hand of the Father: in This Temple shall He come to judge the quick and the dead. What He hath by precept taught, He hath by example manifested. What He hath in His own Flesh shown, that oughtest thou to hope for in thy flesh. This is faith; hold fast what as yet thou seest not. Need there is, that by believing thou abide firm in that thou seest not; lest when thou shalt see, thou be put to shame.

The beginning of John's Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word." Thus he begins, this he saw, and transcending the whole creation, mountains, air, the heavens, the stars, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, all Angels, and Archangels, transcending all; he saw the Word in the beginning, and drank It in. He saw above every creature, he drank in from the Lord's breasts. For this same St. John the Evangelist is he whom Jesus specially loved; insomuch

that he lay on His Breast at supper. There was this secret, that therefrom might be drunk in, what in the Gospel was to be poured forth. Happy they who hear and understand. Of the next degree of blessedness are they who though they understand not, believe. For how great a thing it is to see This Word of God, who can explain in human words?

Lift up your hearts, my brethren, lift them up as best ye can; whatsoever occurs to you from the idea of any body whatsoever, reject. If the Word of God occurs to you under the idea of the light of this sun, expand, extend it how you will, set no bounds in your thought to that light; it is nothing to the Word of God. Whatsoever of this sort the mind conceives, is less in one part than in the whole. Of the Word conceive as whole everywhere. Understand ye what I say; because of my stress of time I am limiting myself as much as I can for your sakes. Understand ye what I say. Lo, this light from heaven, which is called by the name of the sun, when it comes forth, it enlightens the earth, unfolds the day, develops forms, distinguishes colours. Great blessing it is, great gift of God to all mortal men; let His works magnify Him. If the sun is so beauteous, what more beauteous than the sun's Maker? And yet look, Brethren; lo, he pours his rays through the whole earth; penetrates open places, the closed resist him; he sends his light through windows, can he also through a wall? To the Word of God all is open, from the Word of God nothing is hid. Observe another difference, how far from the Creator is the creature, especially the bodily creature. When the sun is in the East, it is not in the West. Its light indeed shed from that vast body reaches even to the West; but itself is not there. When it begins to set, then it will be there. When it rises, it is in the East; when it sets, it is in the West. By these operations of His, it has given name to those quarters. Because it is in the East when it rises at the East, it has made it be called the Rising Sun; because it is at the West when it sets at the West, it has made it be called the Setting Sun. As night it is nowhere seen. Is the Word of God so? When It is in the East, is It not in the West; or when It is in the West, is It not in the East? Or does It ever leave the earth, and go under or

behind the earth? It is Whole everywhere. Who can in words explain this? Who see it? By what means of proof shall I establish to you what I say? I am speaking as a man, it is to men I speak; I am speaking as one weak, to men weaker am I speaking. And yet, my brethren, I am bold to say that I do in some sort see what I am saying to you, though "through a glass," or "darkly," I do in some sort understand even within my heart a word touching this thing. But it seeks to go forth to you, and finds no meet vehicle. The vehicle of the word is the sound of the voice. What I am saying within mine own self I seek to say to you, and words fail. For I wish to speak of the Word of God. How great a Word, what kind of Word? "All things were made by Him." See the works, and stand in awe of the Worker. "All things were made by Him."

Return with me, O human infirmity, return, I say. Let us comprehend these human things if we can. We are men, I who speak, am a man, and to men I speak, and utter the sound of my voice. I convey the sound of my voice to men's ears, and by the sound of my voice I somehow through the ear lay up understanding also in the heart. Let us then speak on this point what and how we can, let us comprehend it. But if we have not ability to comprehend even this, in respect of the Other what are we? Lo, ye are listening to me; I am speaking a word. If any one goes out from us, and is asked outside what is being done here, he answers, "The Bishop is speaking a word." I am speaking a word of the Word. But what a word, of what a Word? A mortal word, of the Word Immortal; a changeable word, of the Word Unchangeable; a passing word of the Word Eternal. Nevertheless, consider my word. For I have told you already, the Word of God is Whole everywhere. See, I am speaking a word to you; what I say reaches to all. Now that what I am saying might come to you all, did ye divide what I say? If I were to feed you, to wish to fill not your minds, but your bodies, and to set loaves before you to be satisfied therewith, would ye not divide my loaves among you? Could my loaves come to every one of you? If they came to one only, the rest would have none. But now see, I am speaking, and ye all re-

ceive. Nay, not only all receive, but all receive it whole. It comes whole to all, to each whole. O the marvels of my word! What then is the Word of God? Hear again. I have spoken; what I have spoken, has gone forth to you, and has not gone away from me. It has reached to you, and has not been separated from me. Before I spake, I had it, and ye had not; I spake, and ye began to have, and I lost nothing. O the marvel of my word! What then is the Word of God? From little things form conjectures of things great. Consider earthly things, laud the heavenly. I am a creature, ye are creatures; and such great miracles are done with my word in my heart, in my mouth, in my voice, in your ears, in your hearts. What then is the Creator? O Lord, hear us. Make us, for that Thou hast made. Make us good, for that Thou hast made us enlightened men. These white-robed, enlightened ones hear Thy word by me. For enlightened by Thy grace they stand before Thee. "This is the day which the Lord hath made." Only let them labour, let them pray for this, that when these days shall have gone by, they may not become darkness, who have been made the light of the wonders and the blessings of God.

SERMONS LXVIII, LXIX, LXX

5. *The Confessions*

But our very Life came down to earth and bore our death, and slew it with the very abundance of his own life. And, thundering, he called us to return to him into that secret place from which he came forth to us—coming first into the virginal womb, where the human creature, our mortal flesh, was joined to him that it might not be forever mortal—and came "as a bridegroom coming out his chamber, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race." For he did not delay, but ran through the world, crying out by words, deeds, death, life, descent, ascension—crying aloud to us

to return to him. And he departed from our sight that we might return to our hearts and find him there. For he left us, and behold, he is here. He could not be with us long, yet he did not leave us. He went back to the place that he had never left, for "the world was made by him." In this world he was, and into this world he came, to save sinners. To him my soul confesses, and he heals it, because it had sinned against him. O sons of men, how long will you be so slow of heart? Even now after Life itself has come down to you, will you not ascend and live? But where will you climb if you are already on a pinnacle and have set your mouth against the heavens? First come down that you may climb up, climb up to God. For you have fallen by trying to climb against Him. Tell this to the souls you love that they may weep in the valley of tears, and so bring them along with you to God, because it is by his spirit that you speak thus to them, if, as you speak, you burn with the fire of love.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 12 (19)

I sought, therefore, some way to acquire the strength sufficient to enjoy thee; but I did not find it until I embraced that "Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus," "who is over all, God blessed forever," who came calling and saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and mingling with our fleshly humanity the heavenly food I was unable to receive. For "the Word was made flesh" in order that thy wisdom, by which thou didst create all things, might become milk for our infancy. And, as yet, I was not humble enough to hold the humble Jesus; nor did I understand what lesson his weakness was meant to teach us. For thy Word, the eternal Truth, far exalted above even the higher parts of thy creation, lifts his subjects up toward himself. But in this lower world, he built for himself a humble habitation of our own clay, so that he might pull down from themselves and win over to himself those whom he is to bring subject to him; lowering their pride and heightening their love, to the end that they might go no farther in self-confidence—but rather should become weak, seeing at their feet the Deity make weak by sharing our coats of skin—so that they might cast them-

selves, exhausted, upon him and be uplifted by his rising.

But I thought otherwise. I saw in our Lord Christ only a man of eminent wisdom to whom no other man could be compared—especially because he was miraculously born of a virgin—sent to us an example of despising worldly things for the attainment of immortality, and thus exhibiting his divine care for us. Because of this, I held that he had merited his great authority as leader. But concerning the mystery contained in “the Word was made flesh,” I could not even form a notion. From what I learned from what has been handed down to us in the books about him—that he ate, drank, slept, walked, rejoiced in spirit, was sad, and discoursed with his fellows—I realized that his flesh alone was not bound unto thy Word, but also that there was a bond with the human soul and body. Everyone knows this who knows the unchangeableness of thy Word, and this I know by now, as far as I was able, and I had no doubts at all about it. For at one time to move the limbs by an act of will, at another time not; at one time to feel some emotion, at another time not; at one time to speak intelligibly through verbal signs, at another, not—these are all properties of a soul and mind subject to change. And if these things were falsely written about him, all the rest would risk the imputation of falsehood, and there would remain in those books no saving faith for the human race.

Therefore, because they were written truthfully, I acknowledged a perfect man to be in Christ—not the body of a man only, nor, in the body, an animal soul without a rational one as well, but a true man. And this man I held to be superior to all others, not only because he was a form of the Truth, but also because of the great excellence and perfection of his human nature, due to his participation in wisdom.

Alypius, on the other hand, supposed the Catholics to believe that God was so clothed with flesh that besides God and the flesh there was no soul in Christ, and he did not think that a human mind was ascribed to him. And because he was fully persuaded that the actions recorded of him could not have been performed except by a living

rational creature, he moved the more slowly toward Christian faith. But when he later learned that this was the error of the Apollinarian heretics, he rejoiced in the Catholic faith and accepted it. For myself, I must confess that it was even later that I learned how in the sentence, "The Word was made flesh," the Catholic truth can be distinguished from the falsehood of Photinus. For the refutation of heretics makes the tenets of thy Church and sound doctrine to stand out boldly. "For there must also be heresies (factions) that those who are approved may be made manifest among the weak." ⁴⁷

By having thus read the books of the Platonists, and having been taught by them to search for the incorporeal Truth, I saw how thy invisible things are understood through the things that are made. And, even when I was thrown back, I still sensed what it was that the dullness of my soul would not allow me to contemplate. I was assured that thou wast, and wast infinite, though not diffused in finite space or infinity; that thou truly art, who art ever the same varying neither in part nor motion; and that all things are from thee, as is proved by this sure cause alone: that they exist.

