On the Holy Trinity part 03

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OF THE

NICENE AND

POST-NICENE FATHERS

OF

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

EDITED BY

PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., LL.D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK,

IN CONNECTION WITH A NUMBER OF PATRISTIC SCHOLARS OF EUROPE AND

AMERICA.

VOLUME III

ON THE HOLY TRINITY

DOCTRINAL TREATISES

MORAL TREATISES

T&T CLARK

EDINBURGH

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Preface.

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This third volume contains the most important doctrinal and moral

treatises of St. Augustin, and presents a pretty complete view of his

dogmatics and ethics.

The most weighty of the doctrinal treatises is that on the Holy

Trinity. The Latin original (De Trinitate contra Arianos libri

quindecim) is contained in the 8th volume of the Benedictine edition.

It is the most elaborate, and probably also the ablest and profoundest

patristic discussion of this central doctrine of the Christian

religion, unless we except the Orations against the Arians, by

Athanasius, "the Father of Orthodoxy," who devoted his life to the

defense of the Divinity of Christ. Augustin, owing to his defective

knowledge of Greek, wrote his work independently of the previous

treatises of the Eastern Church on that subject. He bestowed more time

and care upon it than on any other book, except the City of God.

The value of the present translation, which first appeared in Mr.

Clark's edition, 1873, has been much increased by the revision, the

introductory essay, and the critical notes of a distinguished American

divine, who is in full sympathy with St. Augustin, and thoroughly at

home in the history of this dogma. I could not have intrusted it to

abler hands than those of my friend and colleague, Dr. Shedd.

The moral treatises (contained in the 6th volume of the Benedictine

edition) were first translated for the Oxford Library of the Fathers

(1847). They contain much that will instruct and interest the reader;

while some views will appear strange to those who fail to distinguish

between different ages and different types of virtue and piety.

Augustin shared with the Greek and Latin fathers the ascetic preference

for voluntary celibacy and poverty. He accepted the distinction which

dates from the second century, between two kinds of morality: a lower

morality of the common people, which consists in keeping the ten

commandments; and a higher sanctity of the elect few, which observes,

in addition, the evangelical counsels, so called, or the monastic

virtues. He practiced this doctrine after his conversion. He ought to

have married the mother of his son; but in devoting himself to the

priesthood, he felt it his duty to remain unmarried, according to the

prevailing spirit of the church in his age. His teacher, Ambrose, and

his older contemporary, Jerome, went still further in the enthusiastic

praise of single life. We must admire their power of self-denial and

undivided consecration, though we may dissent from their theory. [1]

The asceticism of the early church was a reaction against the awful

sexual corruption of surrounding heathenism, and with all its excesses

it accomplished a great deal of good. It prepared the way for Christian

family life. The fathers appealed to the example of Christ, who in this

respect, as the Son of God, stood above ordinary human relations, and

the advice of St. Paul, which was given in view of "the present

distress," in times of persecution. They deemed single life better

adapted to the undivided service of Christ and his church than the

married state with its unavoidable secular cares (1 Cor. vii. 25 sqq.).

Augustin expresses this view when he says, on Virginity, � 27:

"Therefore go on, Saints of God, boys and girls, males and females,

unmarried men and women; go on and persevere unto the end. Praise more

sweetly the Lord, whom ye think on more richly; hope more happily in

Him, whom ye serve more earnestly; love more ardently Him, whom ye

please more attentively. With loins girded, and lamps burning, wait for

the Lord, when He returns from the marriage. Ye shall bring unto the

marriage of the Lamb a new song, which ye shall sing on your harps."

The Reformation has abolished the system of monasticism and clerical

celibacy, and substituted for it, as the normal condition for the

clergy as well as the laity, the purity, chastity and beauty of family

life, instituted by God in Paradise and sanctioned by our Saviour's

presence at the wedding at Cana.

New York, March, 1887.

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[1] On the ascetic tendencies of the second and third centuries, and

the gradual introduction of clerical celibacy (which began with a

decree of Bishop Siricius of Rome, 385), see Schaff, Church Hist., vol.

ii. 367-414, and vol. iii. 242-250.

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St. augustin:

on the Trinity

[De trinitate, libri xv.]

Translated by the

Rev. Arthur West Haddan, B.D.,

Hon. Canon of Worchester, and Rector of Barton-on-the-Heath,

Warwickshire.

Revised and Annotated, with an Introductory Essay,

by

William G. T. Shedd, D.D.,

Roosevelt Professor of Systematic Theology in Union Theological

Seminary, New York.

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Introductory Essay.

By William G. T. Shedd, D.D.

The doctrine of the Divine Unity is a truth of natural religion; the

doctrine of the Trinity is a truth of revealed religion. The various

systems of natural theism present arguments for the Divine existence,

unity, and attributes, but proceed no further. They do not assert and

endeavor to demonstrate that the Supreme Being is three persons in one

essence. It is because this doctrine is not discoverable by human

reason, that the Christian church has been somewhat shy of attempts to

construct it analytically; or even to defend it upon grounds of reason.

The keen Dr. South expresses the common sentiment, when he remarks that

"as he that denies this fundamental article of the Christian religion

may lose his soul, so he that much strives to understand it may lose

his wits." Yet all the truths of revelation, like those of natural

religion, have in them the element of reason, and are capable of a

rational defense. At the very least their self-consistence can be

shown, and objections to them can be answered. And this is a rational

process. For one of the surest characteristics of reason is, freedom

from self contradiction, and consonance with acknowledged truths in

other provinces of human inquiry and belief.

It is a remarkable fact, that the earlier forms of Trinitarianism are

among the most metaphysical and speculative of any in dogmatic history.

The controversy with the Arian and the Semi-Arian, brought out a

statement and defense of the truth, not only upon scriptural but

ontological grounds. Such a powerful dialectician as Athanasius, while

thoroughly and intensely scriptural--while starting from the text of

scripture, and subjecting it to a rigorous exegesis--did not hesitate

to pursue the Arian and Semi-Arian dialectics to its most recondite

fallacy in its subtlest recesses. If any one doubts this, let him read

the four Orations of Athanasius, and his defence of the Nicene Decrees.

In some sections of Christendom, it has been contended that the

doctrine of the Trinity should be received without any attempt at all

to establish its rationality and intrinsic necessity. In this case, the

tenets of eternal generation and procession have been regarded as going

beyond the Scripture data, and if not positively rejected, have been

thought to hinder rather than assist faith in three divine persons and

one God. But the history of opinions shows that such sections of the

church have not proved to be the strongest defenders of the Scripture

statement, nor the most successful in keeping clear of the Sabellian,

Arian, or even Socinian departure from it.

Those churches which have followed Scripture most implicitly, and have

most feared human speculation, are the very churches which have

inserted into their creeds the most highly analytic statement that has

yet been made of the doctrine of the Trinity. The Nicene Trinitarianism

is incorporated into nearly all the symbols of modern Christendom; and

this specifies, particularly, the tenets of eternal generation and

procession with their corollaries. The English Church, to whose great

divines, Hooker, Bull, Waterland, and Pearson, scientific

Trinitarianism owes a very lucid and careful statement, has added the

Athanasian creed to the Nicene. The Presbyterian churches,

distinguished for the closeness of their adherence to the simple

Scripture, yet call upon their membership to confess, that "in the

unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power,

and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The

Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is

eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding

from the Father and the Son." [2]

The treatise of Augustin upon the Trinity, which is here made

accessible to the English reader, is one of the ablest produced in the

patristic age. The author devoted nearly thirty years of his matured

life to its composition (A.D. 400 to 428). He was continually touching

and retouching it, and would have delayed its publication longer than

he did, had a copy not been obtained surreptitiously and published. He

seems to have derived little assistance from others; for although the

great Greek Trinitarians--Athanasius, the two Gregories, and Basil--had

published their treatises, yet he informs us that his knowledge of

Greek, though sufficient for understanding the exegetical and practical

writings of his brethren of the Greek Church, was not adequate to the

best use of their dialectical and metaphysical compositions. [3]

Accordingly, there is no trace in this work of the writings of the

Greek Trinitarians, though a substantial agreement with them. The only

Trinitarian author to whom he alludes is Hilary--a highly acute and

abstruse Trinitarian.

In his general position, Augustin agrees with the Nicene creed; but

laying more emphasis upon the consubstantiality of the persons, and

definitely asserting the procession of the Spirit from the Father and

Son. Some dogmatic historians seem to imply that he differed materially

from the Nicene doctrine on the point of subordination. Hagenbach

(Smith's Ed. � 95) asserts that "Augustin completely purified the dogma

of the Trinity from the older vestiges of subordination;" and adds that

"such vestiges are unquestionably to be found in the most orthodox

Fathers, not only in the East but also in the West." He cites Hilary

and Athanasius as examples, and quotes the remark of Gieseler, that

"the idea of a subordination lies at the basis of such declarations."

Neander (II. 470, Note 2) says that Augustin "kept at a distance

everything that bordered on subordinationism." These statements are

certainly too sweeping and unqualified. There are three kinds of

subordination: the filial or trinitarian; the theanthropic; and the

Arian. The first is taught, and the second implied, in the Nicene

creed. The last is denied and excluded. Accordingly, dogmatic

historians like Petavius, Bull, Waterland, and Pearson, contend that

the Nicene creed, in affirming the filial, but denying the Arian

subordination; in teaching subordination as to person and relationship,

but denying it as to essence; enunciates a revealed truth, and that

this is endorsed by all the Trinitarian fathers, Eastern and Western.

And there certainly can be no doubt that Augustin held this view. He

maintains, over and over again, that Sonship as a relationship is

second and subordinate to Fatherhood; that while a Divine Father and a

Divine Son must necessarily be of the very same nature and grade of

being, like a human father and a human son, yet the latter issues from

the former, not the former from the latter. Augustin's phraseology on

this point is as positive as that of Athanasius, and in some respects

even more bold and capable of misinterpretation. He denominates the

Father the "beginning" (principium) of the Son, and the Father and Son

the "beginning" (principium) of the Holy Spirit. "The Father is the

beginning of the whole divinity, or if it is better so expressed,

deity." IV. xx. 29. "In their mutual relation to one another in the

Trinity itself, if the begetter is a beginning (principium) in relation

to that which he begets, the Father is a beginning in relation to the

Son, because he begets Him." V. xiv. 15. Since the Holy Spirit proceeds

from both Father and Son, "the Father and Son are a beginning

(principium) of the Holy Spirit, not two beginnings." V. xiv. 15.

Compare also V. xiii.; X. iv.; and annotations pp. Augustin employs

this term "beginning" only in relation to the person, not to the

essence. There is no "beginning," or source, when the essence itself is

spoken of. Consequently, the "subordination" (implied in a "beginning"

by generation and spiration) is not the Arian subordination, as to

essence, but the trinitarian subordination, as to person and relation.

[4]

Augustin starts with the assumption that man was made in the image of

the triune God, the God of revelation; not in the image of the God of

natural religion, or the untriune deity of the nations. Consequently,

it is to be expected that a trinitarian analogue can be found in his

mental constitution. If man is God's image, he will show traces of it

in every respect. All acknowledge that the Divine unity, and all the

communicable attributes, have their finite correspondents in the unity

and attributes of the human mind. But the Latin father goes further

than this. This, in his view, is not the whole of the Divine image.

When God says, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen.

i. 26), Augustin understands these words to be spoken by the Trinity,

and of the Trinity--by and of the true God, the God of revelation: the

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God. He denies that this is merely

the pluralis excellenti�, and that the meaning of these words would be

expressed by a change of the plural to the singular, and to the

reading, "Let me make man in my image, after my likeness." "For if the

Father alone had made man without the Son, it would not have been

written, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" City of

God XVI. vi.; Trinity I. vii. 14. In Augustin's opinion, the Old

Testament declaration that God is a unity, does not exclude the New

Testament declaration that he is a trinity. "For" says he, "that which

is written, Hear O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord' ought

certainly not to be understood as if the Son were excepted, or the Holy

Spirit were excepted; which one Lord our God we rightly call our

Father, as regenerating us by his grace." Trinity V. xi. 12. How far

Moses understood the full meaning of the Divine communication and

instruction, is one thing. Who it really and actually was that made the

communication to him, is another. Even if we assume, though with

insufficient reason for so doing, that Moses himself had no intimation

of the Trinity, it does not follow that it was not the Trinity that

inspired him, and all the Hebrew prophets. The apostle Peter teaches

that the Old Testament inspiration was a Trinitarian inspiration, when

he says that "the prophets who prophesied of the grace that should

come, searched what the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify,

when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory

that should follow." (1 Pet. i. 10, 11).

In asserting, however, that an image of the Trinity exists in man's

nature, Augustin is careful to observe that it is utterly imperfect and

inadequate. He has no thought or expectation of clearing up the mystery

by any analogy whatever. He often gives expression to his sense of the

inscrutability and incomprehensibility of the Supreme Being, in

language of the most lowly and awe-struck adoration. "I pray to our

Lord God himself, of whom we ought always to think, and yet of whom we

are not able to think worthily, and whom no speech is sufficient to

declare, that He will grant me both help for understanding and

explaining that which I design, and pardon if in anything I offend." V.

i. 1. "O Lord the one God, God the Trinity, whatever I have said in

these books that is of Thine, may they acknowledge who are Thine; if

anything of my own, may it be pardoned both by Thee and by those who

are Thine. Amen." XV. xxviii.

Augustin's method in this work is (1.) The exegetical; (2.) The

rational. He first deduces the doctrine of the Trinity from Scripture,

by a careful collation and combination of the texts, and then defends

it against objections, and illustrates it by the analogies which he

finds in nature generally, and in the human mind particularly. The

Scripture argument is contained in the first seven books; the rational

in the last eight. The first part is, of course, the most valuable of

the two. Though the reader may not be able to agree with Augustin in

his interpretation of some Scripture passages, particularly some which

he cites from the Old Testament, he will certainly be impressed by the

depth, acumen, and accuracy with which the Latin father reaches and

exhausts the meaning of the acknowledged trinitarian texts. Augustin

lived in an age when the Scriptures and the Greek and Roman classics

were nearly all that the student had, upon which to expend his

intellectual force. There was considerable metaphysics, it is true, but

no physics, and little mathematics. There was consequently a more

undivided and exclusive attention bestowed upon revealed religion as

embodied in the Scriptures, and upon ethics and natural religion as

contained in the classics, than has ever been bestowed by any

subsequent period in Christendom. One result was that scripture was

expounded by scripture; things spiritual by things spiritual. This

appears in the exegetical part of this treatise. Augustin reasons out

of the Scriptures; not out of metaphysics or physics.

The second, or speculative division of the work, is that which will be

most foreign to the thinking of some trinitarians. In it they will find

what seems to them to be a philosophy, rather than an interpretation of

the word of God. We shall, therefore, in this introductory essay,

specify some of the advantages, as it seems to us, of the general

method of defending and illustrating the doctrine of the Trinity

employed by Augustin and the patristic Trinitarians.

1. Fuller justice is done to Scripture by this method. Revelation

denominates the first trinitarian person the Father, the second the

Son, the third the Spirit. These terms are literal, not metaphorical;

because the relations denoted by them are eternally in the essence.

Scripture clearly teaches that the Father is such from eternity.

Consequently, "paternity" (implied in the name Father) can no more be

ascribed to the first person of the Godhead in a figurative sense, than

eternity can be. For a person that is a father must be so in relation

to a son. No son, no father. Consequently, an eternal Father implies an

eternal Son. And the same reasoning holds true of the relation of the

Father and Son to the Spirit. The terms Father, Son, and Spirit, in the

baptismal formula and the apostolic benediction, must designate primary

and eternal distinctions. The rite that initiates into the kingdom of

God, certainly would not be administered in three names that denote

only assumed and temporal relations of God; nor would blessings for

time and eternity be invoked from God under such secondary names.

Hence, these trinal names given to God in the baptismal formula and the

apostolic benediction, actually force upon the trinitarian theologian,

the ideas of paternity, generation, filiation, spiration, and

procession. He cannot reflect upon the implication of these names

without forming these ideas, and finding himself necessitated to

concede their literal validity and objective reality. He cannot say

that the first person is the Father, and then deny that he "begets." He

cannot say that the second person is the Son, and then deny that he is

"begotten." He cannot say that the third person is the Spirit, and then

deny that he "proceeds" by "spiration" (spiritus quia spiratus) from

the Father and Son. When therefore Augustin, like the primitive fathers

generally, endeavors to illustrate this eternal, necessary, and

constitutional energizing and activity (opera ad intra) in the Divine

Essence, whereby the Son issues from the Father and the Spirit from

Father and Son, by the emanation of sunbeam from sun, light from light,

river from fountain, thought from mind, word from thought--when the

ternaries from nature and the human mind are introduced to elucidate

the Trinity--nothing more is done than when by other well-known and

commonly adopted analogies the Divine unity, or omniscence, or

omnipresence, is sought to be illustrated. There is no analogy taken

from the finite that will clear up the mystery of the infinite--whether

it be the mystery of the eternity of God, or that of his trinity. But,

at the same time, by the use of these analogies the mind is kept close

up to the Biblical term or statement, and is not allowed to content

itself with only a half-way understanding of it. Such a method brings

thoroughness and clearness into the interpretation of the Word of God.

2. A second advantage in this method is, that it shows the doctrine of

the Trinity to be inseparable from that of the Unity of God. The

Deistical conception of the Divine unity is wholly different from the

Christian. The former is that of natural religion, formed by the

unassisted human mind in its reflection upon the Supreme Being. The

latter is that of revealed religion, given to the human mind by

inspiration. The Deistical unity is mere singleness. The Christian

unity is a trinality. The former is a unit. The latter a true unity,

and union. The former is meagre, having few contents. The latter is a

plenitude--what St. Paul denominates "the fullness of the Godhead"

(pleroma tes theotetos). Coloss. i. 9.

It follows, consequently, that the Divine unity cannot be discussed by

itself without reference to trinality, as the Deist and the Socinian

endeavor to do. [5] Trinality belongs as necessarily and intrinsically

to the Divine unity as eternity does to the Divine essence. "If," says

Athanasius (Oration I. 17) "there was not a Blessed Trinity from

eternity, but only a unity existed first, which at length became a

Trinity, it follows that the Holy Trinity must have been at one time

imperfect, and at another time entire: imperfect until the Son came to

be created, as the Arians maintain, and then entire afterwards." If we

follow the teachings of Revelation, and adopt the revealed idea of God,

we may not discuss mere and simple unity, nor mere and simple

trinality; but we must discuss unity in trinality, and trinality in

unity. We may not think of a monad which originally, and in the order

either of nature or of time, is not trinal, but becomes so. The instant

there is a monad, there is a triad; the instant there is a unity, there

are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Christian Trinity is not that of

Sabellius: namely, an original untrinal monad that subsequently, in the

order of nature if not of time, becomes a triad; whereby four factors

are introduced into the problem. God is not one and three, but one in

three. There is no primary monad, as such, and without trinality, to

which the three distinctions are secondary adjuncts. The monad, or

essence, never exists in and by itself as untrinalized, as in the

Sabellian scheme. It exists only as in the three Persons; only as

trinalized. The Essence, consequently, is not prior to the Persons,

either in the order of nature or of time, nor subsequent to them, but

simultaneously and eternally in and with them.

The Primitive church took this ground with confidence. Unity and

trinality were inseparable in their view. The term God meant for them

the Trinity. A "theologian," in their nomenclature, was a trinitarian.

They called the Apostle John ho theologos, because he was enlightened

by the Holy Spirit to make fuller disclosures, in the preface to his

Gospel, concerning the deity of the Logos and the doctrine of the

Trinity, than were the other evangelists. And they gave the same

epithet to Gregory Nazianzum, because of the acumen and insight of his

trinitarian treatises. This work of Augustin adopts the same position,

and defends it with an ability second to none.

3. A third advantage of this method of illustrating the doctrine of the

Trinity is, that it goes to show that the personality of God depends

upon the trinality of the Divine Essence--that if there are no interior

distinctions in the Infinite Being, he cannot be self-contemplative,

self-cognitive, or self-communing.

This is an important and valuable feature of the method in question,

when viewed in its bearing upon the modern assertion that an Infinite

Being cannot be personal. This treatise of Augustin does not develope

the problem upon this point, but it leads to it. In illustrating the

Trinity by the ternaries in nature, and especially in the human mind,

he aims only to show that trinality of a certain kind does not conflict

with unity of a certain kind. Memory, understanding, and will are three

faculties, yet one soul. Augustin is content with elucidating the

Divine unity by such illustrations. The elucidation of the Divine

personality by them, was not attempted in his day nor in the Medi�val

and Reformation churches. The conflict with pantheism forced this point

upon the attention of the Modern church.

At the same time, these Christian fathers who took the problem of the

Trinity into the centre of the Divine essence, and endeavored to show

its necessary grounds there, prepared the way for showing, by the same

method, that trinality is not only consistent with personality, but is

actually indispensable to it. In a brief essay like this, only the

briefest hints can be indicated.

If God is personal, he is self-conscious. Self-consciousness is, (1),

the power which a rational spirit, or mind, has of making itself its

own object; and, (2), of knowing that it has done so. If the first step

is taken, and not the second, there is no self-consciousness. For the

subject would not know that the object is the self. And the second step

cannot be taken, if the first has not been. These two acts of a

rational spirit, or mind, involve three distinctions in it, or three

modes of it. The whole mind as a subject contemplates the very same

whole mind as an object. Here are two distinctions, or modes of one

mind. And the very same whole mind perceives that the contemplating

subject and the contemplated object are one and the same essence or

being. Here are three modes of one mind, each distinct from the others,

yet all three going to make up the one self-conscious spirit. Unless

there were these three distinctions, there would be no self-knowledge.

Mere singleness, a mere subject without an object, is incompatible with

self-consciousness.

In denying distinctions in the Divine Essence, while asserting its

personality, Deism, with Socinianism and Mohammedanism, contends that

God can be self-knowing and self-communing as a single subject without

an object. The controversy, consequently, is as much between the deist

and the psychologist, as it is between him and the trinitarian. It is

as much a question whether his view of personality and

self-consciousness is correct, as whether his interpretation of

Scripture is. For the dispute involves the necessary conditions of

personality. If a true psychology does not require trinality in a

spiritual essence in order to its own self-contemplation, and

self-knowledge, and self-communion, then the deist is correct; but if

it does, then he is in error. That the study of self-consciousness in

modern metaphysics has favored trinitarianism, is unquestionable. Even

the spurious trinitarianism which has grown up in the schools of the

later pantheism goes to show, that a trinal constitution is requisite

in an essence, in order to explain self-consciousness, and that

absolute singleness, or the absence of all interior distinctions,

renders the problem insoluble. [6]

But the authority of Scripture is higher than that of psychology, and

settles the matter. Revelation unquestionably discloses a deity who is

"blessed forever;" whose blessedness is independent of the universe

which he has made from nonentity, and who must therefore find all the

conditions of blessedness within himself alone. He is blessed from

eternity, in his own self-contemplation and self-communion. He does not

need the universe in order that he may have an object which he can

know, which he can love, and over which he can rejoice. "The Father

knoweth the Son," from all eternity (Matt. xi. 27); and "loveth the

Son," from all eternity (John iii. 35); and "glorifieth the Son," from

all eternity (John xvii. 5). Prior to creation, the Eternal Wisdom "was

by Him as one brought up with Him, and was daily His delight, rejoicing

always before Him" (Prov. viii. 30); and the Eternal Word "was in the

beginning with God" (John i. 2); and "the Only Begotten Son (or God

Only Begotten, as the uncials read) was eternally in the bosom of the

Father" (John i. 18).

Here is society within the Essence, and wholly independent of the

universe; and communion and blessedness resulting therefrom. But this

is impossible to an essence without personal distinctions. Not the

singular Unit of the deist, but the plural Unity of the trinitarian,

explains this. A subject without an object could not know. What is

there to be known? Could not love. What is there to be loved? Could not

rejoice. What is there to rejoice over? And the object cannot be the

universe. The infinite and eternal object of God's infinite and eternal

knowledge, love, and joy, cannot be his creation: because this is

neither eternal, nor infinite. There was a time when the universe was

not; and if God's self-consciousness and blessedness depends upon the

universe, there was a time when God was neither self-conscious nor

blessed. The objective God for the subjective God must, therefore, be

very God of very God, begotten not made, the eternal Son of the eternal

Father.

The same line of reasoning applies to the third trinitarian person, but

there is no need of going through with it. The history of opinion

shows, that if the first two eternal distinctions are conceded, there

is no denial of the reality and eternity of the third. [7]

The analogue derived from the nature of finite personality and

self-consciousness has one great advantage--namely, that it illustrates

the independence of the Divine personality and self-consciousness. The

later pantheism (not the earlier of Spinoza) constructs a kind of

trinity, but it is dependent upon the universe. God distinguishes

Himself from the world, and thereby finds the object required for the

subject. But this implies either that the world is eternal, or else,

that God is not eternally self-conscious. The Christian trinitarianism,

on the contrary, finds all the media and conditions of

self-consciousness within the Divine Essence. God distinguishes himself

from himself, not from the universe. The eternal Father beholds himself

in the eternal Son, his alter ego, the "express image of his own

person" (Heb. i. 3). God does not struggle gradually into

self-consciousness, as in the Hegelian scheme, by the help of the

universe. Before that universe was in existence, and in the solitude of

his own eternity and self-sufficiency, he had within his own essence

all the media and conditions of self-consciousness. And after the

worlds were called into being, the Divine personality remained the same

immutable and infinite self-knowledge, unaffected by anything in his

handiwork.

"O Light Eterne, sole in thyself that dwellest,

Sole knowest thyself, and known unto thyself,

And knowing, lovest and smilest on thyself!"--Dante: Paradise xxxiii.

125.

While, however, this analogue from the conditions of finite personality

approaches nearer to the eternal distinctions in the Godhead than does

that ternary which Augustin employs--namely, memory, understanding, and

will--yet like all finite analogies to the Infinite it is inadequate.

For the subject-ego, object-ego, and ego-percipient, are not so

essentially distinct and completely objective to each other, as are the

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They cannot employ the personal pronouns

in reference to each other. They cannot reciprocally perform acts and

discharge functions towards each other, like the Divine Three.

Revelation is explicit upon this point. It specifies at least the

following twelve actions and relations, that incontestably prove the

conscious distinctness and mutual objectivity of the persons of the

Trinity. One divine person loves another (John iii. 35); dwells in

another (John xiv. 10, 11); knows another (Matt. xi. 27); sends another

(Gen. xvi. 7); suffers from another (Zech. xiii. 7-13); addresses

another (Heb. i. 8); is the way to another (John xiv. 6); speaks of

another (Luke iii. 22); glorifies another (John xvii. 5); confers with

another (Gen. i. 26; xi. 7); plans with another (Is. ix. 6); rewards

another (Phil. ii. 5-11; Heb. ii. 9).

Such are some of the salient features of this important treatise upon

the Trinity. It has its defects; but they pertain to the form more than

to the matter; to arrangement and style more than to dogma. Literary

excellence is not the forte of the patristic writers. Hardly any of

them are literary artists. Lactantius among the Latins, and Chrysostom

among the Greeks, are almost the only fathers that have rhetorical

grace. And none of them approach the beauty of the classic writers, as

seen in the harmonious flow and diction of Plato, and the exquisite

finish of Horace and Catullus.

Augustin is prolix, repetitious, and sometimes leaves his theme to

discuss cognate but distantly related subjects. This appears more in

the last eight chapters, which are speculative, than in the first

seven, which are scriptural. The material in this second division is

capable of considerable compression. The author frequently employs two

illustrations when one would suffice, and three or more when two are

enough. He discusses many themes which are not strictly trinitarian.

Yet the patient student will derive some benefit from this

discursiveness. He will find, for example, in this treatise on the

Trinity, an able examination of the subject of miracles (Book III); of

creation ex nihilo (III. ix); of vicarious atonement (IV. vii-xiv); of

the faculty of memory (XI. x); and, incidentally, many other high

themes are touched upon. Before such a contemplative intellect as that

of Augustin, all truth lay spread out like the ocean, with no limits

and no separating chasms. Everything is connected and fluid.

Consequently, one doctrine inevitably leads to and merges in another,

and the eager and intense inquirer rushes forward, and outward, and

upward, and downward, in every direction. The only aim is to see all

that can be seen, and state all that can be stated. The neglect of the

form, and the anxiety after the substance, contribute to the

discursiveness. Caring little for proportion in method, and nothing for

elegance in diction, the writer, though bringing forth a vast amount of

truth, does it at the expense of clearness, conciseness, and grace.

Such is the case with the North African father--one of the most

voluminous and prolix of authors, yet one of the most original,

suggestive, and fertilizing of any.

And this particular treatise is perhaps as pregnant and suggestive as

any that Augustin, or any other theologian, ever composed. The doctrine

of the Trinity is the most immense of all the doctrines of religion. It

is the foundation of theology. Christianity, in the last analysis, is

Trinitarianism. Take out of the New Testament the persons of the

Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and there is no God left. Take

out of the Christian consciousness the thoughts and affections that

relate to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and there is no

Christian consciousness left. The Trinity is the constitutive idea of

the evangelical theology, and the formative idea of the evangelical

experience. The immensity of the doctrine makes it of necessity a

mystery; but a mystery which like night enfolds in its unfathomed

depths the bright stars--points of light, compared with which there is

no light so keen and so glittering. Mysterious as it is, the Trinity of

Divine Revelation is the doctrine that holds in it all the hope of man;

for it holds within it the infinite pity of the Incarnation and the

infinite mercy of the Redemption.

And it shares its mysteriousness with the doctrine of the Divine

Eternity. It is difficult to say which is most baffling to human

comprehension, the all-comprehending, simultaneous, successionless

consciousness of the Infinite One, or his trinal personality. Yet no

theist rejects the doctrine of the Divine eternity because of its

mystery. The two doctrines are antithetic and correlative. On one of

the Northern rivers that flows through a narrow chasm whose depth no

plummet has sounded, there stand two cliffs fronting each other,

shooting their pinnacles into the blue ether, and sending their roots

down to the foundations of the earth. They have named them Trinity and

Eternity. So stand, antithetic and confronting, in the Christian

scheme, the trinity and eternity of God.

The translation of this treatise is the work of the Rev. Arthur West

Haddan, Hon. Canon of Worcester, who, according to a note of the

publisher, died while it was passing through the press. It has been

compared with the original, and a considerable number of alterations

made. The treatise is exceedingly difficult to render into

English--probably the most so of any in the author's writings. The

changes in some instances were necessary from a misconception of the

original; but more often for the purpose of making the meaning of the

translator himself more clear. It is believed that a comparison between

the original and revised translation will show that the latter is the

more intelligible. At the same time, the reviser would not be too

confident that in every instance the exact meaning of Augustin has been

expressed, by either the translator or reviser.

The annotations of the reviser upon important points in the treatise,

it is hoped, will assist the reader in understanding Augustin's

reasoning, and also throw some light upon the doctrine of the Trinity.

William G. T. Shedd.

New York, Feb. 1, 1887.

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[2] Westminster Confession, II. iii.

[3] That Augustin had considerable acquaintance with Greek is proved by

his many references and citations throughout his writings. In this

work, see XII. vii. 11; XII. xiv. 22; XIII. x. 14; XIV. i. 1; XV. ix.

15. His statement in III. i. 1, is, that he was "not so familiar with

the Greek tongue (Gr�c� lingu� non sit nobis tantus habitus), as to be

able to read and understand the books that treat of such [metaphysical]

topics." In V. viii. 10, he remarks that he does not comprehend the

distinction which the Greek Trinitarians make between ousia and

hupostasis; which shows that he had not read the work of Gregory of

Nyssa, in which it is defined with great clearness. One may have a good

knowledge of a language for general purposes, and yet be unfamiliar

with its philosophical nomenclature.

[4] For an analysis of Augustin's Trinitarianism, see Bauv:

Dreieinigkeitslehre I. 828-885; Gangauf: Des Augustinus speculative

Lehre von Gott dem Dreieinigen; Schaff: History, iii. 684 sq.

[5] The Mohammedan conception of the Divine Unity, also, is deistic. In

energetically rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, the Mohammedan is

the Oriental Unitarian.

[6] "That view of the divine nature which makes it inconsistent with

the Incarnation and Trinity is philosophically imperfect, as well as

scripturally incorrect." H. B. Smith: Faith and Philosophy, p. 191.

[7] Upon the necessary conditions of self consciousness in God, see

M�ller: On Sin, II. 136 sq. (Urwick's Trans ); Dorner: Christian

Doctrine, I. 412-465; Christlieb: Modern Doubt, Lecture III.; Kurtz:

Sacred History, � 2; Billroth: Religions Philosophie, � 89, 90;

Wilberforce: Incarnation, Chapter III; Kidd: On the Trinity, with

Candlish's Introduction; Shedd: History of Doctrine, I. 365-368.

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Translator's Preface.

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The history of St. Augustin's treatise on the Trinity, as gathered by

Tillemont and others from his own allusions to it, may be briefly

given. It is placed by him in his Retractations among the works written

(which in the present case, it appears, must mean begun) in A.D. 400.

In letters of A.D. 410, 414, and at the end of A.D. 415 (Ad Consentium,

Ep. 120, and two Ad Evodium, Epp. 162, 169), it is referred to as still

unfinished and unpublished. But a letter of A.D. 412 (Ad Marcellinum,

Ep. 143) intimates that friends were at that time importuning him,

although without success, to complete and publish it. And the letter to

Aurelius, which was sent to that bishop with the treatise itself when

actually completed, informs us that a portion of it, while it was still

unrevised and incomplete, was in fact surreptitiously made public,--a

proceeding which the letters above cited postpone apparently until at

least after A.D. 415. It was certainly still in hand in A.D. 416,

inasmuch as in Book XIII. a quotation occurs from the 12th Book of the

De Civitate Dei; and another quotation in Book XV., from the 90th

lecture on St. John, indicates most probably a date of at least a year

later, viz. A.D. 417. The Retractations, which refer to it, are usually

dated not later than A.D. 428. The letter to Bishop Aurelius also

informs us that the work was many years in progress, and was begun in

St. Augustin's early manhood, and finished in his old age. We may infer

from this evidence that it was written by him between A.D. 400, when he

was forty-six years old, and had been Bishop of Hippo about four years,

and A.D. 428 at the latest; but probably it was published ten or twelve

years before this date. He writes of it, indeed, himself, as if the

"nonum prematur in annum" very inadequately represented the amount of

deliberate and patient thought which a subject so profound and so

sacred demanded, and which he had striven to give to it; and as if,

even at the very last, he shrank from publishing his work, and was only

driven to do so in order to remedy the mischief of its partial and

unauthorized publication.

His motive for writing on the subject may be learned from the treatise

itself. It was not directed against any individual antagonist, or

occasioned by any particular controversial emergency. In fact, his

labors upon it were, he says, continually interrupted by the

distraction of such controversies. Certain ingenious and subtle

theories respecting types or resemblances of the Holy Trinity,

traceable in human nature as being the image of God, seemed to him to

supply, not indeed a logical proof, but a strong rational presumption,

of the truth of the doctrine itself; and thus to make it incumbent upon

him to expound and unfold them in order to meet rationalizing objectors

upon (so to say) their own ground. He is careful not to deal with these

analogies or images as if they either constituted a purely

argumentative proof or exhausted the full meaning of the doctrine, upon

both which assumptions such speculations have at all times been the

fruitful parent both of presumptious theorizing and of grievous heresy.

But he nevertheless employs them more affirmatively than would perhaps

have been the case. While modern theologians would argue negatively,

from the triplicity of independent faculties,--united, nevertheless, in

the unity of a single human person,--that any presumption of reason

against the Trinity of persons in the Godhead is thereby, if not

removed, at least materially and enormously lessened, St. Augustin

seems to argue positively from analogous grounds, as though they

constituted a direct intimation of the doctrine itself. But he takes

especial pains, at the same time, to dwell upon the incapacity of human

thought to fathom the depths of the nature of God; and he carefully

prefaces his reasonings by a statement of the Scripture evidence of the

catholic doctrine as a matter of faith and not of reason, and by an

explanation of difficult texts upon the subject. One of the most

valuable portions, indeed, of the treatise is the eloquent and profound

exposition given in this part of it of the rule of interpretation to be

applied to Scripture language respecting the person of our Lord. It

should be noticed, however, that a large proportion of St. Augustin's

scriptural exegesis is founded upon a close verbal exposition of the

old Latin version, and is frequently not borne out by the original

text. And the rule followed in rendering Scripture texts in the present

translation has been, accordingly, wherever the argument in the context

rests upon the variations of the old Latin, there to translate the

words as St. Augustin gives them, while adhering otherwise to the

language of the authorized English version. The reader's attention may

allowably be drawn to the language of Book V. c.x., and to its close

resemblance to some of the most remarkable phrases of the Athanasian

Creed, and again to the striking passage respecting miracles in Book

III. c.v., and to that upon the nature of God at the beginning of Book

V.; the last named of which seems to have suggested one of the

profoundest passages in the profoundest of Dr. Newman's University

Sermons (p. 353, ed. 1843). It may be added, that the writings of the

Greek Fathers on the subject were, if not wholly unknown, yet

unfamiliar to Augustin, who quotes directly only the Latin work of

Hilary of Poictiers.

It remains to say, that the translation here printed was made about

four years since by a friend of the writer of this preface, and that

the latter's share in the work has been that of thoroughly revising and

correcting it, and of seeing it through the press. He is therefore

answerable for the work as now published.