Of all this I was convinced, yet I was too weak to enjoy thee. I chattered away as if I were an expert; but if I had not sought thy Way in Christ our Saviour, my knowledge would have turned out to be not instruction but destruction. For now full of what was in fact my punishment, I had begun to desire to seem wise. I did not mourn my ignorance, but rather was puffed up with knowledge. For where was that love which builds upon the foundation of humility, which is Jesus Christ? Or, when would these books teach me this? I now believe that it was thy pleasure that I should fall upon these books before I studied thy Scriptures, that it might be impressed on my memory how I was affected by them; and then afterward, when I was subdued by thy Scriptures and when my wounds were touched by thy healing fingers, I might discern and distinguish what a difference there is between presumption and confession—between those who saw where they

were to go even if they did not see the way, and the Way which leads, not only to the observing, but also the inhabiting of the blessed country. For had I first been molded in thy Holy Scriptures, and if thou hadst grown sweet to me through my familiar use of them, and if then I had afterward fallen on those volumes, they might have pushed me off the solid ground of bodliness—or if I had stood firm in that wholesome disposition which I had there acquired, I might have thought that wisdom could be attained by the study of those (Platonist) books alone.

With great eagerness, then, I fastened upon the venerable writings of thy Spirit and principally upon the apostle Paul. I had thought that he sometimes contradicted himself and that the text of his teaching did not agree with the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets; but now all these doubts vanished away. And I saw that those pure words had but one face, and I learned to rejoice with trembling. So I began, and I found that whatever truth I had read (in the Platonists) was here combined with the exaltation of thy grace. Thus, he who sees must not glory as if he had not received, not only the things that he sees, but the very power of sight—for what does he have that he has not received as a gift? By this he is not only exhorted to see, but also to be cleansed, that he may grasp thee, who art ever the same; and thus he who cannot see thee afar off may yet enter upon the road that leads to reaching, seeing, and possessing thee. For although a man may “delight in the law of God after the inward man,” what shall he do with that other “law in his members which wars against the law of his mind, and brings him into captivity under the law of sin, which is in his members”?⁴⁸ Thou art righteous, O Lord; but we have sinned and committed iniquities, and have done wickedly. Thy hand has grown heavy upon us, and we are justly delivered over to that ancient sinner, the lord of death. For he persuaded our wills to become like his will, by which he remained not in thy truth. What shall “wretched man” do? “Who shall deliver him from the body of this death,”⁴⁹ except thy grace

⁴⁸ Rom. 7:22, 23.

⁴⁹ Rom. 7:24, 25.

through Jesus Christ our Lord; whom thou hast begotten, coeternal with thyself, and didst create in the beginning of thy ways—in whom the prince of this world found nothing worthy of death, yet he killed him—and so the handwriting which was all against us was blotted out?

The books of the Platonists tell nothing of this. Their pages do not contain the expression of this kind of godliness—the tears of confession, thy sacrifice, a troubled spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, the salvation of thy people, the espoused City, the earnest of the Holy Spirit, the cup of our redemption. In them, no man sings: “Shall not my soul be subject unto God, for from him comes my salvation? He is my God and my salvation, my defender; I shall no more be moved.”⁵⁰ In them, no one hears him calling, “Come unto me all you who labor.” They scorn to learn of him because he is “meek and lowly of heart”; for “thou hast hidden those things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” For it is one thing to see the land of peace from a wooded mountain-top, and fail to find the way thither—to attempt impassable ways in vain, opposed and waylaid by fugitives and deserters under their captain, the “lion” and “dragon”; but it is quite another thing to keep to the highway that leads thither, guarded by the hosts of the heavenly Emperor, on which there are no deserters from the heavenly army to rob the passers-by, for they shun it as a torment. These thoughts sank wondrously into my heart, when I read that “least of thy apostles” and when I had considered all thy works and trembled.

BOOK VII, CHAPTERS 18-21

But the true Mediator, whom thou in thy secret mercy hast revealed to the humble, and hast sent to them so that through his example they also might learn the same humility—that “Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus,”⁵¹ appeared between mortal sinners, and the immortal Just One. He was mortal as men are mortal; he was righteous as God is righteous; and because the reward of righteousness is life and peace, he could, through his

⁵⁰ Psalm 62:1, 2, 5, 6.

⁵¹ I Tim. 2:5.

righteousness united with God, cancel the death of justified sinners, which he was willing to have in common with them. Hence he was manifested to holy men of old, to the end that they might be saved through faith in his Passion to come, even as we through faith in his Passion which is past. As man he was Mediator, but as the Word he was not something in between the two; because he was equal to God, and God with God, and, with the Holy Spirit, one God.

How hast thou loved us, O good Father, who didst not spare thy only Son, but didst deliver him up for us wicked ones! How hast thou loved us, for whom he who did not count it robbery to be equal with thee "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"! He alone was "free among the dead." He alone had power to lay down his life and power to take it up again, and for us he became to thee both Victor and Victim; and Victor because he was the Victim. For us, he was to thee both Priest and Sacrifice, and Priest because he was the Sacrifice. Out of slaves, he maketh us thy sons, because he was born of thee and did serve us. Rightly, then, is my hope fixed strongly on him, that thou wilt heal all my diseases through him, who sitteth at thy right hand and maketh intercession for us. Otherwise I should utterly despair. For my infirmities are many and great; indeed, they are very many and very great. But thy medicine is still greater. Otherwise, we might think that thy word was removed from union with man, and despair of ourselves, if it had not been that he was made flesh and dwelt among us.

BOOK X, CHAPTER 43 (68, 69)

6. Letter 199

I have received the letter of your Reverence in which you urge on us the great good of loving and longing for the coming of our Saviour. In this you act like the good servant of the master of the household who is eager for his lord's gain and who wishes to have many sharers in the love which burns so brightly and constantly in you. Examining, therefore, the passage you quoted from the Apostle where he said that the Lord would render a crown of justice not only to him but to all who love His coming, we live as uprightly as he and we pass through this world as pilgrims while our heart constantly expands with this love, and whether He comes sooner or later than He is expected, his coming is loved with faithful charity and longed for with pious affection. Doubtless, that servant who says: "My lord is long a-coming," and who strikes his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, does not love His coming; his mind is shown by his behavior. The good master was careful, however briefly, to explain this conduct, that is, pride and riotous living, lest his saying "My lord is long a-coming" be attributed to a longing for his Master in the same way as the Psalmist longed for Him when he said: "My soul hath thirsted after the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?" For by saying "When shall I come?" he showed his impatience at the delay, because, even though it be quickened in time, it seems slow to his longing. But, how is His coming slow or how is it far in the future when the very apostles, while they were still in the flesh, said: "It is the last hour," although they heard the Lord say: "It is not for you to know the times"? Therefore, they did not know this any more than we know it—I am speaking for myself and for those who share this lack of knowledge

with me—yet, those to whom He said: “It is not for you to know the times which the Father hath put in his own power,” loved His coming and gave their fellow servants meat in due season; did not strike them by lording it over them, nor revel with the lovers of the world, saying: “My lord is long a-coming.”

Therefore, not to know the times is something different from decay of morals and love of vice. For, when the Apostle Paul said: “Be not easily moved from your mind nor be frightened, neither by word nor by epistle as sent from us, as if the day of the Lord were at hand,”⁵² he obviously did not want them to believe those who thought the coming of the Lord was already at hand, but neither did he want them to be like the wicked servant and say: “My lord is long a-coming,” and deliver themselves over to destruction by pride and riotous behavior. Thus, his desire that they should not listen to false rumors about the imminent approach of the last day was consistent with his wish that they should await the coming of their Lord fully prepared, with their loins girt and lamps burning. He said to them: “But you, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief, for all you are the children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness.”⁵³ On the other hand, the one who says: “My lord is long a-coming,” and then strikes his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, is not of light but of darkness, and therefore that day will overtake him as a thief, because everyone ought to fear the last day of his life here. In whatever state his own last day finds each one, in that state the last day of the world will overtake him; such as he is on the day of his death, such each one will be judged on that last day.

What is written in the Gospel of St. Mark has a bearing on this: “Watch, for you know not when the lord of the house cometh, at even or at midnight or at the cock crowing or in the morning, lest coming on a sudden he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch.” Who are the “all” to whom He says this if not His elect

⁵² I Thess. 2:2.

⁵³ I Thess. 5:4, 5.

and His beloved, the members of His body which is the Church? Therefore, He said if not only to those who then heard Him speaking, but also to those who came after them and before us, as well as to us and to those who will come after us until His final coming. Is that day going to find all in this life or is anyone likely to say that these words are also addressed to the dead, when He says: "Watch, lest coming on a sudden he find you sleeping"? Why, then, does He say to all what concerns only those who will then be living, unless it concerns all in the way I have explained it? For that day will come to every single one, when the day comes for him to go out of life, such as he is, to be judged on the last day. For this reason, every Christian ought to watch lest the coming of the Lord find him unprepared. But that day will find unprepared anyone whom the last day will find unprepared. This at least was certainly clear to the Apostles, that the Lord was not likely to come in their times, while they were still living here in the flesh, yet who would doubt that they watched most carefully and observed what He said to all, lest coming on a sudden He find them unprepared?

CHAPTERS 1-3



VIII
THE
CHURCH AND
THE TWO
CITIES



1. *The City of God*

This house of God (the Church) is more glorious than that first one which was constructed of wood and stone, metals and other precious things. Therefore the prophecy of Haggai was not fulfilled in the rebuilding of that temple. For it can never be shown to have had so much glory after it was rebuilt as it had in the time of Solomon; yea, rather, the glory of that house is shown to have been diminished, first by the ceasing of prophecy, and then by the nation itself suffering so great calamities, even to the final destruction made by the Romans, as the things above-mentioned prove. But this house which pertains to the new testament is just as much more glorious as the living stones, even believing, renewed men, of which it is constructed are better. But it was typified by the rebuilding of that temple for this reason, because the very renovation of that edifice typifies in the prophetic oracle another testament which is called the new.

When, therefore, God said by the prophet just named, "And I will give peace in this place,"¹ He is to be understood who is typified by that typical place; for since by that rebuilt place is typified the Church which was to be built by Christ, nothing else can be accepted as the meaning of the saying, "I will give peace in this place,"

¹ Hag. 2:9.

except I will give peace in the place which that place signifies. For all typical things seem in some way to personate those whom they typify, as it is said by the apostle, "That Rock was Christ." Therefore the glory of this new testament house is greater than the glory of the old testament house; and it will show itself as greater when it shall be dedicated. For then "shall come in the desired of all nations," as we read in the Hebrew. For before His advent He had not yet been desired by all nations. For they knew not Him whom they ought to desire, in whom they had not believed. Then, also, according to the Septuagint interpretation (for it also is a prophetic meaning), "shall come those who are elected of the Lord out of all nations." For then indeed there shall come only those who are elected, whereof the apostle saith, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." ² For the Master Builder who said, "Many are called, but few are chosen," did not say this of those who, on being called, came in such a way as to be cast out from the feast, but would point out the house built up of the elect, which henceforth shall dread no ruin. Yet because the churches are also full of those who shall be separated by the winnowing as in the threshing-floor, the glory of this house is not so apparent now as it shall be when everyone who is there shall be there always.

BOOK XVIII, CHAPTER 48

In this wicked world, in these evil days, when the Church measures her future loftiness by her present humility, and is exercised by goading fears, tormenting sorrows, disquieting labors, and dangerous temptations, when she soberly rejoices, rejoicing only in hope, there are many reprobate mingled with the good, and both are gathered together by the gospel as in a drag net; and in this world, as in the sea, both swim enclosed without distinction in the net, until it is brought ashore, when the wicked must be separated from the good, that in the good, as in His temple, God may be all in all. We acknowledge, indeed, that His word is now fulfilled who spake in the psalm, and said, "I

² Eph. 1:4.

have announced and spoken; they are multiplied above number.”³ This takes place now, since He has spoken, first by the mouth of his forerunner John, and afterward by his own mouth, saying, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” He chose disciples, whom He also called apostles, of lowly birth, unhonored, and illiterate, so that whatever great thing they might be or do, He might be and do it in them. He had one among them whose wickedness he could use well in order to accomplish His appointed passion, and furnish His Church an example of bearing with the wicked. Having sown the holy gospel as much as that could be done by His bodily presence, He suffered, died, and rose again, showing by His passion what we ought to suffer for the truth, and by His resurrection what we ought to hope for in adversity; saving always the mystery of the sacrament, by which His blood was shed for the remission of sins. He held converse on the earth forty days with His disciples, and in their sight ascended into heaven, and after ten days sent the promised Holy Spirit. It was given as the chief and most necessary sign of His coming on those who had believed, that everyone of them spoke in the tongues of all nations; thus signifying that the unity of the Catholic Church would embrace all nations, and would in like manner speak in all tongues.

BOOK XVIII, CHAPTER 49

Then was fulfilled that prophecy, “Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem”;⁴ and the prediction of the Lord Christ Himself, when after the resurrection “He opened the understanding” of His amazed disciples “that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, that thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”⁵ And again, when, in reply to their questioning about the day of His last coming, He said,

³ Psalm 40:5.

⁴ Isa. 2:3.

⁵ Luke 24:45-47.

"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power; but ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even unto the ends of the earth." ⁶ First of all, the Church spread herself abroad from Jerusalem; and when very many in Judea and Samaria had believed, she also went into other nations by those who announced the gospel, whom, as lights, He Himself had both prepared by His word and kindled by His Holy Spirit. For He had said to them, "Fear ye not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." ⁷ And that they might not be frozen with fear, they burned with the fire of charity. Finally, the gospel of Christ was preached in the whole world, not only by those who had seen and heard Him both before His passion and after His resurrection, but also after their death by their successors, amid the horrible persecutions, diverse torments and deaths of the martyrs, God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, that the people of the nations, believing in Him who was crucified for their redemption, might venerate with Christian love the blood of the martyrs which they had poured forth with devilish fury, and the very kings by whose laws the Church had been laid waste might become profitably subject to that name they had cruelly striven to take away from the earth, and might begin to persecute the false gods for whose sake the worshippers of the true God had formerly been persecuted. BOOK XVIII, CHAPTER 50

But the devil, seeing the temples of the demons deserted, and the human race running to the name of the liberating Mediator, has moved the heretics under the Christian name to resist the Christian doctrine, as if they could be kept in the city of God indifferently without any correction, just as the city of confusion indifferently held the philosophers who were of diverse and adverse opinions. Those, therefore, in the Church of Christ who savor anything morbid and

⁶ Acts 1:7, 8.

⁷ Matt. 10:28.

depraved, and, on being corrected that they may savor what is wholesome and right, contumaciously resist, and will not amend their pestiferous and deadly dogmas, but persist in defending them, become heretics, and, going without, are to be reckoned as enemies who serve for her discipline. For even thus they profit by their wickedness those true catholic members of Christ, since God makes a good use even of the wicked, and all things work together for good to them that love Him. For all the enemies of the Church, whatever error blinds or malice depraves them, exercise her patience if they receive the power to afflict her corporally; and if they only oppose her by wicked thought, they exercise her wisdom: but at the same time, if these enemies are loved, they exercise her benevolence, or even her beneficence, whether she deals with them by persuasive doctrine or by terrible discipline. And thus the devil, the prince of the impious city, when he stirs up his own vessels against the city of God that sojourns in this world, is permitted to do her no harm. For without doubt the divine providence procures for her both consolation through prosperity, that she may not be broken by adversity, and trial through adversity, that she may not be corrupted by prosperity; and thus each is tempered by the other, as we recognize in the Psalms that voice which arises from no other cause, "According to the multitude of my griefs in my heart, Thy consolations have delighted my soul."⁸ Hence also is that saying of the apostle, "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation."⁹

For it is not to be thought that what the same teacher says can at any time fail, "Whoever will live piously in Christ shall suffer persecution."¹⁰ Because even when those who are without do not rage, and thus there seems to be, and really is, tranquillity, which brings very much consolation, especially to the weak, yet there are not wanting, yea, there are many within who by their abandoned manners torment the hearts of those who live piously, since by them the Christian and catholic name is blasphemed; and the

⁸ Psalm 94:19.

⁹ Rom. 12:12.

¹⁰ II Tim. 3:12.

dearer that name is to those who will live piously in Christ, the more do they grieve that through the wicked, who have a place within, it comes to be less loved than pious minds desire. The heretics themselves also, since they are thought to have the Christian name and sacraments, Scriptures, and profession, cause great grief in the hearts of the pious, both because many who wish to be Christians are compelled by their dissensions to hesitate, and many evil-speakers also find in them matter for blaspheming the Christian name, because they too are at any rate *called* Christians.

By these and similar depraved manners and errors of men, those who will live piously in Christ suffer persecution, even when no one molests or vexes their body; for they suffer this persecution, not in their bodies, but in their hearts. Whence is that word, "According to the multitude of my griefs in my heart"; for he does not say, in my body. Yet, on the other hand, none of them can perish, because the immutable divine promises are thought of. And because the apostle says, "The Lord knoweth them that are His";¹¹ for whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated (to be) conformed to the image of His Son, none of them can perish; therefore it follows in that psalm, "Thy consolations have delighted my soul." But that grief which arises in the hearts of the pious, who are persecuted by the manners of bad or false Christians, is profitable to the sufferers, because it proceeds from the charity in which they do not wish them either to perish or to hinder the salvation of others.

Finally, great consolations grow out of their chastisement, which imbue the souls of the pious with a fecundity as great as the pains with which they were troubled concerning their own perdition. Thus in this world, in these evil days, not only from the time of the bodily presence of Christ and His apostles, but even from that of Abel, whom first his wicked brother slew because he was righteous, and thenceforth even to the end of this world, the Church has gone forward on pilgrimage amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God.

BOOK XVIII, CHAPTER 51

¹¹ II Tim. 2:19.

Of the bliss of Paradise, of Paradise itself, and of the life of our first parents there, and of their sin and punishment, many have thought much, spoken much, written much. We ourselves, too, have spoken of these things in the foregoing books, and have written either what we read in the Holy Scriptures, or what we could reasonably deduce from them. And were we to enter into a more detailed investigation of these matters, an endless number of endless questions would arise, which would involve us in a larger work than the present occasion admits. We cannot be expected to find room for replying to every question that may be started by unoccupied and captious men, who are ever more ready to ask questions than capable of understanding the answer. Yet I trust we have already done justice to these great and difficult questions regarding the beginning of the world, or of the soul, or of the human race itself. This race we have distributed into two parts, the one consisting of those who live according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And these we also mystically call the two cities, or the two communities of men, of which the one is predestined to reign eternally with God, and the other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil. This, however, is their end, and of it we are to speak afterwards. At present, as we have said enough about their origin, whether among the angels, whose numbers we know not, or in the two first human beings, it seems suitable to attempt an account of their career, from the time when our two first parents began to propagate the race until all human generation shall cease. For this whole time or world-age, in which the dying give place and those who are born succeed, is the career of these two cities concerning which we treat.

Of these two first parents of the human race, then, Cain was the first-born, and he belonged to the city of men; after him was born Abel, who belonged to the city of God. For as in the individual the truth of the apostle's statement is discerned, "that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual,"¹² whence it comes to pass that each man, being derived from

¹² I Cor. 15:46.

a condemned stock, is first of all born of Adam evil and carnal, and becomes good and spiritual only afterwards, when he is grafted into Christ by regeneration: so was it in the human race as a whole. When these two cities began to run their course by a series of deaths and births, the citizen of this world was the first-born, and after him the stranger in this world, the citizen of the city of God, predestinated by grace, elected by grace, by grace a stranger below, and by grace a citizen above. By grace—for so far as regards himself he is sprung from the same mass, all of which is condemned in its origin: but God, like a potter (for this comparison is introduced by the apostle judiciously, and not without thought), of the same lump made one vessel to honor, another to dishonor. But first the vessel to dishonor was made, and after it another to honor. For in each individual, as I have already said, there is first of all that which is reprobate, that from which we must begin, but in which we need not necessarily remain; afterwards is that which is well-approved, to which we may advancing attain, and in which, when we have reached it, we may abide. Not, indeed, that every wicked man shall be good, but that no one will be good who was not first of all wicked; but the sooner any one becomes a good man, the more speedily does he receive this title, and abolish the old name in the new. Accordingly, it is recorded of Cain that he built a city, but Abel, being a sojourner, built none. For the city of the saints is above, although here below it begets citizens, in whom it sojourns till the time of its reign arrives, when it shall gather together all in the day of the resurrection; and then shall the promised kingdom be given to them, in which they shall reign with their Prince, the King of the ages, time without end. BOOK XV, CHAPTER 1

There was indeed on earth, so long as it was needed, a symbol and foreshadowing image of this city, which served the purpose of reminding men that such a city was to be, rather than of making it present; and this image was itself called the holy city, as a symbol of the future city, though not itself the reality. Of this city which served as an image, and of that free city it typified, Paul writes to the Galatians

in these terms: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh, but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. And we, brethren, are not children of the bond woman, but of the free, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."¹³ This interpretation of the passage, handed down to us with apostolic authority, shows how we ought to understand the Scriptures of the two covenants—the old and the new. One portion of the earthly city became an image of the heavenly city, not having a significance of its own, but signifying another city, and therefore serving, or "being in bondage." For it was founded not for its own sake, but to prefigure another city; and this shadow of a city was also itself foreshadowed by another preceding figure. For Sarah's handmaid Agar, and her son, were an image of this image. And as the shadows were to pass away when the full light came, Sarah, the free woman, who prefigured the free city (which again was also prefigured in another way by that shadow of a city Jerusalem), therefore said, "Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac," or, as the apostle says, "with the son of the free woman." In the earthly city, then, we find

¹³ Gal. 4:21-31.

two things—its own obvious presence, and its symbolic presentation of the heavenly city. Now citizens are begotten to the earthly city by nature vitiated by sin, but to the heavenly city by grace freeing nature from sin; whence the former are called “vessels of wrath,” the latter “vessels of mercy.”¹⁴ And this was typified in the two sons of Abraham—Ishmael, the son of Agar the handmaid, being born according to the flesh, while Isaac was born of the free woman Sarah, according to the promise. Both, indeed, were of Abraham’s seed; but the one was begotten by natural law, the other was given by gracious promise. In the one birth, human action is revealed; in the other, a divine kindness comes to light.