A. W. Haddan.

Nov. 5, 1872.

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In the Retractations (ii. 15) Augustin speaks of this work in the

following terms:--

"I spent some years in writing fifteen books concerning the Trinity,

which is God. When, however, I had not yet finished the thirteenth

Book, and some who were exceedingly anxious to have the work were kept

waiting longer than they could bear, it was stolen from me in a less

correct state than it either could or would have been had it appeared

when I intended. And as soon as I discovered this, having other copies

of it, I had determined at first not to publish it myself, but to

mention what had happened in the matter in some other work; but at the

urgent request of brethren, whom I could not refuse, I corrected it as

much as I thought fit, and finished and published it, with the

addition, at the beginning, of a letter that I had written to the

venerable Aurelius, Bishop of Carthage, in which I set forth, in the

way of prologue, what had happened, what I had intended to do of

myself, and what love of my brethren had forced me to do."

The letter to which he here alludes is the following:--

"To the most blessed Lord, whom he reveres with most sincere love, to

his holy brother and fellow-priest, Pope Aurelius, Augustin sends

health in the Lord.

"I began as a very young man, and have published in my old age, some

books concerning the Trinity, who is the supreme and true God. I had in

truth laid the work aside, upon discovering that it had been

prematurely, or rather surreptitiously, stolen from me before I had

completed it, and before I had revised and put the finishing touches to

it, as had been my intention. For I had not designed to publish the

Books one by one, but all together, inasmuch as the progress of the

inquiry led me to add the later ones to those which precede them. When,

therefore, these people had hindered the fulfillment of my purpose (in

that some of them had obtained access to the work before I intended), I

had given over dictating it, with the idea of making my complaint

public in some other work that I might write, in order that whoso could

might know that the Books had not been published by myself, but had

been taken away from my possession before they were in my own judgment

fit for publication. Compelled, however, by the eager demands of many

of my brethren, and above all by your command, I have taken the pains,

by God's help, to complete the work, laborious as it is; and as now

corrected (not as I wished, but as I could, lest the Books should

differ very widely from those which had surreptitiously got into

people's hands), I have sent them to your Reverence by my very dear son

and fellow-deacon, and have allowed them to be heard, copied, and read

by every one that pleases. Doubtless, if I could have fulfilled my

original intention, although they would have contained the same

sentiments, they would have been worked out much more thoroughly and

clearly, so far as the difficulty of unfolding so profound a subject,

and so far, too, as my own powers, might have allowed. There are some

persons, however, who have the first four, or rather five, Books

without the prefaces, and the twelfth with no small part of its later

chapters omitted. But these, if they please and can, will amend the

whole, if they become acquainted with the present edition. At any rate,

I have to request that you will order this letter to be prefixed

separately, but at the beginning of the Books. Farewell. Pray for me."

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The

fifteen books of aurelius augustinus,

Bishop of Hippo,

on the Trinity

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Book I.

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In which the unity and equality of the supreme Trinity is established

from the sacred Scriptures, and some texts alleged against the equality

of the Son are explained.

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Chapter 1.--This Work is Written Against Those Who Sophistically Assail

the Faith of the Trinity, Through Misuse of Reason. They Who Dispute

Concerning God Err from a Threefold Cause. Holy Scripture, Removing

What is False, Leads Us on by Degrees to Things Divine. What True

Immortality is. We are Nourished by Faith, that We May Be Enabled to

Apprehend Things Divine.

1. The following dissertation concerning the Trinity, as the reader

ought to be informed, has been written in order to guard against the

sophistries of those who disdain to begin with faith, and are deceived

by a crude and perverse love of reason. Now one class of such men

endeavor to transfer to things incorporeal and spiritual the ideas they

have formed, whether through experience of the bodily senses, or by

natural human wit and diligent quickness, or by the aid of art, from

things corporeal; so as to seek to measure and conceive of the former

by the latter. Others, again, frame whatever sentiments they may have

concerning God according to the nature or affections of the human mind;

and through this error they govern their discourse, in disputing

concerning God, by distorted and fallacious rules. While yet a third

class strive indeed to transcend the whole creation, which doubtless is

changeable, in order to raise their thought to the unchangeable

substance, which is God; but being weighed down by the burden of

mortality, whilst they both would seem to know what they do not, and

cannot know what they would, preclude themselves from entering the very

path of understanding, by an over-bold affirmation of their own

presumptuous judgments; choosing rather not to correct their own

opinion when it is perverse, than to change that which they have once

defended. And, indeed, this is the common disease of all the three

classes which I have mentioned,--viz., both of those who frame their

thoughts of God according to things corporeal, and of those who do so

according to the spiritual creature, such as is the soul; and of those

who neither regard the body nor the spiritual creature, and yet think

falsely about God; and are indeed so much the further from the truth,

that nothing can be found answering to their conceptions, either in the

body, or in the made or created spirit, or in the Creator Himself. For

he who thinks, for instance, that God is white or red, is in error; and

yet these things are found in the body. Again, he who thinks of God as

now forgetting and now remembering, or anything of the same kind, is

none the less in error; and yet these things are found in the mind. But

he who thinks that God is of such power as to have generated Himself,

is so much the more in error, because not only does God not so exist,

but neither does the spiritual nor the bodily creature; for there is

nothing whatever that generates its own existence. [8]

2. In order, therefore, that the human mind might be purged from

falsities of this kind, Holy Scripture, which suits itself to babes has

not avoided words drawn from any class of things really existing,

through which, as by nourishment, our understanding might rise

gradually to things divine and transcendent. For, in speaking of God,

it has both used words taken from things corporeal, as when it says,

"Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings;" [9] and it has borrowed many

things from the spiritual creature, whereby to signify that which

indeed is not so, but must needs so be said: as, for instance, "I the

Lord thy God am a jealous God;" [10] and, "It repenteth me that I have

made man." [11] But it has drawn no words whatever, whereby to frame

either figures of speech or enigmatic sayings, from things which do not

exist at all. And hence it is that they who are shut out from the truth

by that third kind of error are more mischievously and emptily vain

than their fellows; in that they surmise respecting God, what can

neither be found in Himself nor in any creature. For divine Scripture

is wont to frame, as it were, allurements for children from the things

which are found in the creature; whereby, according to their measure,

and as it were by steps, the affections of the weak may be moved to

seek those things that are above, and to leave those things that are

below. But the same Scripture rarely employs those things which are

spoken properly of God, and are not found in any creature; as, for

instance, that which was said to Moses, "I am that I am;" and, "I Am

hath sent me to you." [12] For since both body and soul also are said

in some sense to be, Holy Scripture certainly would not so express

itself unless it meant to be understood in some special sense of the

term. So, too, that which the Apostle says, "Who only hath

immortality." [13] Since the soul also both is said to be, and is, in a

certain manner immortal, Scripture would not say "only hath," unless

because true immortality is unchangeableness; which no creature can

possess, since it belongs to the creator alone. [14] So also James

says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh

down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither

shadow of turning." [15] So also David, "Thou shall change them, and

they shall be changed; but Thou art the same." [16]

3. Further, it is difficult to contemplate and fully know the substance

of God; who fashions things changeable, yet without any change in

Himself, and creates things temporal, yet without any temporal movement

in Himself. And it is necessary, therefore, to purge our minds, in

order to be able to see ineffably that which is ineffable; whereto not

having yet attained, we are to be nourished by faith, and led by such

ways as are more suited to our capacity, that we may be rendered apt

and able to comprehend it. And hence the Apostle says, that "in Christ

indeed are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" [17] and yet

has commended Him to us, as to babes in Christ, who, although already

born again by His grace, yet are still carnal and psychical, not by

that divine virtue wherein He is equal to the Father, but by that human

infirmity whereby He was crucified. For he says, "I determined not to

know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified;" [18] and

then he continues, "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in

much trembling." And a little after he says to them, "And I, brethren,

could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, [19]

even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with

meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye

able." [20] There are some who are angry at language of this kind, and

think it is used in slight to themselves, and for the most part prefer

rather to believe that they who so speak to them have nothing to say,

than that they themselves cannot understand what they have said. And

sometimes, indeed, we do allege to them, not certainly that account of

the case which they seek in their inquiries about God,--because neither

can they themselves receive it, nor can we perhaps either apprehend or

express it,--but such an account of it as to demonstrate to them how

incapable and utterly unfit they are to understand that which they

require of us. But they, on their parts, because they do not hear what

they desire, think that we are either playing them false in order to

conceal our own ignorance, or speaking in malice because we grudge them

knowledge; and so go away indignant and perturbed.

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[8] [Augustin here puts generare for creare--which is rarely the case

with him, since the distinction between generation and creation is of

the highest importance in discussing the doctrine of the Trinity. His

thought here is, that God does not bring himself into being, because he

always is. Some have defined God as the Self-caused: causa sui. But the

category of cause and effect is inapplicable to the Infinite

Being.--W.G.T.S.]

[9] Ps. xvii. 8

[10] Ex. xx. 5

[11] Gen. vi. 7

[12] Ex. iii. 14

[13] 1 Tim. vi. 16

[14] [God's being is necessary; that of the creature is contingent.

Hence the name I Am, or Jehovah,--which denotes this difference. God

alone has immortality a parte ante, as well as a parte post.--W.G.T.S.]

[15] Jas. i. 17

[16] Ps. cii. 26, 27

[17] Col. ii. 3

[18] 1 Cor. ii. 2, 3

[19] [St. Paul, in this place, denominates imperfect but true believers

"carnal," in a relative sense, only. They are comparatively carnal,

when contrasted with the law of God, which is absolutely and perfectly

spiritual. (Rom. vii. 14.) They do not, however, belong to the class of

carnal or natural men, in distinction from spiritual. The persons whom

the Apostle here denominates "carnal," are "babes in

Christ."--W.G.T.S.]

[20] 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2

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Chapter 2.--In What Manner This Work Proposes to Discourse Concerning

the Trinity.

4. Wherefore, our Lord God helping, we will undertake to render, as far

as we are able, that very account which they so importunately demand:

viz., that the Trinity is the one and only and true God, and also how

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are rightly said, believed,

understood, to be of one and the same substance or essence; in such

wise that they may not fancy themselves mocked by excuses on our part,

but may find by actual trial, both that the highest good is that which

is discerned by the most purified minds, and that for this reason it

cannot be discerned or understood by themselves, because the eye of the

human mind, being weak, is dazzled in that so transcendent light,

unless it be invigorated by the nourishment of the righteousness of

faith. First, however, we must demonstrate, according to the authority

of the Holy Scriptures, whether the faith be so. Then, if God be

willing and aid us, we may perhaps at least so far serve these

talkative arguers--more puffed up than capable, and therefore laboring

under the more dangerous disease--as to enable them to find something

which they are not able to doubt, that so, in that case where they

cannot find the like, they may be led to lay the fault to their own

minds, rather than to the truth itself or to our reasonings; and thus,

if there be anything in them of either love or fear towards God, they

may return and begin from faith in due order: perceiving at length how

healthful a medicine has been provided for the faithful in the holy

Church, whereby a heedful piety, healing the feebleness of the mind,

may render it able to perceive the unchangeable truth, and hinder it

from falling headlong, through disorderly rashness, into pestilent and

false opinion. Neither will I myself shrink from inquiry, if I am

anywhere in doubt; nor be ashamed to learn, if I am anywhere in error.

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Chapter 3.--What Augustin Requests from His Readers. The Errors of

Readers Dull of Comprehension Not to Be Ascribed to the Author.

5. Further let me ask of my reader, wherever, alike with myself, he is

certain, there to go on with me; wherever, alike with myself, he

hesitates, there to join with me in inquiring; wherever he recognizes

himself to be in error, there to return to me; wherever he recognizes

me to be so, there to call me back: so that we may enter together upon

the path of charity, and advance towards Him of whom it is said, "Seek

His face evermore." [21] And I would make this pious and safe

agreement, in the presence of our Lord God, with all who read my

writings, as well in all other cases as, above all, in the case of

those which inquire into the unity of the Trinity, of the Father and

the Son and the Holy Spirit; because in no other subject is error more

dangerous, or inquiry more laborious, or the discovery of truth more

profitable. If, then, any reader shall say, This is not well said,

because I do not understand it; such an one finds fault with my

language, not with my faith: and it might perhaps in very truth have

been put more clearly; yet no man ever so spoke as to be understood in

all things by all men. Let him, therefore, who finds this fault with my

discourse, see whether he can understand other men who have handled

similar subjects and questions, when he does not understand me: and if

he can, let him put down my book, or even, if he pleases, throw it

away; and let him spend labor and time rather on those whom he

understands. [22] Yet let him not think on that account that I ought to

have been silent, because I have not been able to express myself so

smoothly and clearly to him as those do whom he understands. For

neither do all things, which all men have written, come into the hands

of all. And possibly some, who are capable of understanding even these

our writings, may not find those more lucid works, and may meet with

ours only. And therefore it is useful that many persons should write

many books, differing in style but not in faith, concerning even the

same questions, that the matter itself may reach the greatest

number--some in one way, some in another. But if he who complains that

he has not understood these things has never been able to comprehend

any careful and exact reasonings at all upon such subjects, let him in

that case deal with himself by resolution and study, that he may know

better; not with me by quarrellings and wranglings, that I may hold my

peace. Let him, again, who says, when he reads my book, Certainly I

understand what is said, but it is not true, assert, if he pleases, his

own opinion, and refute mine if he is able. And if he do this with

charity and truth, and take the pains to make it known to me (if I am

still alive), I shall then receive the most abundant fruit of this my

labor. And if he cannot inform myself, most willing and glad should I

be that he should inform those whom he can. Yet, for my part, "I

meditate in the law of the Lord," [23] if not "day and night," at least

such short times as I can; and I commit my meditations to writing, lest

they should escape me through forgetfulness; hoping by the mercy of God

that He will make me hold steadfastly all truths of which I feel

certain; "but if in anything I be otherwise minded, that He will

himself reveal even this to me," [24] whether through secret

inspiration and admonition, or through His own plain utterances, or

through the reasonings of my brethren. This I pray for, and this my

trust and desire I commit to Him, who is sufficiently able to keep

those things which He has given me, and to render those which He has

promised.

6. I expect, indeed, that some, who are more dull of understanding,

will imagine that in some parts of my books I have held sentiments

which I have not held, or have not held those which I have. But their

error, as none can be ignorant, ought not to be attributed to me, if

they have deviated into false doctrine through following my steps

without apprehending me, whilst I am compelled to pick my way through a

hard and obscure subject: seeing that neither can any one, in any way,

rightly ascribe the numerous and various errors of heretics to the holy

testimonies themselves of the divine books; although all of them

endeavor to defend out of those same Scriptures their own false and

erroneous opinions. The law of Christ, that is, charity, admonishes me

clearly, and commands me with a sweet constraint, that when men think

that I have held in my books something false which I have not held, and

that same falsehood displeases one and pleases another, I should prefer

to be blamed by him who reprehends the falsehood, rather than praised

by him who praises it. For although I, who never held the error, am not

rightly blamed by the former, yet the error itself is rightly censured;

whilst by the latter neither am I rightly praised, who am thought to

have held that which the truth censures, nor the sentiment itself,

which the truth also censures. Let us therefore essay the work which we

have undertaken in the name of the Lord.

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[21] Ps. cv. 4

[22] [This request of Augustin to his reader, involves an admirable

rule for authorship generally--the desire, namely, that truth be

attained, be it through himself or through others. Milton teaches the

same, when he says that the author must "study and love learning for

itself, not for lucre, or any other end, but the service of God and of

truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise, which

God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose

published labors advance the good of mankind."--W.G.T.S.]

[23] Ps. i. 2

[24] Phil. iii. 15

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Chapter 4.--What the Doctrine of the Catholic Faith is Concerning the

Trinity.

7. 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; [25] 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; [26] 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," [27] the same Trinity "sat

upon each 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," [28] whether when He was baptized by John, or when the three

disciples were with Him in the mount, [29] or when the voice sounded,

saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again;" [30] 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. [31] This is also my faith, since it is the Catholic

faith.

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[25] [Augustin teaches the Nicene doctrine of a numerical unity of

essence in distinction from a specific unity. The latter is that of

mankind. In this case there is division of substance--part after part

of the specific nature being separated and formed, by propagation, into

individuals. No human individual contains the whole specific nature.

But in the case of the numerical unity of the Trinity, there is no

division of essence. The whole divine nature is in each divine person.

The three divine persons do not constitute a species--that is, three

divine individuals made by the division and distribution of one common

divine nature--but are three modes or "forms" (Phil. ii. 6) of one

undivided substance, numerically and identically the same in

each.--W.G.T.S.]

[26] Matt. iii. 16

[27] Acts ii. 2, 4

[28] Mark i. 11

[29] Matt. xvii. 5

[30] John xii. 28

[31] [The term Trinity denotes the Divine essence in all three modes.

The term Father (or Son, or Spirit) denotes the essence in only one

mode. Consequently, there is something in the Trinity that cannot be

attributed to any one of the Persons, as such; and something in a

Person that cannot be attributed to the Trinity, as such. Trinality

cannot be ascribed to the first Person; paternity cannot be ascribed to

the Trinity.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 5.--Of Difficulties Concerning the Trinity: in What Manner

Three are One God, and How, Working Indivisibly, They Yet Perform Some

Things Severally.

8. Some persons, however, find a difficulty in this faith; when they

hear that the Father is God, and the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God,

and yet that this Trinity is not three Gods, but one God; and they ask

how they are to understand this: especially when it is said that the

Trinity works indivisibly in everything that God works, and yet that a

certain voice of the Father spoke, which is not the voice of the Son;

and that none except the Son was born in the flesh, and suffered, and

rose again, and ascended into heaven; and that none except the Holy

Spirit came in the form of a dove. They wish to understand how the

Trinity uttered that voice which was only of the Father; and how the

same Trinity created that flesh in which the Son only was born of the

Virgin; and how the very same Trinity itself wrought that form of a

dove, in which the Holy Spirit only appeared. Yet, otherwise, the

Trinity does not work indivisibly, but the Father does some things, the

Son other things, and the Holy Spirit yet others: or else, if they do

some things together, some severally, then the Trinity is not

indivisible. It is a difficulty, too, to them, in what manner the Holy

Spirit is in the Trinity, whom neither the Father nor the Son, nor

both, have begotten, although He is the Spirit both of the Father and

of the Son. Since, then, men weary us with asking such questions, let

us unfold to them, as we are able, whatever wisdom God's gift has

bestowed upon our weakness on this subject; neither "let us go on our

way with consuming envy." [32] Should we say that we are not accustomed

to think about such things, it would not be true; yet if we acknowledge

that such subjects commonly dwell in our thoughts, carried away as we

are by the love of investigating the truth, then they require of us, by

the law of charity, to make known to them what we have herein been able

to find out. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already

perfect" (for, if the Apostle Paul, how much more must I, who lie far

beneath his feet, count myself not to have apprehended!); but,

according to my measure, "if I forget those things that are behind, and

reach forth unto those things which are before, and press towards the

mark for the prize of the high calling," [33] I am requested to

disclose so much of the road as I have already passed, and the point to

which I have reached, whence the course yet remains to bring me to the

end. And those make the request, whom a generous charity compels me to

serve. Needs must too, and God will grant that, in supplying them with

matter to read, I shall profit myself also; and that, in seeking to

reply to their inquiries, I shall myself likewise find that for which I

was inquiring. Accordingly I have undertaken the task, by the bidding

and help of the Lord my God, not so much of discoursing with authority

respecting things I know already, as of learning those things by

piously discoursing of them.

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[32] Wisd. vi. 23

[33] Phil. iii. 12-14

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Chapter 6.--That the Son is Very God, of the Same Substance with the

Father. Not Only the Father, But the Trinity, is Affirmed to Be

Immortal. All Things are Not from the Father Alone, But Also from the

Son. That the Holy Spirit is Very God, Equal with the Father and the

Son.

9. They who have said that our Lord Jesus Christ is not God, or not

very God, or not with the Father the One and only God, or not truly

immortal because changeable, are proved wrong by the most plain and

unanimous voice of divine testimonies; as, for instance, "In the

beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was

God." For it is plain that we are to take the Word of God to be the

only Son of God, of whom it is afterwards said, "And the Word was made

flesh, and dwelt among us," on account of that birth of His

incarnation, which was wrought in time of the Virgin. But herein is

declared, not only that He is God, but also that He is of the same

substance with the Father; because, after saying, "And the Word was

God," it is said also, "The same was in the beginning with God: all

things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made." [34]

Not simply "all things;" but only all things that were made, that is;

the whole creature. From which it appears clearly, that He Himself was

not made, by whom all things were made. And if He was not made, then He

is not a creature; but if He is not a creature, then He is of the same

substance with the Father. For all substance that is not God is

creature; and all that is not creature is God. [35] And if the Son is

not of the same substance with the Father, then He is a substance that

was made: and if He is a substance that was made, then all things were

not made by Him; but "all things were made by Him," therefore He is of

one and the same substance with the Father. And so He is not only God,

but also very God. And the same John most expressly affirms this in his

epistle: "For we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an

understanding, that we may know the true God, and that we may be in His

true Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." [36]

10. Hence also it follows by consequence, that the Apostle Paul did not

say, "Who alone has immortality," of the Father merely; but of the One

and only God, which is the Trinity itself. For that which is itself

eternal life is not mortal according to any changeableness; and hence

the Son of God, because "He is Eternal Life," is also Himself

understood with the Father, where it is said, "Who only hath

immortality." For we, too, are made partakers of this eternal life, and

become, in our own measure, immortal. But the eternal life itself, of

which we are made partakers, is one thing; we ourselves, who, by

partaking of it, shall live eternally, are another. For if He had said,

"Whom in His own time the Father will show, who is the blessed and only

Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath

immortality;" not even so would it be necessarily understood that the

Son is excluded. For neither has the Son separated the Father from

Himself, because He Himself, speaking elsewhere with the voice of

wisdom (for He Himself is the Wisdom of God), [37] says, "I alone

compassed the circuit of heaven." [38] And therefore so much the more

is it not necessary that the words, "Who hath immortality," should be

understood of the Father alone, omitting the Son; when they are said

thus: "That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable,

until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: whom in His own time He

will show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings,

and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light

which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to

whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." [39] In which words neither

is the Father specially named, nor the Son, nor the Holy Spirit; but

the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

that is, the One and only and true God, the Trinity itself.

11. But perhaps what follows may interfere with this meaning; because

it is said, "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see:" although this may

also be taken as belonging to Christ according to His divinity, which

the Jews did not see, who yet saw and crucified Him in the flesh;

whereas His divinity can in no wise be seen by human sight, but is seen

with that sight with which they who see are no longer men, but beyond

men. Rightly, therefore, is God Himself, the Trinity, understood to be

the "blessed and only Potentate," who "shows the coming of our Lord

Jesus Christ in His own time." For the words, "Who only hath

immortality," are said in the same way as it is said, "Who only doeth

wondrous things." [40] And I should be glad to know of whom they take

these words to be said. If only of the Father, how then is that true

which the Son Himself says, "For what things soever the Father doeth,

these also doeth the Son likewise?" Is there any, among wonderful

works, more wonderful than to raise up and quicken the dead? Yet the

same Son saith, "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth

them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." [41] How, then, does

the Father alone "do wondrous things," when these words allow us to

understand neither the Father only, nor the Son only, but assuredly the

one only true God, that is, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy

Spirit? [42]

12. Also, when the same apostle says, "But to us there is but one God,

the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus

Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him," [43] who can doubt that

he speaks of all things which are created; as does John, when he says,

"All things were made by Him"? I ask, therefore, of whom he speaks in

another place: "For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all

things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." [44] For if of the Father,

and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, so as to assign each clause severally

to each person: of Him, that is to say, of the Father; through Him,

that is to say, through the Son; in Him, that is to say, in the Holy

Spirit,--it is manifest that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy

Spirit is one God, inasmuch as the words continue in the singular

number, "To whom [45] be glory for ever." For at the beginning of the

passage he does not say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom

and knowledge" of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit, but

"of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" "How unsearchable are His

judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind

of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given

to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and

through Him, and in Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever.

Amen." [46] But if they will have this to be understood only of the

Father, then in what way are all things by the Father, as is said here;

and all things by the Son, as where it is said to the Corinthians, "And

one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things," [47] and as in the

Gospel of John, "All things were made by Him?" For if some things were

made by the Father, and some by the Son, then all things were not made

by the Father, nor all things by the Son; but if all things were made

by the Father, and all things by the Son, then the same things were

made by the Father and by the Son. The Son, therefore, is equal with

the Father, and the working of the Father and the Son is indivisible.

Because if the Father made even the Son, whom certainly the Son Himself

did not make, then all things were not made by the Son; but all things

were made by the Son: therefore He Himself was not made, that with the

Father He might make all things that were made. And the apostle has not

refrained from using the very word itself, but has said most expressly,

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with

God;" [48] using here the name of God specially of the Father; [49] as

elsewhere, "But the head of Christ is God." [50]

13. Similar evidence has been collected also concerning the Holy

Spirit, of which those who have discussed the subject before ourselves

have most fully availed themselves, that He too is God, and not a

creature. But if not a creature, then not only God (for men likewise

are called gods [51] ), but also very God; and therefore absolutely

equal with the Father and the Son, and in the unity of the Trinity

consubstantial and co-eternal. But that the Holy Spirit is not a

creature is made quite plain by that passage above all others, where we

are commanded not to serve the creature, but the Creator; [52] not in

the sense in which we are commanded to "serve" one another by love,

[53] which is in Greek douleuein, but in that in which God alone is

served, which is in Greek latreuein. From whence they are called

idolaters who tender that service to images which is due to God. For it

is this service concerning which it is said, "Thou shalt worship the

Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." [54] For this is found

also more distinctly in the Greek Scriptures, which have latreuseis.

Now if we are forbidden to serve the creature with such a service,

seeing that it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and

Him only shalt thou serve" (and hence, too, the apostle repudiates

those who worship and serve the creature more than the Creator), then

assuredly the Holy Spirit is not a creature, to whom such a service is

paid by all the saints; as says the apostle, "For we are the

circumcision, which serve the Spirit of God," [55] which is in the

Greek latreuontes. For even most Latin copies also have it thus, "We

who serve the Spirit of God;" but all Greek ones, or almost all, have

it so. Although in some Latin copies we find, not "We worship the

Spirit of God," but, "We worship God in the Spirit." But let those who

err in this case, and refuse to give up to the more weighty authority,

tell us whether they find this text also varied in the mss.: "Know ye

not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you,

which ye have of God?" Yet what can be more senseless or more profane,

than that any one should dare to say that the members of Christ are the

temple of one who, in their opinion, is a creature inferior to Christ?

For the apostle says in another place, "Your bodies are members of

Christ." But if the members of Christ are also the temple of the Holy

Spirit, then the Holy Spirit is not a creature; because we must needs

owe to Him, of whom our body is the temple, that service wherewith God

only is to be served, which in Greek is called latreia. And accordingly

the apostle says, "Therefore glorify God in your body." [56]

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[34] John i. 1, 14, 2, 3

[35] [Augustin here postulates the theistic doctrines of two

substances--infinite and finite; in contradiction to the postulate of

pantheism, that there is only one substance--the infinite.--W.G.T.S.]

[36] 1 John v. 20

[37] 1 Cor. i. 24

[38] Ecclus. xxiv. 5

[39] 1 Tim. vi. 14-16

[40] Ps. lxxii. 18

[41] John v. 19, 21

[42] [Nothing is more important, in order to a correct interpretation

of the New Testament, than a correct explanation of the term God.

Sometimes it denotes the Trinity, and sometimes a person of the

Trinity. The context always shows which it is. The examples given here

by Augustin are only a few out of many.--W.G.T.S.]

[43] 1 Cor. viii. 6

[44] Rom. xi. 36

[45] Ipsi.

[46] Rom. xi. 33-36

[47] 1 Cor. viii. 6

[48] Phil. ii. 6

[49] [It is not generally safe to differ from Augustin in trinitarian

exegesis. But in Phil. ii. 6 "God" must surely denote the Divine

Essence, not the first Person of the Essence. St. Paul describes

"Christ Jesus" as "subsisting" (huparchon) originally, that is prior to

incarnation, "in a form of God"(en morphe theou), and because he so

subsisted, as being "equal with God." The word morphe is anarthrous in

the text: a form, not the form, as the A.V and R.V. render. St. Paul

refers to one of three "forms" of God--namely, that particular form of

Sonship, which is peculiar to the second person of the Godhead. Had the

apostle employed the article with morphe, the implication would be that

there is only one "form of God"--that is, only one person in the Divine

Essence. If then theou, in this place, denotes the Father, as Augustin

says, St. Paul would teach that the Logos subsisted "in a form of the

Father," which would imply that the Father had more than one "form," or

else (if morphe be rendered with the article) that the Logos subsisted

in the "form" of the Father, neither of which is true. But if "God," in

this place, denotes the Divine Essence, then St. Paul teaches that the

unincarnate Logos subsisted in a particular "form" of the Essence--the

Father and Spirit subsisting in other "forms" of it. The student will

observe that Augustin is careful to teach that the Logos, when he took

on him "a form of a servant," did not lay aside "a form of God." He

understands the kenosis (ekenose) to be, the humbling of the divinity

by its union with the humanity, not the exinanition of it in the

extremest sense of entirely divesting himself of the divinity, nor the

less extreme sense of a total non-use of it during the

humiliation.--W.G.T.S.]

[50] 1 Cor. xi. 3

[51] Ps. lxxxii. 6

[52] Rom. i. 25

[53] Gal. v. 13

[54] Deut. vi. 13

[55] Phil. iii. 3 (Vulgate, etc.).

[56] 1 Cor. vi. 19, 15, 20

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Chapter 7.--In What Manner the Son is Less Than the Father, and Than

Himself.

14. In these and like testimonies of the divine Scriptures, by free use

of which, as I have said, our predecessors exploded such sophistries or

errors of the heretics, the unity and equality of the Trinity are

intimated to our faith. But because, on account of the incarnation of

the Word of God for the working out of our salvation, that the man

Christ Jesus might be the Mediator between God and men, [57] many

things are so said in the sacred books as to signify, or even most

expressly declare, the Father to be greater than the Son; men have

erred through a want of careful examination or consideration of the

whole tenor of the Scriptures, and have endeavored to transfer those

things which are said of Jesus Christ according to the flesh, to that

substance of His which was eternal before the incarnation, and is

eternal. They say, for instance, that the Son is less than the Father,

because it is written that the Lord Himself said, "My Father is greater

than I." [58] But the truth shows that after the same sense the Son is

less also than Himself; for how was He not made less also than Himself,

who "emptied [59] Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant?"

For He did not so take the form of a servant as that He should lose the

form of God, in which He was equal to the Father. If, then, the form of

a servant was so taken that the form of God was not lost, since both in

the form of a servant and in the form of God He Himself is the same

only-begotten Son of God the Father, in the form of God equal to the

Father, in the form of a servant the Mediator between God and men, the

man Christ Jesus; is there any one who cannot perceive that He Himself

in the form of God is also greater than Himself, but yet likewise in

the form of a servant less than Himself? And not, therefore, without

cause the Scripture says both the one and the other, both that the Son

is equal to the Father, and that the Father is greater than the Son.

For there is no confusion when the former is understood as on account

of the form of God, and the latter as on account of the form of a

servant. And, in truth, this rule for clearing the question through all

the sacred Scriptures is set forth in one chapter of an epistle of the

Apostle Paul, where this distinction is commended to us plainly enough.

For he says, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to

be equal with God; but emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a

servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and was found in fashion

[60] as a man." [61] The Son of God, then, is equal to God the Father

in nature, but less in "fashion." [62] For in the form of a servant

which He took He is less than the Father; but in the form of God, in

which also He was before He took the form of a servant, He is equal to

the Father. In the form of God He is the Word, "by whom all things are

made;" [63] but in the form of a servant He was "made of a woman, made

under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." [64] In like

manner, in the form of God He made man; in the form of a servant He was

made man. For if the Father alone had made man without the Son, it

would not have been written, "Let us make man in our image, after our

likeness." [65] Therefore, because the form of God took the form of a

servant, both is God and both is man; but both God, on account of God

who takes; and both man, on account of man who is taken. For neither by

that taking is the one of them turned and changed into the other: the

Divinity is not changed into the creature, so as to cease to be

Divinity; nor the creature into Divinity, so as to cease to be

creature.

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[57] 1 Tim. ii. 5

[58] John xiv. 28

[59] Exinanivit

[60] Habitu

[61] Phil. ii. 6, 7

[62] Habitu

[63] John i. 3

[64] Gal. iv. 4, 5

[65] Gen. i. 26

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Chapter 8.--The Texts of Scripture Explained Respecting the Subjection

of the Son to the Father, Which Have Been Misunderstood. Christ Will

Not So Give Up the Kingdom to the Father, as to Take It Away from

Himself. The Beholding Him is the Promised End of All Actions. The Holy

Spirit is Sufficient to Our Blessedness Equally with the Father.

15. As for that which the apostle says, "And when all things shall be

subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him

that put all things under Him:" either the text has been so turned,

lest any one should think that the "fashion" [66] of Christ, which He

took according to the human creature, was to be transformed hereafter

into the Divinity, or (to express it more precisely) the Godhead

itself, who is not a creature, but is the unity of the Trinity,--a

nature incorporeal, and unchangeable, and consubstantial, and

co-eternal with itself; or if any one contends, as some have thought,

that the text, "Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him

that put all things under Him," is so turned in order that one may

believe that very "subjection" to be a change and conversion hereafter

of the creature into the substance or essence itself of the Creator,

that is, that that which had been the substance of a creature shall

become the substance of the Creator;--such an one at any rate admits

this, of which in truth there is no possible doubt, that this had not

yet taken place, when the Lord said, "My Father is greater than I." For

He said this not only before He ascended into heaven, but also before

He had suffered, and had risen from the dead. But they who think that

the human nature in Him is to be changed and converted into the

substance of the Godhead, and that it was so said, "Then shall the Son

also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him,"--as if

to say, Then also the Son of man Himself, and the human nature taken by

the Word of God, shall be changed into the nature of Him who put all

things under Him,--must also think that this will then take place,

when, after the day of judgment, "He shall have delivered up the

kingdom to God, even the Father." And hence even still, according to

this opinion, the Father is greater than that form of a servant which

was taken of the Virgin. But if some affirm even further, that the man

Christ Jesus has already been changed into the substance of God, at

least they cannot deny that the human nature still remained, when He

said before His passion, "For my Father is greater than I;" whence

there is no question that it was said in this sense, that the Father is

greater than the form of a servant, to whom in the form of God the Son

is equal. Nor let any one, hearing what the apostle says, "But when He

saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted

which did put all things under Him," [67] think the words, that He hath

put all things under the Son, to be so understood of the Father, as

that He should not think that the Son Himself put all things under

Himself. For this the apostle plainly declares, when he says to the

Philippians, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we

look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile

body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according

to the working whereby He is able even to subdue [68] all things unto

Himself." [69] For the working of the Father and of the Son is

indivisible. Otherwise, neither hath the Father Himself put all things

under Himself, but the Son hath put all things under Him, who delivers

the kingdom to Him, and puts down all rule and all authority and power.

For these words are spoken of the Son: "When He shall have delivered

up," says the apostle, "the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He

shall have put down [70] all rule, and all authority, and all power."

For the same that puts down, also makes subject.

16. Neither may we think that Christ shall so give up the kingdom to

God, even the Father, as that He shall take it away from Himself. For

some vain talkers have thought even this. For when it is said, "He

shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father," He

Himself is not excluded; because He is one God together with the

Father. But that word "until" deceives those who are careless readers

of the divine Scriptures, but eager for controversies. For the text

continues, "For He must reign, until He hath put all enemies under His

feet;" [71] as though, when He had so put them, He would no more reign.

Neither do they perceive that this is said in the same way as that

other text, "His heart is established: He shall not be afraid, until He

see His desire upon His enemies." [72] For He will not then be afraid

when He has seen it. What then means, "When He shall have delivered up

the kingdom to God, even the Father," as though God and the Father has

not the kingdom now? But because He is hereafter to bring all the just,

over whom now, living by faith, the Mediator between God and men, the

man Christ Jesus, reigns, to that sight which the same apostle calls

"face to face;" [73] therefore the words, "When He shall have delivered

up the kingdom to God, even the Father," are as much as to say, When He

shall have brought believers to the contemplation of God, even the

Father. For He says, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father:

and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the

Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."

[74] The Father will then be revealed by the Son, "when He shall have

put down all rule, and all authority, and all power;" that is, in such

wise that there shall be no more need of any economy of similitudes, by

means of angelic rulers, and authorities, and powers. Of whom that is

not unfitly understood, which is said in the Song of Songs to the

bride, "We will make thee borders [75] of gold, with studs of silver,

while the King sitteth at His table;" [76] that is, as long as Christ

is in His secret place: since "your life is hid with Christ in God;

when Christ, who is our [77] life, shall appear, then shall ye also

appear with Him in glory." [78] Before which time, "we see now through

a glass, in an enigma," that is, in similitudes, "but then face to

face." [79]

17. For this contemplation is held forth to us as the end of all

actions, and the everlasting fullness of joy. For "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." [80] For that which He said to His servant Moses, "I am that I am;

thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me to

you;" [81] this it is which we shall contemplate when we shall live in

eternity. For so it is said, "And this is life eternal, that they might

know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

[82] This shall be when the Lord shall have come, and "shall have

brought to light the hidden things of darkness;" [83] when the darkness

of this present mortality and corruption shall have passed away. Then

will be our morning, which is spoken of in the Psalm, "In the morning

will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will contemplate Thee." [84] Of

this contemplation I understand it to be said, "When He shall have

delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;" that is, when He

shall have brought the just, over whom now, living by faith, the

Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, reigns, to the

contemplation of God, even the Father. If herein I am foolish, let him

who knows better correct me; to me at least the case seems as I have

said. [85] For we shall not seek anything else, when we shall have come

to the contemplation of Him. But that contemplation is not yet, so long

as our joy is in hope. For "hope that is seen is not hope: for what a

man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see

not, then do we with patience wait for it," [86] viz. "as long as the

King sitteth at His table." [87] Then will take place that which is

written, "In Thy presence is fullness of joy." [88] Nothing more than

that joy will be required; because there will be nothing more than can

be required. For the Father will be manifested to us, and that will

suffice for us. And this much Philip had well understood, so that he

said to the Lord, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." But he had

not yet understood that he himself was able to say this very same thing

in this way also: Lord, show Thyself to us, and it sufficeth us. For,

that he might understand this, the Lord replied to him, "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." But because He intended him, before

he could see this, to live by faith, He went on to say, "Believest thou

not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" [89] For "while we

are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by

faith, not by sight." [90] For contemplation is the recompense of

faith, for which recompense our hearts are purified by faith; as it is

written, "Purifying their hearts by faith." [91] And that our hearts

are to be purified for this contemplation, is proved above all by this

text, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." [92] And

that this is life eternal, God says in the Psalm, "With long life will

I satisfy him, and show him my salvation." [93] Whether, therefore, we

hear, Show us the Son; or whether we hear, Show us the Father; it is

even all one, since neither can be manifested without the other. For

they are one, as He also Himself says, "My Father and I are one." [94]

Finally, on account of this very indivisibility, it suffices that

sometimes the Father alone, or the Son alone, should be named, as

hereafter to fill us with the joy of His countenance.

18. Neither is the Spirit of either thence excluded, that is, the

Spirit of the Father and of the Son; which Holy Spirit is specially

called "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive." [95] For

to have the fruition of God the Trinity, after whose image we are made,

is indeed the fullness of our joy, than which there is no greater. On

this account the Holy Spirit is sometimes spoken of as if He alone

sufficed to our blessedness: and He does alone so suffice, because He

cannot be divided from the Father and the Son; as the Father alone is

sufficient, because He cannot be divided from the Son and the Holy

Spirit; and the Son alone is sufficient because He cannot be divided

from the Father and the Holy Spirit. For what does He mean by saying,

"If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father, and

He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for

ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive," [96]

that is, the lovers of the world? For "the natural man receiveth not

the things of the Spirit of God." [97] But it may perhaps seem,

further, as if the words, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall

give you another Comforter," were so said as if the Son alone were not

sufficient. And that place so speaks of the Spirit, as if He alone were

altogether sufficient: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will

guide you into all truth." [98] Pray, therefore, is the Son here

excluded, as if He did not teach all truth, or as if the Holy Spirit

were to fill up that which the Son could not fully teach? Let them say

then, if it pleases them, that the Holy Spirit is greater than the Son,

whom they are wont to call less. Or is it, forsooth, because it is not

said, He alone,--or, No one else except Himself--will guide you into

all truth, that they allow that the Son also may be believed to teach

together with Him? In that case the apostle has excluded the Son from

knowing those things which are of God, where he says, "Even so the

things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God:" [99] so that

these perverse men might, upon this ground, go on to say that none but

the Holy Spirit teaches even the Son the things of God, as the greater

teaches the less; to whom the Son Himself ascribes so much as to say,

"But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your

heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that

I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."

[100]

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[66] Habitum

[67] 1 Cor. xv. 28, 24, 27

[68] Subjicere

[69] Phil. iii. 20, 21

[70] Evacuaverit

[71] 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25

[72] Ps. cxii. 8

[73] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[74] Matt. xi. 27

[75] Similitudines

[76] In recubitu Cant. i. 11; see LXX.

[77] Vestra

[78] Col. iii. 3, 4

[79] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[80] 1 John iii. 2

[81] Ex. iii 14

[82] John xvii. 3

[83] 1 Cor. iv. 5

[84] Ps. v. 5

[85] [The common explanation is better, which regards the "kingdom"

that is to be delivered up, to be the mediatorial commission. When

Christ shall have finished his work of redeeming men, he no longer

discharges the office of a mediator. It seems incongruous to denominate

the beatific vision of God by the redeemed, a surrender of a kingdom.

In I. x. 21, Augustin says that when the Redeemer brings the redeemed

from faith to sight, "He is said to deliver up the kingdom to God, even

the Father.' "--W.G.T.S.]

[86] Rom. viii. 24, 25

[87] Cant. i. 12

[88] Ps. xvi. 11

[89] John xiv. 8, 10

[90] 2 Cor. v. 6, 7

[91] Acts xv. 9

[92] Matt. v. 8

[93] Ps. xci. 16

[94] John x. 30

[95] John xiv. 17

[96] John xiv. 15-17

[97] 1 Cor. ii. 14

[98] John xvi. 13

[99] 1 Cor. ii. 11

[100] John xvi. 6, 7

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Chapter 9.--All are Sometimes Understood in One Person.

But this is said, not on account of any inequality of the Word of God

and of the Holy Spirit, but as though the presence of the Son of man

with them would be a hindrance to the coming of Him, who was not less,

because He did not "empty Himself, taking upon Him the form of a

servant," [101] as the Son did. It was necessary, then, that the form

of a servant should be taken away from their eyes, because, through

gazing upon it, they thought that alone which they saw to be Christ.

Hence also is that which is said, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice

because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than

I:'" [102] that is, on that account it is necessary for me to go to the

Father, because, whilst you see me thus, you hold me to be less than

the Father through that which you see; and so, being taken up with the

creature and the "fashion" which I have taken upon me, you do not

perceive the equality which I have with the Father. Hence, too, is

this: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." [103] For

touch, as it were, puts a limit to their conception, and He therefore

would not have the thought of the heart, directed towards Himself, to

be so limited as that He should be held to be only that which He seemed

to be. But the "ascension to the Father" meant, so to appear as He is

equal to the Father, that the limit of the sight which sufficeth us

might be attained there. Sometimes also it is said of the Son alone,

that He himself sufficeth, and the whole reward of our love and longing

is held forth as in the sight of Him. For so it is said, "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." [104] Pray, because He has not here said, And

I will show the Father also to him, has He therefore excluded the

Father? On the contrary, because it is true, "I and my Father are one,"

when the Father is manifested, the Son also, who is in Him, is

manifested; and when the Son is manifested, the Father also, who is in

Him, is manifested. As, therefore, when it is said, "And I will

manifest myself to him," it is understood that He manifests also the

Father; so likewise in that which is said, "When He shall have

delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father," it is understood

that He does not take it away from Himself; since, when He shall bring

believers to the contemplation of God, even the Father, doubtless He

will bring them to the contemplation of Himself, who has said, "And I

will manifest myself to him." And so, consequently, when Judas had said

to Him, "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and

not unto the world?" Jesus answered and said to him, "If a man love me,

he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come

unto him, and make our abode with him." [105] Behold, that He manifests

not only Himself to him by whom He is loved, because He comes to him

together with the Father, and abides with him.

19. Will it perhaps be thought, that when the Father and the Son make

their abode with him who loves them, the Holy Spirit is excluded from

that abode? What, then, is that which is said above of the Holy Spirit:

"Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not: but ye know

Him; for He abideth with you, and is in you"? He, therefore, is not

excluded from that abode, of whom it is said, "He abideth with you, and

is in you;" unless, perhaps, any one be so senseless as to think, that

when the Father and the Son have come that they may make their abode

with him who loves them, the Holy Spirit will depart thence, and (as it

were) give place to those who are greater. But the Scripture itself

meets this carnal idea; for it says a little above: "I will pray the

Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with

you for ever." [106] He will not therefore depart when the Father and

the Son come, but will be in the same abode with them eternally;

because neither will He come without them, nor they without Him. But in

order to intimate the Trinity, some things are separately affirmed, the

Persons being also each severally named; and yet are not to be

understood as though the other Persons were excluded, on account of the

unity of the same Trinity and the One substance and Godhead of the

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. [107]

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[101] Phil. ii. 7

[102] John xiv. 28

[103] John xx. 17

[104] John xiv. 21

[105] John xiv. 22, 23

[106] John xiv. 16-23

[107] [An act belonging eminently and officially to a particular

trinitarian person is not performed to the total exclusion of the other

persons, because of the numerical unity of essence. The whole undivided

essence is in each person; consequently, what the essence in one of its

personal modes, or forms, does officially and eminently, is

participated in by the essence in its other modes or forms. Hence the

interchange of persons in Scripture. Though creation is officially the

Father's work, yet the Son creates (Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 3). The name

Saviour is given to the Father (1 Tim. i. 1). Judgment belongs

officially to the Son (John v. 22; Matt xxv. 31); yet the Father

judgeth (1 Pet. i. 17). The Father raises Christ (Acts xiii. 30); yet

Christ raises himself (John x. 18; Acts x. 41; Rom. xiv. 9).--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 10.--In What Manner Christ Shall Deliver Up the Kingdom to God,

Even the Father. The Kingdom Having Been Delivered to God, Even the

Father, Christ Will Not Then Make Intercession for Us.

20. Our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, will so deliver up the kingdom to

God, even the Father, Himself not being thence excluded, nor the Holy

Spirit, when He shall bring believers to the contemplation of God,

wherein is the end of all good actions, and everlasting rest, and joy

which never will be taken from us. For He signifies this in that which

He says: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your

joy no man taketh from you." [108] Mary, sitting at the feet of the

Lord, and earnestly listening to His word, foreshowed a similitude of

this joy; resting as she did from all business, and intent upon the

truth, according to that manner of which this life is capable, by

which, however, to prefigure that which shall be for eternity. For

while Martha, her sister, was cumbered about necessary business, which,

although good and useful, yet, when rest shall have succeeded, is to

pass away, she herself was resting in the word of the Lord. And so the

Lord replied to Martha, when she complained that her sister did not

help her: "Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken

away from her." [109] He did not say that Martha was acting a bad part;

but that "best part that shall not be taken away." For that part which

is occupied in the ministering to a need shall be "taken away" when the

need itself has passed away. Since the reward of a good work that will

pass away is rest that will not pass away. In that contemplation,

therefore, God will be all in all; because nothing else but Himself

will be required, but it will be sufficient to be enlightened by and to

enjoy Him alone. And so he in whom "the Spirit maketh intercession with

groanings which cannot be uttered," [110] says, "One thing have I

desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the

house of the Lord all the days of my life, to contemplate the beauty of

the Lord." [111] For we shall then contemplate God, the Father and the

Son and the Holy Spirit, when the Mediator between God and men, the man

Christ Jesus, shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the

Father, so as no longer to make intercession for us, as our Mediator

and Priest, Son of God and Son of man; [112] but that He Himself too,

in so far as He is a Priest that has taken the form of a servant for

us, shall be put under Him who has put all things under Him, and under

whom He has put all things: so that, in so far as He is God, He with

Him will have put us under Himself; in so far as He is a Priest, He

with us will be put under Him. [113] And therefore as the [incarnate]

Son is both God and man, it is rather to be said that the manhood in

the Son is another substance [from the Son], than that the Son in the

Father [is another substance from the Father]; just as the carnal

nature of my soul is more another substance in relation to my soul

itself, although in one and the same man, than the soul of another man

is in relation to my soul. [114]

21. When, therefore, He "shall have delivered up the kingdom to God,

even the Father,"--that is, when He shall have brought those who

believe and live by faith, for whom now as Mediator He maketh

intercession, to that contemplation, for the obtaining of which we sigh

and groan, and when labor and groaning shall have passed away,--then,

since the kingdom will have been delivered up to God, even the Father,

He will no more make intercession for us. And this He signifies, when

He says: "These things have I spoken unto you in similitudes; [115] but

the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in similitudes,

[116] but I shall declare [117] to you plainly of the Father:" that is,

they will not then be "similitudes," when the sight shall be "face to

face." For this it is which He says, "But I will declare to you plainly

of the Father;" as if He said I will plainly show you the Father. For

He says, I will "declare" to you, because He is His word. For He goes

on to say, "At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto

you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth

you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from

God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I

leave the world, and go to the Father." [118] What is meant by "I came

forth from the Father," unless this, that I have not appeared in that

form in which I am equal to the Father, but otherwise, that is, as less

than the Father, in the creature which I have taken upon me? And what

is meant by "I am come into the world," unless this, that I have

manifested to the eyes even of sinners who love this world, the form of

a servant which I took, making myself of no reputation? And what is

meant by "Again, I leave the world," unless this, that I take away from

the sight of the lovers of this world that which they have seen? And

what is meant by "I go to the Father," unless this, that I teach those

who are my faithful ones to understand me in that being in which I am

equal to the Father? Those who believe this will be thought worthy of

being brought by faith to sight, that is, to that very sight, in

bringing them to which He is said to "deliver up the kingdom to God,

even the Father." For His faithful ones, whom He has redeemed with His

blood, are called His kingdom, for whom He now intercedes; but then,

making them to abide in Himself there, where He is equal to the Father,

He will no longer pray the Father for them. "For," He says, "the Father

Himself loveth you." For indeed He "prays," in so far as He is less

than the Father; but as He is equal with the Father, He with the Father

grants. Wherefore He certainly does not exclude Himself from that which

He says, "The Father Himself loveth you;" but He means it to be

understood after that manner which I have above spoken of, and

sufficiently intimated,--namely, that for the most part each Person of

the Trinity is so named, that the other Persons also may be understood.

Accordingly, "For the Father Himself loveth you," is so said that by

consequence both the Son and the Holy Spirit also may be understood:

not that He does not now love us, who spared not His own Son, but

delivered Him up for us all; [119] but God loves us, such as we shall

be, not such as we are, for such as they are whom He loves, such are

they whom He keeps eternally; which shall then be, when He who now

maketh intercession for us shall have "delivered up the kingdom to God,

even the Father," so as no longer to ask the Father, because the Father

Himself loveth us. But for what deserving, except of faith, by which we

believe before we see that which is promised? For by this faith we

shall arrive at sight; so that He may love us, being such, as He loves

us in order that we may become; and not such, as He hates us because we

are, and exhorts and enables us to wish not to be always.

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[108] John xvi. 22

[109] Luke x. 30-42

[110] Rom. viii. 26

[111] Ps. xxvii. 4

[112] [The redeemed must forever stand in the relation of redeemed

sinners to their Redeemer. Thus standing, they will forever need

Christ's sacrifice and intercession in respect to their past sins in

this earthly state. But as in the heavenly state they are sinless, and

are incurring no new guilt, it is true that they do not require the

fresh application of atoning blood for new sins, nor Christ's

intercession for such. This is probably what Augustin means by saying

that Christ "no longer makes intercession for us," when he has

delivered up the kingdom to God. When the Mediator has surrendered his

commission, he ceases to redeem sinners from death, while yet he

continues forever to be the Head of those whom he has redeemed, and

their High Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. vii.

17.)--W.G.T.S.]

[113] 1 Cor. xv. 24-28

[114] [The animal soul is different in kind from the rational soul

though both constitute one person; while the rational soul of a man is

the same in kind with that of another man. Similarly, says Augustin,

there is a difference in kind between the human nature and the divine

nature of Christ, though constituting one theanthropic person, while

the divine nature of the Son is the same in substance with that of the

Father, though constituting two different persons, the Father and

Son.--W.G.T.S.]

[115] Proverbs--A.V.

[116] Proverbs--A.V.

[117] Show--A.V.

[118] John xvi. 25-28

[119] Rom. viii. 32

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Chapter 11.--By What Rule in the Scriptures It is Understood that the

Son is Now Equal and Now Less.

22. Wherefore, having mastered this rule for interpreting the

Scriptures concerning the Son of God, that we are to distinguish in

them what relates to the form of God, in which He is equal to the

Father, and what to the form of a servant which He took, in which He is

less than the Father; we shall not be disquieted by apparently contrary

and mutually repugnant sayings of the sacred books. For both the Son

and the Holy Spirit, according to the form of God, are equal to the

Father, because neither of them is a creature, as we have already

shown: but according to the form of a servant He is less than the

Father, because He Himself has said, "My Father is greater than I;"

[120] and He is less than Himself, because it is said of Him, He

emptied Himself;" [121] and He is less than the Holy Spirit, because He

Himself says, "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it

shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost,

it shall not be forgiven Him." [122] And in the Spirit too He wrought

miracles, saying: "But if I with the Spirit of God cast out devils, no

doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." [123] And in Isaiah He

says,--in the lesson which He Himself read in the synagogue, and showed

without a scruple of doubt to be fulfilled concerning Himself,--"The

Spirit of the Lord God," He says, "is upon me: because He hath anointed

me to preach good tidings unto the meek He hath sent me to proclaim

liberty to the captives," [124] etc.: for the doing of which things He

therefore declares Himself to be "sent," because the Spirit of God is

upon Him. According to the form of God, all things were made by Him;

[125] according to the form of a servant, He was Himself made of a

woman, made under the law. [126] According to the form of God, He and

the Father are one; [127] according to the form of a servant, He came

not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. [128]

According to the form of God, "As the Father hath life in Himself, so

hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;" [129] according to

the form of a servant, His "soul is sorrowful even unto death;" and, "O

my Father," He says, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

[130] According to the form of God, "He is the True God, and eternal

life;" [131] according to the form of a servant, "He became obedient

unto death, even the death of the cross." [132] --23. According to the

form of God, all things that the Father hath are His, [133] and "All

mine," He says, "are Thine, and Thine are mine;" [134] according to the

form of a servant, the doctrine is not His own, but His that sent Him.

[135]

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[120] John xiv. 28

[121] Phil. ii. 7

[122] Matt. xii. 32

[123] Matt. xii. 28

[124] Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18, 19

[125] John i. 3

[126] Gal. iv. 4

[127] John x. 30

[128] John vi. 38

[129] John v. 26. [In communicating the Divine Essence to the Son, in

eternal generation, the essence is communicated with all its

attributes. Self existence is one of these attributes. In this way, the

Father "gives to the Son to have life in himself," when he makes common

(koinonein), between Himself and the Son, the one Divine

Essence.--W.G.T.S.]

[130] Matt. xxvi. 38, 39

[131] 1 John v. 20

[132] Phil. ii. 8

[133] John xvii. 15

[134] John xvii. 10

[135] John vii. 16

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Chapter 12.--In What Manner the Son is Said Not to Know the Day and the

Hour Which the Father Knows. Some Things Said of Christ According to

the Form of God, Other Things According to the Form of a Servant. In

What Way It is of Christ to Give the Kingdom, in What Not of Christ.

Christ Will Both Judge and Not Judge.

Again, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels

which are in heaven; neither the Son, but the Father." [136] For He is

ignorant of this, as making others ignorant; that is, in that He did

not so know as at that time to show His disciples: [137] as it was said

to Abraham, "Now I know that thou fearest God," [138] that is, now I

have caused thee to know it; because he himself, being tried in that

temptation, became known to himself. For He was certainly going to tell

this same thing to His disciples at the fitting time; speaking of which

yet future as if past, He says, "Henceforth I call you not servants,

but friends; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I

have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father

I have made known unto you;" [139] which He had not yet done, but spoke

as though He had already done it, because He certainly would do it. For

He says to the disciples themselves, "I have yet many things to say

unto you; but ye cannot bear them now." [140] Among which is to be

understood also, "Of the day and hour." For the apostle also says, "I

determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him

crucified;" [141] because he was speaking to those who were not able to

receive higher things concerning the Godhead of Christ. To whom also a

little while after he says, "I could not speak unto you as unto

spiritual, but as unto carnal." [142] He was "ignorant," therefore,

among them of that which they were not able to know from him. And that

only he said that he knew, which it was fitting that they should know

from him. In short, he knew among the perfect what he knew not among

babes; for he there says: "We speak wisdom among them that are

perfect." [143] For a man is said not to know what he hides, after that

kind of speech, after which a ditch is called blind which is hidden.

For the Scriptures do not use any other kind of speech than may be

found in use among men, because they speak to men.

24. According to the form of God, it is said "Before all the hills He

begat me," [144] that is, before all the loftinesses of things created

and, "Before the dawn I begat Thee," [145] that is, before all times

and temporal things: but according to the form of a servant, it is

said, "The Lord created me in the beginning of His ways." [146]

Because, according to the form of God, He said, "I am the truth;" and

according to the form of a servant, "I am the way." [147] For, because

He Himself, being the first-begotten of the dead, [148] made a passage

to the kingdom of God to life eternal for His Church, to which He is so

the Head as to make the body also immortal, therefore He was "created

in the beginning of the ways" of God in His work. For, according to the

form of God, He is the beginning, [149] that also speaketh unto us, in

which "beginning" God created the heaven and the earth; [150] but

according to the form of a servant, "He is a bridegroom coming out of

His chamber." [151] According to the form of God, "He is the first-born

of every creature, and He is before all things and by him all things

consist;" according to the form of a servant, "He is the head of the

body, the Church." [152] According to the form of God, "He is the Lord

of glory." [153] From which it is evident that He Himself glorifies His

saints: for, "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom

He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also

glorified." [154] Of Him accordingly it is said, that He justifieth the

ungodly; [155] of Him it is said, that He is just and a justifier.

[156] If, therefore, He has also glorified those whom He has justified,

He who justifies, Himself also glorifies; who is, as I have said, the

Lord of glory. Yet, according to the form of a servant, He replied to

His disciples, when inquiring about their own glorification: "To sit on

my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but [it shall be

given to them] for whom it is prepared by my Father." [157]

25. But that which is prepared by His Father is prepared also by the

Son Himself, because He and the Father are one. [158] For we have

already shown, by many modes of speech in the divine Scriptures, that,

in this Trinity, what is said of each is also said of all, on account

of the indivisible working of the one and same substance. As He also

says of the Holy Spirit, "If I depart, I will send Him unto you." [159]

He did not say, We will send; but in such way as if the Son only should

send Him, and not the Father; while yet He says in another place,

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you; but

the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my

name, He shall teach you all things." [160] Here again it is so said as

if the Son also would not send Him, but the Father only. As therefore

in these texts, so also where He says, "But for them for whom it is

prepared by my Father," He meant it to be understood that He Himself,

with the Father, prepares seats of glory for those for whom He will.

But some one may say: There, when He spoke of the Holy Spirit, He so

says that He Himself will send Him, as not to deny that the Father will

send Him; and in the other place, He so says that the Father will send

Him, as not to deny that He will do so Himself; but here He expressly

says, "It is not mine to give," and so goes on to say that these things

are prepared by the Father. But this is the very thing which we have

already laid down to be said according to the form of a servant: viz.,

that we are so to understand "It is not mine to give," as if it were

said, This is not in the power of man to give; that so He may be

understood to give it through that wherein He is God equal to the

Father. "It is not mine," He says, "to give;" that is, I do not give

these things by human power, but "to those for whom it is prepared by

my Father;" but then take care you understand also, that if "all things

which the Father hath are mine," [161] then this certainly is mine

also, and I with the Father have prepared these things.

26. For I ask again, in what manner this is said, "If any man hear not

my words, I will not judge him?" [162] For perhaps He has said here, "I

will not judge him," in the same sense as there, "It is not mine to

give." But what follows here? "I came not," He says, "to judge the

world, but to save the world;" and then He adds, "He that rejecteth me,

and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him." Now here we

should understand the Father, unless He had added, "The word that I

have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Well, then,

will neither the Son judge, because He says, "I will not judge him,"

nor the Father, but the word which the Son hath spoken? Nay, but hear

what yet follows: "For I," He says, "have not spoken of myself; but the

Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and

what I should speak; and I know that His commandment is life

everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto

me, so I speak." If therefore the Son judges not, but "the word which

the Son hath spoken;" and the word which the Son hath spoken therefore

judges, because the Son "hath not spoken of Himself, but the Father who

sent Him gave Him a commandment what He should say, and what He should

speak:" then the Father assuredly judges, whose word it is which the

Son hath spoken; and the same Son Himself is the very Word of the

Father. For the commandment of the Father is not one thing, and the

word of the Father another; for He hath called it both a word and a

commandment. Let us see, therefore, whether perchance, when He says, "I

have not spoken of myself," He meant to be understood thus,--I am not

born of myself. For if He speaks the word of the Father, then He speaks

Himself, [163] because He is Himself the Word of the Father. For

ordinarily He says, "The Father gave to me;" by which He means it to be

understood that the Father begat Him: not that He gave anything to Him,

already existing and not possessing it; but that the very meaning of,

To have given that He might have, is, To have begotten that He might

be. For it is not, as with the creature so with the Son of God before

the incarnation and before He took upon Him our flesh, the

Only-begotten by whom all things were made; that He is one thing, and

has another: but He is in such way as to be what He has. And this is

said more plainly, if any one is fit to receive it, in that place where

He says: "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to

the Son to have life in Himself." [164] For He did not give to Him,

already existing and not having life, that He should have life in

Himself; inasmuch as, in that He is, He is life. Therefore "He gave to

the Son to have life in Himself" means, He begat the Son to be

unchangeable life, which is life eternal. Since, therefore, the Word of

God is the Son of God, and the Son of God is "the true God and eternal

life," [165] as John says in his Epistle; so here, what else are we to

acknowledge when the Lord says, "The word which I have spoken, the same

shall judge him at the last day," [166] and calls that very word the

word of the Father and the commandment of the Father, and that very

commandment everlasting life?" "And I know," He says, "that His

commandment is life everlasting."

27. I ask, therefore, how we are to understand, "I will not judge him;

but the Word which I have spoken shall judge him:" which appears from

what follows to be so said, as if He would say, I will not judge; but

the Word of the Father will judge. But the Word of the Father is the

Son of God Himself. Is it to be so understood: I will not judge, but I

will judge? How can this be true, unless in this way: viz., I will not

judge by human power, because I am the Son of man; but I will judge by

the power of the Word, because I am the Son of God? Or if it still

seems contradictory and inconsistent to say, I will not judge, but I

will judge; what shall we say of that place where He says, "My doctrine

is not mine?" How "mine," when "not mine?" For He did not say, This

doctrine is not mine, but "My doctrine is not mine:" that which He

called His own, the same He called not His own. How can this be true,

unless He has called it His own in one relation; not His own, in

another? According to the form of God, His own; according to the form

of a servant, not His own. For when He says, "It is not mine, but His

that sent me," [167] He makes us recur to the Word itself. For the

doctrine of the Father is the Word of the Father, which is the Only

Son. And what, too, does that mean, "He that believeth on me, believeth

not on me?" [168] How believe on Him, yet not believe on Him? How can

so opposite and inconsistent a thing be understood--"Whoso believeth on

me," He says, "believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me;"--unless

you so understand it, Whoso believeth on me believeth not on that which

he sees, lest our hope should be in the creature; but on Him who took

the creature, whereby He might appear to human eyes, and so might

cleanse our hearts by faith, to contemplate Himself as equal to the

Father? So that in turning the attention of believers to the Father,

and saying, "Believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me," He

certainly did not mean Himself to be separated from the Father, that

is, from Him that sent Him; but that men might so believe on Himself,

as they believe on the Father, to whom He is equal. And this He says in

express terms in another place, "Ye believe in God, believe also in

me:" [169] that is, in the same way as you believe in God, so also

believe in me; because I and the Father are One God. As therefore,

here, He has as it were withdrawn the faith of men from Himself, and

transferred it to the Father, by saying, "Believeth not on me, but on

Him that sent me," from whom nevertheless He certainly did not separate

Himself; so also, when He says, "It is not mine to give, but [it shall

be given to them] for whom it is prepared by my Father," it is I think

plain in what relation both are to be taken. For that other also is of

the same kind, "I will not judge;" whereas He Himself shall judge the

quick and dead. [170] But because He will not do so by human power,

therefore, reverting to the Godhead, He raises the hearts of men

upwards; which to lift up, He Himself came down.

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[136] Mark xiii. 32

[137] [The more common explanation of this text in modern exegesis

makes the ignorance to be literal, and referable solely to the human

nature of our Lord, not to his person as a whole. Augustin's

explanation, which Bengel, on Mark xiii. 32, is inclined to favor,

escapes the difficulty that arises from a seeming division of the one

theanthopic person into two portions, one of which knows, and the other

does not. Yet this same difficulty besets the fact of a growth in

knowledge, which is plainly taught in Luke i. 80. In this case, the

increase in wisdom must relate to the humanity alone.--W.G.T.S.]

[138] Gen. xxii. 12

[139] John xv. 15

[140] John xvi. 12

[141] 1 Cor. ii. 2

[142] 1 Cor. iii. 1

[143] 1 Cor. ii. 6

[144] Prov. viii. 25

[145] Ps. cx. 3. Vulgate.

[146] Prov. viii. 22

[147] John xiv. 6

[148] Apoc. i. 5

[149] John viii. 25

[150] Gen. i. 1

[151] Ps. xix. 5

[152] Col. i. 15, 17, 18

[153] 1 Cor. ii. 8

[154] Rom. viii. 30

[155] Rom. iv. 5

[156] Rom. iii. 26

[157] Matt. xx. 23

[158] John x. 30

[159] John xvi. 7

[160] John xiv. 25, 26

[161] John xvi. 15

[162] John xii. 47-50

[163] Seipsum loquitur

[164] John v. 26

[165] 1 John v. 20

[166] John xii. 48

[167] John vii. 16

[168] John xii. 44

[169] John xiv. 1

[170] 2 Tim. iv. 1

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Chapter 13.--Diverse Things are Spoken Concerning the Same Christ, on

Account of the Diverse Natures of the One Hypostasis [Theanthropic

Person]. Why It is Said that the Father Will Not Judge, But Has Given

Judgment to the Son.

28. Yet unless the very same were the Son of man on account of the form

of a servant which He took, who is the Son of God on account of the

form of God in which He is; Paul the apostle would not say of the

princes of this world, "For had they known it, they would not have

crucified the Lord of glory." [171] For He was crucified after the form

of a servant, and yet "the Lord of glory" was crucified. For that

"taking" was such as to make God man, and man God. Yet what is said on

account of what, and what according to what, the thoughtful, diligent,

and pious reader discerns for himself, the Lord being his helper. For

instance, we have said that He glorifies His own, as being God, and

certainly then as being the Lord of glory; and yet the Lord of glory

was crucified, because even God is rightly said to have been crucified,

not after the power of the divinity, but after the weakness of the

flesh: [172] just as we say, that He judges as God, that is, by divine

power, not by human; and yet the man Himself will judge, just as the

Lord of glory was crucified: for so He expressly says, "When the Son of

man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, and

before Him shall be gathered all nations;" [173] and the rest that is

foretold of the future judgment in that place even to the last

sentence. And the Jews, inasmuch as they will be punished in that

judgment for persisting in their wickedness, as it is elsewhere

written, "shall look upon Him whom they have pierced." [174] For

whereas both good and bad shall see the Judge of the quick and dead,

without doubt the bad will not be able to see Him, except after the

form in which He is the Son of man; but yet in the glory wherein He

will judge, not in the lowliness wherein He was judged. But the ungodly

without doubt will not see that form of God in which He is equal to the

Father. For they are not pure in heart; and "Blessed are the pure in

heart: for they shall see God." [175] And that sight is face to face,

[176] the very sight that is promised as the highest reward to the

just, and which will then take place when He "shall have delivered up

the kingdom to God, even the Father;" and in this "kingdom" He means

the sight of His own form also to be understood, the whole creature

being made subject to God, including that wherein the Son of God was

made the Son of man. Because, according to this creature, "The Son also

Himself shall be subject unto Him, that put all things under Him, that

God may be all in all." [177] Otherwise if the Son of God, judging in

the form in which He is equal to the Father, shall appear when He

judges to the ungodly also; what becomes of that which He promises, as

some great thing, to him who loves Him, saying, "And I will love him,

and will manifest myself to him?" [178] Wherefore He will judge as the

Son of man, yet not by human power, but by that whereby He is the Son

of God; and on the other hand, He will judge as the Son of God, yet not

appearing in that [unincarnate] form in which He is God equal to the

Father, but in that [incarnate form] in which He is the Son of man.

[179]

29. Therefore both ways of speaking may be used; the Son of man will

judge, and, the Son of man will not judge: since the Son of man will

judge, that the text may be true which says, "When the Son of man shall

come, then before Him shall be gathered all nations;" and the Son of

man will not judge, that the text may be true which says, "I will not

judge him;" [180] and, "I seek not mine own glory: there is One that

seeketh and judgeth." [181] For in respect to this, that in the

judgment, not the form of God, but the form of the Son of man will

appear, the Father Himself will not judge; for according to this it is

said, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment

unto the Son." Whether this is said after that mode of speech which we

have mentioned above, where it is said, "So hath He given to the Son to

have life in Himself," [182] that it should signify that so He begat

the Son; or, whether after that of which the apostle speaks, saying,

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which

is above every name:"--(For this is said of the Son of man, in respect

to whom the Son of God was raised from the dead; since He, being in the

form of God equal to the Father, wherefrom He "emptied" Himself by

taking the form of a servant, both acts and suffers, and receives, in

that same form of a servant, what the apostle goes on to mention: "He

humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the

cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name

which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should

bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the

earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

in the Glory of God the Father:" [183] --whether then the words, "He

hath committed all judgment unto the Son," are said according to this

or that mode of speech; it sufficiently appears from this place, that

if they were said according to that sense in which it is said, "He hath

given to the Son to have life in Himself," it certainly would not be

said, "The Father judgeth no man." For in respect to this, that the

Father hath begotten the Son equal to Himself, He judges with Him.

Therefore it is in respect to this that it is said, that in the

judgment, not the form of God, but the form of the Son of man will

appear. Not that He will not judge, who hath committed all judgment

unto the Son, since the Son saith of Him, "There is One that seeketh

and judgeth:" but it is so said, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath

committed all judgment unto the Son;" as if it were said, No one will

see the Father in the judgment of the quick and the dead, but all will

see the Son: because He is also the Son of man, so that He can be seen

even by the ungodly, since they too shall see Him whom they have

pierced.

30. Lest, however, we may seem to conjecture this rather than to prove

it clearly, let us produce a certain and plain sentence of the Lord

Himself, by which we may show that this was the cause why He said, "The

Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,"

viz. because He will appear as Judge in the form of the Son of man,

which is not the form of the Father, but of the Son; nor yet that form

of the Son in which He is equal to the Father, but that in which He is

less than the Father; in order that, in the judgment, He may be visible

both to the good and to the bad. For a little while after He says,

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth

on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into

condemnation; but shall pass [184] from death unto life." Now this life

eternal is that sight which does not belong to the bad. Then follows,

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when

the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear

shall live." [185] And this is proper to the godly, who so hear of His

incarnation, as to believe that He is the Son of God, that is, who so

receive Him, as made for their sakes less than the Father, in the form

of a servant, that they believe Him equal to the Father, in the form of

God. And thereupon He continues, enforcing this very point, "For as the

Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life

in Himself." And then He comes to the sight of His own glory, in which

He shall come to judgment; which sight will be common to the ungodly

and to the just. For He goes on to say, "And hath given Him authority

to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." [186] I think

nothing can be more clear. For inasmuch as the Son of God is equal to

the Father, He does not receive this power of executing judgment, but

He has it with the Father in secret; but He receives it, so that the

good and the bad may see Him judging, inasmuch as He is the Son of man.

Since the sight of the Son of man will be shown to the bad also: for

the sight of the form of God will not be shown except to the pure in

heart, for they shall see God; that is, to the godly only, to whose

love He promises this very thing, that He will show Himself to them.