BOOK XV, CHAPTER 2

But the earthly city, which shall not be everlasting (for it will no longer be a city when it has been committed to the extreme penalty), has its good in this world, and rejoices in it with such joy as such things can afford. But as this is not a good which can discharge its devotees of all distresses, this city is often divided against itself by litigations, wars, quarrels, and such victories as are either life-destroying or short-lived. For each part of it that arms against another part of it seeks to triumph over the nations through itself in bondage to vice. If, when it has conquered, it is inflated with pride, its victory is life-destroying; but if it turns its thoughts upon the common casualties of our mortal condition, and is rather anxious concerning the disasters that may befall it than elated with the successes already achieved, this victory, though of a higher kind, is still only short-lived; for it cannot abidingly rule over those whom it has victoriously subjugated. But the things which this city desires cannot justly be said to be evil, for it is itself, in its own kind, better than all other human good. For it desires earthly peace for the sake of enjoying earthly goods, and it makes war in order to attain to this peace; since, if it has conquered, and there remains no one to resist it, it enjoys a peace which it had not while there were opposing parties who contested for the enjoyment of those things which were too small to satisfy both. This peace is

¹⁴ Rom. 9:22, 23.

purchased by toilsome wars; it is obtained by what they style a glorious victory. Now, when victory remains with the party which had the juster cause, who hesitates to congratulate the victor, and style it a desirable peace? These things, then, are good things, and without doubt the gifts of God. But if they neglect the better things of the heavenly city, which are secured by eternal victory and peace never-ending, and so inordinately covet these present good things that they believe them to be the only desirable things, or love them better than those things which are believed to be better—if this be so, then it is necessary that misery follow and ever increase.

BOOK XV, CHAPTER 4

Thus the founder of the earthly city was a fratricide. Overcome with envy, he slew his own brother, a citizen of the eternal city, and a sojourner on earth. So that we cannot be surprised that this first specimen, or, as the Greeks say, archetype of crime, should, long afterwards, find a corresponding crime at the foundation of that city which was destined to reign over so many nations, and be the head of this earthly city of which we speak. For of that city also, as one of their poets has mentioned, "the first walls were stained with a brother's blood," or, as Roman history records, Remus was slain by his brother Romulus. And thus there is no difference between the foundation of this city and of the earthly city, unless it be that Romulus and Remus were both citizens of the earthly city. Both desired to have the glory of founding the Roman republic, but both could not have as much glory as if one only claimed it; for he who wished to have the glory of ruling would certainly rule less if his power were shared by a living consort. In order, therefore, that the whole glory might be enjoyed by one, his consort was removed; and by this crime the empire was made larger indeed, but inferior, while otherwise it would have been less, but better. Now these brothers, Cain and Abel, were not both animated by the same earthly desires, nor did the murderer envy the other because he feared that, by both ruling, his own dominion would be curtailed—for Abel was not solicitous to rule in that city which his brother built—he was moved

by that diabolical, envious hatred with which the evil regard the good, for no other reason than because they are good while themselves are evil. For the possession of goodness is by no means diminished by being shared with a partner either permanent or temporarily assumed; on the contrary, the possession of goodness is increased in proportion to the concord and charity of each of those who share it. In short, he who is unwilling to share this possession cannot have it; and he who is most willing to admit others to a share of it will have the greatest abundance to himself. The quarrel, then, between Romulus and Remus shows how the earthly city is divided against itself; that which fell out between Cain and Abel illustrated the hatred that subsists between the two cities, that of God and that of men. The wicked war with the wicked; the good also war with the wicked. But with the good, good men, or at least perfectly good men, cannot war; though, while only going on towards perfection, they war to this extent, that every good man resists others in those points in which he resists himself. And in each individual "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh."¹⁵ This spiritual lusting, therefore, can be at war with the carnal lust of another man; or carnal lust may be at war with the spiritual desires of another, in some such way as good and wicked men are at war; or, still more certainly, the carnal lusts of two men, good but not yet perfect, contend together, just as the wicked contend with the wicked, until the health of those who are under the treatment of grace attains final victory.

BOOK XV, CHAPTER 5

But the families which do not live by faith seek their peace in the earthly advantages of this life; while the families which live by faith look for those eternal blessings which are promised, and use as pilgrims such advantages of time and of earth as do not fascinate and divert them from God, but rather aid them to endure with greater ease, and to keep down the number of those burdens of the corruptible body which weigh upon the soul. Thus the things necessary for this mortal life are used by both kinds of men and

families alike, but each has its own peculiar and widely different aim in using them. The earthly city, which does not live by faith, seeks an earthly peace, and the end it proposes, in the well-ordered concord of civic obedience and rule, is the combination of men's wills to attain the things which are helpful to this life. The heavenly city, or rather the part of it which sojourns on earth and lives by faith, makes use of this peace only because it must, until this mortal condition which necessitates it shall pass away. Consequently, so long as it lives like a captive and a stranger in the earthly city, though it has already received the promise of redemption, and the gift of the Spirit as the earnest of it, it makes no scruple to obey the laws of the earthly city, whereby the things necessary for the maintenance of this mortal life are administered; and thus, as this life is common to both cities, so there is a harmony between them in regard to what belongs to it. But, as the earthly city has had some philosophers whose doctrine is condemned by the divine teaching, and who, being deceived either by their own conjectures or by demons, supposed that many gods must be invited to take an interest in human affairs, and assigned to each a separate function and a separate department—to one the body, to another the soul; and in the body itself, to one the head, to another the neck, and each of the other members to one of the gods; and in like manner, in the soul, to one god the natural capacity was assigned, to another education, to another anger, to another lust; and so the various affairs of life were assigned—cattle to one, corn to another, wine to another, oil to another, the woods to another, money to another, navigation to another, wars and victories to another, marriages to another, births and fecundity to another, and other things to other gods: and as the celestial city, on the other hand, knew that one God only was to be worshipped, and that to Him alone was due that service which the Greeks call *λατρεία*, and which can be given only to a god, it has come to pass that the two cities could not have common laws of religion, and that the heavenly city has been compelled in this matter to dissent, and to become obnoxious to those who think differently, and to stand the

brunt of their anger and hatred and persecutions, except in so far as the minds of their enemies have been alarmed by the multitude of the Christians and quelled by the manifest protection of God accorded to them. This heavenly city, then, while it sojourns on earth, calls citizens out of all nations, and gathers together a society of pilgrims of all languages, not scrupling about diversities in the manners, laws, and institutions whereby earthly peace is secured and maintained, but recognizing that, however various these are, they all tend to one and the same end of earthly peace. It therefore is so far from rescinding and abolishing these diversities, that it even preserves and adopts them, so long only as no hindrance to the worship of the one supreme and true God is thus introduced. Even the heavenly city, therefore, while in its state of pilgrimage, avails itself of the peace of earth, and, so far as it can without injuring faith and godliness, desires and maintains a common agreement among men regarding the acquisition of the necessities of life, and makes this earthly peace bear upon the peace of heaven; for this alone can be truly called and esteemed the peace of the reasonable creatures, consisting as it does in the perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and of one another in God. When we shall have reached that peace, this mortal life shall give place to one that is eternal, and our body shall be no more this animal body which by its corruption weighs down the soul, but a spiritual body feeling no want, and in all its members subjected to the will. In its pilgrim state the heavenly city possesses this peace by faith; and by this faith it lives righteously when it refers to the attainment of that peace every good action towards God and man; for the life of the city is a social life.

2. *Expositions on the Psalms*

PSALM 65

1. The voice of holy prophecy must be confessed in the very title of this Psalm. It is inscribed, "Unto the end, a Psalm of David, a song of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, on account of the people of transmigration when they were beginning to go forth." How it fared with our fathers in the time of the transmigration to Babylon, is not known to all, but only to those that diligently study the Holy Scriptures, either by hearing or by reading. For the captive people Israel from the city of Jerusalem was let into slavery unto Babylon. But holy Jeremiah prophesied, that after seventy years the people would return out of captivity, and would rebuild the very city Jerusalem, which they had mourned as having been overthrown by enemies. But at that time there were prophets in that captivity of the people dwelling in Babylon, among whom was also the prophet Ezekiel. But that people was waiting until there should be fulfilled the space of seventy years, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah. It came to pass, when the seventy years had been completed, the temple was restored which had been thrown down: and there returned from captivity a great part of that people. But whereas the Apostle saith, "these things in figure happen unto them, but they have been written for our sakes, upon whom the end of the world hath come":¹⁶ we also ought to know first our captivity, then our deliverance: we ought to know the Babylon wherein we are captives, and the Jerusalem for a return to which we are sighing. For these two cities, according to the letter, in reality are two cities. And the former Jerusalem indeed by the Jews is not now inhabited. For after the crucifixion of

¹⁶ I Cor. 10:11.

the Lord vengeance was taken upon them with a great scourge, and being rooted up from that place where, with impious licentiousness being infuriated, they had madly raged against their Physician, they have been dispersed throughout all nations, and that land hath been given to Christians: and there is fulfilled what the Lord had said to them, "Therefore the kingdom shall be taken away from you, and it shall be given to a nation doing justice." ¹⁷ But when they saw great multitudes then following the Lord, preaching the kingdom of Heaven, and doing wonderful things, the rulers of that city said, "If we shall have let Him go, all men will go after Him, and there shall come the Romans, and shall take from us both place and nation." ¹⁸ That they might not lose their place, they killed the Lord; and they lost it, even because they killed. Therefore that city, being one earthly, did bear the figure of a certain city everlasting in the Heavens: but when that which was signified began more evidently to be preached, the shadow, whereby it was being signified, was thrown down: for this reason in that place now the temple is no more, which had been constructed for the image of the future Body of the Lord. We have the light, the shadow hath passed away: nevertheless, still in a kind of captivity we are: "So long as we are," he saith, "in the body, we are sojourning afar from the Lord." ¹⁹

2. And see ye the names of those two cities, Babylon and Jerusalem. Babylon is interpreted as confusion, Jerusalem as vision of peace. Observe now the city of confusion, in order that ye may perceive the vision of peace; that ye may endure that, sigh for this. Whereby can those two cities be distinguished? Can we anywise now separate them from each other? They are mingled, and from the very beginning of mankind mingled they run on unto the end of the world. Jerusalem received beginning through Abel, Babylon through Cain: for the buildings of the cities were afterwards erected. That Jerusalem in the land of the Jebusites was builded: for at first it used to be called Jebus,

¹⁷ Matt. 21:43.