And see, accordingly, what follows: "Marvel not at this," He says. Why

does He forbid us to marvel, unless it be that, in truth, every one

marvels who does not understand, that therefore He said the Father gave

Him power also to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man;

whereas, it might rather have been anticipated that He would say, since

He is the Son of God? But because the wicked are not able to see the

Son of God as He is in the form of God equal to the Father, but yet it

is necessary that both the just and the wicked should see the Judge of

the quick and dead, when they will be judged in His presence; "Marvel

not at this," He says, "for the hour is coming, in the which all that

are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that

have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done

evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." [187] For this purpose,

then, it was necessary that He should therefore receive that power,

because He is the Son of man, in order that all in rising again might

see Him in the form in which He can be seen by all, but by some to

damnation, by others to life eternal. And what is life eternal, unless

that sight which is not granted to the ungodly? "That they might know

Thee," He says, "the One true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast

sent." [188] And how are they to know Jesus Christ Himself also, unless

as the One true God, who will show Himself to them; not as He will show

Himself, in the form of the Son of man, to those also that shall be

punished? [189]

31. He is "good," according to that sight, according to which God

appears to the pure in heart; for "truly God is good unto Israel even

to such as are of a clean heart." [190] But when the wicked shall see

the Judge, He will not seem good to them; because they will not rejoice

in their heart to see Him, but all "kindreds of the earth shall then

wail because of Him," [191] namely, as being reckoned in the number of

all the wicked and unbelievers. On this account also He replied to him,

who had called Him Good Master, when seeking advice of Him how he might

attain eternal life, "Why askest thou me about good? [192] there is

none good but One, that is, God." [193] And yet the Lord Himself, in

another place, calls man good: "A good man," He says, "out of the good

treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out

of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things." [194]

But because that man was seeking eternal life, and eternal life

consists in that contemplation in which God is seen, not for

punishment, but for everlasting joy; and because he did not understand

with whom he was speaking, and thought Him to be only the Son of man:

[195] Why, He says, askest thou me about good? that is, with respect to

that form which thou seest, why askest thou about good, and callest me,

according to what thou seest, Good Master? This is the form of the Son

of man, the form which has been taken, the form that will appear in

judgment, not only to the righteous, but also to the ungodly; and the

sight of this form will not be for good to those who are wicked. But

there is a sight of that form of mine, in which when I was, I thought

it not robbery to be equal with God: but in order to take this form I

emptied myself. [196] That one God, therefore, the Father and the Son

and the Holy Spirit, who will not appear, except for joy which cannot

be taken away from the just; for which future joy he sighs, who says,

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I

may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold

the beauty of the Lord:" [197] that one God, therefore, Himself, I say,

is alone good, for this reason, that no one sees Him for sorrow and

wailing, but only for salvation and true joy. If you understand me

after this latter form, then I am good; but if according to that former

only, then why askest thou me about good? If thou art among those who

"shall look upon Him whom they have pierced," [198] that very sight

itself will be evil to them, because it will be penal. That after this

meaning, then, the Lord said, "Why askest thou me about good? there is

none good but One, that is, God," is probable upon those proofs which I

have alleged, because that sight of God, whereby we shall contemplate

the substance of God unchangeable and invisible to human eyes (which is

promised to the saints alone; which the Apostle Paul speaks of, as

"face to face;" [199] and of which the Apostle John says, "We shall be

like Him, for we shall see Him as He is;" [200] and of which it is

said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I may behold the

beauty of the Lord," and of which the Lord Himself says, "I will both

love him, and will manifest myself to him;" [201] and on account of

which alone we cleanse our hearts by faith, that we may be those "pure

in heart who are blessed for they shall see God:" [202] and whatever

else is spoken of that sight: which whosoever turns the eye of love to

seek it, may find most copiously scattered through all the

Scriptures),--that sight alone, I say, is our chief good, for the

attaining of which we are directed to do whatever we do aright. But

that sight of the Son of man which is foretold, when all nations shall

be gathered before Him, and shall say to Him, "Lord, when saw we Thee

an hungered, or thirsty, etc.?" will neither be a good to the ungodly,

who shall be sent into everlasting fire, nor the chief good to the

righteous. For He still goes on to call these to the kingdom which has

been prepared for them from the foundation of the world. For, as He

will say to those, "Depart into everlasting fire;" so to these, "Come,

ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." And as

those will go into everlasting burning; so the righteous will go into

life eternal. But what is life eternal, except "that they may know

Thee," He says, "the One true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast

sent?" [203] but know Him now in that glory of which He says to the

Father, "Which I had with Thee before the world was." [204] For then He

will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, [205] that the

good servant may enter into the joy of his Lord, [206] and that He may

hide those whom God keeps in the hiding of His countenance from the

confusion of men, namely, of those men who shall then be confounded by

hearing this sentence; of which evil hearing "the righteous man shall

not be afraid" [207] if only he be kept in "the tabernacle," that is,

in the true faith of the Catholic Church, from "the strife of tongues,"

[208] that is, from the sophistries of heretics. But if there is any

other explanation of the words of the Lord, where He says, "Why asketh

thou me about good? there is none good, but One, that is, God;"

provided only that the substance of the Father be not therefore

believed to be of greater goodness than that of the Son, according to

which He is the Word by whom all things were made; and if there is

nothing in it abhorrent from sound doctrine; let us securely use it,

and not one explanation only, but as many as we are able to find. For

so much the more powerfully are the heretics proved wrong, the more

outlets are open for avoiding their snares. But let us now start

afresh, and address ourselves to the consideration of that which still

remains.

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[171] 1 Cor. ii. 8

[172] 2 Cor. xiii. 4

[173] Matt. xxv. 31, 32

[174] Zech. xii. 10

[175] Matt. v. 8

[176] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[177] 1 Cor. xv. 24-28

[178] John xiv. 21

[179] [Augustin in this discussion, sometimes employs the phrase "Son

of man" to denote the human nature of Christ, in distinction from the

divine. But in Scripture and in trinitarian theology generally, this

phrase properly denotes the whole theanthropic person under a human

title--just as "man", (1 Tim. ii. 5), "last Adam" (1 Cor. xv. 45), and

"second man" (1 Cor. xv. 47), denote not the human nature, but the

whole divine-human person under a human title. Strictly used, the

phrase "Son of man" does not designate the difference between the

divine and human natures in the theanthropos, but between the person of

the un-incarnate and that of the incarnate Logos. Augustin's meaning

is, that the Son of God will judge men at the last day, not in his

original "form of God," but as this is united with human nature--as the

Son of man.--W.G.T.S.]

[180] John xii. 47

[181] John viii. 50

[182] John v. 22, 26

[183] Phil. ii. 8-11

[184] Transiit in Vulg.; and so in the Greek.

[185] John v. 24, 25

[186] John v. 25, 26

[187] John v. 22-29

[188] John xvii. 3

[189] [Augustin here seems to teach that the phenomenal appearance of

Christ to the redeemed in heaven will be different from that to all men

in the day of judgment. He says that he will show himself to the former

"in the form of God;" to the latter, "in the form of the Son of man."

But, surely, it is one and the same God-man who sits on the judgment

throne, and the heavenly throne. His appearance must be the same in

both instances: namely, that of God incarnate. The effect of his

phenomenal appearance upon the believer will, indeed, be very different

from that upon the unbeliever. For the wicked, this vision of God

incarnate will be one of terror; for the redeemed one of

joy.--W.G.T.S.]

[190] Ps. lxxiii. 1

[191] Apoc. i. 7

[192] [Augustin's reading of this text is that of the uncials; and in

that form which omits the article with agathou.--W.G.T.S.]

[193] Matt. xix. 17

[194] Matt. xii. 35

[195] [That is, a mere man. Augustin here, as in some other places,

employs the phrase "Son of man" to denote the human nature by

itself--not the divine and human natures united in one person, and

designated by this human title. The latter is the Scripture usage. As

"Immanuel" does not properly denote the divine nature, but the union of

divinity and humanity, so "Son of man" does not properly denote the

human nature, but the union of divinity and humanity.--W.G.T.S.]

[196] Phil. ii. 6, 7

[197] Ps. xxvii. 4

[198] Zech. xii. 10

[199] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[200] 1 John iii. 2

[201] John xiv. 21

[202] Matt. v. 8

[203] Matt. xxv. 37, 41, 34

[204] John xvii. 3-5

[205] 1 Cor. xv. 24

[206] Matt. xxv. 21, 23

[207] Ps. cxii. 7

[208] Ps. xxxi. 21

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Book II.

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Augustin pursues his defense of the equality of the Trinity; and in

treating of the sending of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and of the

various appearances of God, demonstrates that He who is sent is not

therefore less than He who sends, because the one has sent, the other

has been sent; but that the Trinity, being in all things equal, and

alike in its own nature unchangeable and invisible and omnipresent,

works indivisibly in each sending or appearance.

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Preface.

When men seek to know God, and bend their minds according to the

capacity of human weakness to the understanding of the Trinity;

learning, as they must, by experience, the wearisome difficulties of

the task, whether from the sight itself of the mind striving to gaze

upon light unapproachable, or, indeed, from the manifold and various

modes of speech employed in the sacred writings (wherein, as it seems

to me, the mind is nothing else but roughly exercised, in order that it

may find sweetness when glorified by the grace of Christ);--such men, I

say, when they have dispelled every ambiguity, and arrived at something

certain, ought of all others most easily to make allowance for those

who err in the investigation of so deep a secret. But there are two

things most hard to bear with, in the case of those who are in error:

hasty assumption before the truth is made plain; and, when it has been

made plain, defence of the falsehood thus hastily assumed. From which

two faults, inimical as they are to the finding out of the truth, and

to the handling of the divine and sacred books, should God, as I pray

and hope, defend and protect me with the shield of His good will, [209]

and with the grace of His mercy, I will not be slow to search out the

substance of God, whether through His Scripture or through the

creature. For both of these are set forth for our contemplation to this

end, that He may Himself be sought, and Himself be loved, who inspired

the one, and created the other. Nor shall I be afraid of giving my

opinion, in which I shall more desire to be examined by the upright,

than fear to be carped at by the perverse. For charity, most excellent

and unassuming, gratefully accepts the dovelike eye; but for the dog's

tooth nothing remains, save either to shun it by the most cautious

humility, or to blunt it by the most solid truth; and far rather would

I be censured by any one whatsoever, than be praised by either the

erring or the flatterer. For the lover of truth need fear no one's

censure. For he that censures, must needs be either enemy or friend.

And if an enemy reviles, he must be borne with: but a friend, if he

errs, must be taught; if he teaches, listened to. But if one who errs

praises you, he confirms your error; if one who flatters, he seduces

you into error. "Let the righteous," therefore, "smite me, it shall be

a kindness; and let him reprove me; but the oil of the sinner shall not

anoint my head." [210]

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[209] Ps. v. 12

[210] Ps. cxli. 5

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Chapter 1.--There is a Double Rule for Understanding the Scriptural

Modes of Speech Concerning the Son of God. These Modes of Speech are of

a Threefold Kind.

2. Wherefore, although we hold most firmly, concerning our Lord Jesus

Christ, what may be called the canonical rule, as it is both

disseminated through the Scriptures, and has been demonstrated by

learned and Catholic handlers of the same Scriptures, namely, that the

Son of God is both understood to be equal to the Father according to

the form of God in which He is, and less than the Father according to

the form of a servant which He took; [211] in which form He was found

to be not only less than the Father, but also less than the Holy

Spirit; and not only so, but less even than Himself,--not than Himself

who was, but than Himself who is; because, by taking the form of a

servant, He did not lose the form of God, as the testimonies of the

Scriptures taught us, to which we have referred in the former book: yet

there are some things in the sacred text so put as to leave it

ambiguous to which rule they are rather to be referred; whether to that

by which we understand the Son as less, in that He has taken upon Him

the creature, or to that by which we understand that the Son is not

indeed less than, but equal to the Father, but yet that He is from Him,

God of God, Light of light. For we call the Son God of God; but the

Father, God only; not of God. Whence it is plain that the Son has

another of whom He is, and to whom He is Son; but that the Father has

not a Son of whom He is, but only to whom He is father. For every son

is what he is, of his father, and is son to his father; but no father

is what he is, of his son, but is father to his son. [212]

3. Some things, then, are so put in the Scriptures concerning the

Father and the Son, as to intimate the unity and equality of their

substance; as, for instance, "I and the Father are one;" [213] and,

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with

God;" [214] and whatever other texts there are of the kind. And some,

again, are so put that they show the Son as less on account of the form

of a servant, that is, of His having taken upon Him the creature of a

changeable and human substance; as, for instance, that which says, "For

my Father is greater than I;" [215] and, "The Father judgeth no man,

but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." For a little after he

goes on to say, "And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also,

because He is the Son of man." And further, some are so put, as to show

Him at that time neither as less nor as equal, but only to intimate

that He is of the Father; as, for instance, that which says, "For as

the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have

life in Himself;" and that other: "The Son can do nothing of Himself,

but what He seeth the Father do." [216] For if we shall take this to be

therefore so said, because the Son is less in the form taken from the

creature, it will follow that the Father must have walked on the water,

or opened the eyes with clay and spittle of some other one born blind,

and have done the other things which the Son appearing in the flesh did

among men, before the Son did them; [217] in order that He might be

able to do those things, who said that the Son was not able to do

anything of Himself, except what He hath seen the Father do. Yet who,

even though he were mad, would think this? It remains, therefore, that

these texts are so expressed, because the life of the Son is

unchangeable as that of the Father is, and yet He is of the Father; and

the working of the Father and of the Son is indivisible, and yet so to

work is given to the Son from Him of whom He Himself is, that is, from

the Father; and the Son so sees the Father, as that He is the Son in

the very seeing Him. For to be of the Father, that is, to be born of

the Father, is to Him nothing else than to see the Father; and to see

Him working, is nothing else than to work with Him: but therefore not

from Himself, because He is not from Himself. And, therefore, those

things which "He sees the Father do, these also doeth the Son

likewise," because He is of the Father. For He neither does other

things in like manner, as a painter paints other pictures, in the same

way as he sees others to have been painted by another man; nor the same

things in a different manner, as the body expresses the same letters,

which the mind has thought; but "whatsoever things," saith He, "the

Father doeth, these same things also doeth the Son likewise." [218] He

has said both "these same things," and "likewise;" and hence the

working of both the Father and the Son is indivisible and equal, but it

is from the Father to the Son. Therefore the Son cannot do anything of

Himself, except what He seeth the Father do. From this rule, then,

whereby the Scriptures so speak as to mean, not to set forth one as

less than another, but only to show which is of which, some have drawn

this meaning, as if the Son were said to be less. And some among

ourselves who are more unlearned and least instructed in these things,

endeavoring to take these texts according to the form of a servant, and

so misinterpreting them, are troubled. And to prevent this, the rule in

question is to be observed whereby the Son is not less, but it is

simply intimated that He is of the Father, in which words not His

inequality but His birth is declared.

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[211] Phil. ii. 6, 7

[212] [Augustin here brings to view both the trinitarian and the

theanthropic or mediatorial subordination. The former is the status of

Sonship. God the Son is God of God. Sonship as a relation is

subordinate to paternity. But a son must be of the same grade of being,

and of the same nature with his father. A human son and a human father

are alike and equally human. And a Divine Son and a Divine father are

alike and equally divine. The theanthropic or mediatorial subordination

is the status of humiliation, by reason of the incarnation. In the

words of Augustin, it is "that by which we understand the Son as less,

in that he has taken upon Him the creature." The subordination in this

case is that of voluntary condescension, for the purpose of redeeming

sinful man.--W.G.T.S.]

[213] John x. 30

[214] Phil. ii. 6

[215] John xiv. 28

[216] John v. 22, 27, 26, 19

[217] Matt. xiv. 26, and John ix. 6, 7

[218] John v. 19

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Chapter 2.--That Some Ways of Speaking Concerning the Son are to Be

Understood According to Either Rule.

4. There are, then, some things in the sacred books, as I began by

saying, so put, that it is doubtful to which they are to be referred:

whether to that rule whereby the Son is less on account of His having

taken the creature; or whether to that whereby it is intimated that

although equal, yet He is of the Father. And in my opinion, if this is

in such way doubtful, that which it really is can neither be explained

nor discerned, then such passages may without danger be understood

according to either rule, as that, for instance, "My doctrine is not

mine, but His that sent me." [219] For this may both be taken according

to the form of a servant, as we have already treated it in the former

book; [220] or according to the form of God, in which He is in such way

equal to the Father, that He is yet of the Father. For according to the

form of God, as the Son is not one and His life another, but the life

itself is the Son; so the Son is not one and His doctrine another, but

the doctrine itself is the Son. And hence, as the text, "He hath given

life to the Son," is no otherwise to be understood than, He hath

begotten the Son, who is life; so also when it is said, He hath given

doctrine to the Son, it may be rightly understood to mean, He hath

begotten the Son, who is doctrine so that, when it is said, "My

doctrine is not mine, but His who sent me," it is so to be understood

as if it were, I am not from myself, but from Him who sent me.

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[219] John vii. 16

[220] See above, Book I. c. 12.

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Chapter 3.--Some Things Concerning the Holy Spirit are to Be Understood

According to the One Rule Only.

5. For even of the Holy Spirit, of whom it is not said, "He emptied

Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant;" yet the Lord Himself

says, "Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you

into all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He

shall hear that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He

shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto

you." And except He had immediately gone on to say after this, "All

things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall

take of mine, and shall show it unto you;" [221] it might, perhaps,

have been believed that the Holy Spirit was so born of Christ, as

Christ is of the Father. Since He had said of Himself, "My doctrine is

not mine, but His that sent me;" but of the Holy Spirit, "For He shall

not speak of Himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall He

speak;" and, "For He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto

you." But because He has rendered the reason why He said, "He shall

receive of mine" (for He says, "All things that the Father hath are

mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine"); it remains that

the Holy Spirit be understood to have of that which is the Father's, as

the Son also hath. And how can this be, unless according to that which

we have said above, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send

unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth

from the Father, He shall testify of me"? [222] He is said, therefore,

not to speak of Himself, in that He proceedeth from the Father; and as

it does not follow that the Son is less because He said, "The Son can

do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do" (for He has not

said this according to the form of a servant, but according to the form

of God, as we have already shown, and these words do not set Him forth

as less than, but as of the Father), so it is not brought to pass that

the Holy Spirit is less, because it is said of Him, "For He shall not

speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak;"

for the words belong to Him as proceeding from the Father. But whereas

both the Son is of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the

Father, why both are not called sons, and both not said to be begotten,

but the former is called the one only-begotten Son, and the latter,

viz. the Holy Spirit, neither son nor begotten, because if begotten,

then certainly a son, we will discuss in another place, if God shall

grant, and so far as He shall grant. [223]

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[221] John xvi. 13-15

[222] John xv. 26

[223] Below, Bk. XV. c. 25.

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Chapter 4.--The Glorification of the Son by the Father Does Not Prove

Inequality.

6. But here also let them wake up if they can, who have thought this,

too, to be a testimony on their side, to show that the Father is

greater than the Son, because the Son hath said, "Father, glorify me."

Why, the Holy Spirit also glorifies Him. Pray, is the Spirit, too,

greater than He? Moreover, if on that account the Holy Spirit glorifies

the Son, because He shall receive of that which is the Son's, and shall

therefore receive of that which is the Son's because all things that

the Father has are the Son's also; it is evident that when the Holy

Spirit glorifies the Son, the Father glorifies the Son. Whence it may

be perceived that all things that the Father hath are not only of the

Son, but also of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is able to

glorify the Son, whom the Father glorifies. But if he who glorifies is

greater than he whom he glorifies, let them allow that those are equal

who mutually glorify each other. But it is written, also, that the Son

glorifies the Father; for He says, "I have glorified Thee on the

earth." [224] Truly let them beware lest the Holy Spirit be thought

greater than both, because He glorifies the Son whom the Father

glorifies, while it is not written that He Himself is glorified either

by the Father or by the Son.

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[224] John xvii. 1, 4

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Chapter 5.--The Son and Holy Spirit are Not Therefore Less Because

Sent. The Son is Sent Also by Himself. Of the Sending of the Holy

Spirit.

7. But being proved wrong so far, men betake themselves to saying, that

he who sends is greater than he who is sent: therefore the Father is

greater than the Son, because the Son continually speaks of Himself as

being sent by the Father; and the Father is also greater than the Holy

Spirit, because Jesus has said of the Spirit, "Whom the Father will

send in my name;" [225] and the Holy Spirit is less than both, because

both the Father sends Him, as we have said, and the Son, when He says,

"But if I depart, I will send Him unto you." I first ask, then, in this

inquiry, whence and whither the Son was sent. "I," He says, "came forth

from the Father, and am come into the world." [226] Therefore, to be

sent, is to come forth forth from the Father, and to come into the

world. What, then, is that which the same evangelist says concerning

Him, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world

knew Him not;" and then he adds, "He came unto His own?" [227]

Certainly He was sent thither, whither He came; but if He was sent into

the world, because He came forth from the Father, then He both came

into the world and was in the world. He was sent therefore thither,

where He already was. For consider that, too, which is written in the

prophet, that God said, "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" [228] If this

is said of the Son (for some will have it understood that the Son

Himself spoke either by the prophets or in the prophets), whither was

He sent except to the place where He already was? For He who says, "I

fill heaven and earth," was everywhere. But if it is said of the

Father, where could He be without His own word and without His own

wisdom, which "reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly

ordereth all things?" [229] But He cannot be anywhere without His own

Spirit. Therefore, if God is everywhere, His Spirit also is everywhere.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit, too, was sent thither, where He already

was. For he, too, who finds no place to which he might go from the

presence of God, and who says, "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art

there; if I shall go down into hell, behold, Thou art there;" wishing

it to be understood that God is present everywhere, named in the

previous verse His Spirit; for He says," Whither shall I go from Thy

Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" [230]

8. For this reason, then, if both the Son and the Holy Spirit are sent

thither where they were, we must inquire, how that sending, whether of

the Son or of the Holy Spirit, is to be understood; for of the Father

alone, we nowhere read that He is sent. Now, of the Son, the apostle

writes thus: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent

forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that

were under the law." [231] "He sent," he says, "His Son, made of a

woman." And by this term, woman, [232] what Catholic does not know that

he did not wish to signify the privation of virginity; but, according

to a Hebraism, the difference of sex? When, therefore, he says, "God

sent His Son, made of a woman," he sufficiently shows that the Son was

"sent" in this very way, in that He was "made of a woman." Therefore,

in that He was born of God, He was in the world; but in that He was

born of Mary, He was sent and came into the world. Moreover, He could

not be sent by the Father without the Holy Spirit, not only because the

Father, when He sent Him, that is, when He made Him of a woman, is

certainly understood not to have so made Him without His own Spirit;

but also because it is most plainly and expressly said in the Gospel in

answer to the Virgin Mary, when she asked of the angel, "How shall this

be?" "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest

shall overshadow thee." [233] And Matthew says, "She was found with

child of the Holy Ghost." [234] Although, too, in the prophet Isaiah,

Christ Himself is understood to say of His own future advent, "And now

the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me." [235]

9. Perhaps some one may wish to drive us to say, that the Son is sent

also by Himself, because the conception and childbirth of Mary is the

working of the Trinity, by whose act of creating all things are

created. And how, he will go on to say, has the Father sent Him, if He

sent Himself? To whom I answer first, by asking him to tell me, if he

can, in what manner the Father hath sanctified Him, if He hath

sanctified Himself? For the same Lord says both; "Say ye of Him," He

says, "whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou

blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God;" [236] while in

another place He says, "And for their sake I sanctify myself." [237] I

ask, also, in what manner the Father delivered Him, if He delivered

Himself? For the Apostle Paul says both: "Who," he says, "spared not

His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all;" [238] while elsewhere he

says of the Saviour Himself, "Who loved me, and delivered Himself for

me." [239] He will reply, I suppose, if he has a right sense in these

things, Because the will of the Father and the Son is one, and their

working indivisible. In like manner, then, let him understand the

incarnation and nativity of the Virgin, wherein the Son is understood

as sent, to have been wrought by one and the same operation of the

Father and of the Son indivisibly; the Holy Spirit certainly not being

thence excluded, of whom it is expressly said, "She was found with

child by the Holy Ghost." For perhaps our meaning will be more plainly

unfolded, if we ask in what manner God sent His Son. He commanded that

He should come, and He, complying with the commandment, came. Did He

then request, or did He only suggest? But whichever of these it was,

certainly it was done by a word, and the Word of God is the Son of God

Himself. Wherefore, since the Father sent Him by a word, His being sent

was the work of both the Father and His Word; therefore the same Son

was sent by the Father and the Son, because the Son Himself is the Word

of the Father. For who would embrace so impious an opinion as to think

the Father to have uttered a word in time, in order that the eternal

Son might thereby be sent and might appear in the flesh in the fullness

of time? But assuredly it was in that Word of God itself which was in

the beginning with God and was God, namely, in the wisdom itself of

God, apart from time, at what time that wisdom must needs appear in the

flesh. Therefore, since without any commencement of time, the Word was

in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, it

was in the Word itself without any time, at what time the Word was to

be made flesh and dwell among us. [240] And when this fullness of time

had come, "God sent His Son, made of a woman," [241] that is, made in

time, that the Incarnate Word might appear to men; while it was in that

Word Himself, apart from time, at what time this was to be done; for

the order of times is in the eternal wisdom of God without time. Since,

then, that the Son should appear in the flesh was wrought by both the

Father and the Son, it is fitly said that He who appeared in that flesh

was sent, and that He who did not appear in it, sent Him; because those

things which are transacted outwardly before the bodily eyes have their

existence from the inward structure (apparatu) of the spiritual nature,

and on that account are fitly said to be sent. Further, that form of

man which He took is the person of the Son, not also of the Father; on

which account the invisible Father, together with the Son, who with the

Father is invisible, is said to have sent the same Son by making Him

visible. But if He became visible in such way as to cease to be

invisible with the Father, that is, if the substance of the invisible

Word were turned by a change and transition into a visible creature,

then the Son would be so understood to be sent by the Father, that He

would be found to be only sent; not also, with the Father, sending. But

since He so took the form of a servant, as that the unchangeable form

of God remained, it is clear that that which became apparent in the Son

was done by the Father and the Son not being apparent; that is, that by

the invisible Father, with the invisible Son, the same Son Himself was

sent so as to be visible. Why, therefore, does He say, "Neither came I

of myself?" This, we may now say, is said according to the form of a

servant, in the same way as it is said, "I judge no man." [242]

10. If, therefore, He is said to be sent, in so far as He appeared

outwardly in the bodily creature, who inwardly in His spiritual nature

is always hidden from the eyes of mortals, it is now easy to understand

also of the Holy Spirit why He too is said to be sent. For in due time

a certain outward appearance of the creature was wrought, wherein the

Holy Spirit might be visibly shown; whether when He descended upon the

Lord Himself in a bodily shape as a dove, [243] or when, ten days

having past since His ascension, on the day of Pentecost a sound came

suddenly from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and cloven tongues

like as of fire were seen upon them, and it sat upon each of them.

[244] This operation, visibly exhibited, and presented to mortal eyes,

is called the sending of the Holy Spirit; not that His very substance

appeared, in which He himself also is invisible and unchangeable, like

the Father and the Son, but that the hearts of men, touched by things

seen outwardly, might be turned from the manifestation in time of Him

as coming to His hidden eternity as ever present.

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[225] John xiv. 26

[226] John xvi. 7, 28

[227] John i. 10, 11

[228] Jer. xxiii. 24

[229] Wisd. viii. 1

[230] Ps. cxxxix. 8, 7

[231] Gal. iv. 4, 5

[232] Mulier

[233] Luke i. 34, 35

[234] Matt. i. 18

[235] Isa. xlviii. 16

[236] John x. 36

[237] John xvii. 19

[238] Rom. viii. 32

[239] Gal. ii. 20

[240] John i. 1, 2, 14

[241] Gal. iv. 4

[242] John viii. 42, 15

[243] Matt. iii. 16

[244] Acts ii. 2-4

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Chapter 6.--The Creature is Not So Taken by the Holy Spirit as Flesh is

by the Word.

11. It is, then, for this reason nowhere written, that the Father is

greater than the Holy Spirit, or that the Holy Spirit is less than God

the Father, because the creature in which the Holy Spirit was to appear

was not taken in the same way as the Son of man was taken, as the form

in which the person of the Word of God Himself should be set forth not

that He might possess the word of God, as other holy and wise men have

possessed it, but "above His fellows;" [245] not certainly that He

possessed the word more than they, so as to be of more surpassing

wisdom than the rest were, but that He was the very Word Himself. For

the word in the flesh is one thing, and the Word made flesh is another;

i.e. the word in man is one thing, the Word that is man is another. For

flesh is put for man, where it is said, "The Word was made flesh;"

[246] and again, "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." [247]

For it does not mean flesh without soul and without mind; but "all

flesh," is the same as if it were said, every man. The creature, then,

in which the Holy Spirit should appear, was not so taken, as that flesh

and human form were taken, of the Virgin Mary. For the Spirit did not

beatify the dove, or the wind, or the fire, and join them for ever to

Himself and to His person in unity and "fashion." [248] Nor, again, is

the nature of the Holy Spirit mutable and changeable; so that these

things were not made of the creature, but He himself was turned and

changed first into one and then into another, as water is changed into

ice. But these things appeared at the seasons at which they ought to

have appeared, the creature serving the Creator, and being changed and

converted at the command of Him who remains immutably in Himself, in

order to signify and manifest Him in such way as it was fit He should

be signified and manifested to mortal men. Accordingly, although that

dove is called the Spirit; [249] and in speaking of that fire, "There

appeared unto them," he says, "cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it

sat upon each of them; and they began to speak with other tongues, as

the Spirit gave them utterance; [250] in order to show that the Spirit

was manifested by that fire, as by the dove; yet we cannot call the

Holy Spirit both God and a dove, or both God and fire, in the same way

as we call the Son both God and man; nor as we call the Son the Lamb of

God; which not only John the Baptist says, "Behold the Lamb of God,"

[251] but also John the Evangelist sees the Lamb slain in the

Apocalypse. [252] For that prophetic vision was not shown to bodily

eyes through bodily forms, but in the spirit through spiritual images

of bodily things. But whosoever saw that dove and that fire, saw them

with their eyes. Although it may perhaps be disputed concerning the

fire, whether it was seen by the eyes or in the spirit, on account of

the form of the sentence. For the text does not say, They saw cloven

tongues like fire, but, "There appeared to them." But we are not wont

to say with the same meaning, It appeared to me; as we say, I saw. And

in those spiritual visions of corporeal images the usual expressions

are, both, It appeared to me; and, I saw: but in those things which are

shown to the eyes through express corporeal forms, the common

expression is not, It appeared to me; but, I saw. There may, therefore,

be a question raised respecting that fire, how it was seen; whether

within in the spirit as it were outwardly, or really outwardly before

the eyes of the flesh. But of that dove, which is said to have

descended in a bodily form, no one ever doubted that it was seen by the

eyes. Nor, again, as we call the Son a Rock (for it is written, "And

that Rock was Christ" [253] ), can we so call the Spirit a dove or

fire. For that rock was a thing already created, and after the mode of

its action was called by the name of Christ, whom it signified; like

the stone placed under Jacob's head, and also anointed, which he took

in order to signify the Lord; [254] or as Isaac was Christ, when he

carried the wood for the sacrifice of himself. [255] A particular

significative action was added to those already existing things; they

did not, as that dove and fire, suddenly come into being in order

simply so to signify. The dove and the fire, indeed, seem to me more

like that flame which appeared to Moses in the bush, [256] or that

pillar which the people followed in the wilderness, [257] or the

thunders and lightnings which came when the Law was given in the mount.

[258] For the corporeal form of these things came into being for the

very purpose, that it might signify something, and then pass away.

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[245] Heb. i. 9

[246] John i. 14

[247] Luke iii. 6

[248] [The reference is to schema, in Phil. ii. 8--the term chosen by

St. Paul to describe the "likeness of men," which the second

trinitarian person assumed. The variety in the terms by which St. Paul

describes the incarnation is very striking. The person incarnated

subsists first in a "form of God;" he then takes along with this (still

retaining this) a "form of a servant;" which form of a servant is a

"likeness of men;" which likeness of men is a "scheme" (A.V. "fashion")

or external form of a man.--W.G.T.S.]

[249] Matt. iii. 16

[250] Acts ii. 3, 4

[251] John i. 29

[252] Apoc. v. 6

[253] 1 Cor. x. 4

[254] Gen. xxviii. 18

[255] Gen. xxii. 6

[256] Ex. iii. 2

[257] Ex. xiii. 21, 22

[258] Ex. xix. 16

[259] [A theophany, though a harbinger of the incarnation, differs from

it, by not effecting a hypostatical or personal union between God and

the creature. When the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, he

did not unite himself with it. The dove did not constitute an integral

part of the divine person who employed it. Nor did the illuminated

vapor in the theophany of the Shekinah. But when the Logos appeared in

the form of a man, he united himself with it, so that it became a

constituent part of his person. A theophany, as Augustin notices, is

temporary and transient. The incarnation is perpetual.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 7.--A Doubt Raised About Divine Appearances.

12. The Holy Spirit, then, is also said to be sent, on account of these

corporeal forms which came into existence in time, in order to signify

and manifest Him, as He must needs be manifested, to human senses; yet

He is not said to be less than the Father, as the Son, because He was

in the form of a servant, is said to be; because that form of a servant

inhered in the unity of the person of the Son, but those corporeal

forms appeared for a time, in order to show what was necessary to be

shown, and then ceased to be. Why, then, is not the Father also said to

be sent, through those corporeal forms, the fire of the bush, and the

pillar of cloud or of fire, and the lightnings in the mount, and

whatever other things of the kind appeared at that time, when (as we

have learned from Scripture testimony) He spake face to face with the

fathers, if He Himself was manifested by those modes and forms of the

creature, as exhibited and presented corporeally to human sight? But if

the Son was manifested by them, why is He said to be sent so long

after, when He was made of a woman, as the apostle says, "But when the

fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman,"

[260] seeing that He was sent also before, when He appeared to the

fathers by those changeable forms of the creature? Or if He cannot

rightly be said to be sent, unless when the Word was made flesh, why is

the Holy Spirit said to be sent, of whom no such incarnation was ever

wrought? But if by those visible things, which are put before us in the

Law and in the prophets, neither the Father nor the Son but the Holy

Spirit was manifested, why also is He said to be sent now, when He was

sent also before after these modes?

13. In the perplexity of this inquiry, the Lord helping us, we must

ask, first, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; or

whether, sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Holy

Spirit; or whether it was without any distinction of persons, in such

way as the one and only God is spoken of, that is, that the Trinity

itself appeared to the Fathers by those forms of the creature. Next,

whichever of these alternatives shall have been found or thought true,

whether for this purpose only the creature was fashioned, wherein God,

as He judged it suitable at that time, should be shown to human sight;

or whether angels, who already existed, were so sent, as to speak in

the person of God, taking a corporeal form from the corporeal creature,

for the purpose of their ministry, as each had need; or else, according

to the power the Creator has given them, changing and converting their

own body itself, to which they are not subject, but govern it as

subject to themselves, into whatever appearances they would that were

suited and apt to their several actions. Lastly, we shall discern that

which it was our purpose to ask, viz. whether the Son and the Holy

Spirit were also sent before; and, if they were so sent, what

difference there is between that sending, and the one which we read of

in the Gospel; or whether in truth neither of them were sent, except

when either the Son was made of the Virgin Mary, or the Holy Spirit

appeared in a visible form, whether in the dove or in tongues of fire.

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[260] Gal. iv. 4

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Chapter 8.--The Entire Trinity Invisible.

14. Let us therefore say nothing of those who, with an over carnal

mind, have thought the nature of the Word of God, and the Wisdom,

which, "remaining in herself, maketh all things new," [261] whom we

call the only Son of God, not only to be changeable, but also to be

visible. For these, with more audacity than religion, bring a very dull

heart to the inquiry into divine things. For whereas the soul is a

spiritual substance, and whereas itself also was made, yet could not be

made by any other than by Him by whom all things were made, and without

whom nothing is made, [262] it, although changeable, is yet not

visible; and this they have believed to be the case with the Word

Himself and with the Wisdom of God itself, by which the soul was made;

whereas this Wisdom is not only invisible, as the soul also is, but

likewise unchangeable, which the soul is not. It is in truth the same

unchangeableness in it, which is referred to when it was said,

"Remaining in herself she maketh all things new." Yet these people,

endeavoring, as it were, to prop up their error in its fall by

testimonies of the divine Scriptures, adduce the words of the Apostle

Paul; and take that, which is said of the one only God, in whom the

Trinity itself is understood, to be said only of the Father, and

neither of the Son nor of the Holy Spirit: "Now unto the King eternal,

immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and

ever;" [263] and that other passage, "The blessed and only Potentate,

the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality,

dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath

seen, nor can see." [264] How these passages are to be understood, I

think we have already discoursed sufficiently. [265]

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[261] Wisd. vii. 27

[262] John i. 3

[263] 1 Tim. i. 17

[264] 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16

[265] [For an example of the manner in which the patristic writers

present the doctrine of the divine invisibility, see Iren�us, Adv.

H�reses, IV. xx.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 9.--Against Those Who Believed the Father Only to Be Immortal

and Invisible. The Truth to Be Sought by Peaceful Study.

15. But they who will have these texts understood only of the Father,

and not of the Son or the Holy Spirit, declare the Son to be visible,

not by having taken flesh of the Virgin, but aforetime also in Himself.

For He Himself, they say, appeared to the eyes of the Fathers. And if

you say to them, In whatever manner, then, the Son is visible in

Himself, in that manner also He is mortal in Himself; so that it

plainly follows that you would have this saying also understood only of

the Father, viz., "Who only hath immortality;" for if the Son is mortal

from having taken upon Him our flesh, then allow that it is on account

of this flesh that He is also visible: they reply, that it is not on

account of this flesh that they say that the Son is mortal; but that,

just as He was also before visible, so He was also before mortal. For

if they say the Son is mortal from having taken our flesh, then it is

not the Father alone without the Son who hath immortality; because His

Word also has immortality, by which all things were made. For He did

not therefore lose His immortality, because He took mortal flesh;

seeing that it could not happen even to the human soul, that it should

die with the body, when the Lord Himself says, "Fear not them which

kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." [266] Or, forsooth,

also the Holy Spirit took flesh: concerning whom certainly they will,

without doubt, be troubled to say--if the Son is mortal on account of

taking our flesh--in what manner they understand that the Father only

has immortality without the Son and the Holy Spirit, since, indeed, the

Holy Spirit did not take our flesh; and if He has not immortality, then

the Son is not mortal on account of taking our flesh; but if the Holy

Spirit has immortality, then it is not said only of the Father, "Who

only hath immortality." And therefore they think they are able to prove

that the Son in Himself was mortal also before the incarnation, because

changeableness itself is not unfitly called mortality, according to

which the soul also is said to die; not because it is changed and

turned into body, or into some substance other than itself, but

because, whatever in its own selfsame substance is now after another

mode than it once was, is discovered to be mortal, in so far as it has

ceased to be what it was. Because then, say they, before the Son of God

was born of the Virgin Mary, He Himself appeared to our fathers, not in

one and the same form only, but in many forms; first in one form, then

in another; He is both visible in Himself, because His substance was

visible to mortal eyes, when He had not yet taken our flesh, and

mortal, inasmuch as He is changeable. And so also the Holy Spirit, who

appeared at one time as a dove, and another time as fire. Whence, they

say, the following texts do not belong to the Trinity, but singularly

and properly to the Father only: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal,

and invisible, the only wise God;" and, "Who only hath immortality,

dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath

seen, nor can see."

16. Passing by, then, these reasoners, who are unable to know the

substance even of the soul, which is invisible, and therefore are very

far indeed from knowing that the substance of the one and only God,

that is, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, remains ever not

only invisible, but also unchangeable, and that hence it possesses true

and real immortality; let us, who deny that God, whether the Father, or

the Son, or the Holy Spirit, ever appeared to bodily eyes, unless

through the corporeal creature made subject to His own power; let us, I

say--ready to be corrected, if we are reproved in a fraternal and

upright spirit, ready to be so, even if carped at by an enemy, so that

he speak the truth--in catholic peace and with peaceful study inquire,

whether God indiscriminately appeared to our fathers before Christ came

in the flesh, or whether it was any one person of the Trinity, or

whether severally, as it were by turns.

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[266] Matt. x. 28

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Chapter 10--Whether God the Trinity Indiscriminately Appeared to the

Fathers, or Any One Person of the Trinity. The Appearing of God to

Adam. Of the Same Appearance. The Vision to Abraham.

17. And first, in that which is written in Genesis, viz., that God

spake with man whom He had formed out of the dust; if we set apart the

figurative meaning, and treat it so as to place faith in the narrative

even in the letter, it should appear that God then spake with man in

the appearance of a man. This is not indeed expressly laid down in the

book, but the general tenor of its reading sounds in this sense,

especially in that which is written, that Adam heard the voice of the

Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the evening, and hid

himself among the trees of the garden; and when God said, "Adam, where

art thou?" [267] replied, "I heard Thy voice, and I was afraid because

I was naked, and I hid myself from Thy face." For I do not see how such

a walking and conversation of God can be understood literally, except

He appeared as a man. For it can neither be said that a voice only of

God was framed, when God is said to have walked, or that He who was

walking in a place was not visible; while Adam, too, says that he hid

himself from the face of God. Who then was He? Whether the Father, or

the Son, or the Holy Spirit? Whether altogether indiscriminately did

God the Trinity Himself speak to man in the form of man? The context,

indeed, itself of the Scripture nowhere, it should seem, indicates a

change from person to person; but He seems still to speak to the first

man, who said, "Let there be light," and, "Let there be a firmament,"

and so on through each of those days; whom we usually take to be God

the Father, making by a word whatever He willed to make. For He made

all things by His word, which Word we know, by the right rule of faith,

to be His only Son. If, therefore, God the Father spake to the first

man, and Himself was walking in the garden in the cool of the evening,

and if it was from His face that the sinner hid himself amongst the

trees of the garden, why are we not to go on to understand that it was

He also who appeared to Abraham and to Moses, and to whom He would, and

how He would, through the changeable and visible creature, subjected to

Himself, while He Himself remains in Himself and in His own substance,

in which He is unchangeable and invisible? But, possibly, it might be

that the Scripture passed over in a hidden way from person to person,

and while it had related that the Father said "Let there be light," and

the rest which it mentioned Him to have done by the Word, went on to

indicate the Son as speaking to the first man; not unfolding this

openly, but intimating it to be understood by those who could

understand it.

18. Let him, then, who has the strength whereby he can penetrate this

secret with his mind's eye, so that to him it appears clearly, either

that the Father also is able, or that only the Son and Holy Spirit are

able, to appear to human eyes through a visible creature; let him, I

say, proceed to examine these things if he can, or even to express and

handle them in words; but the thing itself, so far as concerns this

testimony of Scripture, where God spake with man, is, in my judgment,

not discoverable, because it does not evidently appear even whether

Adam usually saw God with the eyes of his body; especially as it is a

great question what manner of eyes it was that were opened when they

tasted the forbidden fruit; [268] for before they had tasted, these

eyes were closed. Yet I would not rashly assert, even if that scripture

implies Paradise to have been a material place, that God could not have

walked there in any way except in some bodily form. For it might be

said, that only words were framed for the man to hear, without seeing

any form. Neither, because it is written, "Adam hid himself from the

face of God," does it follow forthwith that he usually saw His face.

For what if he himself indeed could not see, but feared to be himself

seen by Him whose voice he had heard, and had felt His presence as he

walked? For Cain, too, said to God, "From Thy face I will hide myself;"

[269] yet we are not therefore compelled to admit that he was wont to

behold the face of God with his bodily eyes in any visible form,

although he had heard the voice of God questioning and speaking with

him of his sin. But what manner of speech it was that God then uttered

to the outward ears of men, especially in speaking to the first man, it

is both difficult to discover, and we have not undertaken to say in

this discourse. But if words alone and sounds were wrought, by which to

bring about some sensible presence of God to those first men, I do not

know why I should not there understand the person of God the Father,

seeing that His person is manifested also in that voice, when Jesus

appeared in glory on the mount before the three disciples; [270] and in

that when the dove descended upon Him at His baptism; [271] and in that

where He cried to the Father concerning His own glorification and it

was answered Him, "I have both glorified, and will glorify again."

[272] Not that the voice could be wrought without the work of the Son

and of the Holy Spirit (since the Trinity works indivisibly), but that

such a voice was wrought as to manifest the person of the Father only;

just as the Trinity wrought that human form from the Virgin Mary, yet

it is the person of the Son alone; for the invisible Trinity wrought

the visible person of the Son alone. Neither does anything forbid us,

not only to understand those words spoken to Adam as spoken by the

Trinity, but also to take them as manifesting the person of that

Trinity. For we are compelled to understand of the Father only, that

which is said, "This is my beloved Son." [273] For Jesus can neither be

believed nor understood to be the Son of the Holy Spirit, or even His

own Son. And where the voice uttered, "I have both glorified, and will

glorify again," we confess it was only the person of the Father; since

it is the answer to that word of the Lord, in which He had said,

"Father, glorify thy Son," which He could not say except to God the

Father only, and not also to the Holy Spirit, whose Son He was not. But

here, where it is written, "And the Lord God said to Adam," no reason

can be given why the Trinity itself should not be understood.

19. Likewise, also, in that which is written, "Now the Lord had said

unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and

thy father's house," it is not clear whether a voice alone came to the

ears of Abraham, or whether anything also appeared to his eyes. But a

little while after, it is somewhat more clearly said, "And the Lord

appeared unto Abraham, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land."

[274] But neither there is it expressly said in what form God appeared

to him, or whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit appeared

to him. Unless, perhaps, they think that it was the Son who appeared to

Abraham, because it is not written, God appeared to him, but "the Lord

appeared to him." For the Son seems to be called the Lord as though the

name was appropriated to Him; as e.g. the apostle says, "For though

there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there

be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the

Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus

Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." [275] But since it is

found that God the Father also is called Lord in many places,--for

instance, "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I

begotten Thee;" [276] and again, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou

at my right hand;" [277] since also the Holy Spirit is found to be

called Lord, as where the apostle says, "Now the Lord is that Spirit;"

and then, lest any one should think the Son to be signified, and to be

called the Spirit on account of His incorporeal substance, has gone on

to say, "And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" [278]

and no one ever doubted the Spirit of the Lord to be the Holy Spirit:

therefore, neither here does it appear plainly whether it was any

person of the Trinity that appeared to Abraham, or God Himself the

Trinity, of which one God it is said, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy

God, and Him only shall thou serve." [279] But under the oak at Mamre

he saw three men, whom he invited, and hospitably received, and

ministered to them as they feasted. Yet Scripture at the beginning of

that narrative does not say, three men appeared to him, but, "The Lord

appeared to him." And then, setting forth in due order after what

manner the Lord appeared to him, it has added the account of the three

men, whom Abraham invites to his hospitality in the plural number, and

afterwards speaks to them in the singular number as one; and as one He

promises him a son by Sara, viz. the one whom the Scripture calls Lord,

as in the beginning of the same narrative, "The Lord," it says,

"appeared to Abraham." He invites them then, and washes their feet, and

leads them forth at their departure, as though they were men; but he

speaks as with the Lord God, whether when a son is promised to him, or

when the destruction is shown to him that was impending over Sodom.

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[267] Gen. iii. 8-10

[268] Gen. iii. 7

[269] Gen. iv. 14

[270] Matt. xvii. 5

[271] Matt. iii. 17

[272] John xii. 28

[273] Matt. iii. 17

[274] Gen. xii. 1, 7

[275] 1 Cor viii. 5, 6

[276] Ps. ii. 7

[277] Ps. cx. 1

[278] 2 Cor. iii. 17

[279] Deut. vi. 13

[280] Gen. xviii

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Chapter 11.--Of the Same Appearance.

20. That place of Scripture demands neither a slight nor a passing

consideration. For if one man had appeared, what else would those at

once cry out, who say that the Son was visible also in His own

substance before He was born of the Virgin, but that it was Himself?

since it is said, they say, of the Father, "To the only invisible God."

[281] And yet, I could still go on to demand, in what manner "He was

found in fashion as a man," before He had taken our flesh, seeing that

his feet were washed, and that He fed upon earthly food? How could that

be, when He was still "in the form of God, and thought it not robbery

to be equal with God?" [282] For, pray, had He already "emptied

Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant, and made in the

likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man?" when we know when it

was that He did this through His birth of the Virgin. How, then, before

He had done this, did He appear as one man to Abraham? or, was not that

form a reality? I could put these questions, if it had been one man

that appeared to Abraham, and if that one were believed to be the Son

of God. But since three men appeared, and no one of them is said to be

greater than the rest either in form, or age, or power, why should we

not here understand, as visibly intimated by the visible creature, the

equality of the Trinity, and one and the same substance in three

persons? [283]

21. For, lest any one should think that one among the three is in this

way intimated to have been the greater, and that this one is to be

understood to have been the Lord, the Son of God, while the other two

were His angels; because, whereas three appeared, Abraham there speaks

to one as the Lord: Holy Scripture has not forgotten to anticipate, by

a contradiction, such future cogitations and opinions, when a little

while after it says that two angels came to Lot, among whom that just

man also, who deserved to be freed from the burning of Sodom, speaks to

one as to the Lord. For so Scripture goes on to say, "And the Lord went

His way, as soon as He left communing with Abraham; and Abraham

returned to his place." [284]

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[281] 1 Tim. i. 17

[282] Phil. ii. 6, 7

[283] [The theophanies of the Pentateuch are trinitarian in their

implication. They involve distinctions in God--God sending, and God

sent; God speaking of God, and God speaking to God. The trinitarianism

of the Old Testament has been lost sight of to some extent in the

modern construction of the doctrine. The patristic, medi�val, and

reformation theologies worked this vein with thoroughness, and the

analysis of Augustin in this reference is worthy of careful

study.--W.G.T.S.]

[284] Gen. xviii. 33

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Chapter 12.--The Appearance to Lot is Examined.

"But there came two angels to Sodom at even." Here, what I have begun

to set forth must be considered more attentively. Certainly Abraham was

speaking with three, and called that one, in the singular number, the

Lord. Perhaps, some one may say, he recognized one of the three to be

the Lord, but the other two His angels. What, then, does that mean

which Scripture goes on to say, "And the Lord went His way, as soon as

He had left communing with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place:

and there came two angels to Sodom at even?" Are we to suppose that the

one who, among the three, was recognized as the Lord, had departed, and

had sent the two angels that were with Him to destroy Sodom? Let us

see, then, what follows. "There came," it is said, "two angels to Sodom

at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them, rose up

to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; and

he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's

house." Here it is clear, both that there were two angels, and that in

the plural number they were invited to partake of hospitality, and that

they were honorably designated lords, when they perchance were thought

to be men.

22. Yet, again, it is objected that except they were known to be angels

of God, Lot would not have bowed himself with his face to the ground.

Why, then, is both hospitality and food offered to them, as though they

wanted such human succor? But whatever may here lie hid, let us now

pursue that which we have undertaken. Two appear; both are called

angels; they are invited plurally; he speaks as with two plurally,

until the departure from Sodom. And then Scripture goes on to say, "And

it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that they

said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in

all the plain; escape to the mountain, and there thou shalt be saved,

[285] lest thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them, Oh! not so, my

lord: behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight," [286]

etc. What is meant by his saying to them, "Oh! not so, my lord," if He

who was the Lord had already departed, and had sent the angels? Why is

it said, "Oh! not so, my lord," and not, "Oh! not so, my lords?" Or if

he wished to speak to one of them, why does Scripture say, "But Lot

said to them, Oh! not so, my lord: behold now, thy servant hath found

grace in thy sight," etc.? Are we here, too, to understand two persons

in the plural number, but when the two are addressed as one, then the

one Lord God of one substance? But which two persons do we here

understand?--of the Father and of the Son, or of the Father and of the

Holy Spirit, or of the Son and of the Holy Spirit? The last, perhaps,

is the more suitable; for they said of themselves that they were sent,

which is that which we say of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. For we

find nowhere in the Scriptures that the Father was sent. [287]

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[285] This clause is not in the Hebrew.

[286] Gen. xix. 1-19

[287] [It is difficult to determine the details of this theophany,

beyond all doubt: namely, whether the "Jehovah" who "went his way as

soon as he had left communing with Abraham." (Gen. xviii. 33) joins the

"two angels" that "came to Sodom at even" (Gen xix. 1); or whether one

of these "two angels" is Jehovah himself. One or the other supposition

must be made; because a person is addressed by Lot as God (Gen. xix.

18-20), and speaks to Lot as God (Gen. xix. 21, 22), and acts as God

(Gen. xix. 24). The Masorite marking of the word "lords" in Gen. xix.

2, as "profane," i.e., to be taken in the human sense, would favor the

first supposition. The interchange of the singular and plural, in the

whole narrative is very striking. "It came to pass, when they had

brought them forth abroad, that he said, escape for thy life. And Lot

said unto them. Oh not so, my Lord: behold now, thy servant hath found

grace in thy sight. And he said unto him, see I have accepted thee; I

will not overthrow the city of which thou hast spoken." (Gen. xix.

17-21.)--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 13.--The Appearance in the Bush.

23. But when Moses was sent to lead the children of Israel out of

Egypt, it is written that the Lord appeared to him thus: "Now Moses

kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and

he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the

mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto

him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and,

behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And

Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the

bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see,

God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, I am the

God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of

Jacob." [288] He is here also first called the Angel of the Lord, and

then God. Was an angel, then, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac,

and the God of Jacob? Therefore He may be rightly understood to be the

Saviour Himself, of whom the apostle says, "Whose are the fathers, and

of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God

blessed for ever." [289] He, therefore, "who is over all, God blessed

for ever," is not unreasonably here understood also to be Himself the

God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. But why is He

previously called the Angel of the Lord, when He appeared in a flame of

fire out of the bush? Was it because it was one of many angels, who by

an economy [or arrangement] bare the person of his Lord? or was

something of the creature assumed by Him in order to bring about a

visible appearance for the business in hand, and that words might

thence be audibly uttered, whereby the presence of the Lord might be

shown, in such way as was fitting, to the corporeal senses of man, by

means of the creature made subject? For if he was one of the angels,

who could easily affirm whether it was the person of the Son which was

imposed upon him to announce, or that of the Holy Spirit, or that of

God the Father, or altogether of the Trinity itself, who is the one and

only God, in order that he might say, "I am the God of Abraham, and the

God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" For we cannot say that the Son of

God is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,

and that the Father is not; nor will any one dare to deny that either

the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity itself, whom we believe and understand

to be the one God, is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the

God of Jacob. For he who is not God, is not the God of those fathers.

Furthermore, if not only the Father is God, as all, even heretics,

admit; but also the Son, which, whether they will or not, they are

compelled to acknowledge, since the apostle says, "Who is over all, God

blessed for ever;" and the Holy Spirit, since the same apostle says,

"Therefore glorify God in your body;" when he had said above, "Know ye

not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you,

which ye have of God?" [290] and these three are one God, as catholic

soundness believes: it is not sufficiently apparent which person of the

Trinity that angel bare, if he was one of the rest of the angels, and

whether any person, and not rather that of the Trinity itself. But if

the creature was assumed for the purpose of the business in hand,

whereby both to appear to human eyes, and to sound in human ears, and

to be called the Angel of the Lord, and the Lord, and God; then cannot

God here be understood to be the Father, but either the Son or the Holy

Spirit. Although I cannot call to mind that the Holy Spirit is anywhere

else called an angel, which yet may be understood from His work; for it

is said of Him, "And He will show you [291] things to come;" [292] and

"angel" in Greek is certainly equivalent to "messenger" [293] in Latin:

but we read most evidently of the Lord Jesus Christ in the prophet,

that He is called "the Angel of Great Counsel," [294] while both the

Holy Spirit and the Son of God is God and Lord of the angels.

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[288] Ex. iii. 1-6

[289] Rom. ix. 5

[290] 1 Cor. vi. 20, 19

[291] Annuntiabit

[292] John xvi. 13

[293] Nuntius

[294] Isa. ix. 6

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Chapter 14.--Of the Appearance in the Pillar of Cloud and of Fire.

24. Also in the going forth of the children of Israel from Egypt it is

written, "And the Lord went before them, by day in a pillar of cloud to

lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire. He took not away

the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from

before the people." [295] Who here, too, would doubt that God appeared

to the eyes of mortal men by the corporeal creature made subject to

Him, and not by His own substance? But it is not similarly apparent

whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity

itself, the one God. Nor is this distinguished there either, in my

judgment, where it is written, "The glory of the Lord appeared in the

cloud, and the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the

murmurings of the children of Israel," [296] etc.

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[295] Ex. iii. 21, 22

[296] Ex. xvi. 10-12

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Chapter 15.--Of the Appearance on Sinai. Whether the Trinity Spake in

that Appearance or Some One Person Specially.

25. But now of the clouds, and voices, and lightnings, and the trumpet,

and the smoke on Mount Sinai, when it was said, "And Mount Sinai was

altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and

the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace; and all the

people that was in the camp trembled; and when the voice of the trumpet

sounded long and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered

him by a voice." [297] And a little after, when the Law had been given

in the ten commandments, it follows in the text, "And all the people

saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet,

and the mountain smoking." And a little after, "And [when the people

saw it,] they removed and stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the

thick darkness [298] where God was, and the Lord said unto Moses,"

[299] etc. What shall I say about this, save that no one can be so

insane as to believe the smoke, and the fire, and the cloud, and the

darkness, and whatever there was of the kind, to be the substance of

the word and wisdom of God which is Christ, or of the Holy Spirit? For

not even the Arians ever dared to say that they were the substance of

God the Father. All these things, then, were wrought through the

creature serving the Creator, and were presented in a suitable economy

(dispensatio) to human senses; unless, perhaps, because it is said,

"And Moses drew near to the cloud where God was," carnal thoughts must

needs suppose that the cloud was indeed seen by the people, but that

within the cloud Moses with the eyes of the flesh saw the Son of God,

whom doting heretics will have to be seen in His own substance.

Forsooth, Moses may have seen Him with the eyes of the flesh, if not

only the wisdom of God which is Christ, but even that of any man you

please and howsoever wise, can be seen with the eyes of the flesh; or

if, because it is written of the elders of Israel, that "they saw the

place where the God of Israel had stood," and that "there was under His

feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the

body of heaven in his clearness," [300] therefore we are to believe

that the word and wisdom of God in His own substance stood within the

space of an earthly place, who indeed "reacheth firmly from end to end,

and sweetly ordereth all things;" [301] and that the Word of God, by

whom all things were made, [302] is in such wise changeable, as now to

contract, now to expand Himself; (may the Lord cleanse the hearts of

His faithful ones from such thoughts!) But indeed all these visible and

sensible things are, as we have often said, exhibited through the

creature made subject in order to signify the invisible and

intelligible God, not only the Father, but also the Son and the Holy

Spirit, "of whom are all things, and through whom are all things, and

in whom are all things;" [303] although "the invisible things of God,

from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by

the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." [304]

26. But as far as concerns our present undertaking, neither on Mount

Sinai do I see how it appears, by all those things which were fearfully

displayed to the senses of mortal men, whether God the Trinity spake,

or the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit severally. But if it is

allowable, without rash assertion, to venture upon a modest and

hesitating conjecture from this passage, if it is possible to

understand it of one person of the Trinity, why do we not rather

understand the Holy Spirit to be spoken of, since the Law itself also,

which was given there, is said to have been written upon tables of

stone with the finger of God, [305] by which name we know the Holy

Spirit to be signified in the Gospel. [306] And fifty days are numbered

from the slaying of the lamb and the celebration of the Passover until

the day in which these things began to be done in Mount Sinai; just as

after the passion of our Lord fifty days are numbered from His

resurrection, and then came the Holy Spirit which the Son of God had

promised. And in that very coming of His, which we read of in the Acts

of the Apostles, there appeared cloven tongues like as of fire, and it

sat upon each of them: [307] which agrees with Exodus, where it is

written, "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord

descended upon it in fire;" and a little after, "And the sight of the

glory of the Lord," he says, "was like devouring fire on the top of the

mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." [308] Or if these things

were therefore wrought because neither the Father nor the Son could be

there presented in that mode without the Holy Spirit, by whom the Law

itself must needs be written; then we know doubtless that God appeared

there, not by His own substance, which remains invisible and

unchangeable, but by the appearance above mentioned of the creature;

but that some special person of the Trinity appeared, distinguished by

a proper mark, as far as my capacity of understanding reaches, we do

not see.

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[297] Ex. xix. 18, 19

[298] Nebulam

[299] Ex. xx. 18, 21

[300] Ex. xxiv. 10

[301] Wisd. viii. 1

[302] John i. 3

[303] Rom. xi. 36

[304] Rom. i. 20

[305] Ex. xxi. 18

[306] Luke xi. 20

[307] Acts. ii. 1-4

[308] Ex. xxiv. 17

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Chapter 16.--In What Manner Moses Saw God.

26. There is yet another difficulty which troubles most people, viz.

that it is written, "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a

man speaketh unto his friend;" whereas a little after, the same Moses

says, "Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight,

show me now Thyself plainly, that I may see Thee, that I may find grace

in Thy sight, and that I may consider that this nation is Thy people;"

and a little after Moses again said to the Lord, "Show me Thy glory."

What means this then, that in everything which was done, as above said,

God was thought to have appeared by His own substance; whence the Son

of God has been believed by these miserable people to be visible not by

the creature, but by Himself; and that Moses, entering into the cloud,

appeared to have had this very object in entering, that a cloudy

darkness indeed might be shown to the eyes of the people, but that

Moses within might hear the words of God, as though he beheld His face;

and, as it is said, "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a

man speaketh unto his friend;" and yet, behold, the same Moses says,

"If I have found grace in Thy sight, show me Thyself plainly?"

Assuredly he knew that he saw corporeally, and he sought the true sight

of God spiritually. And that mode of speech accordingly which was

wrought in words, was so modified, as if it were of a friend speaking

to a friend. Yet who sees God the Father with the eyes of the body? And

that Word, which was in the beginning, the Word which was with God, the

Word which was God, by which all things were made, [309] --who sees Him

with the eyes of the body? And the spirit of wisdom, again, who sees

with the eyes of the body? Yet what is, "Show me now Thyself plainly,

that I may see Thee," unless, Show me Thy substance? But if Moses had

not said this, we must indeed have borne with those foolish people as

we could, who think that the substance of God was made visible to his

eyes through those things which, as above mentioned, were said or done.

But when it is here demonstrated most evidently that this was not

granted to him, even though he desired it; who will dare to say, that

by the like forms which had appeared visibly to him also, not the

creature serving God, but that itself which is God, appeared to the

eyes of a mortal man?

28. Add, too, that which the Lord afterward said to Moses, "Thou canst

not see my face: for there shall no man see my face, and live. And the

Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a

rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will

put thee into a watch-tower [310] of the rock, and will cover thee with

my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt

see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." [311]

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[309] John i. 1, 3

[310] Clift--A.V. Spelunca is one reading in S. Aug., but the

Benedictines read specula = watch-tower, which the context proves to be

certainly right.

[311] Ex. xxxiii. 11-23

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Chapter 17.--How the Back Parts of God Were Seen. The Faith of the

Resurrection of Christ. The Catholic Church Only is the Place from

Whence the Back Parts of God are Seen. The Back Parts of God Were Seen

by the Israelites. It is a Rash Opinion to Think that God the Father

Only Was Never Seen by the Fathers.

Not unfitly is it commonly understood to be prefigured from the person

of our Lord Jesus Christ, that His "back parts" are to be taken to be

His flesh, in which He was born of the Virgin, and died, and rose

again; whether they are called back parts [312] on account of the

posteriority of mortality, or because it was almost in the end of the

world, that is, at a late period, [313] that He deigned to take it: but

that His "face" was that form of God, in which He "thought it not

robbery to be equal with God," [314] which no one certainly can see and

live; whether because after this life, in which we are absent from the

Lord, [315] and where the corruptible body presseth down the soul,

[316] we shall see "face to face," [317] as the apostle says--(for it

is said in the Psalms, of this life, "Verily every man living is

altogether vanity;" [318] and again, "For in Thy sight shall no man

living be justified;" [319] and in this life also, according to John,

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know," he says, "that

when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He

is," [320] which he certainly intended to be understood as after this

life, when we shall have paid the debt of death, and shall have

received the promise of the resurrection);--or whether that even now,

in whatever degree we spiritually understand the wisdom of God, by

which all things were made, in that same degree we die to carnal

affections, so that, considering this world dead to us, we also

ourselves die to this world, and say what the apostle says, "The world

is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." [321] For it was of this

death that he also says, "Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ, why as

though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?" [322] Not

therefore without cause will no one be able to see the "face," that is,

the manifestation itself of the wisdom of God, and live. For it is this

very appearance, for the contemplation of which every one sighs who

strives to love God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with

all his mind; to the contemplation of which, he who loves his neighbor,

too, as himself builds up his neighbor also as far as he may; on which

two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. [323] And this is

signified also in Moses himself. For when he had said, on account of

the love of God with which he was specially inflamed, "If I have found

grace in thy sight, show me now Thyself plainly, that I may find grace

in Thy sight;" he immediately subjoined, on account of the love also of

his neighbor, "And that I may know that this nation is Thy people." It

is therefore that "appearance" which hurries away every rational soul

with the desire of it, and the more ardently the more pure that soul

is; and it is the more pure the more it rises to spiritual things; and

it rises the more to spiritual things the more it dies to carnal

things. But whilst we are absent from the Lord, and walk by faith, not

by sight, [324] we ought to see the "back parts" of Christ, that is His

flesh, by that very faith, that is, standing on the solid foundation of

faith, which the rock signifies, [325] and beholding it from such a

safe watch-tower, namely in the Catholic Church, of which it is said,

"And upon this rock I will build my Church." [326] For so much the more

certainly we love that face of Christ, which we earnestly desire to

see, as we recognize in His back parts how much first Christ loved us.

29. But in the flesh itself, the faith in His resurrection saves and

justifies us. For, "If thou shalt believe," he says, "in thine heart,

that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved;" [327] and

again, "Who was delivered," he says, "for our offenses, and was raised

again for our justification." [328] So that the reward of our faith is

the resurrection of the body of our Lord. [329] For even His enemies

believe that that flesh died on the cross of His passion, but they do

not believe it to have risen again. Which we believing most firmly,

gaze upon it as from the solidity of a rock: whence we wait with

certain hope for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body;

[330] because we hope for that in the members of Christ, that is, in

ourselves, which by a sound faith we acknowledge to be perfect in Him

as in our Head. Thence it is that He would not have His back parts

seen, unless as He passed by, that His resurrection may be believed.

For that which is Pascha in Hebrew, is translated Passover. [331]

Whence John the Evangelist also says, "Before the feast of the

Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come, that He should pass

out of this world unto the Father." [332]

30. But they who believe this, but believe it not in the Catholic

Church, but in some schism or in heresy, do not see the back parts of

the Lord from "the place that is by Him." For what does that mean which

the Lord says, "Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand

upon a rock?" What earthly place is "by" the Lord, unless that is "by

Him" which touches Him spiritually? For what place is not "by" the

Lord, who "reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth

order all things," [333] and of whom it is said, "Heaven is His throne,

and earth is His footstool;" and who said, "Where is the house that ye

build unto me, and where is the place of my rest? For has not my hand

made all those things?" [334] But manifestly the Catholic Church itself

is understood to be "the place by Him," wherein one stands upon a rock,

where he healthfully sees the "Pascha Domini," that is, the "Passing

by" [335] of the Lord, and His back parts, that is, His body, who

believes in His resurrection. "And thou shalt stand," He says, "upon a

rock while my glory passeth by." For in reality, immediately after the

majesty of the Lord had passed by in the glorification of the Lord, in

which He rose again and ascended to the Father, we stood firm upon the

rock. And Peter himself then stood firm, so that he preached Him with

confidence, whom, before he stood firm, he had thrice from fear denied;

[336] although, indeed, already before placed in predestination upon

the watch-tower of the rock, but with the hand of the Lord still held

over him that he might not see. For he was to see His back parts, and

the Lord had not yet "passed by," namely, from death to life; He had

not yet been glorified by the resurrection.

31. For as to that, too, which follows in Exodus, "I will cover thee

with mine hand while I pass by, and I will take away my hand and thou

shalt see my back parts;" many Israelites, of whom Moses was then a

figure, believed in the Lord after His resurrection, as if His hand had

been taken off from their eyes, and they now saw His back parts. And

hence the evangelist also mentions that prophesy of Isaiah, "Make the

heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their

eyes." [337] Lastly, in the Psalm, that is not unreasonably understood

to be said in their person, "For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon

me." "By day," perhaps, when He performed manifest miracles, yet was

not acknowledged by them; but "by night," when He died in suffering,

when they thought still more certainly that, like any one among men, He

was cut off and brought to an end. But since, when He had already

passed by, so that His back parts were seen, upon the preaching to them

by the Apostle Peter that it behoved Christ to suffer and rise again,

they were pricked in their hearts with the grief of repentance, [338]

that that might come to pass among the baptized which is said in the

beginning of that Psalm, "Blessed are they whose transgressions are

forgiven, and whose sins are covered;" therefore, after it had been

said, "Thy hand is heavy upon me," the Lord, as it were, passing by, so

that now He removed His hand, and His back parts were seen, there

follows the voice of one who grieves and confesses and receives

remission of sins by faith in the resurrection of the Lord: "My

moisture," he says, "is turned into the drought of summer. I

acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I

said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and Thou

forgavest the iniquity of my sin." [339] For we ought not to be so

wrapped up in the darkness of the flesh, as to think the face indeed of

God to be invisible, but His back visible, since both appeared visibly

in the form of a servant; but far be it from us to think anything of

the kind in the form of God; far be it from us to think that the Word

of God and the Wisdom of God has a face on one side, and on the other a

back, as a human body has, or is at all changed either in place or time

by any appearance or motion. [340]

32. Wherefore, if in those words which were spoken in Exodus, and in

all those corporeal appearances, the Lord Jesus Christ was manifested;

or if in some cases Christ was manifested, as the consideration of this

passage persuades us, in others the Holy Spirit, as that which we have

said above admonishes us; at any rate no such result follows, as that

God the Father never appeared in any such form to the Fathers. For many

such appearances happened in those times, without either the Father, or

the Son, or the Holy Spirit being expressly named and designated in

them; but yet with some intimations given through certain very probable

interpretations, so that it would be too rash to say that God the

Father never appeared by any visible forms to the fathers or the

prophets. For they gave birth to this opinion who were not able to

understand in respect to the unity of the Trinity such texts as, "Now

unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God;" [341]

and, "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see." [342] Which texts are

understood by a sound faith in that substance itself, the highest, and

in the highest degree divine and unchangeable, whereby both the Father

and the Son and the Holy Spirit is the one and only God. But those

visions were wrought through the changeable creature, made subject to

the unchangeable God, and did not manifest God properly as He is, but

by intimations such as suited the causes and times of the several

circumstances.

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[312] Posteriora

[313] Posterius

[314] Phil. ii. 6

[315] 2 Cor. v. 6

[316] Wisd. ix. 15

[317] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[318] Ps. xxxix. 5

[319] Ps. cxliii. 2

[320] 1 John iii. 2

[321] Gal. vi. 14

[322] Col. ii. 20. Viventes de hoc mundo decernitis.

[323] Matt. xxii. 37-40

[324] 2 Cor. v. 6, 7

[325] [Augustin here gives the Protestant interpretation of the word

"rock," in the passage, "on this rock I will build my

church."--W.G.T.S.]

[326] Matt. xvi. 18

[327] Rom. x. 9

[328] Rom. iv. 25

[329] [The meaning seems to be, that the vivid realization that

Christ's body rose from the dead is the reward of a Christian's faith.

The unbeliever has no such reward.--W.G.T.S.]

[330] Rom. viii. 23

[331] Transitus = passing by.

[332] John xiii. 1

[333] Wisd. viii. 1

[334] Isa. lxvi. 1, 2

[335] Transitus

[336] Matt. xxvi. 70-74

[337] Isa. vi. 10; Matt. xiii. 15

[338] Acts ii. 37, 41

[339] Ps. xxxii. 4, 5

[340] [This explanation of the "back parts" of Christ to mean his

resurrection, and of "the place that is by him," to mean the church, is

an example of the fanciful exegesis into which Augustin, with the

fathers generally, sometimes falls. The reasoning, here, unlike that in

the preceding chapter, is not from the immediate context, and hence

extraneous matter is read into the text.--W.G.T.S.]

[341] 1 Tim. i. 17

[342] 1 Tim. vi. 16

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Chapter 18.--The Vision of Daniel.

33. [343] I do not know in what manner these men understand that the

Ancient of Days appeared to Daniel, from whom the Son of man, which He

deigned to be for our sakes, is understood to have received the

kingdom; namely, from Him who says to Him in the Psalms, "Thou art my

Son; this day have I begotten Thee; ask of me, and I shall give Thee

the heathen for Thine inheritance;" [344] and who has "put all things

under His feet." [345] If, however, both the Father giving the kingdom,

and the Son receiving it, appeared to Daniel in bodily form, how can

those men say that the Father never appeared to the prophets, and,

therefore, that He only ought to be understood to be invisible whom no

man has seen, nor can see? For Daniel has told us thus: "I beheld," he

says, "till the thrones were set, [346] and the Ancient of Days did

sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the

pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as

burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him:

thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten

thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were

opened," etc. And a little after, "I saw," he says, "in the night

visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of

heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near

before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,

that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion

is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom

that which shall not be destroyed." [347] Behold the Father giving, and

the Son receiving, an eternal kingdom; and both are in the sight of him

who prophesies, in a visible form. It is not, therefore, unsuitably

believed that God the Father also was wont to appear in that manner to

mortals.

34. Unless, perhaps, some one shall say, that the Father is therefore

not visible, because He appeared within the sight of one who was

dreaming; but that therefore the Son and the Holy Spirit are visible,

because Moses saw all those things being awake; as if, forsooth, Moses

saw the Word and the Wisdom of God with fleshly eyes, or that even the

human spirit which quickens that flesh can be seen, or even that

corporeal thing which is called wind;--how much less can that Spirit of

God be seen, who transcends the minds of all men, and of angels, by the

ineffable excellence of the divine substance? Or can any one fall

headlong into such an error as to dare to say, that the Son and the

Holy Spirit are visible also to men who are awake, but that the Father

is not visible except to those who dream? How, then, do they understand

that of the Father alone, "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see."? When

men sleep, are they then not men? Or cannot He, who can fashion the

likeness of a body to signify Himself through the visions of dreamers,

also fashion that same bodily creature to signify Himself to the eyes

of those who are awake? Whereas His own very substance, whereby He

Himself is that which He is, cannot be shown by any bodily likeness to

one who sleeps, or by any bodily appearance to one who is awake; but

this not of the Father only, but also of the Son and of the Holy

Spirit. And certainly, as to those who are moved by the visions of

waking men to believe that not the Father, but only the Son, or the

Holy Spirit, appeared to the corporeal sight of men,--to omit the great

extent of the sacred pages, and their manifold interpretation, such

that no one of sound reason ought to affirm that the person of the

Father was nowhere shown to the eyes of waking men by any corporeal

appearance;--but, as I said, to omit this, what do they say of our

father Abraham, who was certainly awake and ministering, when, after

Scripture had premised, "The Lord appeared unto Abraham," not one, or

two, but three men appeared to him; no one of whom is said to have

stood prominently above the others, no one more than the others to have

shone with greater glory, or to have acted more authoritatively? [348]

35. Wherefore, since in that our threefold division we determined to

inquire, [349] first, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy

Spirit; or whether sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes

the Holy Spirit; or whether, without any distinction of persons, as it

is said, the one and only God, that is, the Trinity itself, appeared to

the fathers through those forms of the creature: now that we have

examined, so far as appeared to be sufficient what places of the Holy

Scriptures we could, a modest and cautious consideration of divine

mysteries leads, as far as I can judge, to no other conclusion, unless

that we may not rashly affirm which person of the Trinity appeared to

this or that of the fathers or the prophets in some body or likeness of

body, unless when the context attaches to the narrative some probable

intimations on the subject. For the nature itself, or substance, or

essence, or by whatever other name that very thing, which is God,

whatever it be, is to be called, cannot be seen corporeally: but we

must believe that by means of the creature made subject to Him, not

only the Son, or the Holy Spirit, but also the Father, may have given

intimations of Himself to mortal senses by a corporeal form or

likeness. And since the case stands thus, that this second book may not

extend to an immoderate length, let us consider what remains in those

which follow.