¹⁸ John 11:48.

¹⁹ II Cor. 5:6.

from thence the nation of the Jebusites was expelled, when the people of God was delivered from Egypt, and led into the land of promise. But Babylon was builded in the most interior regions of Persia, which for a long time raised its head above the rest of nations. These two cities then at particular times were builded, so that there might be shown a figure of two cities begun of old, and to remain even unto the end in this world, but at the end to be severed. Whereby then can we now show them, that are mingled? At that time the Lord shall show, when some He shall set on the right hand, others on the left. Jerusalem on the right hand shall be, Babylon on the left. . . . Two loves make up these two cities: love of God maketh Jerusalem, love of the world maketh Babylon. Therefore let each one question himself as to what he loveth: and he shall find of which he is a citizen: and if he shall have found himself to be a citizen of Babylon, let him root out cupidity, implant charity: but if he shall have found himself a citizen of Jerusalem, let him endure captivity, hope for liberty. . . . Now therefore let us hear of, brethren, hear of, and sing of, and long for, that city whereof we are citizens. And what are the joys which are sung of to us? In what manner in ourselves is formed again the love of our city, which by long sojourning we had forgotten? But our Father hath sent from thence letters to us, God hath supplied to us the Scriptures, by which letters there should be wrought in us a longing for return: because by loving our sojourning, to enemies we had turned our face, and our back to our fatherland. What then is here sung?

3. "For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Zion." That fatherland is Zion: Jerusalem is the very same as Zion; and of this name the interpretation ye ought to know. As Jerusalem is interpreted vision of peace, so Zion *Beholding*, that is, vision and contemplation. Some great inexplicable sight to us is promised: and this is God Himself that hath builded the city. Beauteous and graceful the city, how much more beauteous a Builder it hath! "For Thee a hymn is meet, O God," he saith. But where? "In Zion": in Babylon it is not meet. For when a man beginneth to be renewed, already with heart in Jerusalem he singeth, with

the Apostle saying, "Our conversation is in the Heavens." ²⁰ For "in the flesh though walking," he saith, "not after the flesh we war." ²¹ Already in longing we are there, already hope into that land, as it were an anchor, we have sent before, lest in this sea being tossed we suffer shipwreck. In like manner therefore as of a ship which is at anchor, we rightly say that already she is come to land, for still she rolleth, but to land in a manner she hath been brought safe in the teeth of winds and in the teeth of storms; so against the temptations of this sojourning, our hope being grounded in that city Jerusalem causeth us not to be carried away upon rocks. He therefore that according to this hope singeth, in that city singeth: let him therefore say, "For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Zion." . . .

4. "And to Thee shall there be paid a vow in Jerusalem." Here we vow, and a good thing it is that there we should pay. But who are they that here do vow and pay not? They that persevere not even unto the end in that which they have vowed. Whence saith another Psalm, "Vow ye, and pay ye unto the Lord your God":²² and, "to Thee shall it be paid in Jerusalem." For there shall we be whole, that is, entire in the resurrection of just men: there shall be paid our whole vow, not soul alone, but the very flesh also, no longer corruptible, because no longer in Babylon, but now a body heavenly and changed. What sort of change is promised? "For we all shall rise again," saith the Apostle, "but we shall not all be changed. . . . Where is, O death, thy sting?" ²³ For now while there begin in use the first-fruits of the mind, from whence is the longing for Jerusalem, many things of corruptible flesh do contend against us, which will not contend, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory. Peace shall conquer, and war shall be ended. But when peace shall conquer, that city shall conquer which is called the vision of peace. On the part of death therefore shall be no contention. Now with how great a death do we contend! For thence are carnal pleasures, which to us even unlawfully do suggest many

²⁰ Phil. 3:20.

²¹ II Cor. 10:3.

²² Psalm 76:11.

²³ I Cor. 15:51.

things: to which we give no consent, but nevertheless in giving no consent we contend. . . .

5. "Hearken," he saith, "to my prayer, unto Thee all flesh shall come." And we have the Lord saying, that there was given to Him "power over every flesh." That King therefore began even now to appear, when there was being said, "Unto Thee all flesh shall come." "To Thee," he saith, "all flesh shall come." Wherefore to Him shall "all" flesh come? Because flesh He hath taken to Him. Whither shall there come all flesh? He took the first-fruits thereof out of the womb of the Virgin; and now that the first-fruits have been taken to Him, the rest shall follow, in order that the holocaust may be completed. Whence then "all flesh"? Every man. And whence every man? Have all been foretold, as going to believe in Christ? Have not many ungodly men been foretold, that shall be condemned also? Do not daily men not believing die in their own unbelief? After what manner therefore do we understand, "Unto Thee all flesh shall come"? By "all flesh" he hath signified, "flesh of every kind": out of every kind of flesh they shall come to Thee. What is, out of every kind of flesh? Have there come poor men, and have there not come rich men? Have there come humble men, and not come lofty men? Have there come unlearned men, and not come learned men? Have there come men, and not come women? Have there come masters, and not come servants? Have there come old men, and not come young men; or have there come young men, and not come boys; or have there come boys, and have there not been brought infants? In a word, have there come Jews (for thence were the Apostles, thence many thousands of men at first betraying, afterwards believing), and have there not come Greeks; or have there come Greeks, and not come Romans; or have there come Romans, and not come barbarians? And who could number ill nations coming to Him, to whom hath been said, "Unto Thee every flesh shall come"?

6. "The discourses of unjust men have prevailed over us, and our iniquities Thou shalt propitiate. . . . Every man, in whatsoever place he is born, of that same land, or region or city learneth the language, is hibiuated to the manners

and life of that place. What should a boy do, born among heathens, to avoid worshipping a stone, inasmuch as his parents have suggested that worship? From them the first words he hath heard, that error with his milk he hath sucked in; and because they that used to speak were elders, and the boy that was learning to speak was an infant, what could the little one do but follow the authority of elders, and deem that to be good which they recommended? Therefore nations that are converted to Christ afterwards, and taking to heart the impieties of their parents, and saying now what the prophet Jeremiah himself said, "Truly a lie our fathers have worshipped, vanity which hath not profited them" ²⁴—when, I say, they now say this, they renounce the opinions and blasphemies of their unjust parents. . . . There have led us away men teaching evil things, citizens of Babylon they have made us, we have left the Creator, have adored the creature: have left Him by whom we were made, have adored that which we ourselves have made. For "the discourses of unjust men have prevailed over us": but nevertheless they have not crushed us. Wherefore? "Our impieties Thou shalt propitiate," is not said except to some priest offering somewhat whereby impiety may be expiated and propitiated. For impiety is then said to be propitiated, when God is made propitious to the impiety. What is it for God to be made propitious to impiety? It is His becoming forgiving and giving pardon. But in order that God's pardon may be obtained, propitiation is made through some sacrifice. There hath come forth therefore, sent from God the Lord, One our Priest; He took upon Him from us that which He might offer to the Lord; we are speaking of those same first-fruits of the flesh from the womb of the Virgin. This holocaust He offered to God. He stretched out His hands on the Cross, in order that He might say, "Let My prayer be directed as incense in Thy sight, and the lifting up of My hands an evening sacrifice." ²⁵ As ye know, the Lord about eventide hung on the Cross: and our impieties were propitiated; otherwise

²⁴ Jer. 16:19.

²⁵ Psalm 141:2.

they had swallowed us up; the discourses of unjust men had prevailed over us; there had led us astray preachers of Jupiter, and of Saturn, and of Mercury: "The discourses of ungodly men had prevailed over us." But what wilt Thou do? "Our impieties Thou wilt propitiate." Thou art the priest, Thou the victim; Thou the offerer, Thou the offering. . . .

7. "Blessed is he whom Thou hast chosen, and hast taken to Thee." Who is he that is chosen by Him and taken to Him? Was anyone chosen by our Saviour Jesus Christ, or was Himself after the flesh, because He is man, chosen and taken to Him? . . . Or hath not rather Christ Himself taken to Him some blessed one, and the same whom He hath taken to Him is not spoken of in the plural number but in the singular? For one man He hath taken to Him, because unity He hath taken to Him. Schisms He hath not taken to Him, heresies He hath not taken to Him; a multitude they have made of themselves, there is not one to be taken to Him. But they that abide in the bond of Christ and are the members of Him, make in a manner one man, of whom saith the Apostle, "Until we all arrive at the acknowledging of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ."²⁶ therefore one man is taken to Him, to which the Head is Christ; because "the Head of the man is Christ."²⁷ The same is that blessed man that "hath not departed in the counsel of ungodly men,"²⁸ and the like things which there are spoken of: the same is He that is taken to Him. He is not without us, in His own members we are, under one Head we are governed, by one Spirit we all live, one fatherland we all long for. . . . And to us He will give what? "He shall inhabit," he saith, "in Thy courts." Jerusalem, that is, to which they sing that begin to go forth from Babylon: "He shall inhabit in Thy courts: we shall be filled with the good things of Thy House." What are the good things of the House of God? Brethren, let us set before ourselves some rich house, with what numerous good things it is

²⁶ Eph. 4:13.

²⁷ I Cor. 11:3.