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[343] [The original has an awkward anacoluthon in the opening sentence

of this chapter, which has been removed by omitting "quamquam," and

substituting "autem" for "ergo."--W.G.T.S.]

[344] Ps. ii. 7, 8

[345] Ps. viii. 8

[346] Cast down--A.V.

[347] Dan. vii. 9-14

[348] Gen. xviii. 1

[349] See above, chap. vii.

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Book III.

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The question is discussed with respect to the appearances of God spoken

of in the previous book, which were made under bodily forms, whether

only a creature was formed, for the purpose of manifesting God to human

sight in such way as He at each time judged fitting; or whether angels,

already existing, were so sent as to speak in the person of God; and

this, either by assuming a bodily appearance from the bodily creature,

or by changing their own bodies into whatever forms they would,

suitable to the particular action, according to the power given to them

by the Creator; while the essence itself of God was never seen in

itself.

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Preface.--Why Augustin Writes of the Trinity. What He Claims from

Readers. What Has Been Said in the Previous Book.

1. I Would have them believe, who are willing to do so, that I had

rather bestow labor in reading, than in dictating what others may read.

But let those who will not believe this, but are both able and willing

to make the trial, grant me whatever answers may be gathered from

reading, either to my own inquiries, or to those interrogations of

others, which for the character I bear in the service of Christ, and

for the zeal with which I burn that our faith may be fortified against

the error of carnal and natural men, [350] I must needs bear with; and

then let them see how easily I would refrain from this labor, and with

how much even of joy I would give my pen a holiday. But if what we have

read upon these subjects is either not sufficiently set forth, or is

not to be found at all, or at any rate cannot easily be found by us, in

the Latin tongue, while we are not so familiar with the Greek tongue as

to be found in any way competent to read and understand therein the

books that treat of such topics, in which class of writings, to judge

by the little which has been translated for us, I do not doubt that

everything is contained that we can profitably seek; [351] while yet I

cannot resist my brethren when they exact of me, by that law by which I

am made their servant, that I should minister above all to their

praiseworthy studies in Christ by my tongue and by my pen, of which two

yoked together in me, Love is the charioteer; and while I myself

confess that I have by writing learned many things which I did not

know: if this be so, then this my labor ought not to seem superfluous

to any idle, or to any very learned reader; while it is needful in no

small part, to many who are busy, and to many who are unlearned,and

among these last to myself. Supported, then, very greatly, and aided by

the writings we have already read of others on this subject, I have

undertaken to inquire into and to discuss, whatever it seems to my

judgment can be reverently inquired into and discussed, concerning the

Trinity, the one supreme and supremely good God; He himself exhorting

me to the inquiry, and helping me in the discussion of it; in order

that, if there are no other writings of the kind, there may be

something for those to have and read who are willing and capable; but

if any exist already, then it may be so much the easier to find some

such writings, the more there are of the kind in existence.

2. Assuredly, as in all my writings I desire not only a pious reader,

but also a free corrector, so I especially desire this in the present

inquiry, which is so important that I would there were as many

inquirers as there are objectors. But as I do not wish my reader to be

bound down to me, so I do not wish my corrector to be bound down to

himself. Let not the former love me more than the catholic faith, let

not the latter love himself more than the catholic verity. As I say to

the former, Do not be willing to yield to my writings as to the

canonical Scriptures; but in these, when thou hast discovered even what

thou didst not previously believe, believe it unhesitatingly; while in

those, unless thou hast understood with certainty what thou didst not

before hold as certain, be unwilling to hold it fast: so I say to the

latter, Do not be willing to amend my writings by thine own opinion or

disputation, but from the divine text, or by unanswerable reason. If

thou apprehendest anything of truth in them, its being there does not

make it mine, but by understanding and loving it, let it be both thine

and mine; but if thou convictest anything of falsehood, though it have

once been mine, in that I was guilty of the error, yet now by avoiding

it let it be neither thine nor mine.

3. Let this third book, then, take its beginning at the point to which

the second had reached. For after we had arrived at this, that we

desired to show that the Son was not therefore less than the Father,

because the Father sent and the Son was sent; nor the Holy Spirit

therefore less than both, because we read in the Gospel that He was

sent both by the one and by the other; we undertook then to inquire,

since the Son was sent thither, where He already was, for He came into

the world, and "was in the world;" [352] since also the Holy Spirit was

sent thither, where He already was, for "the Spirit of the Lord filleth

the world, and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the

voice;" [353] whether the Lord was therefore "sent" because He was born

in the flesh so as to be no longer hidden, and, as it were, came forth

from the bosom of the Father, and appeared to the eyes of men in the

form of a servant; and the Holy Spirit also was therefore "sent,"

because He too was seen as a dove in a corporeal form, [354] and in

cloven tongues, like as of fire; [355] so that, to be sent, when spoken

of them, means to go forth to the sight of mortals in some corporeal

form from a spiritual hiding-place; which, because the Father did not,

He is said only to have sent, not also to be sent. Our next inquiry

was, Why the Father also is not sometimes said to be sent, if He

Himself was manifested through those corporeal forms which appeared to

the eyes of the ancients. But if the Son was manifested at these times,

why should He be said to be "sent" so long after, when the fullness of

time was come that He should be born of a woman; [356] since, indeed,

He was sent before also, viz., when He appeared corporeally in those

forms? Or if He were not rightly said to be "sent," except when the

Word was made flesh; [357] why should the Holy Spirit be read of as

"sent," of whom such an incarnation never took place? But if neither

the Father, nor the Son, but the Holy Spirit was manifested through

these ancient appearances; why should He too be said to be "sent" now,

when He was also sent before in these various manners? Next we

subdivided the subject, that it might be handled most carefully, and we

made the question threefold, of which one part was explained in the

second book, and two remain, which I shall next proceed to discuss. For

we have already inquired and determined, that not only the Father, nor

only the Son, nor only the Holy Spirit appeared in those ancient

corporeal forms and visions, but either indifferently the Lord God, who

is understood to be the Trinity itself, or some one person of the

Trinity, whichever the text of the narrative might signify, through

intimations supplied by the context.

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[350] [The English translator renders "animalium" by "psychical," to

agree with psuchikos in 1 Cor. ii. 14. The rendering "natural" of the

A.V. is more familiar.--W.G.T.S.]

[351] [This is an important passage with reference to Augustin's

learning. From it, it would appear that he had not read the Greek

Trinitarians in the original, and that only "a little" of these had

been translated, at the time when he was composing this treatise. As

this was from A.D. 400 to A.D. 416--, the treatises of Athanasius (d.

373), Basil (d. 379), Gregory of Nyssa (d. 400?), and Gregory of

Nazianzum (d. 390?) had been composed and were current in the Eastern

church. That Augustin thought out this profound scheme of the doctrine

of the Trinity by the close study of Scripture alone, and unassisted by

the equally profound trinitarianism of the Greek church, is an evidence

of the depth and strength of his remarkable intellect.--W.G.T.S.]

[352] John i. 10

[353] Wisd. i. 7

[354] Matt. iii. 16

[355] Acts ii. 3

[356] Gal. iv. 4

[357] John i. 14

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Chapter 1.--What is to Be Said Thereupon.

4. Let us, then, continue our inquiry now in order. For under the

second head in that division the question occurred, whether the

creature was formed for that work only, wherein God, in such way as He

then judged it to be fitting, might be manifested to human sight; or

whether angels, who already existed, were so sent as to speak in the

person of God, assuming a corporeal appearance from the corporeal

creature for the purpose of their ministry; or else changing and

turning their own body itself, to which they are not subject, but

govern it as subject to themselves, into whatever forms they would,

that were appropriate and fit for their actions, according to the power

given to them by the Creator. And when this part of the question shall

have been investigated, so far as God permit, then, lastly, we shall

have to see to that question with which we started, viz., whether the

Son and the Holy Spirit were also "sent" before; and if it be so, then

what difference there is between that sending and the one of which we

read in the Gospel; or whether neither of them were sent, except when

either the Son was made of the Virgin Mary, or when the Holy Spirit

appeared in a visible form, whether as a dove or in tongues of fire.

[358]

5. I confess, however, that it reaches further than my purpose can

carry me to inquire whether the angels, secretly working by the

spiritual quality of their body abiding still in them, assume somewhat

from the inferior and more bodily elements, which, being fitted to

themselves, they may change and turn like a garment into any corporeal

appearances they will, and those appearances themselves also real, as

real water was changed by our Lord into real wine; [359] or whether

they transform their own bodies themselves into that which they would,

suitably to the particular act. But it does not signify to the present

question which of these it is. And although I be not able to understand

these things by actual experience, seeing that I am a man, as the

angels do who do these things, and know them better than I know them,

viz., how far my body is changeable by the operation of my will;

whether it be by my own experience of myself, or by that which I have

gathered from others; yet it is not necessary here to say which of

these alternatives I am to believe upon the authority of the divine

Scriptures, lest I be compelled to prove it, and so my discourse become

too long upon a subject which does not concern the present question.

6. Our present inquiry then is, whether the angels were then the agents

both in showing those bodily appearances to the eyes of men and in

sounding those words in their ears when the sensible creature itself,

serving the Creator at His beck, was turned for the time into whatever

was needful; as it is written in the book of Wisdom, "For the creature

serveth Thee, who art the Maker, increaseth his strength against the

unrighteous for their punishment, and abateth his strength for the

benefit of such as put their trust in Thee. Therefore, even then was it

altered into all fashions, and was obedient to Thy grace, that

nourisheth all things according to the desire of them that longed for

Thee." [360] For the power of the will of God reaches through the

spiritual creature even to visible and sensible effects of the

corporeal creature. For where does not the wisdom of the omnipotent God

work that which He wills, which "reacheth from one end to another

mightily, and sweetly doth order all things"? [361]

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[358] See above, Book ii. chap. vii. n. 13.

[359] John ii. 9

[360] Wisd. xvi. 24, 25

[361] Wisd. viii. 1

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Chapter 2.--The Will of God is the Higher Cause of All Corporeal

Change. This is Shown by an Example.

7. But there is one kind of natural order in the conversion and

changeableness of bodies, which, although itself also serves the

bidding of God, yet by reason of its unbroken continuity has ceased to

cause wonder; as is the case, for instance, with those things which are

changed either in very short, or at any rate not long, intervals of

time, in heaven, or earth, or sea; whether it be in rising, or in

setting, or in change of appearance from time to time; while there are

other things, which, although arising from that same order, yet are

less familiar on account of longer intervals of time. And these things,

although the many stupidly wonder at them, yet are understood by those

who inquire into this present world, and in the progress of generations

become so much the less wonderful, as they are the more often repeated

and known by more people. Such are the eclipses of the sun and moon,

and some kinds of stars, appearing seldom, and earthquakes, and

unnatural births of living creatures, and other similar things; of

which not one takes place without the will of God; yet, that it is so,

is to most people not apparent. And so the vanity of philosophers has

found license to assign these things also to other causes, true causes

perhaps, but proximate ones, while they are not able to see at all the

cause that is higher than all others, that is, the will of God; or

again to false causes, and to such as are not even put forward out of

any diligent investigation of corporeal things and motions, but from

their own guess and error.

8. I will bring forward an example, if I can, that this may be plainer.

There is, we know, in the human body, a certain bulk of flesh and an

outward form, and an arrangement and distraction of limbs, and a

temperament of health; and a soul breathed into it governs this body,

and that soul a rational one; which, therefore, although changeable,

yet can be partaker of that unchangeable wisdom, so that "it may

partake of that which is in and of itself;" [362] as it is written in

the Psalm concerning all saints, of whom as of living stones is built

that Jerusalem which is the mother of us all, eternal in the heavens.

For so it is sung, "Jerusalem is builded as a city, that is partaker of

that which is in and of itself." [363] For "in and of itself," in that

place, is understood of that chiefest and unchangeable good, which is

God, and of His own wisdom and will. To whom is sung in another place,

"Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the

same." [364]

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[362] [The original is: "ut sit participatio ejus in idipsum." The

English translator renders: "So that it may partake thereof in itself."

The thought of Augustin is, that the believing soul though mutable

partakes of the immutable; and he designates the immutable as the in

idipsum: the self-existent. In that striking passage in the

Confessions, in which he describes the spiritual and extatic

meditations of himself and his mother, as they looked out upon the

Mediterranean from the windows at Ostia--a scene well known from Ary

Schefer's painting--he denominates God the idipsum: the "self same"

(Confessions IX. x). Augustin refers to the same absolute immutability

of God, in this place. By faith, man is "a partaker of a divine

nature," (2 Pet. i. 4.)--W.G.T.S.]

[363] Ps. cxxii. 3. Vulg.

[364] Ps. cii. 26, 27

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Chapter 3.--Of the Same Argument.

Let us take, then, the case of a wise man, such that his rational soul

is already partaker of the unchangeable and eternal truth, so that he

consults it about all his actions, nor does anything at all, which he

does not by it know ought to be done, in order that by being subject to

it and obeying it he may do rightly. Suppose now that this man, upon

counsel with the highest reason of the divine righteousness, which he

hears with the ear of his heart in secret, and by its bidding, should

weary his body by toil in some office of mercy, and should contract an

illness; and upon consulting the physicians, were to be told by one

that the cause of the disease was overmuch dryness of the body, but by

another that it was overmuch moisture; one of the two no doubt would

allege the true cause and the other would err, but both would pronounce

concerning proximate causes only, that is, corporeal ones. But if the

cause of that dryness were to be inquired into, and found to be the

self-imposed toil, then we should have come to a yet higher cause,

which proceeds from the soul so as to affect the body which the soul

governs. Yet neither would this be the first cause, for that doubtless

was a higher cause still, and lay in the unchangeable wisdom itself, by

serving which in love, and by obeying its ineffable commands, the soul

of the wise man had undertaken that self-imposed toil; and so nothing

else but the will of God would be found most truly to be the first

cause of that illness. But suppose now in that office of pious toil

this wise man had employed the help of others to co-operate in the good

work, who did not serve God with the same will as himself, but either

desired to attain the reward of their own carnal desires, or shunned

merely carnal unpleasantnesses;--suppose, too, he had employed beasts

of burden, if the completion of the work required such a provision,

which beasts of burden would be certainly irrational animals, and would

not therefore move their limbs under their burdens because they at all

thought of that good work, but from the natural appetite of their own

liking, and for the avoiding of annoyance;--suppose, lastly, he had

employed bodily things themselves that lack all sense, but were

necessary for that work, as e.g. corn, and wine, and oils, clothes, or

money, or a book, or anything of the kind;--certainly, in all these

bodily things thus employed in this work, whether animate or inanimate,

whatever took place of movement, of wear and tear, of reparation, of

destruction, of renewal or of change in one way or another, as places

and times affected them; pray, could there be, I say, any other cause

of all these visible and changeable facts, except the invisible and

unchangeable will of God, using all these, both bad and irrational

souls, and lastly bodies, whether such as were inspired and animated by

those souls, or such as lacked all sense, by means of that upright soul

as the seat of His wisdom, since primarily that good and holy soul

itself employed them, which His wisdom had subjected to itself in a

pious and religious obedience?

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Chapter 4.--God Uses All Creatures as He Will, and Makes Visible Things

for the Manifestation of Himself.

9. What, then, we have alleged by way of example of a single wise man,

although of one still bearing a mortal body and still seeing only in

part, may be allowably extended also to a family, where there is a

society of such men, or to a city, or even to the whole world, if the

chief rule and government of human affairs were in the hands of the

wise, and of those who were piously and perfectly subject to God; but

because this is not the case as yet (for it behoves us first to be

exercised in this our pilgrimage after mortal fashion, and to be taught

with stripes by force of gentleness and patience), let us turn our

thoughts to that country itself that is above and heavenly, from which

we here are pilgrims. For there the will of God, "who maketh His angels

spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire," [365] presiding among

spirits which are joined in perfect peace and friendship, and combined

in one will by a kind of spiritual fire of charity, as it were in an

elevated and holy and secret seat, as in its own house and in its own

temple, thence diffuses itself through all things by certain most

perfectly ordered movements of the creature; first spiritual, then

corporeal; and uses all according to the unchangeable pleasure of its

own purpose, whether incorporeal things or things corporeal, whether

rational or irrational spirits, whether good by His grace or evil

through their own will. But as the more gross and inferior bodies are

governed in due order by the more subtle and powerful ones, so all

bodies are governed by the living spirit; and the living spirit devoid

of reason, by the reasonable living spirit; and the reasonable living

spirit that makes default and sins, by the living and reasonable spirit

that is pious and just; and that by God Himself, and so the universal

creature by its Creator, from whom and through whom and in whom it is

also created and established. [366] And so it comes to pass that the

will of God is the first and the highest cause of all corporeal

appearances and motions. For nothing is done visibly or sensibly,

unless either by command or permission from the interior palace,

invisible and intelligible, of the supreme Governor, according to the

unspeakable justice of rewards and punishments, of favor and

retribution, in that far-reaching and boundless commonwealth of the

whole creature.

10. If, therefore, the Apostle Paul, although he still bare the burden

of the body, which is subject to corruption and presseth down the soul,

[367] and although he still saw only in part and in an enigma, [368]

wishing to depart and be with Christ, [369] and groaning within

himself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of his body,

[370] yet was able to preach the Lord Jesus Christ significantly, in

one way by his tongue, in another by epistle, in another by the

sacrament of His body and blood (since, certainly, we do not call

either the tongue of the apostle, or the parchments, or the ink, or the

significant sounds which his tongue uttered, or the alphabetical signs

written on skins, the body and blood of Christ; but that only which we

take of the fruits of the earth and consecrate by mystic prayer, and

then receive duly to our spiritual health in memory of the passion of

our Lord for us: and this, although it is brought by the hands of men

to that visible form, yet is not sanctified to become so great a

sacrament, except by the spirit of God working invisibly; since God

works everything that is done in that work through corporeal movements,

by setting in motion primarily the invisible things of His servants,

whether the souls of men, or the services of hidden spirits subject to

Himself): what wonder if also in the creature of heaven and earth, of

sea and air, God works the sensible and visible things which He wills,

in order to signify and manifest Himself in them, as He Himself knows

it to be fitting, without any appearing of His very substance itself,

whereby He is, which is altogether unchangeable, and more inwardly and

secretly exalted than all spirits whom He has created?

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[365] Ps. civ. 4

[366] Col. i. 16

[367] Wisd. ix. 15

[368] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[369] Phil. i. 23

[370] Rom. viii. 23

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Chapter 5.--Why Miracles are Not Usual Works.

11. For since the divine power administers the whole spiritual and

corporeal creature, the waters of the sea are summoned and poured out

upon the face of the earth on certain days of every year. But when this

was done at the prayer of the holy Elijah; because so continued and

long a course of fair weather had gone before, that men were famished;

and because at that very hour, in which the servant of God prayed, the

air itself had not, by any moist aspect, put forth signs of the coming

rain; the divine power was apparent in the great and rapid showers that

followed, and by which that miracle was granted and dispensed. [371] In

like manner, God works ordinarily through thunders and lightnings: but

because these were wrought in an unusual manner on Mount Sinai, and

those sounds were not uttered with a confused noise, but so that it

appeared by most sure proofs that certain intimations were given by

them, they were miracles. [372] Who draws up the sap through the root

of the vine to the bunch of grapes, and makes the wine, except God;

who, while man plants and waters, Himself giveth the increase? [373]

But when, at the command of the Lord, the water was turned into wine

with an extraordinary quickness, the divine power was made manifest, by

the confession even of the foolish. [374] Who ordinarily clothes the

trees with leaves and flowers except God? Yet, when the rod of Aaron

the priest blossomed, the Godhead in some way conversed with doubting

humanity. [375] Again, the earthy matter certainly serves in common to

the production and formation both of all kinds of wood and of the flesh

of all animals: and who makes these things, but He who said, Let the

earth bring them forth; [376] and who governs and guides by the same

word of His, those things which He has created? Yet, when He changed

the same matter out of the rod of Moses into the flesh of a serpent,

immediately and quickly, that change, which was unusual, although of a

thing which was changeable, was a miracle. [377] But who is it that

gives life to every living thing at its birth, unless He who gave life

to that serpent also for the moment, as there was need. [378]

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[371] 1 Kings xviii. 45

[372] Ex. xix. 6

[373] 1 Cor. iii. 7

[374] John ii. 9

[375] Num. xvii. 8

[376] Gen. i. 24

[377] Ex. iv. 3

[378] [One chief reason why a miracle is incredible for the skeptic, is

the difficulty of working it. If the miracle were easy of execution for

man--who for the skeptic is the measure of power--his disbelief of it

would disappear. In reference to this objection, Augustin calls

attention to the fact, that so far as difficulty of performance is

concerned, the products of nature are as impossible to man as

supernatural products. Aaron could no more have made an almond rod

blossom and fructuate on an almond tree, than off it. That a miracle is

difficult to be wrought is, consequently, no good reason for

disbelieving its reality.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 6.--Diversity Alone Makes a Miracle.

And who is it that restored to the corpses their proper souls when the

dead rose again, [379] unless He who gives life to the flesh in the

mother's womb, in order that they may come into being who yet are to

die? But when such things happen in a continuous kind of river of

ever-flowing succession, passing from the hidden to the visible, and

from the visible to the hidden, by a regular and beaten track, then

they are called natural; when, for the admonition of men, they are

thrust in by an unusual changeableness, then they are called miracles.

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[379] Ezek. xxxvii. 1-10

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Chapter 7.--Great Miracles Wrought by Magic Arts.

12. I see here what may occur to a weak judgment, namely, why such

miracles are wrought also by magic arts; for the wise men of Pharaoh

likewise made serpents, and did other like things. Yet it is still more

a matter of wonder, how it was that the power of those magicians, which

was able to make serpents, when it came to very small flies, failed

altogether. For the lice, by which third plague the proud people of

Egypt were smitten, are very short-lived little flies; yet there

certainly the magicians failed, saying, "This is the finger of God."

[380] And hence it is given us to understand that not even those angels

and powers of the air that transgressed, who have been thrust down into

that lowest darkness, as into a peculiar prison, from their habitation

in that lofty ethereal purity, through whom magic arts have whatever

power they have, can do anything except by power given from above. Now

that power is given either to deceive the deceitful, as it was given

against the Egyptians, and against the magicians also themselves, in

order that in the seducing of those spirits they might seem admirable

by whom they were wrought, but to be condemned by the truth of God; or

for the admonishing of the faithful, lest they should desire to do

anything of the kind as though it were a great thing, for which reason

they have been handed down to us also by the authority of Scripture; or

lastly, for the exercising, proving, and manifesting of the patience of

the righteous. For it was not by any small power of visible miracles

that Job lost all that he had, and both his children and his bodily

health itself. [381]

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[380] Ex. vii. and viii

[381] Job i. and ii

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Chapter 8.--God Alone Creates Those Things Which are Changed by Magic

Art.

13. Yet it is not on this account to be thought that the matter of

visible things is subservient to the bidding of those wicked angels;

but rather to that of God, by whom this power is given, just so far as

He, who is unchangeable, determines in His lofty and spiritual abode to

give it. For water and fire and earth are subservient even to wicked

men, who are condemned to the mines, in order that they may do

therewith what they will, but only so far as is permitted. Nor, in

truth, are those evil angels to be called creators, because by their

means the magicians, withstanding the servant of God, made frogs and

serpents; for it was not they who created them. But, in truth, some

hidden seeds of all things that are born corporeally and visibly, are

concealed in the corporeal elements of this world. For those seeds that

are visible now to our eyes from fruits and living things, are quite

distinct from the hidden seeds of those former seeds; from which, at

the bidding of the Creator, the water produced the first swimming

creatures and fowl, and the earth the first buds after their kind, and

the first living creatures after their kind. [382] For neither at that

time were those seeds so drawn forth into products of their several

kinds, as that the power of production was exhausted in those products;

but oftentimes, suitable combinations of circumstances are wanting,

whereby they may be enabled to burst forth and complete their species.

For, consider, the very least shoot is a seed; for, if fitly consigned

to the earth, it produces a tree. But of this shoot there is a yet more

subtle seed in some grain of the same species, and this is visible even

to us. But of this grain also there is further still a seed, which,

although we are unable to see it with our eyes, yet we can conjecture

its existence from our reason; because, except there were some such

power in those elements, there would not so frequently be produced from

the earth things which had not been sown there; nor yet so many

animals, without any previous commixture of male and female; whether on

the land, or in the water, which yet grow, and by commingling bring

forth others, while themselves sprang up without any union of parents.

And certainly bees do not conceive the seeds of their young by

commixture, but gather them as they lie scattered over the earth with

their mouth. [383] For the Creator of these invisible seeds is the

Creator of all things Himself; since whatever comes forth to our sight

by being born, receives the first beginnings of its course from hidden

seeds, and takes the successive increments of its proper size and its

distinctive forms from these as it were original rules. As therefore we

do not call parents the creators of men, nor farmers the creators of

corn,--although it is by the outward application of their actions that

the power [384] of God operates within for the creating these

things;--so it is not right to think not only the bad but even the good

angels to be creators, if, through the subtilty of their perception and

body, they know the seeds of things which to us are more hidden, and

scatter them secretly through fit temperings of the elements, and so

furnish opportunities of producing things, and of accelerating their

increase. But neither do the good angels do these things, except as far

as God commands, nor do the evil ones do them wrongfully, except as far

as He righteously permits. For the malignity of the wicked one makes

his own will wrongful; but the power to do so, he receives rightfully,

whether for his own punishment, or, in the case of others, for the

punishment of the wicked, or for the praise of the good.

14. Accordingly, the Apostle Paul, distinguishing God's creating and

forming within, from the operations of the creature which are applied

from without, and drawing a similitude from agriculture, says, "I

planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." [385] As,

therefore, in the case of spiritual life itself, no one except God can

work righteousness in our minds, yet men also are able to preach the

gospel as an outward means, not only the good in sincerity, but also

the evil in pretence; [386] so in the creation of visible things it is

God that works from within; but the exterior operations, whether of

good or bad, of angels or men, or even of any kind of animal, according

to His own absolute power, and to the distribution of faculties, and

the several appetites for things pleasant, which He Himself has

imparted, are applied by Him to that nature of things wherein He

creates all things, in like manner as agriculture is to the soil.

Wherefore I can no more call the bad angels, evoked by magic arts, the

creators of the frogs and serpents, than I can say that bad men were

creators of the corn crop, which I see to have sprung up through their

labor.

15. Just as Jacob, again, was not the creator of the colors in the

flocks, because he placed the various colored rods for the several

mothers, as they drank, to look at in conceiving. [387] Yet neither

were the cattle themselves creators of the variety of their own

offspring, because the variegated image, impressed through their eyes

by the sight of the varied rods, clave to their soul, but could affect

the body that was animated by the spirit thus affected only through

sympathy with this commingling, so far as to stain with color the

tender beginnings of their offspring. For that they are so affected

from themselves, whether the soul from the body, or the body from the

soul, arises in truth from suitable reasons, which immutably exist in

that highest wisdom of God Himself, which no extent of place contains;

and which, while it is itself unchangeable, yet quits not one even of

those things which are changeable, because there is not one of them

that is not created by itself. For it was the unchangeable and

invisible reason of the wisdom of God, by which all things are created,

which caused not rods, but cattle, to be born from cattle; but that the

color of the cattle conceived should be in any degree influenced by the

variety of the rods, came to pass through the soul of the pregnant

cattle being affected through their eyes from without, and so according

to its own measure drawing inwardly within itself the rule of

formation, which it received from the innermost power of its own

Creator. How great, however, may be the power of the soul in affecting

and changing corporeal substance (although certainly it cannot be

called the creator of the body, because every cause of changeable and

sensible substance, and all its measure and number and weight, by which

are brought to pass both its being at all and its being of such and

such a nature, arise from the intelligible and unchangeable life, which

is above all things, and which reaches even to the most distant and

earthly things), is a very copious subject, and one not now necessary.

But I thought the act of Jacob about the cattle should be noticed, for

this reason, viz. in order that it might be perceived that, if the man

who thus placed those rods cannot be called the creator of the colors

in the lambs and kids; nor yet even the souls themselves of the

mothers, which colored the seeds conceived in the flesh by the image of

variegated color, conceived through the eyes of the body, so far as

nature permitted it; much less can it be said that the creators of the

frogs and serpents were the bad angels, through whom the magicians of

Pharaoh then made them.

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[382] Gen. i. 20-25

[383] [Augustin is not alone in his belief that the bee is an exception

to the dictum; omne animal ex ovo. As late as 1744, Thorley, an English

"scientist," said that "the manner in which bees propagate their

species is entirely hid from the eyes of all men; and the most strict,

diligent, and curious observers and inquisitors have not been able to

discover it. It is a secret, and will remain a mystery. Dr. Butler says

that they do not copulate as other living creatures do." (Thorley:

Melisselogia. Section viii.) The observations of Huber and others have

disproved this opinion. Some infer that ignorance of physics proves

ignorance of philosophy and theology. The difference between matter and

mind is so great, that erroneous opinions in one province are

compatible with correct ones in the other. It does not follow that

because Augustin had wrong notions about bees, and no knowledge at all

of the steam engine and telegraph, his knowledge of God and the soul

was inferior to that of a modern materialist.--W.G.T.S.]

[384] [The English translator renders "virtus" in its secondary sense

of "goodness." Augustin employs it here, in its primary sense of

"energy," "force."--W.G.T.S.]

[385] 1 Cor. iii. 6

[386] Phil. i. 18

[387] Gen. xxx. 41

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Chapter 9.--The Original Cause of All Things is from God.

16. For it is one thing to make and administer the creature from the

innermost and highest turning-point of causation, which He alone does

who is God the Creator; but quite another thing to apply some operation

from without in proportion to the strength and faculties assigned to

each by Him, so that what is created may come forth into being at this

time or at that, and in this or that way. For all these things in the

way of original and beginning have already been created in a kind of

texture of the elements, but they come forth when they get the

opportunity. [388] For as mothers are pregnant with young, so the world

itself is pregnant with the causes of things that are born; which are

not created in it, except from that highest essence, where nothing

either springs up or dies, either begins to be or ceases. But the

applying from without of adventitious causes, which, although they are

not natural, yet are to be applied according to nature, in order that

those things which are contained and hidden in the secret bosom of

nature may break forth and be outwardly created in some way by the

unfolding of the proper measures and numbers and weights which they

have received in secret from Him "who has ordered all things in measure

and number and weight:" [389] this is not only in the power of bad

angels, but also of bad men, as I have shown above by the example of

agriculture.

17. But lest the somewhat different condition of animals should trouble

any one, in that they have the breath of life with the sense of

desiring those things that are according to nature, and of avoiding

those things that are contrary to it; we must consider also, how many

men there are who know from what herbs or flesh, or from what juices or

liquids you please, of whatever sort, whether so placed or so buried,

or so bruised or so mixed, this or that animal is commonly born; yet

who can be so foolish as to dare to call himself the creator of these

animals? Is it, therefore, to be wondered at, if just as any, the most

worthless of men, can know whence such or such worms and flies are

produced; so the evil angels in proportion to the subtlety of their

perceptions discern in the more hidden seeds of the elements whence

frogs and serpents are produced, and so through certain and known

opportune combinations applying these seeds by secret movements, cause

them to be created, but do not create them? Only men do not marvel at

those things that are usually done by men. But if any one chance to

wonder at the quickness of those growths, in that those living beings

were so quickly made, let him consider how even this may be brought

about by men in proportion to the measure of human capability. For

whence is it that the same bodies generate worms more quickly in summer

than in winter, or in hotter than in colder places? Only these things

are applied by men with so much the more difficulty, in proportion as

their earthly and sluggish members are wanting in subtlety of

perception, and in rapidity of bodily motion. And hence it arises that

in the case of any kind of angels, in proportion as it is easier for

them to draw out the proximate causes from the elements, so much the

more marvellous is their rapidity in works of this kind.

18. But He only is the creator who is the chief former of these things.

Neither can any one be this, unless He with whom primarily rests the

measure, number, and weight of all things existing; and He is God the

one Creator, by whose unspeakable power it comes to pass, also, that

what these angels were able to do if they were permitted, they are

therefore not able to do because they are not permitted. For there is

no other reason why they who made frogs and serpents were not able to

make the most minute flies, unless because the greater power of God was

present prohibiting them, through the Holy Spirit; which even the

magicians themselves confessed, saying, "This is the finger of God."

[390] But what they are able to do by nature, yet cannot do, because

they are prohibited; and what the very condition of their nature itself

does not suffer them to do; it is difficult, nay, impossible, for man

to search out, unless through that gift of God which the apostle

mentions when he says, "To another the discerning of spirits." [391]

For we know that a man can walk, yet that he cannot do so if he is not

permitted; but that he cannot fly, even if he be permitted. So those

angels, also, are able to do certain things if they are permitted by

more powerful angels, according to the supreme commandment of God; but

cannot do certain other things, not even if they are permitted by them;

because He does not permit from whom they have received such and such a

measure of natural powers: who, even by His angels, does not usually

permit what He has given them power to be able to do.

19. Excepting, therefore, those corporeal things which are done in the

order of nature in a perfectly usual series of times, as e.g., the

rising and setting of the stars, the generations and deaths of animals,

the innumerable diversities of seeds and buds, the vapors and the

clouds, the snow and the rain, the lightnings and the thunder, the

thunderbolts and the hail, the winds and the fire, cold and heat, and

all like things; excepting also those which in the same order of nature

occur rarely, such as eclipses, unusual appearances of stars, and

monsters, and earthquakes, and such like;--all these, I say, are to be

excepted, of which indeed the first and chief cause is only the will of

God; whence also in the Psalm, when some things of this kind had been

mentioned, "Fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind," lest any one

should think those to be brought about either by chance or only from

corporeal causes, or even from such as are spiritual, but exist apart

from the will of God, it is added immediately, "fulfilling His word."

[392]

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[388] [This is the same as the theological distinction between

substances and their modifications. "The former," says Howe, "are the

proper object of creation strictly taken; the modifications of things

are not properly created, in the strictest sense of creation, but are

educed and brought forth out of those substantial things that were

themselves created, or made out of nothing."--Germs are originated ex

nihilo, and fall under creation proper; their evolution and development

takes place according to the nature and inherent force of the germ, and

falls under providence, in distinction from creation. See the writer's

Theological Essays, 133-137.--W.G.T.S.]

[389] Wisd. xi. 20

[390] Ex. vii. 12, and viii. 7, 18, 19

[391] 1 Cor. xii. 10

[392] Ps. cxlviii. 8

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Chapter 10.--In How Many Ways the Creature is to Be Taken by Way of

Sign. The Eucharist.

Excepting, therefore, all these things as I just now said, there are

some also of another kind; which, although from the same corporeal

substance, are yet brought within reach of our senses in order to

announce something from God, and these are properly called miracles and

signs; yet is not the person of God Himself assumed in all things which

are announced to us by the Lord God. When, however, that person is

assumed, it is sometimes made manifest as an angel; sometimes in that

form which is not an angel in his own proper being, although it is

ordered and ministered by an angel. Again, when it is assumed in that

form which is not an angel in his own proper being; sometimes in this

case it is a body itself already existing, assumed after some kind of

change, in order to make that message manifest; sometimes it is one

that comes into being for the purpose, and that being accomplished, is

discarded. Just as, also, when men are the messengers, sometimes they

speak the words of God in their own person, as when it is premised,

"The Lord said," or, "Thus saith the Lord," [393] or any other such

phrase, but sometimes without any such prefix, they take upon

themselves the very person of God, as e.g.: "I will instruct thee, and

teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go:" [394] so, not only in

word, but also in act, the signifying of the person of God is imposed

upon the prophet, in order that he may bear that person in the

ministering of the prophecy; just as he, for instance, bore that person

who divided his garment into twelve parts, and gave ten of them to the

servant of King Solomon, to the future king of Israel. [395] Sometimes,

also, a thing which was not a prophet in his own proper self, and which

existed already among earthly things, was assumed in order to signify

this; as Jacob, when he had seen the dream, upon waking up did with the

stone, which when asleep he had under his head. [396] Sometimes a thing

is made in the same kind, for the mere purpose; so as either to

continue a little while in existence, as that brazen serpent was able

to do which was lifted up in the wilderness, [397] and as written

records are able to do likewise; or so as to pass away after having

accomplished its ministry, as the bread made for the purpose is

consumed in the receiving of the sacrament.

20. But because these things are known to men, in that they are done by

men, they may well meet with reverence as being holy things, but they

cannot cause wonder as being miracles. And therefore those things which

are done by angels are the more wonderful to us, in that they are more

difficult and more known; but they are known and easy to them as being

their own actions. An angel speaks in the person of God to man, saying,

"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;"

the Scripture having said just before, "The angel of the Lord appeared

to him." [398] And a man also speaks in the person of God, saying,

"Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee, O Israel: I am the

Lord thy God." [399] A rod was taken to serve as a sign, and was

changed into a serpent by angelical power; [400] but although that

power is wanting to man, yet a stone was taken also by man for a

similar sign. [401] There is a wide difference between the deed of the

angel and the deed of the man. The former is both to be wondered at and

to be understood, the latter only to be understood. That which is

understood from both, is perhaps one and the same; but those things

from which it is understood, are different. Just as if the name of God

were written both in gold and in ink; the former would be the more

precious, the latter the more worthless; yet that which is signified in

both is one and the same. And although the serpent that came from

Moses' rod signified the same thing as Jacob's stone, yet Jacob's stone

signified something better than did the serpents of the magicians. For

as the anointing of the stone signified Christ in the flesh, in which

He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows; [402] so

the rod of Moses, turned into a serpent, signified Christ Himself made

obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. [403] Whence it is

said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so

must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him

should not perish, but have everlasting life;" [404] just as by gazing

on that serpent which was lifted up in the wilderness, they did not

perish by the bites of the serpents. For "our old man is crucified with

Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." [405] For by the serpent

death is understood, which was wrought by the serpent in paradise,

[406] the mode of speech expressing the effect by the efficient.

Therefore the rod passed into the serpent, Christ into death; and the

serpent again into the rod, whole Christ with His body into the

resurrection; which body is the Church; [407] and this shall be in the

end of time, signified by the tail, which Moses held, in order that it

might return into a rod. [408] But the serpents of the magicians, like

those who are dead in the world, unless by believing in Christ they

shall have been as it were swallowed up by, [409] and have entered

into, His body, will not be able to rise again in Him. Jacob's stone,

therefore, as I said, signified something better than did the serpents

of the magicians; yet the deed of the magicians was much more

wonderful. But these things in this way are no hindrance to the

understanding of the matter; just as if the name of a man were written

in gold, and that of God in ink.

21. What man, again, knows how the angels made or took those clouds and

fires in order to signify the message they were bearing, even if we

supposed that the Lord or the Holy Spirit was manifested in those

corporeal forms? Just as infants do not know of that which is placed

upon the altar and consumed after the performance of the holy

celebration, whence or in what manner it is made, or whence it is taken

for religious use. And if they were never to learn from their own

experience or that of others, and never to see that species of thing

except during the celebration of the sacrament, when it is being

offered and given; and if it were told them by the most weighty

authority whose body and blood it is; they will believe nothing else,

except that the Lord absolutely appeared in this form to the eyes of

mortals, and that that liquid actually flowed from the piercing of a

side [410] which resembled this. But it is certainly a useful caution

to myself, that I should remember what my own powers are, and admonish

my brethren that they also remember what theirs are, lest human

infirmity pass on beyond what is safe. For how the angels do these

things, or rather, how God does these things by His angels, and how far

He wills them to be done even by the bad angels, whether by permitting,

or commanding, or compelling, from the hidden seat of His own supreme

power; this I can neither penetrate by the sight of the eyes, nor make

clear by assurance of reason, nor be carried on to comprehend it by

reach of intellect, so as to speak thereupon to all questions that may

be asked respecting these matters, as certainly as if I were an angel,

or a prophet, or an apostle. "For the thoughts of mortal men are

miserable, and our devices are but uncertain. For the corruptible body

presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the

mind, that museth upon many things. And hardly do we guess aright at

things that are upon earth, and with labor do we find the things that

are before us; but the things that are in heaven, who hath searched

out?" But because it goes on to say, "And Thy counsel who hath known,

except Thou give wisdom, and send Thy Holy Spirit from above;" [411]

therefore we refrain indeed from searching out the things which are in

heaven, under which kind are contained both angelical bodies according

to their proper dignity, and any corporeal action of those bodies; yet,

according to the Spirit of God sent to us from above, and to His grace

imparted to our minds, I dare to say confidently, that neither God the

Father, nor His Word, nor His Spirit, which is the one God, is in any

way changeable in regard to that which He is, and whereby He is that

which He is; and much less is in this regard visible. Since there are

no doubt some things changeable, yet not visible, as are our thoughts,

and memories, and wills, and the whole incorporeal creature; but there

is nothing that is visible that is not also changeable.

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[393] Jer. xxxi. 1, 2

[394] Ps. xxxii. 8

[395] 1 Kings xi. 30, 31

[396] Gen. xxviii. 18

[397] Num. xxi. 9

[398] Ex. iii. 6, 2

[399] Ps. lxxxi. 8, 10

[400] Ex. vii. 10

[401] Gen. xxviii. 18

[402] Ps. xlv. 7

[403] Phil. ii. 9

[404] John iii. 14, 15

[405] Rom. vi. 6

[406] Gen. iii

[407] Col. i. 24

[408] Ex. iv. 4

[409] Ex. vii. 12

[410] John xix. 34

[411] Wisd. ix. 14-17

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Chapter 11.--The Essence of God Never Appeared in Itself. Divine

Appearances to the Fathers Wrought by the Ministry of Angels. An

Objection Drawn from the Mode of Speech Removed. That the Appearing of

God to Abraham Himself, Just as that to Moses, Was Wrought by Angels.

The Same Thing is Proved by the Law Being Given to Moses by Angels.

What Has Been Said in This Book, and What Remains to Be Said in the

Next.

Wherefore the substance, or, if it is better so to say, the essence of

God, [412] wherein we understand, in proportion to our measure, in

however small a degree, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, since

it is in no way changeable, can in no way in its proper self be

visible.

22. It is manifest, accordingly, that all those appearances to the

fathers, when God was presented to them according to His own

dispensation, suitable to the times, were wrought through the creature.

And if we cannot discern in what manner He wrought them by ministry of

angels, yet we say that they were wrought by angels; but not from our

own power of discernment, lest we should seem to any one to be wise

beyond our measure, whereas we are wise so as to think soberly, as God

hath dealt to us the measure of faith; [413] and we believe, and

therefore speak. [414] For the authority is extant of the divine

Scriptures, from which our reason ought not to turn aside; nor by

leaving the solid support of the divine utterance, to fall headlong

over the precipice of its own surmisings, in matters wherein neither

the perceptions of the body rule, nor the clear reason of the truth

shines forth. Now, certainly, it is written most clearly in the Epistle

to the Hebrews, when the dispensation of the New Testament was to be

distinguished from the dispensation of the Old, according to the

fitness of ages and of times, that not only those visible things, but

also the word itself, was wrought by angels. For it is said thus: "But

to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on my right hand, until

I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering

spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of

salvation?" [415] Whence it appears that all those things were not only

wrought by angels, but wrought also on our account, that is, on account

of the people of God, to whom is promised the inheritance of eternal

life. As it is written also to the Corinthians, "Now all these things

happened unto them in a figure: and they are written for our

admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." [416] And then,

demonstrating by plain consequence that as at that time the word was

spoken by the angels, so now by the Son; "Therefore," he says, "we

ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard,

lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by

angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received

a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so

great salvation?" And then, as though you asked, What salvation?--in

order to show that he is now speaking of the New Testament, that is, of

the word which was spoken not by angels, but by the Lord, he says,

"Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed

unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both

with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy

Ghost, according to His own will." [417]

23. But some one may say, Why then is it written, "The Lord said to

Moses;" and not, rather, The angel said to Moses? Because, when the

crier proclaims the words of the judge, it is not usually written in

the record, so and so the crier said, but so and so the judge. In like

manner also, when the holy prophet speaks, although we say, The prophet

said, we mean nothing else to be understood than that the Lord said;

and if we were to say, The Lord said, we should not put the prophet

aside, but only intimate who spake by him. And, indeed, these

Scriptures often reveal the angel to be the Lord, of whose speaking it

is from time to time said, "the Lord said," as we have shown already.

But on account of those who, since the Scripture in that place

specifies an angel, will have the Son of God Himself and in Himself to

be understood, because He is called an angel by the prophet, as

announcing the will of His Father and of Himself; I have therefore

thought fit to produce a plainer testimony from this epistle, where it

is not said by an angel, but "by angels."

24. For Stephen, too, in the Acts of the Apostles, relates these things

in that manner in which they are also written in the Old Testament:

"Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken," he says; "The God of glory

appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia." [418]

But lest any one should think that the God of glory appeared then to

the eyes of any mortal in that which He is in Himself, he goes on to

say that an angel appeared to Moses. "Then fled Moses," he says, "at

that saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat

two sons. And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in

the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire

in a bush. When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew

near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, I am

the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and

the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. Then said

the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet," [419] etc. Here,

certainly, he speaks both of angel and of Lord; and of the same as the

God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; as is

written in Genesis.

25. Can there be any one who will say that the Lord appeared to Moses

by an angel, but to Abraham by Himself? Let us not answer this question

from Stephen, but from the book itself, whence Stephen took his

narrative. For, pray, because it is written, "And the Lord God said

unto Abraham;" [420] and a little after, "And the Lord God appeared

unto Abraham;" [421] were these things, for this reason, not done by

angels? Whereas it is said in like manner in another place, "And the

Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door

in the heat of the day;" and yet it is added immediately, "And he lift

up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him:" [422] of whom

we have already spoken. For how will these people, who either will not

rise from the words to the meaning, or easily throw themselves down

from the meaning to the words,--how, I say, will they be able to

explain that God was seen in three men, except they confess that they

were angels, as that which follows also shows? Because it is not said

an angel spoke or appeared to him, will they therefore venture to say

that the vision and voice granted to Moses was wrought by an angel

because it is so written, but that God appeared and spake in His own

substance to Abraham because there is no mention made of an angel? What

of the fact, that even in respect to Abraham an angel is not left

unmentioned? For when his son was ordered to be offered up as a

sacrifice, we read thus: "And it came to pass after these things that

God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold,

here I am. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom

thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there

for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee

of." Certainly God is here mentioned, not an angel. But a little

afterwards Scripture hath it thus: "And Abraham stretched forth his

hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord

called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said,

Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do

thou anything unto him." What can be answered to this? Will they say

that God commanded that Isaac should be slain, and that an angel

forbade it? and further, that the father himself, in opposition to the

decree of God, who had commanded that he should be slain, obeyed the

angel, who had bidden him spare him? Such an interpretation is to be

rejected as absurd. Yet not even for it, gross and abject as it is,

does Scripture leave any room, for it immediately adds: "For now I know

that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine

only son, on account of me." [423] What is "on account of me," except

on account of Him who had commanded him to be slain? Was then the God

of Abraham the same as the angel, or was it not rather God by an angel?

Consider what follows. Here, certainly, already an angel has been most

clearly spoken of; yet notice the context: "And Abraham lifted up his

eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by

his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a

burnt-offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of

that place, The Lord saw: [424] as it is said to this day, In the mount

the Lord was seen." [425] Just as that which a little before God said

by an angel, "For now I know that thou fearest God;" not because it was

to be understood that God then came to know, but that He brought it to

pass that through God Abraham himself came to know what strength of

heart he had to obey God, even to the sacrificing of his only son:

after that mode of speech in which the effect is signified by the

efficient,--as cold is said to be sluggish, because it makes men

sluggish; so that He was therefore said to know, because He had made

Abraham himself to know, who might well have not discerned the firmness

of his own faith, had it not been proved by such a trial. So here, too,

Abraham called the name of the place "The Lord saw," that is, caused

Himself to be seen. For he goes on immediately to say, "As it is said

to this day, In the mount the Lord was seen." Here you see the same

angel is called Lord: wherefore, unless because the Lord spake by the

angel? But if we pass on to that which follows, the angel altogether

speaks as a prophet, and reveals expressly that God is speaking by the

angel. "And the angel of the Lord," he says, "called unto Abraham out

of heaven the second time, and said, By myself I have sworn, saith the

Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy

son, thine only son, on account of me," [426] etc. Certainly these

words, viz. that he by whom the Lord speaks should say, "Thus saith the

Lord," are commonly used by the prophets also. Does the Son of God say

of the Father, "The Lord saith," while He Himself is that Angel of the

Father? What then? Do they not see how hard pressed they are about

these three men who appeared to Abraham, when it had been said before,

"The Lord appeared to him?" Were they not angels because they are

called men? Let them read Daniel, saying, "Behold the man Gabriel."

[427]

26. But why do we delay any longer to stop their mouths by another most

clear and most weighty proof, where not an angel in the singular nor

men in the plural are spoken of, but simply angels; by whom not any

particular word was wrought, but the Law itself is most distinctly

declared to be given; which certainly none of the faithful doubts that

God gave to Moses for the control of the children of Israel, or yet,

that it was given by angels. So Stephen speaks: "Ye stiff-necked," he

says, "and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the

Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have

not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed

before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the

betrayers and murderers: who have received the Law by the disposition

of angels, [428] and have not kept it." [429] What is more evident than

this? What more strong than such an authority? The Law, indeed, was

given to that people by the disposition of angels; but the advent of

our Lord Jesus Christ was by it prepared and pre-announced; and He

Himself, as the Word of God, was in some wonderful and unspeakable

manner in the angels, by whose disposition the Law itself was given.

And hence He said in the Gospel, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would

have believed me; for he wrote of me." [430] Therefore then the Lord

was speaking by the angels; and the son of God, who was to be the

Mediator of God and men, from the seed of Abraham, was preparing His

own advent by the angels, that He might find some by whom He would be

received, confessing themselves guilty, whom the Law unfulfilled had

made transgressors. And hence the apostle also says to the Galatians,

"Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of

transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made,

which [seed] was ordered [431] through angels in the hand of a

mediator;" [432] that is, ordered through angels in His own hand. For

He was not born in limitation, but in power. But you learn in another

place that he does not mean any one of the angels as a mediator, but

the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in so far as He deigned to be made man:

"For there is one God," he says, "and one Mediator between God and man,

the man Christ Jesus." [433] Hence that passover in the killing of the

lamb: [434] hence all those things which are figuratively spoken in the

Law, of Christ to come in the flesh, and to suffer, but also to rise

again, which Law was given by the disposition of angels; in which

angels, were certainly the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit;

and in which, sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the

Holy Spirit, and sometimes God, without any distinction of person, was

figuratively signified by them, although appearing in visible and

sensible forms, yet by His own creature, not by His substance, in order

to the seeing of which, hearts are cleansed through all those things

which are seen by the eyes and heard by the ears.

27. But now, as I think, that which we had undertaken to show in this

book has been sufficiently discussed and demonstrated, according to our

capacity; and it has been established, both by probable reason, so far

as a man, or rather, so far as I am able, and by strength of authority,

so far as the divine declarations from the Holy Scriptures have been

made clear, that those words and bodily appearances which were given to

these ancient fathers of ours before the incarnation of the Saviour,

when God was said to appear, were wrought by angels: whether themselves

speaking or doing something in the person of God, as we have shown that

the prophets also were wont to do, or assuming from the creature that

which they themselves were not, wherein God might be shown in a figure

to men; which manner of showing also, Scripture teaches by many

examples, that the prophets, too, did not omit. It remains, therefore,

now for us to consider,--since both in the Lord as born of a virgin,

and in the Holy Spirit descending in a corporeal form like a dove,

[435] and in the tongues like as of fire, which appeared with a sound

from heaven on the day of Pentecost, after the ascension of the Lord,

[436] it was not the Word of God Himself by His own substance, in which

He is equal and eternal with the Father, nor the Spirit of the Father

and of the Son by His own substance, in which He Himself also is equal

and co-eternal with both, but assuredly a creature, such as could be

formed and exist in these fashions, which appeared to corporeal and

mortal senses,--it remains, I say, to consider what difference there is

between these manifestations and those which were proper to the Son of

God and to the Holy Spirit, although wrought by the visible creature;

[437] which subject we shall more conveniently begin in another book.

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[412] ["Substance," from sub stans, is a passive term, denoting latent

and potential being. "Essence," from esse, is an active term, denoting

energetic being. The schoolmen, as Augustin does here, preferred the

latter term to the former, though employing both to designate the

divine nature.--W.G.T.S.]

[413] Rom. xii. 3

[414] 2 Cor. iv. 13

[415] Heb. i. 13, 14

[416] 1 Cor. x. 11

[417] Heb. ii. 1-4

[418] Acts vii. 2

[419] Ex. ii. 15 and iii. 7, and Acts vii. 29-33

[420] Gen. xii. 1

[421] Gen. xvii. 1

[422] Gen. xviii. 1, 2

[423] Propter me

[424] Dominus vidit

[425] Dominus visus est

[426] Gen. xxii

[427] Dan. ix. 21

[428] In edictis angelorum

[429] Acts vii. 51-53

[430] John v. 46

[431] Dispositum

[432] Gal. iii. 19

[433] 1 Tim. ii. 5

[434] Ex. xii

[435] Matt. iii. 16

[436] Acts ii. 1-4

[437] [The reference here is to the difference between a theophany, and

an incarnation; already alluded to, in the note on p. 149.--W.G.T.S.]

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Book IV.

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Explains for what the Son of God was sent, viz, that by Christ's dying

for sinners, we were to be convinced how great is God's love for us,

and also what manner of men we are whom He loved. That the Word came in

the flesh, to the purpose also of enabling us to be so cleansed as to

contemplate and cleave to God. That our double death was abolished by

His death, being one and single. And hereupon is discussed, how the

single of our Saviour harmonizes to salvation with our double; and the

perfection is treated at length of the senary number, to which the

ratio itself of single to double is reducible. That all are gathered

together from many into one by the one Mediator of life, viz. Christ,

through Whom alone is wrought the true cleansing of the soul. Further

it is demonstrated that the Son of God, although made less by being

sent, on account of the form of a servant which He took, is not

therefore less than the Father according to the form of God, because He

was sent by Himself: and that the same account is to be given of the

sending of the Holy Spirit.

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Preface.--The Knowledge of God is to Be Sought from God.

1. Theknowledge of things terrestrial and celestial is commonly thought

much of by men. Yet those doubtless judge better who prefer to that

knowledge, the knowledge of themselves; and that mind is more

praiseworthy which knows even its own weakness, than that which,

without regard to this, searches out, and even comes to know, the ways

of the stars, or which holds fast such knowledge already acquired,

while ignorant of the way by which itself to enter into its own proper

health and strength. But if any one has already become awake towards

God, kindled by the warmth of the Holy Spirit, and in the love of God

has become vile in his own eyes; and through wishing, yet not having

strength to come in unto Him, and through the light He gives, has given

heed to himself, and has found himself, and has learned that his own

filthiness cannot mingle with His purity; and feels it sweet to weep

and to entreat Him, that again and again He will have compassion, until

he have put off all his wretchedness; and to pray confidently, as

having already received of free gift the pledge of salvation through

his only Saviour and Enlightener of man:--such an one, so acting, and

so lamenting, knowledge does not puff up, because charity edifieth;

[438] for he has preferred knowledge to knowledge, he has preferred to

know his own weakness, rather than to know the walls of the world, the

foundations of the earth, and the pinnacles of heaven. And by obtaining

this knowledge, he has obtained also sorrow; [439] but sorrow for

straying away from the desire of reaching his own proper country, and

the Creator of it, his own blessed God. And if among men such as these,

in the family of Thy Christ, O Lord my God, I groan among Thy poor,

give me out of Thy bread to answer men who do not hunger and thirst

after righteousness, but are sated and abound. [440] But it is the vain

image of those things that has sated them, not Thy truth, which they

have repelled and shrunk from, and so fall into their own vanity. I

certainly know how many figments the human heart gives birth to. And

what is my own heart but a human heart? But I pray the God of my heart,

that I may not vomit forth (eructuem) into these writings any of these

figments for solid truths, but that there may pass into them only what

the breath of His truth has breathed into me; cast out though I am from

the sight of His eyes, [441] and striving from afar to return by the

way which the divinity of His only-begotten Son has made by His

humanity. And this truth, changeable though I am, I so far drink in, as

far as in it I see nothing changeable: neither in place and time, as is

the case with bodies; nor in time alone, and in a certain sense place,

as with the thoughts of our own spirits; nor in time alone, and not

even in any semblance of place, as with some of the reasonings of our

own minds. For the essence of God, whereby He is, has altogether

nothing changeable, neither in eternity, nor in truth, nor in will;

since there truth is eternal, love eternal; and there love is true,

eternity true; and there eternity is loved, and truth is loved.

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[438] 1 Cor. viii. 1

[439] Eccles. i. 18

[440] Matt. v. 6

[441] Ps. xxxi. 22

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Chapter 1.--We are Made Perfect by Acknowledgement of Our Own Weakness.

The Incarnate Word Dispels Our Darkness.

2. But since we are exiled from the unchangeable joy, yet neither cut

off nor torn away from it so that we should not seek eternity, truth,

blessedness, even in those changeable and temporal things (for we wish

neither to die, nor to be deceived, nor to be troubled); visions have

been sent to us from heaven suitable to our state of pilgrimage, in

order to remind us that what we seek is not here, but that from this

pilgrimage we must return thither, whence unless we originated we

should not here seek these things. And first we have had to be

persuaded how much God loved us, lest from despair we should not dare

to look up to Him. And we needed to be shown also what manner of men we

are whom He loved, lest being proud, as if of our own merits, we should

recede the more from Him, and fail the more in our own strength. And

hence He so dealt with us, that we might the rather profit by His

strength, and that so in the weakness of humility the virtue of charity

might be perfected. And this is intimated in the Psalm, where it is

said, "Thou, O God, didst send a spontaneous rain, whereby Thou didst

make Thine inheritance perfect, when it was weary." [442] For by

"spontaneous rain" nothing else is meant than grace, not rendered to

merit, but given freely, [443] whence also it is called grace; for He

gave it, not because we were worthy, but because He willed. And knowing

this, we shall not trust in ourselves; and this is to be made "weak."

But He Himself makes us perfect, who says also to the Apostle Paul, "My

grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in

weakness." [444] Man, then, was to be persuaded how much God loved us,

and what manner of men we were whom He loved; the former, lest we

should despair; the latter, lest we should be proud. And this most

necessary topic the apostle thus explains: "But God commendeth," he

says, "His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ

died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall

be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were

reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled,

we shall be saved by His life." [445] Also in another place: "What," he

says, "shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be

against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us

all, how has He not with Him also freely given us all things?" [446]

Now that which is declared to us as already done, was shown also to the

ancient righteous as about to be done; that through the same faith they

themselves also might be humbled, and so made weak; and might be made

weak, and so perfected.

3. Because therefore the Word of God is One, by which all things were

made, which is the unchangeable truth, all things are simultaneously

therein, potentially and unchangeably; not only those things which are

now in this whole creation, but also those which have been and those

which shall be. And therein they neither have been, nor shall be, but

only are; and all things are life, and all things are one; or rather it

is one being and one life. For all things were so made by Him, that

whatsoever was made in them was not made in Him, but was life in Him.

Since, "in the beginning," the Word was not made, but "the Word was

with God, and the Word was God, and all things were made by Him;"

neither had all things been made by Him, unless He had Himself been

before all things and not made. But in those things which were made by

Him, even body, which is not life, would not have been made by Him,

except it had been life in Him before it was made. For "that which was

made was already life in Him;" and not life of any kind soever: for the

soul also is the life of the body, but this too is made, for it is

changeable; and by what was it made, except by the unchangeable Word of

God? For "all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything

made that was made." "What, therefore, was made was already life in

Him;" and not any kind of life, but "the life [which] was the light of

men;" the light certainly of rational minds, by which men differ from

beasts, and therefore are men. Therefore not corporeal light, which is

the light of the flesh, whether it shine from heaven, or whether it be

lighted by earthly fires; nor that of human flesh only, but also that

of beasts, and down even to the minutest of worms. For all these things

see that light: but that life was the light of men; nor is it far from

any one of us, for in it "we live, and move, and have our being." [447]

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[442] Ps. lxviii. 9.--Pluviam voluntariam.

[443] Gratis.

[444] 2 Cor. xii. 9

[445] Rom. v. 8-10--Donavit.

[446] Rom. viii. 31, 32

[447] Acts xvii. 27, 28

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Chapter 2.--How We are Rendered Apt for the Perception of Truth Through

the Incarnate Word.

4. But "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it

not." Now the "darkness" is the foolish minds of men, made blind by

vicious desires and unbelief. And that the Word, by whom all things

were made, might care for these and heal them, "The Word was made

flesh, and dwelt among us." For our enlightening is the partaking of

the Word, namely, of that life which is the light of men. But for this

partaking we were utterly unfit, and fell short of it, on account of

the uncleanness of sins. Therefore we were to be cleansed. And further,

the one cleansing of the unrighteous and of the proud is the blood of

the Righteous One, and the humbling of God Himself; [448] that we might

be cleansed through Him, made as He was what we are by nature, and what

we are not by sin, that we might contemplate God, which by nature we

are not. For by nature we are not God: by nature we are men, by sin we

are not righteous. Wherefore God, made a righteous man, interceded with

God for man the sinner. For the sinner is not congruous to the

righteous, but man is congruous to man. By joining therefore to us the

likeness of His humanity, He took away the unlikeness of our

unrighteousness; and by being made partaker of our mortality, He made

us partakers of His divinity. For the death of the sinner springing

from the necessity of comdemnation is deservedly abolished by the death

of the Righteous One springing from the free choice of His compassion,

while His single [death and resurrection] answers to our double [death

and resurrection]. [449] For this congruity, or suitableness, or

concord, or consonance, or whatever more appropriate word there may be,

whereby one is [united] to two, is of great weight in all compacting,

or better, perhaps, co-adaptation, of the creature. For (as it just

occurs to me) what I mean is precisely that co-adaptation which the

Greeks call harmonia. However this is not the place to set forth the

power of that consonance of single to double which is found especially

in us, and which is naturally so implanted in us (and by whom, except

by Him who created us?), that not even the ignorant can fail to

perceive it, whether when singing themselves or hearing others. For by

this it is that treble and bass voices are in harmony, so that any one

who in his note departs from it, offends extremely, not only trained

skill, of which the most part of men are devoid, but the very sense of

hearing. To demonstrate this, needs no doubt a long discourse; but any

one who knows it, may make it plain to the very ear in a rightly

ordered monochord.

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[448] John i. 1, 14

[449] [This singleness and doubleness is explained in chapter

3.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 3.--The One Death and Resurrection of The Body of Christ

Harmonizes with Our Double Death and Resurrection of Body and Soul, to

the Effect of Salvation. In What Way the Single Death of Christ is

Bestowed Upon Our Double Death.

5. But for our present need we must discuss, so far as God gives us

power, in what manner the single of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

answers to, and is, so to say, in harmony with our double to the effect

of salvation. We certainly, as no Christian doubts, are dead both in

soul and body: in soul, because of sin; in body, because of the

punishment of sin, and through this also in body because of sin. And to

both these parts of ourselves, that is, both to soul and to body, there

was need both of a medicine and of resurrection, that what had been

changed for the worse might be renewed for the better. Now the death of

the soul is ungodliness, and the death of the body is corruptibility,

through which comes also a departure of the soul from the body. For as

the soul dies when God leaves it, so the body dies when the soul leaves

it; whereby the former becomes foolish, the latter lifeless. For the

soul is raised up again by repentance, and the renewing of life is

begun in the body still mortal by faith, by which men believe on Him

who justifies the ungodly; [450] and it is increased and strengthened

by good habits from day to day, as the inner man is renewed more and

more. [451] But the body, being as it were the outward man, the longer

this life lasts is so much the more corrupted, either by age or by

disease, or by various afflictions, until it come to that last

affliction which all call death. And its resurrection is delayed until

the end; when also our justification itself shall be perfected

ineffably. For then we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He

is. [452] But now, so long as the corruptible body presseth down the

soul, [453] and human life upon earth is all temptation, [454] in His

sight shall no man living be justified, [455] in comparison of the

righteousness in which we shall be made equal with the angels, and of

the glory which shall be revealed in us. But why mention more proofs

respecting the difference between the death of the soul and the death

of the body, when the Lord in one sentence of the Gospel has made

either death easily distinguishable by any one from the other, where He

says, "Let the dead bury their dead"? [456] For burial was the fitting

disposal of a dead body. But by those who were to bury it He meant

those who were dead in soul by the impiety of unbelief, such, namely,

as are awakened when it is said, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise

from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." [457] And there is a

death which the apostle denounces, saying of the widow, "But she that

liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." [458] Therefore the soul,

which was before ungodly and is now godly, is said to have come alive

again from the dead and to live, on account of the righteousness of

faith. But the body is not only said to be about to die, on account of

that departure of the soul which will be; but on account of the great

infirmity of flesh and blood it is even said to be now dead, in a

certain place in the Scriptures, namely, where the apostle says, that

"the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of

righteousness." [459] Now this life is wrought by faith, "since the

just shall live by faith." [460] But what follows? "But if the spirit

of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised

up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His

Spirit which dwelleth in you." [461]

6. Therefore on this double death of ours our Saviour bestowed His own

single death; and to cause both our resurrections, He appointed

beforehand and set forth in mystery and type His own one resurrection.

For He was not a sinner or ungodly, that, as though dead in spirit, He

should need to be renewed in the inner man, and to be recalled as it

were to the life of righteousness by repentance; but being clothed in

mortal flesh, and in that alone dying, in that alone rising again, in

that alone did He answer to both for us; since in it was wrought a

mystery as regards the inner man, and a type as regards the outer. For

it was in a mystery as regards our inner man, so as to signify the

death of our soul, that those words were uttered, not only in the

Psalm, but also on the cross: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken

me?" [462] To which words the apostle agrees, saying, "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;" since by the

crucifixion of the inner man are understood the pains of repentance,

and a certain wholesome agony of self-control, by which death the death

of ungodliness is destroyed, and in which death God has left us. And so

the body of sin is destroyed through such a cross, that now we should

not yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. [463]

Because, if even the inner man certainly is renewed day by day, [464]

yet undoubtedly it is old before it is renewed. For that is done

inwardly of which the same apostle speaks: "Put off the old man, and

put on the new;" which he goes on to explain by saying, "Wherefore,

putting away lying, speak every man truth." [465] But where is lying

put away, unless inwardly, that he who speaketh the truth from his

heart may inhabit the holy hill of God? [466] But the resurrection of

the body of the Lord is shown to belong to the mystery of our own inner

resurrection, where, after He had risen, He says to the woman, "Touch

me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;" [467] with which

mystery the apostle's words agree, where he says, "If ye then be risen

with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on

the right hand of God; set your thoughts [468] on things above." [469]

For not to touch Christ, unless when He had ascended to the Father,

means not to have thoughts [470] of Christ after a fleshly manner.

Again, the death of the flesh of our Lord contains a type of the death

of our outer man, since it is by such suffering most of all that He

exhorts His servants that they should not fear those who kill the body,

but are not able to kill the soul. [471] Wherefore the apostle says,

"That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ

in my flesh." [472] And the resurrection of the body of the Lord is

found to contain a type of the resurrection of our outward man, because

He says to His disciples, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not

flesh and bones, as ye see me have." [473] And one of the disciples

also, handling His scars, exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" [474] And

whereas the entire integrity of that flesh was apparent, this was shown

in that which He had said when exhorting His disciples: "There shall

not a hair of your head perish." [475] For how comes it that first is

said, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;" [476] and

how comes it that before He ascends to the Father, He actually is

touched by the disciples: unless because in the former the mystery of

the inner man was intimated, in the latter a type was given of the

outer man? Or can any one possibly be so without understanding, and so

turned away from the truth, as to dare to say that He was touched by

men before He ascended, but by women when He had ascended? It was on

account of this type, which went before in the Lord, of our future

resurrection in the body, that the apostle says, "Christ the

first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's." [477] For it was the

resurrection of the body to which this place refers, on account of

which he also says, "Who has changed our vile body, that it may be

fashioned like unto His glorious body." [478] The one death therefore

of our Saviour brought salvation to our double death, and His one

resurrection wrought for us two resurrections; since His body in both

cases, that is, both in His death and in His resurrection, was

ministered to us by a kind of healing suitableness, both as a mystery

of the inner man, and as a type of the outer.

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[450] Rom. iv. 5

[451] 2 Cor. iv. 16

[452] 1 John iii. 1

[453] Wisd. ix. 15

[454] Job. vii. 1

[455] Ps. cxliii. 2

[456] Matt. viii. 22

[457] Eph. v. 14

[458] 1 Tim. v. 6

[459] Rom. viii. 10

[460] Rom. i. 17

[461] Rom. viii. 10, 11

[462] Ps. xxii. 1, and Matt. xxvii. 46

[463] Rom. vi. 6, 13

[464] 2 Cor. iv. 16

[465] Eph. iv. 22-25

[466] Ps. xv. 1, 3

[467] John xx. 17

[468] Sapite

[469] Col. iii. 1, 2

[470] Sapere

[471] Matt. x. 28

[472] Col. i. 24

[473] Luke xxiv. 39

[474] John xx. 28

[475] Luke xxi. 18

[476] John xx. 17

[477] 1 Cor. xv. 23

[478] Phil. iii. 21

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Chapter 4.--The Ratio of the Single to the Double Comes from the

Perfection of the Senary Number. The Perfection of The Senary Number is

Commended in the Scriptures. The Year Abounds in The Senary Number.

7. Now this ratio of the single to the double arises, no doubt, from

the ternary number, since one added to two makes three; but the whole

which these make reaches to the senary, for one and two and three make

six. And this number is on that account called perfect, because it is

completed in its own parts: for it has these three, sixth, third, and

half; nor is there any other part found in it, which we can call an

aliquot part. The sixth part of it, then, is one; the third part, two;

the half, three. But one and two and three complete the same six. And

Holy Scripture commends to us the perfection of this number, especially

in this, that God finished His works in six days, and on the sixth day

man was made in the image of God. [479] And the Son of God came and was

made the Son of man, that He might re-create us after the image of God,

in the sixth age of the human race. For that is now the present age,

whether a thousand years apiece are assigned to each age, or whether we

trace out memorable and remarkable epochs or turning-points of time in

the divine Scriptures, so that the first age is to be found from Adam

until Noah, and the second thence onwards to Abraham, and then next,

after the division of Matthew the evangelist, from Abraham to David,

from David to the carrying away to Babylon, and from thence to the

travail of the Virgin, [480] which three ages joined to those other two

make five. Accordingly, the nativity of the Lord began the sixth, which

is now going onwards until the hidden end of time. We recognize also in

this senary number a kind of figure of time, in that threefold mode of

division, by which we compute one portion of time before the Law; a

second, under the Law; a third, under grace. In which last time we have

received the sacrament of renewal, that we may be renewed also in the

end of time, in every part, by the resurrection of the flesh, and so

may be made whole from our entire infirmity, not only of soul, but also

of body. And thence that woman is understood to be a type of the

church, who was made whole and upright by the Lord, after she had been

bowed by infirmity through the binding of Satan. For those words of the

Psalm lament such hidden enemies: "They bowed down my soul." [481] And

this woman had her infirmity eighteen years, which is thrice six. And

the months of eighteen years are found in number to be the cube of six,

viz. six times six times six. Nearly, too, in the same place in the

Gospel is that fig tree, which was convicted also by the third year of

its miserable barrenness. But intercession was made for it, that it

might be let alone that year, that year, that if it bore fruit, well;

if otherwise, it should be cut down. [482] For both three years belong

to the same threefold division, and the months of three years make the

square of six, which is six times six.

8. A single year also, if the whole twelve months are taken into

account, which are made up of thirty days each (for the month that has

been kept from of old is that which the revolution of the moon

determines), abounds in the number six. For that which six is, in the

first order of numbers, which consists of units up to ten, that sixty

is in the second order, which consists of tens up to a hundred. Sixty

days, then, are a sixth part of the year. Further, if that which stands

as the sixth of the second order is multiplied by the sixth of the

first order, then we make six times sixty, i.e. three hundred and sixty

days, which are the whole twelve months. But since, as the revolution

of the moon determines the month for men, so the year is marked by the

revolution of the sun; and five days and a quarter of a day remain,

that the sun may fulfill its course and end the year; for four quarters

make one day, which must be intercalated in every fourth year, which

they call bissextile, that the order of time may not be disturbed: if

we consider, also, these five days and a quarter themselves, the number

six prevails in them. First, because, as it is usual to compute the

whole from a part, we must not call it five days, but rather six,

taking the quarter days for one day. Next, because five days themselves

are the sixth part of a month; while the quarter of a day contains six

hours. For the entire day, i.e. including its night, is twenty-four

hours, of which the fourth part, which is a quarter of a day, is found

to be six hours. So much in the course of the year does the sixth

number prevail.

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[479] Gen. i. 27

[480] Matt. i. 17

[481] Ps. lvii. 6

[482] Luke xiii. 6-17

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Chapter 5.--The Number Six is Also Commended in the Building Up of the

Body of Christ and of the Temple at Jerusalem.

9. And not without reason is the number six understood to be put for a

year in the building up of the body of the Lord, as a figure of which

He said that He would raise up in three days the temple destroyed by

the Jews. For they said, "Forty and six years was this temple in

building." [483] And six times forty-six makes two hundred and

seventy-six. And this number of days completes nine months and six

days, which are reckoned, as it were, ten months for the travail of

women; not because all come to the sixth day after the ninth month, but

because the perfection itself of the body of the Lord is found to have

been brought in so many days to the birth, as the authority of the

church maintains upon the tradition of the elders. For He is believed

to have been conceived on the 25th of March, upon which day also He

suffered; so the womb of the Virgin, in which He was conceived, where

no one of mortals was begotten, corresponds to the new grave in which

He was buried, wherein was never man laid, [484] neither before nor

since. But He was born, according to tradition, upon December the 25th.

If, then you reckon from that day to this you find two hundred and

seventy-six days which is forty-six times six. And in this number of

years the temple was built, because in that number of sixes the body of

the Lord was perfected; which being destroyed by the suffering of

death, He raised again on the third day. For "He spake this of the

temple of His body," [485] as is declared by the most clear and solid

testimony of the Gospel; where He said, "For as Jonas was three days

and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three

days and three nights in the heart of the earth." [486]

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[483] John ii. 20

[484] John xix. 41, 42

[485] John ii. 19-21

[486] Matt. xii. 40

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Chapter 6.--The Three Days of the Resurrection, in Which Also the Ratio

of Single to Double is Apparent.