²⁸ Psalm 1:1.

crowded, how abundantly it is furnished, how many vessels there are there of gold and also of silver; how great an establishment of servants, how many horses and animals, in a word, how much the house itself delights us with pictures, marble, ceilings, pillars, recesses, chambers—all such things are indeed objects of desire, but still they are of the confusion of Babylon. Cut off all such longings, O citizen of Jerusalem, cut them off; if thou wilt return, let not captivity delight thee. But hast thou already begun to go forth? Do not look back, do not loiter on the road. Still there are not wanting foes to recommend thee captivity and sojourning: no longer let there prevail against thee the discourses of ungodly men. For the House of God long thou, and for the good things of that House long thou: but do not long for such things as thou art wont to long for either in thy house, or in the house of thy neighbour, or in the house of thy patron. . . .

8. "Thy holy Temple is marvellous in righteousness." These are the good things of that House. He hath not said Thy holy Temple is marvellous in pillars, marvellous in marbles, marvellous in gilded ceilings; but is "marvellous in righteousness." Without thou hast eyes wherewith thou mayest see marbles, and gold: within is an eye wherewith may be seen the beauty of righteousness. If there is no beauty in righteousness, why is a righteous old man loved? What bringeth he in body that may please the eyes? Crooked limbs, brow wrinkled, head blanched with gray hairs, dotage everywhere full of complaints. But perchance because thine eyes this decrepit old man pleaseth not, thine ears he pleaseth: with what words? With what song? Even if perchance when a young man he sang well, all with age hath been lost. Doth perchance the sound of his words please thine ears, that can hardly articulate whole words for loss of teeth? Nevertheless, if righteous he is, if another man's goods he coveteth not, if of his own that he possesseth he distributeth to the needy, if he giveth good advice, and soundly judgeth, if he believeth the entire faith, if for his belief in the faith he is ready to expend even those very shattered limbs, for many Martyrs are even old men; why do we love him? What good thing in him do we see with

the eyes of the flesh? Not any. There is therefore a kind of beauty in righteousness, which we see with the eye of the heart, and we love, and we kindle with affection: how much men found to love in those same Martyrs, though beasts tore their limbs! Is it possible but that when blood was staining all parts, when with the teeth of monsters their bowels gushed out, the eyes had nothing but objects to shudder at? What was there to be loved, except that in that hideous spectacle of mangled limbs, entire was the beauty of righteousness? These are the good things of the House of God, with these prepare thyself to be satisfied. . . . "Blessed they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." ²⁹ "Thy holy Temple is marvellous in righteousness." And that same temple, brethren, do not imagine to be aught but yourselves. Love ye righteousness, and ye are the Temple of God.

9. "Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour." He hath disclosed now Whom he nameth as God. The "Saviour" specially is the Lord Jesus Christ. It hath appeared now more openly of Whom he had said, "Unto Thee all flesh shall come." That One Man that is taken unto Him into the Temple of God, is both many and is One. In the person of One he hath said, "Hearken, O God, i.e., to my hunger": and because the same One of many is composed, now he saith, "Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour." Hear Him now more openly preached: "Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour, the Hope of all the ends of the earth and in the sea afar." Behold wherefore hath been said, "Unto Thee every flesh shall come." From every quarter they come. "Hope of all the ends of the earth," not hope of one corner, not hope of Judea alone, not hope of Africa alone, not hope of Pannonia, not hope of East or of West: but "Hope of all the ends of the earth, and in the sea afar": of the very ends of the earth. "And in the sea afar": and because in the sea, therefore afar. For the sea by a figure is spoken of this world, with saltness bitter, with storms troubled; where men of perverse and depraved appetites have become like fishes devouring one another. Observe the evil sea, bitter sea, with waves violent, observe with

what sort of men it is filled. Who desireth an inheritance except through the death of another? Who desireth gain except by the loss of another? By the fall of others how many men wish to be exalted? How many, in order that they may buy, desire for other men to sell their goods? How they mutually oppress, and how they that are able to devour! And when one fish hath devoured, the greater the less, itself also is devoured by some greater. . . . Because evil fishes that were taken within the nets they said they would not endure; they themselves have become more evil than they whom they said they could not endure. For those nets did take fishes both good and evil. The Lord saith, "The kingdom of Heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, which gathereth of every kind, which, when it had been filled, drawing out, and sitting on the shore, they gathered the good into vessels, but the evil they cast out: so it shall be," ³⁰ He showeth what is the shore, He showeth what is the end of the sea. "The angels shall go forth, and shall sever the evil from the midst of the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Ha! Ye citizens of Jerusalem that are within the nets, and are good fishes; endure the evil, the nest break ye not: together with them ye are in a sea, not together with them will ye be in the vessels. For "Hope" He is, "of the ends of the earth," Himself is Hope "also in the sea afar." Afar, because also in the sea.

10. "Preparing mountains in His strength." Not in their strength. For He hath prepared great preachers, and those same He hath called mountains; humble in themselves, exalted in Him. "Preparing mountains in His strength." What saith one of those same mountains? "We ourselves in our own selves have had the answer of death, in order that in ourselves we should not trust, but in God that raiseth the dead." ³¹ He that in himself doth trust, and in Christ trusteth not, is not of those mountains which He hath prepared in His strength. "Preparing mountains is His strength: girded about in power." "Power," I understand:

³⁰ Matt. 13:47-49.

³¹ II Cor. 1:9.

“girded about,” is what? They that put Christ in the midst, “girded about” they make Him, that is on all sides begirt. We all have Him in common, therefore in the midst He is: all we gird Him about that believe in Him: and because our faith is not of our strength, but of His power; therefore girded about He is in His power; not in our own strength.

11. “That troublest the bottom of the sea.” He hath done this: it is seen what He hath done. For He hath prepared mountains in His strength, hath sent them to preach; girded about He is by believers in power: and moved is the sea, moved is the world, and it beginneth to persecute His saints. “Girded about in power: that troublest the bottom of the sea.” He hath not said: that troublest the sea; but “the bottom of the sea.” The bottom of the sea is the heart of ungodly men. For just as from the bottom more thoroughly all things are stirred, and the bottom holdeth firm all things: so whatsoever hath gone forth by tongue, by hands, by divers powers for the persecution of the Church, from the bottom hath gone forth. For if there were not the root of iniquity in the heart, all those things would not have gone forth against Christ. The bottom He troubles, perchance in order that the bottom He might also empty: for in the case of certain evil men He emptied the sea from the bottom, and made the sea a desert place. Another Psalm saith this, “He turneth sea into dry land.” All ungodly and heathen men that have believed were sea, have been made land; with salt waves at first barren, afterwards with the fruit of righteousness productive. “That troublest the bottom of the sea: the sound of its waves who shall endure”? “Who shall endure,” is what? What man shall endure the sound of the waves of the sea, the behests of the high powers of the world? But whence are they endured? Because He prepareth mountains in His strength. In that therefore which he hath said “who shall’ endure? he saith thus: We ourselves of our own selves should not be able to endure those persecutions, unless He gave strength.

12. “The nations shall be troubled.” At first they shall be troubled: but those mountains prepared in the strength of Christ, are they troubled? Troubled is the sea, against

the mountains it dasheth: the sea breaketh, unshaken the mountains have remained. "The nations shall be troubled, and all men shall fear." Behold now all men fear: they that before have been troubled do now all fear. The Christians feared not, and now the Christians are feared. All that did persecute do now fear. For He hath overcome that is girded about with power, to Him hath come every flesh in such sort, that the rest by their very minority do now fear. And all men shall fear, that inhabit the ends of the earth, because of Thy signs. For miracles the Apostles wrought, and thence all the ends of the earth have feared and have believed. "Outgoings in morning and in evening Thou shall delight:" that is, Thou makest delightful. Already in this life what is there being promised to us? There are outgoings in morning, there are outgoings in the evening. By the morning he signifieth the prosperity of the world, by the evening he signifieth the trouble of the world. . . . At first when he was promising gain, it was morning to thee: but now evening draweth on, sad thou hast become. But He that hath given thee an outgoing in the morning, will give one also in the evening. In the same manner as thou hast contemned the morning of the world by the light of the Lord, so condemn the evening also by the sufferings of the Lord, in saying to thy soul, What more will this man do to me, than my Lord hath suffered for me? May I hold fast justice, not consent to iniquity. Let him vent his rage on the flesh, the trap will be broken, and I will fly to my Lord, that saith to me, "Do not fear them that kill the body, but the soul are not able to kill."³² And for the body itself He hath given security, saying, "A hair of your head shall not perish."³³ Nobly here he hath set down, "Thou wilt delight outgoings in morning and in evening." For if thou take not delight in the very outgoing, thou wilt not labour to go out thence. Thou runnest thy head into the promised gain, if thou art not delighted with the promise of the Saviour. And again thou yieldest to one tempting and terrifying, if thou find no delight in

³² Matt. 10:28.

³³ Luke 21:18.

Him that suffered before thee, in order that He might make an outgoing for thee.

13. "Thou hast visited the earth, and hast inebriated it." Whence hast inebriated the earth? Thou hast sent Thy clouds, they have rained down the preaching of the truth, inebriated is the earth. "Thou hast multiplied to enrich it." Whence? "The river of God is filled with water." What is the river of God? The people of God. The first people was filled with water, wherewith the rest of the earth might be watered. Hear Him promising water: "If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink: he that believeth on Me, rivers of living water from his belly shall flow":³⁴ if rivers, one river also; for in respect of unity many are one. Many churches and one Church, many faithful and one Bride of Christ: so many rivers and one river. Many Israelites believed, and were fulfilled with the Holy Spirit; from thence they were scattered abroad through the nations, they began to preach the truth, and from the river of God that was filled with water, was the whole earth watered. "Thou hast prepared food for them: because thus is Thy preparing." Not because they have deserved of Thee, whom Thou hast forgiven sins: the merits of them were evil, but Thou for Thy mercy's sake, "because thus is Thy preparing," thus "Thou hast prepared food for them."

14. "The furrows thereof inebriate Thou." Let there be made therefore at first furrows to be inebriated: let the hardness of our breast be opened with the share of the word of God, "The furrows thereof inebriate Thou: multiply the generations thereof." We see, they believe, and by them believing other men believe, and because of those others believe; and it is not sufficient for one man, that having become himself a believer, he should gain one. So is multiplied seed too: a few grains are scattered, and fields spring up. "In the drops thereof it shall rejoice, when it shall rise up." That is, before it be perchance enlarged to the bulk of a river, "when it shall rise up, in its drops," that is, in those meet for it, "it shall rejoice." For upon

³⁴ John 7:37, 38.

those that are yet babes, and upon the weak, are dropped some portions of the sacraments, because they cannot receive the fulness of the truth. Hear in what manner he droppeth upon babes, while they are rising up, that is, in their recent rising having small capacities: the Apostle saith, "To you I could not speak as if to spiritual, but as if to carnal, as if to babes in Christ."³⁵ When he saith, "to babes in Christ," he speaketh of them as already risen up, but not yet meet to receive that plenteous wisdom, whereof he saith, "Wisdom we speak among perfect men."³⁶ Let it rejoice in its drops, while it is rising up and is growing, when strengthened it shall receive wisdom also: in the same manner as an infant is fed with milk, and becometh fit for meat, and nevertheless at first out of that very meat for which it was not fit, for it milk is made.

15. "Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness." Seed is now sowing, that which is sown is growing, there will be the harvest too. And now over the seed the enemy hath sown tares; and there have risen up evil ones among the good, false Christians, having like leaf, but not like fruit. For those are properly called tares, which spring up in the manner of wheat, for instance darnel, for instance wild oats, and all such as have the first leaf the same. Therefore of the sowing of the tares thus saith the Lord: "There hath come an enemy, and hath sown over them tares";³⁷ but what hath he done to the grain? The wheat is not choked by the tares, nay, through endurance of the tares the fruit of the wheat is increased. For the Lord Himself said to certain workmen desiring to root up the tares, "Suffer ye both to grow unto the harvest."³⁸ . . . Conquer the devil, and thou wilt have a crown. "Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness." Again he maketh reference to the goodness of God, lest any one boast of his own merits. "Thy plains shall be filled with abundance."

16. "The ends of the desert shall grow fat, and the hills shall be encircled with exultation." Plains, hills, ends of

³⁵ I Cor. 3:1.

³⁶ I Cor. 2:6.

³⁷ Matt. 13:25.

³⁸ Matt. 13:30.

the desert, the same are also men. Plains, because of the equality: because of equality, I say, from thence just peoples have been called plains. Hills, because of lifting up: because God doth lift up in Himself those that humble themselves. Ends of the desert are all nations. Wherefore ends of the desert? Deserted they were, to them no Prophet had been sent: they were in like case as is a desert where no man passeth by. No word of God was sent to the nations: to the people Israel alone the Prophets preached. We came to the Lord; the wheat believed among that same people of the Jews. For He said at that time to the disciples, "Ye say, far off is the harvest: look back, and see how white are the lands to harvest." There hath been therefore a first harvest, there will be a second in the last age. The first harvest was of Jews, because there were sent to them Prophets proclaiming a coming Saviour. Therefore the Lord said to His disciples, "See how white are the lands to harvest": the lands, to wit, of Judea. "Other men," He saith, "have laboured, and into their labours ye have entered." The Prophets laboured to sow, and ye with the sickle have entered into their labours. There hath been finished therefore the first harvest, and thence, with that very wheat which then was purged, hath been sown the round world; so that there ariseth another harvest, which at the end is to be reaped. In the second harvest have been sown tares, now here there is labour. Just as in that first harvest the Prophets laboured until the Lord came: so in that second harvest the Apostles laboured, and all preachers of the truth labour, even until at the end the Lord send unto the harvest His angels. Aforetime, I say, a desert there was, "but the ends of the desert shall grow fat." Behold where the prophets had given no sound, the Lord of the prophets hath been received, "The ends of the desert shall grow fat, and with exultation the hills shall be encircled."

17. "Clothed have been the rams of the sheep": "with exultation" must be understood. For with what exultation the hills are encircled, with the same are clothed the rams of the sheep. Rams are the very same as hills. For hills they are because of more eminent grace; rams, because

they are leaders of the flocks. . . . "They shall shout": thence they shall abound with wheat, because they shall shout. What shall they shout? "For a hymn they shall say." For one thing it is to shout against God, another thing to say a hymn; one thing to shout iniquities, another thing to shout the praises of God. If thou shout in blasphemy, thorns thou hast brought forth: if thou shoutest in a hymn, thou aboudest in wheat.

3. *On Baptism*

For in fact, as to what some opposed to the reasoning of Cyprian, that the apostle says, "Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, let Christ be preached,"³⁹ Cyprian rightly exposed their error showing that it has nothing to do with the case of heretics, since the apostle was speaking of those who were acting within the Church, with malicious envy seeking their own profit. They announced Christ, indeed, according to the truth whereby we believe in Christ, but not in the spirit in which He was announced by the good evangelists to the sons of the dove. "For Paul," he says, "in his epistle was not speaking of heretics, or of their baptism, so that it could be shown that he had laid down anything concerning this matter. He was speaking of brethren, whether as walking disorderly and contrary to the discipline of the Church, or as keeping the discipline of the Church in the fear of God. And he declared that some of them spoke the word of God steadfastly and fearlessly, but that some were acting in envy and strife; that some had kept themselves encompassed with kindly Christian love, but that others entertained malice and strife: but yet that he patiently endured all things, with the view that, whether in truth or in pretence, the name of Christ, which Paul

³⁹ Phil. 1:18.

preached, might come to the knowledge of the greatest number, and that the sowing of the word, which was as yet a new and unaccustomed work, might spread more widely by the preaching of those that spoke. Furthermore, it is one thing for those who are within the Church to speak in the name of Christ, another thing for those who are without, acting against the Church, to baptize in the name of Christ." These words of Cyprian seem to warn us that we must distinguish between those who are bad outside, and those who are bad within the Church. And those whom he says that the apostle represents as preaching the gospel impurely and of envy, he says truly were within. This much, however, I think I may say without rashness, if no one outside can have anything which is of Christ, neither can any one within have anything which is of the devil. For if that closed garden can contain the thorns of the devil, why cannot the fountain of Christ equally flow beyond the garden's bounds? But if it cannot contain them, whence, even in the time of the Apostle Paul himself, did there arise amongst those who were within so great an evil of envy and malicious strife? For these are the words of Cyprian. Can it be that envy and malicious strife are a small evil? How then were those in unity who were not at peace? For it is not my voice, nor that of any man, but of the Lord Himself; nor did the sound go forth from men, but from angels, at the birth of Christ, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." And this certainly would not have been proclaimed by the voice of angels when Christ was born upon the earth, unless God wished this to be understood, that those are in the peace of Christ who are of good will. Furthermore, as good will is shown in kindness, so is bad will shown in malice.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 7 (11)

In short, we may see how great an evil in itself is envy, which cannot be other than malicious. Let us not look for other testimony. Cyprian himself is sufficient for us, through whose mouth the Lord poured forth so many thunders in most perfect truth, and uttered so many useful precepts about envy and malignity. Let us therefore read

the letter of Cyprian about envy and malignity, and see how great an evil it is to envy those better than ourselves—an evil whose origin he shows in memorable words to have sprung from the devil himself. "To feel jealousy," he says, "of what you regard as good, and to envy those who are better than yourselves, to some, dearest brethren, seems a light and minute offense." And again a little later, when he was inquiring into the source and origin of the evil, he says, "From this the devil, in the very beginning of the world, perished first himself, and led others to destruction." And further on in the same chapter: "What an evil, dearest brethren, is that by which an angel fell! by which that exalted and illustrious loftiness was able to be deceived and overthrown! by which he was deceived who was the deceiver! From that time envy stalks upon the earth, when man, about to perish through malignity, submits himself to the teacher of perdition—when he who envies imitates the devil, as it is written, 'Through envy of the devil came death into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it.'" How true, how forcible are these words of Cyprian, in an epistle known throughout the world, we cannot fail to recognize. It was truly fitting for Cyprian to argue and warn most forcibly about envy and malignity, from which most deadly evil he proved his own heart to be so far removed by the abundance of his Christian love; by carefully guarding which he remained in the unity of communion with his colleagues, who without ill-feeling entertained different views about baptism, whilst he himself differed in opinion from them, not through any contention of ill will, but through human infirmity, erring in a point which God, in His own good time, would reveal to him by reason of his perseverance in love. For he says openly, "Judging no one, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he differ from us. For no one of us setteth himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying." And in the end of the epistle before us he says, "These things I have written to you briefly, dearest brother, according to my poor ability, prescribing to or prejudging no one, so as to prevent each bishop from doing what he thinks

right in the free exercise of his own judgment. We, so far as in us lies, do not strive on behalf of heretics with our colleges and fellow-bishops, with whom we hold the harmony that God enjoins, and the peace of our Lord, especially as the apostle says, 'If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.'⁴⁰ Christian love in our souls, the honor of our fraternity, the bond of faith, the harmony of the priesthood, all these are maintained by us with patience and gentleness. For this cause, we have also, so far as our poor ability admitted, by the permission and inspiration of the Lord, written now a treatise on the benefit of patience, which we have sent to you in consideration of our mutual affection."

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 8 (12)

By this patience of Christian love he not only endured the difference of opinion manifested in all kindness by his good colleagues on an obscure point, as he also himself received toleration, till, in process of time, when it so pleased God, what had always been a most wholesome custom was further confirmed by a declaration of the truth in a plenary Council, but he even put up with those who were manifestly bad, as was very well known to himself, who did not entertain a different view in consequence of the obscurity of the question, but acted contrary to their preaching in the evil practices of an abandoned life, as the apostle says of them, "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?"⁴¹ For Cyprian says in his letter of such bishops of his own time, his own colleagues, and remaining in communion with him, "while they had brethren starving in the Church, they tried to amass large sums of money, they took possession of estates by fraudulent proceedings, they multiplied their gains by accumulated usuries." For here there is no obscure question. Scripture declares openly, "Neither covetous nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God";⁴² and "He that putteth out his money to usury,"⁴³ and "No whore-

⁴⁰ I Cor. 11:16.

⁴¹ Rom. 2:21.

⁴² I Cor. 6:10.

⁴³ Psalm 15:5.

monger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”⁴⁴ He therefore certainly would not, without knowledge, have brought accusations of such covetousness, that men not only greedily treasured up their own goods, but also fraudulently appropriated the goods of others, or of idolatry existing in such enormity as he understands and proves it to exist; nor assuredly would he bear false witness against his fellow-bishops. And yet with the bowels of fatherly and motherly love he endured them, lest that, by rooting out the tares before their time, the wheat should also have been rooted up, imitating assuredly the Apostle Paul, who, with the same love towards the Church, endured those who were ill-disposed and envious towards him.

But yet because “by the envy of the devil death entered into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it,” not because they are created by God, but because they go astray of themselves, as Cyprian also says himself, seeing that the devil, before he was a devil, was an angel, and good, how can it be that they who are of the devil’s side are in the unity of Christ? Beyond all doubt, as the Lord Himself says, “an enemy hath done this,” who “sowed tares among the wheat.” As therefore what is of the devil within the fold must be convicted, so what is of Christ without must be recognized. Has the devil what is his within the unity of the Church, and shall Christ not have what is His without? This, perhaps, might be said of individual men, that as the devil has none that are his among the holy angels, so God has none that are His outside the communion of the Church. But though it may be allowed to the devil to mingle tares, that is, wicked men, with this Church which still wears the mortal nature of flesh, so long as it is wandering far from God, he being allowed this just because of the pilgrimage of the Church herself, that men may desire more ardently the rest of that country which the angels enjoy, yet this cannot be said of the sacraments. For, as the tares within the Church can have and handle them, though not for salvation, but for

⁴⁴ Eph. 5:5.

the destruction to which they are destined in the fire, so also can the tares without, which received them from seceders from within; for they did not lose them by seceding. This, indeed, is made plain from the fact that baptism is not conferred again on their return, when any of the very men who seceded happen to come back again. And let not any one say, Why, what fruit hath the tares? For if this be so, their condition is the same, so far as this goes, both inside and without. For it surely cannot be that grains of corn are found in the tares inside, and not in those without. But when the question is of the sacrament, we do not consider whether the tares bear any fruit, but whether they have any share of heaven; for the tares, both within and without, share the rain with the wheat itself, which rain is in itself heavenly and sweet, even though under its influence the tares grow up in barrenness. And so the sacrament, according to the gospel of Christ, is divine and pleasant; nor is it to be esteemed as naught because of the barrenness of those on whom its dew falls even without.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 9 (13, 14)

But some one may say that the tares within may more easily be converted into wheat. I grant that it is so; but what has this to do with the question of repeating baptism? You surely do not maintain that if a man converted from heresy, through the occasion and opportunity given by his conversion, should bear fruit before another who, being within the Church, is more slow to be washed from his iniquity, and so corrected and changed, the former therefore needs not to be baptized again, but the churchman to be baptized again, who was outstripped by him who came from the heretics, because of the greater slowness of his amendment. It has nothing, therefore, to do with the question now at issue who is later or slower in being converted from his especial waywardness to the straight path of faith, or hope, or charity. For although the bad within the fold are more easily made good yet it will sometimes happen that certain of the number of these outside will outstrip in their conversion certain of those within; and while these remain in barrenness, the former,

being restored to unity and communion, will bear fruit with patience, thirty-fold, or sixty-fold, or a hundred-fold. Or if those only are to be called tares who remain in perverse error to the end, there are many ears of corn outside, and many tares within.

But it will be urged that the bad outside are worse than those within. It is indeed a weighty question, whether Nicolaus, being already severed from the Church, or Simon, who was still within it, was the worse—the one being a heretic, the other a sorcerer. But if the mere fact of division, as being the clearest token of violated charity, is held to be the worse evil, I grant that it is so. Yet many, though they have lost all feelings of charity, yet do not secede from considerations of worldly profit; and as they seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's, what they are unwilling to secede from is not the unity of Christ, but their own temporal advantage. Whence it is said in praise of charity, that she "seeketh not her own."

Now, therefore, the question is, how could men of the party of the devil belong to the Church, which has no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, of which also it is said, "My dove is one"? But if they cannot, it is clear that she groans among those who are not of her, some treacherously laying wait within, some barking at her gate without. Such men, however, even within, both receive baptism, and possess it, and transmit it holy in itself; nor is it in any way defiled by their wickedness, in which they persevere even to the end. Wherefore the same blessed Cyprian teaches us that baptism is to be considered as consecrated in itself by the words of the gospel, as the Church has received, without joining to it or mingling with it any consideration of waywardness and wickedness on the part of either minister or recipients; since he himself points out to us both truths—both that there have been some within the Church who did not cherish kindly Christian love, but practised envy and unkind dissension, of whom the Apostle Paul spoke; and also that the envious belong to the devil's party, Christ's sacrament may yet be holy—not, indeed, to their salvation, but to their condemnation—and that not only if they are led astray after they have

been baptized, but even if they were such in heart when they received the sacrament, renouncing the world (as the same Cyprian shows) in words only and not in deeds; and since even if afterwards they be brought into the right way, the sacrament is not to be again administered which they received when they were astray; so far as I can see, the case is already clear and evident, that in the question of baptism we have to consider, not who gives, but what he gives; not who receives, but what he receives; not who has, but what he has. For if men of the party of the devil, and therefore in no way belonging to the one dove, can yet receive, and have, and give baptism in all its holiness, in no way defiled by their waywardness, as we are taught by the letters of Cyprian himself, how are we ascribing to heretics what does not belong to them? how are we saying that what is really Christ's is theirs, and not rather recognizing in them the signs of our Sovereign, and correcting the deeds of deserters from Him? Wherefore it is one thing, as the holy Cyprian says, "for those within, in the Church, to speak in the name of Christ, another thing for those without, who are acting against the Church, to baptize in His name." But both many who are within act against the Church by evil living, and by enticing weak souls to copy their lives; and some who are without speak in Christ's name, and are not forbidden to work the works of Christ, but only to be without, since for the healing of their souls we grasp at them, or reason with them, or exhort them. For he, too, was without who did not follow Christ with His disciples, and yet in Christ's name was casting out devils, which the Lord enjoined that he should not be prevented from doing; although, certainly, in the point where he was imperfect he was to be made whole, in accordance with the words of the Lord, in which He says, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."⁴⁵ Therefore both some things are done outside in the name of Christ not against the Church, and some things are done inside on the devil's part which are against the Church.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 10 (15-17)

⁴⁵ Matt. 12:30.

What shall we say of what is also wonderful, that he who carefully observes may find that it is possible that certain persons, without violating Christian charity, may yet teach what is useless, as Peter wished to compel the Gentiles to observe Jewish customs, as Cyprian himself would force heretics to be baptized anew? whence the apostle says to such good members, who are rooted in charity, and yet walk not rightly in some points, "If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you";⁴⁶ and that some again, though devoid of charity, may teach something wholesome? of whom the Lord says, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not."⁴⁷ Whence the apostle also says of those envious and malicious ones who yet preach salvation through Christ, "Whether in pretense, or in truth, let Christ be preached." Wherefore, both within and without, the waywardness of man is to be corrected, but the divine sacraments and utterances are not to be attributed to men. He is not, therefore, a "patron of heretics" who refuses to attribute to them what he knows not to belong to them, even though it be found among them. We do not grant baptism to be theirs; but we recognize His baptism of whom it is said, "The same is He which baptizeth,"⁴⁸ wheresoever we find it. But if "the treacherous and blasphemous man" continue in his treachery and blasphemy, he receives no "remission of sins either without" or within the Church; or if, by the power of the sacrament, he receives it for the moment, the same force operates both without and within, as the power of the name of Christ used to work the expulsion of devils even without the Church.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 11 (18)

But he urges that "we find that the apostles, in all their epistles, execrated and abhorred the sacrilegious wickedness of heretics, so as to say that 'their word does

⁴⁶ Phil. 3:15.

⁴⁷ Matt. 23:2, 3.

⁴⁸ John 1:33.

spread as a canker.' " What then? Does not Paul also show that those who said, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," were corrupters of good manners by their evil communications, adding immediately afterwards, "Evil communications corrupt good manners"; and yet he intimated that these were within the Church when he says, "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" ⁴⁹ But when does he fail to express his abhorrence of the covetous? Or could anything be said in stronger terms, than that covetousness should be called idolatry, as the same apostle declared? Nor did Cyprian understand his language otherwise, inserting it when need required in his letters; though he confesses that in his time there were in the Church not covetous men of an ordinary type, but robbers and usurers, and these found not among the masses, but among the bishops. And yet I should be willing to understand that those of whom the apostle says, "Their word does spread as a canker," were without the Church, but Cyprian himself will not allow me. For, when showing, in his letter to Antonianus, that no man ought to sever himself from the unity of the Church before the time of the final separation of the just and unjust, merely because of the admixture of evil men in the Church, when he makes it manifest how holy he was, and deserving of the illustrious martyrdom which he won, he says, "what swelling of arrogance it is, what forgetfulness of humility and gentleness, that any one should dare or believe that he can do what the Lord did not grant even to the apostles—to think that he can distinguish the tares from the wheat, or, as if it were granted to him to carry the fan and purge the floor, to endeavor to separate the chaff from the grain! And whereas the apostle says, 'But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth,' ⁵⁰ that he should seem to choose those of gold and of silver, and despise and cast away and condemn those of wood and of earth, when really the vessels of wood are only to be burned in the day of the Lord by the burning of the divine conflagration, and those of earth

⁴⁹ I Cor. 15:32.

⁵⁰ II Tim. 2:20.

are to be broken by Him to whom the 'rod of iron has been given.' " By this argument, therefore, against those who, under the pretext of avoiding the society of wicked men, had severed themselves from the unity of the Church, Cyprian shows that by the great house of which the apostle spoke, in which there were not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, he understood nothing else but the Church, in which there should be good and bad, till at the last day it should be cleansed as a threshing-floor by the winnowing-fan. And if this be so, in the Church herself, that is, in the great house itself, there were vessels to dishonor, whose word did spread like a canker. For the apostle, speaking of them, taught as follows: "And their word," he says, "will spread as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth." ⁵¹ If, therefore, they whose words did spread as doth a canker were as it were vessels to dishonor in the great house, and by that "great house" Cyprian understands the unity of the Church itself, surely it cannot be that their canker polluted the baptism of Christ. Accordingly, neither without, any more than within, can any one who is of the devil's party, either in himself or in any other person, stain the sacrament which is of Christ. It is not, therefore, the case that "the word which spreads as a canker to the ears of those who hear it gives remission of sins"; but when baptism is given in the words of the gospel, however great be the perverseness of understanding on the part either of him through whom, or of him to whom it is given, the sacrament itself is holy in itself on account of Him whose sacrament it is. And if any one, receiving it at the hands of a misguided man, yet does not receive the perversity of the minister, but only the holiness of the

51 II Tim. 2:17-20.

mystery, being closely bound to the unity of the Church in good faith and hope and charity, he receives remission of his sins—not by the words which do eat as doth a canker, but by the sacraments of the gospel flowing from a heavenly source. But if the recipient himself be misguided, on the one hand, what is given is of no avail for the salvation of the misguided man; and yet, on the other hand, that which is received remains holy in the recipient, and is not renewed to him if he be brought to the right way.

BOOK IV, CHAPTER 12 (19)

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