10. Scripture again witnesses that the space of those three days

themselves was not whole and entire, but the first day is counted as a

whole from its last part, and the third day is itself also counted as a

whole from its first part; but the intervening day, i.e. the second

day, was absolutely a whole with its twenty-four hours, twelve of the

day and twelve of the night. For He was crucified first by the voices

of the Jews in the third hour, when it was the sixth day of the week.

Then He hung on the cross itself at the sixth hour, and yielded up His

spirit at the ninth hour. [487] But He was buried, "now when the even

was come," as the words of the evangelist express it; [488] which

means, at the end of the day. Wheresoever then you begin,--even if some

other explanation can be given, so as not to contradict the Gospel of

John, [489] but to understand that He was suspended on the cross at the

third hour,--still you cannot make the first day an entire day. It will

be reckoned then an entire day from its last part, as the third from

its first part. For the night up to the dawn, when the resurrection of

the Lord was made known, belongs to the third day; because God (who

commanded the light to shine out of darkness, [490] that through the

grace of the New Testament and the partaking of the resurrection of

Christ the words might be spoken to us "For ye were sometimes darkness,

but now are ye light in the Lord" [491] ) intimates to us in some way

that the day takes its beginning from the night. For as the first days

of all were reckoned from light to night, on account of the future fall

of man; [492] so these on account of the restoration of man, are

reckoned from darkness to light. From the hour, then, of His death to

the dawn of the resurrection are forty hours, counting in also the

ninth hour itself. And with this number agrees also His life upon earth

of forty days after His resurrection. And this number is most

frequently used in Scripture to express the mystery of perfection in

the fourfold world. For the number ten has a certain perfection, and

that multiplied by four makes forty. But from the evening of the burial

to the dawn of the resurrection are thirty-six hours which is six

squared. And this is referred to that ratio of the single to the double

wherein there is the greatest consonance of co-adaptation. For twelve

added to twenty-four suits the ratio of single added to double and

makes thirty-six: namely a whole night with a whole day and a whole

night, and this not without the mystery which I have noticed above. For

not unfitly do we liken the spirit to the day and the body to the

night. For the body of the Lord in His death and resurrection was a

figure of our spirit and a type of our body. In this way, then, also

that ratio of the single to the double is apparent in the thirty-six

hours, when twelve are added to twenty-four. As to the reasons, indeed,

why these numbers are so put in the Holy Scriptures, other people may

trace out other reasons, either such that those which I have given are

to be preferred to them, or such as are equally probable with mine, or

even more probable than they are; but there is no one surely so foolish

or so absurd as to contend that they are so put in the Scriptures for

no purpose at all, and that there are no mystical reasons why those

numbers are there mentioned. But those reasons which I have here given,

I have either gathered from the authority of the church, according to

the tradition of our forefathers, or from the testimony of the divine

Scriptures, or from the nature itself of numbers and of similitudes. No

sober person will decide against reason, no Christian against the

Scriptures, no peaceable person against the church.

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[487] Matt. xxvii. 23-50

[488] Mark xv. 42-46

[489] John xix. 14

[490] 2 Cor. iv. 6

[491] Eph. v. 8

[492] Gen. i. 4, 5

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Chapter 7.--In What Manner We are Gathered from Many into One Through

One Mediator.

11. This mystery, this sacrifice, this priest, this God, before He was

sent and came, being made of a woman--of Him, all those things which

appeared to our fathers in a sacred and mystical way by angelical

miracles, or which were done by the fathers themselves, were

similitudes; in order that every creature by its acts might speak in

some way of that One who was to be, in whom there was to be salvation

in the recovery of all from death. For because by the wickedness of

ungodliness we had recoiled and fallen away in discord from the one

true and supreme God, and had in many things become vain, being

distracted through many things and cleaving fast to many things; it was

needful, by the decree and command of God in His mercy, that those same

many things should join in proclaiming the One that should come, and

that One should come so proclaimed by these many things, and that these

many things should join in witnessing that this One had come; and that

so, freed from the burden of these many things, we should come to that

One, and dead as we were in our souls by many sins, and destined to die

in the flesh on account of sin, that we should love that One who,

without sin, died in the flesh for us; and by believing in Him now

raised again, and by rising again with Him in the spirit through faith,

that we should be justified by being made one in the one righteous One;

and that we should not despair of our own resurrection in the flesh

itself, when we consider that the one Head had gone before us the many

members; in whom, being now cleansed through faith, and then renewed by

sight, and through Him as mediator reconciled to God, we are to cleave

to the One, to feast upon the One, to continue one.

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Chapter 8.--In What Manner Christ Wills that All Shall Be One in

Himself.

12. So the Son of God Himself, the Word of God, Himself also the

Mediator between God and men, the Son of man, [493] equal to the Father

through the unity of the Godhead, and partaker with us by the taking

upon Him of humanity, interceding for us with the Father in that He was

man, [494] yet not concealing that He was God, one with the Father,

among other things speaks thus: "Neither pray I for these alone," He

says, "but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee,

that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou

hast sent me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them;

that they may be one, even as we are one." [495]

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[493] 1 Tim. ii. 5

[494] Rom. viii. 34

[495] John xvii. 20-22

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Chapter 9.--The Same Argument Continued.

He did not say, I and they are one thing; [496] although, in that He is

the head of the church which is His body, [497] He might have said, and

they are, not one thing, [498] but one person, [499] because the head

and the body is one Christ; but in order to show His own Godhead

consubstantial with the Father (for which reason He says in another

place, "I and my Father are one" [500] ), in His own kind, that is, in

the consubstantial parity of the same nature, He wills His own to be

one, [501] but in Himself; since they could not be so in themselves,

separated as they are one from another by divers pleasures and desires

and uncleannesses of sin; whence they are cleansed through the

Mediator, that they may be one [502] in Him, not only through the same

nature in which all become from mortal men equal to the angels, but

also through the same will most harmoniously conspiring to the same

blessedness, and fused in some way by the fire of charity into one

spirit. For to this His words come, "That they may be one, even as we

are one;" namely, that as the Father and Son are one, not only in

equality of substance, but also in will, so those also may be one,

between whom and God the Son is mediator, not only in that they are of

the same nature, but also through the same union of love. And then He

goes on thus to intimate the truth itself, that He is the Mediator,

through whom we are reconciled to God, by saying, "I in them, and Thou

in me, that they may be made perfect in one." [503]

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[496] Unum

[497] Eph. i. 22, 23

[498] Unum

[499] Unus

[500] John x. 30; unum.

[501] Unum

[502] Unum

[503] John xvii. 23

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Chapter 10.--As Christ is the Mediator of Life, So the Devil is the

Mediator of Death.

13. Therein is our true peace and firm bond of union with our Creator,

that we should be purified and reconciled through the Mediator of life,

as we had been polluted and alienated, and so had departed from Him,

through the mediator of death. For as the devil through pride led man

through pride to death; so Christ through lowliness led back man

through obedience to life. Since, as the one fell through being lifted

up, and cast down [man] also who consented to him; so the other was

raised up through being abased, and lifted up [man] also who believed

in Him. For because the devil had not himself come thither whither he

had led the way (inasmuch as he bare indeed in his ungodliness the

death of the spirit, but had not undergone the death of the flesh,

because he had not assumed the covering of the flesh), he appeared to

man to be a mighty chief among the legions of devils, through whom he

exercises his reign of deceits; so puffing up man the more, who is

eager for power more than righteousness, through the pride of elation,

or through false philosophy; or else entangling him through

sacrilegious rites, in which, while casting down headlong by deceit and

illusion the minds of the more curious and prouder sort, he holds him

captive also to magical trickery; promising too the cleansing of the

soul, through those initiations which they call teletai, by

transforming himself into an angel of light, [504] through divers

machinations in signs and prodigies of lying.

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[504] 2 Cor. xi. 14

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Chapter 11.--Miracles Which are Done by Demons are to Be Spurned.

14. For it is easy for the most worthless spirits to do many things by

means of aerial bodies, such as to cause wonder to souls which are

weighed down by earthly bodies, even though they be of the better

inclined. For if earthly bodies themselves, when trained by a certain

skill and practice, exhibit to men so great marvels in theatrical

spectacles, that they who never saw such things scarcely believe them

when told; why should it be hard for the devil and his angels to make

out of corporeal elements, through their own aerial bodies, things at

which the flesh marvels; or even by hidden inspirations to contrive

fantastic appearances to the deluding of men's senses, whereby to

deceive them, whether awake or asleep, or to drive them into frenzy?

But just as it may happen that one who is better than they in life and

character may gaze at the most worthless of men, either walking on a

rope, or doing by various motions of the body many things difficult of

belief, and yet he may not at all desire to do such things, nor think

those men on that account to be preferred to himself; so the faithful

and pious soul, not only if it sees, but even if on account of the

frailty of the flesh it shudders at, the miracles of demons; yet will

not for that either deplore its own want of power to do such things, or

judge them on this account to be better than itself; especially since

it is in the company of the holy, who, whether they are men or good

angels, accomplish, through the power of God, to whom all things are

subject, wonders which are far greater and the very reverse of

deceptive.

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Chapter 12.--The Devil the Mediator of Death, Christ of Life.

15. In no wise therefore are souls cleansed and reconciled to God by

sacrilegious imitations, or curious arts that are impious, or magical

incantations; since the false mediator does not translate them to

higher things, but rather blocks and cuts off the way thither through

the affections, malignant in proportion as they are proud, which he

inspires into those of his own company; which are not able to nourish

the wings of virtues so as to fly upwards, but rather to heap up the

weight of vices so as to press downwards; since the soul will fall down

the more heavily, the more it seems to itself to have been carried

upwards. Accordingly, as the Magi did when warned of God, [505] whom

the star led to adore the low estate of the Lord; so we also ought to

return to our country, not by the way by which we came, but by another

way which the lowly King has taught, and which the proud king, the

adversary of that lowly King, cannot block up. For to us, too, that we

may adore the lowly Christ, the "heavens have declared the glory of

God, when their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the

ends of the world." [506] A way was made for us to death through sin in

Adam. For, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;

and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." [507] Of

this way the devil was the mediator, the persuader to sin, and the

caster down into death. For he, too, applied his one death to work out

our double death. Since he indeed died in the spirit through

ungodliness, but certainly did not die in the flesh: yet both persuaded

us to ungodliness, and thereby brought it to pass that we deserved to

come into the death of the flesh. We desired therefore the one through

wicked persuasion, the other followed us by a just condemnation; and

therefore it is written, "God made not death," [508] since He was not

Himself the cause of death; but yet death was inflicted on the sinner,

through His most just retribution. Just as the judge inflicts

punishment on the guilty; yet it is not the justice of the judge, but

the desert of the crime, which is the cause of the punishment. Whither,

then, the mediator of death caused us to pass, yet did not come

himself, that is, to the death of the flesh, there our Lord God

introduced for us the medicine of correction, which He deserved not, by

a hidden and exceeding mysterious decree of divine and profound

justice. In order, therefore, that as by one man came death, so by one

man might come also the resurrection of the dead; [509] because men

strove more to shun that which they could not shun, viz. the death of

the flesh, than the death of the spirit, i.e. punishment more than the

desert of punishment (for not to sin is a thing about which either men

are not solicitous or are too little solicitous; but not to die,

although it be not within reach of attainment, is yet eagerly sought

after); the Mediator of life, making it plain that death is not to be

feared, which by the condition of humanity cannot now be escaped, but

rather ungodliness, which can be guarded against through faith, meets

us at the end to which we have come, but not by the way by which we

came. For we, indeed, came to death through sin; He through

righteousness: and, therefore, as our death is the punishment of sin,

so His death was made a sacrifice for sin.

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[505] Matt. ii. 12

[506] Ps. xix. 1, 4

[507] Rom. v. 12--in quo.

[508] Wisd. i. 13

[509] 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22

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Chapter 13.--The Death of Christ Voluntary. How the Mediator of Life

Subdued the Mediator of Death. How the Devil Leads His Own to Despise

the Death of Christ.

16. Wherefore, since the spirit is to be preferred to the body, and the

death of the spirit means that God has left it, but the death of the

body that the spirit has left it; and since herein lies the punishment

in the death of the body, that the spirit leaves the body against its

will, because it left God willingly; so that, whereas the spirit left

God because it would, it leaves the body although it would not; nor

leaves it when it would, unless it has offered violence to itself,

whereby the body itself is slain: the spirit of the Mediator showed how

it was through no punishment of sin that He came to the death of the

flesh, because He did not leave it against His will, but because He

willed, when He willed, as He willed. For because He is so commingled

[with the flesh] by the Word of God as to be one, He says: "I have

power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. No man

taketh it from me, but I lay down my life that I might take it again."

[510] And, as the Gospel tells us, they who were present were most

astonished at this, that after that [last] word, in which He set forth

the figure of our sin, He immediately gave up His spirit. For they who

are hung on the cross are commonly tortured by a prolonged death.

Whence it was that the legs of the thieves were broken, in order that

they might die directly, and be taken down from the cross before the

Sabbath. And that He was found to be dead already, caused wonder. And

it was this also, at which, as we read, Pilate marvelled, when the body

of the Lord was asked of him for burial. [511]

17. Because that deceiver then,--who was a mediator to death for man,

and feignedly puts himself forward as to life, under the name of

cleansing by sacrilegious rites and sacrifices, by which the proud are

led away,--can neither share in our death, nor rise again from his own:

he has indeed been able to apply his single death to our double one;

but he certainly has not been able to apply a single resurrection,

which should be at once a mystery of our renewal, and a type of that

waking up which is to be in the end. He then who being alive in the

spirit raised again His own flesh that was dead, the true Mediator of

life, has cast out him, who is dead in the spirit and the mediator of

death, from the spirits of those who believe in Himself, so that he

should not reign within, but should assault from without, and yet not

prevail. And to him, too, He offered Himself to be tempted, in order

that He might be also a mediator to overcome his temptations, not only

by succor, but also by example. But when the devil, from the first,

although striving through every entrance to creep into His inward

parts, was thrust out, having finished all his alluring temptation in

the wilderness after the baptism; [512] because, being dead in the

spirit, he forced no entrance into Him who was alive in the spirit, he

betook himself, through eagerness for the death of man in any way

whatsoever, to effecting that death which he could, and was permitted

to effect it upon that mortal element which the living Mediator had

received from us. And where he could do anything, there in every

respect he was conquered; and wherein he received outwardly the power

of slaying the Lord in the flesh, therein his inward power, by which he

held ourselves, was slain. For it was brought to pass that the bonds of

many sins in many deaths were loosed, through the one death of One

which no sin had preceded. Which death, though not due, the Lord

therefore rendered for us, that the death which was due might work us

no hurt. For He was not stripped of the flesh by obligation of any

authority, but He stripped Himself. For doubtless He who was able not

to die, if He would not, did die because He would: and so He made a

show of principalities and powers, openly triumphing over them in

Himself. [513] For whereas by His death the one and most real sacrifice

was offered up for us, whatever fault there was, whence principalities

and powers held us fast as of right to pay its penalty, He cleansed,

abolished, extinguished; and by His own resurrection He also called us

whom He predestinated to a new life; and whom He called, them He

justified; and whom He justified, them He glorified. [514] And so the

devil, in that very death of the flesh, lost man, whom he was

possessing as by an absolute right, seduced as he was by his own

consent, and over whom he ruled, himself impeded by no corruption of

flesh and blood, through that frailty of man's mortal body, whence he

was both too poor and too weak; he who was proud in proportion as he

was, as it were, both richer and stronger, ruling over him who was, as

it were, both clothed in rags and full of troubles. For whither he

drove the sinner to fall, himself not following, there by following he

compelled the Redeemer to descend. And so the Son of God deigned to

become our friend in the fellowship of death, to which because he came

not, the enemy thought himself to be better and greater than ourselves.

For our Redeemer says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man

lay down his life for his friends." [515] Wherefore also the devil

thought himself superior to the Lord Himself, inasmuch as the Lord in

His sufferings yielded to him; for of Him, too, is understood what is

read in the Psalm, "For Thou hast made Him a little lower than the

angels:" [516] so that He, being Himself put to death, although

innocent, by the unjust one acting against us as it were by just right,

might by a most just right overcome him, and so might lead captive the

captivity wrought through sin, [517] and free us from a captivity that

was just on account of sin, by blotting out the handwriting, and

redeeming us who were to be justified although sinners, through His own

righteous blood unrighteously poured out.

18. Hence also the devil mocks those who are his own until this very

day, to whom he presents himself as a false mediator, as though they

would be cleansed or rather entangled and drowned by his rites, in that

he very easily persuades the proud to ridicule and despise the death of

Christ, from which the more he himself is estranged, the more is he

believed by them to be the holier and more divine. Yet those who have

remained with him are very few, since the nations acknowledge and with

pious humility imbibe the price paid for themselves, and in trust upon

it abandon their enemy, and gather together to their Redeemer. For the

devil does not know how the most excellent wisdom of God makes use of

both his snares and his fury to bring about the salvation of His own

faithful ones, beginning from the former end, which is the beginning of

the spiritual creature, even to the latter end, which is the death of

the body, and so "reaching from the one end to the other, mightily and

sweetly ordering all things." [518] For wisdom "passeth and goeth

through all things by reason of her pureness, and no defiled thing can

fall into her." [519] And since the devil has nothing to do with the

death of the flesh, whence comes his exceeding pride, a death of

another kind is prepared in the eternal fire of hell, by which not only

the spirits that have earthly, but also those who have aerial bodies,

can be tormented. But proud men, by whom Christ is despised, because He

died, wherein He bought us with so great a price, [520] both bring back

the former death, and also men, to that miserable condition of nature,

which is derived from the first sin, and will be cast down into the

latter death with the devil. And they on this account preferred the

devil to Christ, because the former cast them into that former death,

whither he himself fell not through the difference of his nature, and

whither on account of them Christ descended through His great mercy:

and yet they do not hesitate to believe themselves better than the

devils, and do not cease to assail and denounce them with every sort of

malediction, while they know them at any rate to have nothing to do

with the suffering of this kind of death, on account of which they

despise Christ. Neither will they take into account that the case may

possibly be, that the Word of God, remaining in Himself, and in Himself

in no way changeable, may yet, through the taking upon Him of a lower

nature, be able to suffer somewhat of a lower kind, which the unclean

spirit cannot suffer, because he has not an earthly body. And so,

whereas they themselves are better than the devils, yet, because they

bear a body of flesh, they can so die, as the devils certainly cannot

die, who do not bear such a body. They presume much on the deaths of

their own sacrifices, which they do not perceive that they sacrifice to

deceitful and proud spirits; or if they have come to perceive it, think

their friendship to be of some good to themselves, treacherous and

envious although they are, whose purpose is bent upon nothing else

except to hinder our return.

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[510] John x. 17, 18

[511] Mark xv. 37, 39, 43, 44, and John xix. 30-34

[512] Matt. iv. 1-11

[513] Col. ii. 15

[514] Rom. viii. 30

[515] John xv. 13

[516] Ps. viii. 5

[517] Eph. iv. 8

[518] Wisd. viii. 1

[519] Wisd. vii. 24, 25

[520] 1 Cor. vi. 20

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Chapter 14.--Christ the Most Perfect Victim for Cleansing Our Faults.

In Every Sacrifice Four Things are to Be Considered.

19. They do not understand, that not even the proudest of spirits

themselves could rejoice in the honor of sacrifices, unless a true

sacrifice was due to the one true God, in whose stead they desire to be

worshipped: and that this cannot be rightly offered except by a holy

and righteous priest; nor unless that which is offered be received from

those for whom it is offered; and unless also it be without fault, so

that it may be offered for cleansing the faulty. This at least all

desire who wish sacrifice to be offered for themselves to God. Who then

is so righteous and holy a priest as the only Son of God, who had no

need to purge His own sins by sacrifice, [521] neither original sins,

nor those which are added by human life? And what could be so fitly

chosen by men to be offered for them as human flesh? And what so fit

for this immolation as mortal flesh? And what so clean for cleansing

the faults of mortal men as the flesh born in and from the womb of a

virgin, without any infection of carnal concupiscence? And what could

be so acceptably offered and taken, as the flesh of our sacrifice, made

the body of our priest? In such wise that, whereas four things are to

be considered in every sacrifice,--to whom it is offered, by whom it is

offered, what is offered, for whom it is offered,--the same One and

true Mediator Himself, reconciling us to God by the sacrifice of peace,

might remain one with Him to whom He offered, might make those one in

Himself for whom He offered, Himself might be in one both the offerer

and the offering.

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[521] Heb. vii

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Chapter 15.--They are Proud Who Think They are Able, by Their Own

Righteousness, to Be Cleansed So as to See God.

20. There are, however, some who think themselves capable of being

cleansed by their own righteousness, so as to contemplate God, and to

dwell in God; whom their very pride itself stains above all others. For

there is no sin to which the divine law is more opposed, and over which

that proudest of spirits, who is a mediator to things below, but a

barrier against things above, receives a greater right of mastery:

unless either his secret snares be avoided by going another way, or if

he rage openly by means of a sinful people (which Amalek, being

interpreted, means), and forbid by fighting the passage to the land of

promise, he be overcome by the cross of the Lord, which is prefigured

by the holding out of the hands of Moses. [522] For these persons

promise themselves cleansing by their own righteousness for this

reason, because some of them have been able to penetrate with the eye

of the mind beyond the whole creature, and to touch, though it be in

ever so small a part, the light of the unchangeable truth; a thing

which they deride many Christians for being not yet able to do, who, in

the meantime, live by faith alone. But of what use is it for the proud

man, who on that account is ashamed to embark upon the ship of wood,

[523] to behold from afar his country beyond the sea? Or how can it

hurt the humble man not to behold it from so great a distance, when he

is actually coming to it by that wood upon which the other disdains to

be borne?

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[522] Ex. xvii. 8-16

[523] [The wood of the cross is meant. One of the ancient symbols of

the church was a ship.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 16.--The Old Philosophers are Not to Be Consulted Concerning

the Resurrection and Concerning Things to Come.

21. These people also blame us for believing the resurrection of the

flesh, and rather wish us to believe themselves concerning these

things. As though, because they have been able to understand the high

and unchangeable substance by the things which are made, [524] for this

reason they had a claim to be consulted concerning the revolutions of

mutable things, or concerning the connected order of the ages. For

pray, because they dispute most truly, and persuade us by most certain

proofs, that all things temporal are made after a science that is

eternal, are they therefore able to see clearly in the matter of this

science itself, or to collect from it, how many kinds of animals there

are, what are the seeds of each in their beginnings, what measure in

their increase, what numbers run through their conceptions, births,

ages, settings; what motions in desiring things according to their

nature, and in avoiding the contrary? Have they not sought out all

these things, not through that unchangeable wisdom, but through the

actual history of places and times, or have trusted the written

experience of others? Wherefore it is the less to be wondered at, that

they have utterly failed in searching out the succession of more

lengthened ages, and in finding any goal of that course, down which, as

though down a river, the human race is sailing, and the transition

thence of each to its own appropriate end. For these are subjects which

historians could not describe, inasmuch as they are far in the future,

and have been experienced and related by no one. Nor have those

philosophers, who have profiled better than others in that high and

eternal science, been able to grasp such subjects with the

understanding; otherwise they would not be inquiring as they could into

past things of the kind, such as are in the province of historians, but

rather would foreknow also things future; and those who are able to do

this are called by them soothsayers, but by us prophets:

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[524] Rom. i. 20

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Chapter 17.--In How Many Ways Things Future are Foreknown. Neither

Philosophers, Nor Those Who Were Distinguished Among the Ancients, are

to Be Consulted Concerning the Resurrection of the Dead.

22.--although the name of prophets, too, is not altogether foreign to

their writings. But it makes the greatest possible difference, whether

things future are conjectured by experience of things past (as

physicians also have committed many things to writing in the way of

foresight, which they themselves have noted by experience; or as again

husbandmen, or sailors, too, foretell many things; for if such

predictions are made a long while before, they are thought to be

divinations), or whether such things have already started on their road

to come to us, and being seen coming far off, are announced in

proportion to the acuteness of the sense of those who see them, by

doing which the aerial powers are thought to divine (just as if a

person from the top of a mountain were to see far off some one coming,

and were to announce it beforehand to those who dwelt close by in the

plain); or whether they are either fore-announced to certain men, or

are heard by them and again transmitted to other men, by means of holy

angels, to whom God shows those things by His Word and His Wisdom,

wherein both things future and things past consist: or whether the

minds of certain men themselves are so far borne upwards by theHoly

Spirit, as to behold, not through the angels, but of themselves, the

immoveable causes of things future, in that very highest pinnacle of

the universe itself. [And I say, behold,] for the aerial powers, too,

hear these things, either by message through angels, or through men;

and hear only so much as He judges to be fitting, to whom all things

are subject. Many things, too, are foretold by a kind of instinct and

inward impulse of such as know them not: as Caiaphas did not know what

he said, but being the high priest, he prophesied. [525]

23. Therefore, neither concerning the successions of ages, nor

concerning the resurrection of the dead, ought we to consult those

philosophers, who have understood as much as they could the eternity of

the Creator, in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." [526]

Since, knowing God through those things which are made, they have not

glorified Him as God, neither were thankful but professing themselves

wise, they became fools. [527] And whereas they were not fit to fix the

eye of the mind so firmly upon the eternity of the spiritual and

unchangeable nature, as to be able to see, in the wisdom itself of the

Creator and Governor of the universe, those revolutions of the ages,

which in that wisdom were already and were always, but here were about

to be so that as yet they were not; or, again, to see therein those

changes for the better, not of the souls only, but also of the bodies

of men, even to the perfection of their proper measure; whereas then, I

say, they were in no way fit to see these things therein, they were not

even judged worthy of receiving any announcement of them by the holy

angels; whether externally through the senses of the body, or by

interior revelations exhibited in the spirit; as these things actually

were manifested to our fathers, who were gifted with true piety, and

who by foretelling them, obtaining credence either by present signs, or

by events close at hand, which turned out as they had foretold, earned

authority to be believed respecting things remotely future, even to the

end of the world. But the proud and deceitful powers of the air, even

if they are found to have said through their soothsayers some things of

the fellowship and citizenship of the saints, and of the true Mediator,

which they heard from the holy prophets or the angels, did so with the

purpose of seducing even the faithful ones of God, if they could, by

these alien truths, to revolt to their own proper falsehoods. But God

did this by those who knew not what they said, in order that the truth

might sound abroad from all sides, to aid the faithful, to be a witness

against the ungodly.

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[525] John xi. 51

[526] Acts xvii. 28

[527] Rom. i. 21, 22

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Chapter 18.--The Son of God Became Incarnate in Order that We Being

Cleansed by Faith May Be Raised to the Unchangeable Truth.

24. 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 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:" [528] 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, [529] 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, [530]

dead, risen again, taken up. Of these 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." [531] From what, except from death, from

corruptions, from changeableness? Since truth remains immortal,

incorrupt, unchangeable. But true immortality, true incorruptibility,

true unchangeableness, is eternity itself.

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[528] John xvii. 3

[529] Ps. lxxxv. 11

[530] Ortus.

[531] John viii. 31, 32

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Chapter 19.--In What Manner the Son Was Sent and Proclaimed Beforehand.

How in the Sending of His Birth in the Flesh He Was Made Less Without

Detriment to His Equality with the Father.

25. 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. For except one

were preached by the sending of many [witnesses] one would not be bound

to, the sending away of many. 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 things in them

are incomparably greater works of the Son of God, since all things were

made by Him, than 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.

26. "When, therefore, the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His

Son, made of a woman, made under the Law;" [532] 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

sent; 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," [533] 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 be contemplated in eternity by the mind when

cleansed by faith?

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[532] Gal. iv. 4

[533] John xiv. 9, 21

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Chapter 20.--The Sender and the Sent Equal. Why the Son is Said to Be

Sent by the Father. Of the Mission of the Holy Spirit. How and by Whom

He Was Sent. The Father the Beginning of the Whole Godhead.

27. 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," [534] 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 (manatio) 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 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 an emanation from the Omnipotent; for

soon after it is said of it, "And being but one, she can do all

things." [535] 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;" [536] 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;" [537] so she also fills the holy angels, and works all

things fitting for such ministries by them. [538] But when the fullness

of time was come, she was sent, [539] 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, 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 [540] was manifest in the flesh,

justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles,

believed on in the world, received up into glory." [541]

28. 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 (genitum); 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 world, whence He says, "I came forth from the Father,

and am come into the world;" [542] 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." [543] What then is

born (natum) 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," [544] and that the Word should be made

flesh, and dwell among us. [545] 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 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 came out of the mouth of the Most

High," [546] and it is said of the Holy Spirit, "He proceedeth from the

Father," [547] but the Father is from no one.

29. 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. [548] 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. [549] 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." [550] 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. [551] For the Spirit of God is one, the

Spirit of the Father and of the Son, the Holy Spirit, who worketh all

in all. [552] But that He was given 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," [553] --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." [554] 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

(principium) of the whole divinity, or if it is better so expressed,

deity. [555] He, therefore, who proceeds from the Father and from the

Son, is referred back to Him from whom the Son was born (natus). And

that which the evangelist says, "For the Holy Ghost was not yet given,

because that Jesus was not yet glorified;" [556] 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." And his father Zacharias is

found to have been filled with the Holy Ghost, so as to say such things

of him. And Mary, too, was filled with the Holy Ghost, so as to

foretell such things of the Lord, whom she was bearing in her womb.

[557] And Simeon and Anna were filled with the Holy Spirit, so as to

acknowledge the greatness of the little child Christ. [558] 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 a 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 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." [559]

30. 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.

And this person angelic nature could prefigure beforehand, so as to

pre-announce, but could not appropriate, so as to be that person

itself.

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[534] John i. 3, 18, 14

[535] Wisd. vii. 25-27

[536] Wisd. ix. 10

[537] Wisd. vii. 27

[538] [The allusion is to the Wisdom of Proverbs, and of the Book of

Wisdom which Augustin regards as canonical, as his frequent citations

show.--W.G.T.S.]

[539] Gal. iv. 4

[540] Quod, scil. sacramentum

[541] 1 Tim. iii. 16

[542] John xvi. 28

[543] Wisd. ix. 10

[544] 1 Cor. i. 21

[545] John i. 5, 14

[546] Ecclus. xxiv. 3

[547] John xv. 26

[548] John x. 30

[549] [Augustin here, as in previous instances, affirms the procession

of the Spirit from the Father and Son.--W.G.T.S.]

[550] John xx. 22

[551] Acts ii. 1-4

[552] 1 Cor. xii. 6

[553] John xv. 26

[554] John xiv. 26

[555] [The term "beginning" is employed "relatively, and not according

to substance," as Augustin says. The Father is "the beginning of the

whole deity," with reference to the personal distinctions of Father,

Son, and Spirit--the Son being from the Father, and the Spirit from

Father and Son. The trinitarian relations or modes of the essence,

"begin" with the first person, not the second or the third. The phrase

"whole deity," in the above statement, is put for "trinity," not for

"essence." Augustin would not say that the Father is the "beginning"

(principium) of the divine essence considered abstractly, but only of

the essence as trinal. In this sense, Trinitarian writers denominate

the Father "fons trinitatis," and sometimes "fons deitatis." Turrettin

employs this latter phraseology (iii. xxx. i. 8); so does Owen

(Communion with Trinity, Ch. iii.); and Hooker (Polity, v. liv.). But

in this case, the guarding clause of Turretin is to be subjoined: "fons

deitatis, si modus subsistendi spectatur." The phrase "fons

trinitatis," or "principium trinitatis," is less liable to be

misconceived, and more accurate than "fons deitatis," or "principum

deitatis."--W.G.T.S.]

[556] John vii. 39

[557] Luke i. 15, 41-79

[558] Luke ii. 25-38

[559] Ps. xix. 3, 4

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Chapter 21.--Of the Sensible Showing of the Holy Spirit, and of the

Coeternity of the Trinity. What Has Been Said, and What Remains to Be

Said.

But with respect to the sensible showing of the Holy Spirit, whether by

the shape of a dove, [560] or by fiery tongues, [561] when the

subjected and subservient creature by temporal motions and forms

manifested His substance co-eternal with the Father and the Son, and

alike with them unchangeable, while it was not united so as to be one

person with Him, as the flesh was which the Word was made; [562] I do

not dare to say that nothing of the kind was done aforetime. But I

would boldly say, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, of one and the

same substance, God the Creator, the Omnipotent Trinity, work

indivisibly; but that this cannot be indivisibly manifested by the

creature, which is far inferior, and least of all by the bodily

creature: just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cannot be named by

our words, which certainly are bodily sounds, except in their own

proper intervals of time, divided by a distinct separation, which

intervals the proper syllables of each word occupy. Since in their

proper substance wherein they are, the three are one, the Father, and

the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the very same, by no temporal motion,

above the whole creature, without any interval of time and place, and

at once one and the same from eternity to eternity, as it were eternity

itself, which is not without truth and charity. But, in my words, the

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are separated, and cannot be named at

once, and occupy their own proper places separately invisible letters.

And as, when I name my memory, and intellect, and will, each name

refers to each severally, but yet each is uttered by all three; for

there is no one of these three names that is not uttered by both my

memory and my intellect and my will together [by the soul as a whole];

so the Trinity together wrought both the voice of the Father, and the

flesh of the Son, and the dove of the Holy Spirit, while each of these

things is referred severally to each person. And by this similitude it

is in some degree discernible, that the Trinity, which is inseparable

in itself, is manifested separably by the appearance of the visible

creature; and that the operation of the Trinity is also inseparable in

each severally of those things which are said to pertain properly to

the manifesting of either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit.

31. 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. And if I am asked, how, after the

incarnation of the Word, either a voice of the Father was produced, or

a corporeal appearance by which the Holy Spirit was manifested: I do

not doubt indeed that this was done through the creature; but whether

only corporeal and sensible, or whether by the employment also of the

spirit rational or intellectual (for this is the term by which some

choose to call what the Greeks name noeron), not certainly so as to

form one person (for who could possibly say that whatever creature it

was by which the voice of the Father sounded, is in such sense God the

Father; or whatever creature it was by which the Holy Spirit was

manifested in the form of a dove, or in fiery tongues, is in such sense

the Holy Spirit, as the Son of God is that man who was made of a

virgin?), but only to the ministry of bringing about such intimations

as God judged needful; or whether anything else is to be understood: is

difficult to discover, and not expedient rashly to affirm. Yet I see

not how those things could have been brought to pass without the

rational or intellectual creature. But it is not yet the proper place

to explain, as the Lord may give me strength, why I so think; for the

arguments of heretics must first be discussed and refuted, which they

do not produce from the divine books, but from their own reasons, and

by which, as they think, they forcibly compel us so to understand the

testimonies of the Scriptures which treat of the Father, and the Son,

and the Holy Spirit, as they themselves will.

32. 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 creature; or rather on account of commending to

our thoughts the emanation [within the Godhead]; [563] but not on

account of inequality, or imparity, or unlikeness of substance; since,

even if 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.

Let this, therefore, be the limit of the present book. Henceforth in

the rest we shall see, the Lord helping, of what sort are those crafty

arguments of the heretics, and in what manner they may be confuted.

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[560] Matt. iii. 16

[561] Acts ii. 3

[562] John i. 14

[563] [The original is: "propter principii commendationem," which the

English translator renders "On account of commending to our thoughts

the principle [of the Godhead]." The technical use of "principium" is

missed. Augustin says that the phrases, "sending the Son," and "sending

the Spirit," have reference to the "visible creature" through which in

the theophanies each was manifested; but still more, to the fact that

the Father is the "beginning" of the Son, and the Father and Son are

the "beginning" of the Spirit. This fact of a "beginning," or emanation

(manatio) of one from another, is what is commended to our

thoughts.--W.G.T.S.]

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Book V.

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Proceeds to treat of the arguments put forward by the heretics, not

from Scripture, but from their own reason. Those are refuted, who think

the substance of the Father and of the Son to be not the same, because

everything predicated of God is, in their opinion, predicated of Him

according to substance; and therefore it follows, that to beget and to

be begotten, or to be begotten and unbegotten, being diverse, are

diverse substances; whereas it is here demonstrated that not everything

predicated of God is predicated according to substance, in such manner

as He is called good and great according to substance, or anything else

that is predicated of Him in respect to Himself; but that some things

are also predicated of Him relatively, i.e. not in respect to Himself,

but to something not Himself, as He is called Father in respect to the

Son, and Lord in respect to the creature that serveth Him; in which

case, if anything thus predicated relatively, i.e. in respect to

something not Himself, is even predicated as happening in time, as e.g.

"Lord, thou hast become our refuge," yet nothing happens to God so as

to work a change in Him, but He Himself remains absolutely unchangeable

in His own nature or essence.

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Chapter 1.--What the Author Entreats from God, What from the Reader. In

God Nothing is to Be Thought Corporeal or Changeable.

1. Beginning, as I now do henceforward, to speak of subjects which

cannot altogether be spoken as they are thought, either by any man, or,

at any rate, not by myself; although even our very thought, when we

think of God the Trinity, falls (as we feel) very far short of Him of

whom we think, nor comprehends Him as He is; but He is seen, as it is

written, even by those who are so great as was the Apostle Paul,

"through a glass and in an enigma:" [564] first, I pray to our Lord God

Himself, of whom we ought always to think, and of whom we are not able

to think worthily, in praise of whom blessing is at all times to be

rendered, [565] and whom no speech is sufficient to declare, that He

will grant me both help for understanding and explaining that which I

design, and pardon if in anything I offend. For I bear in mind, not

only my desire, but also my infirmity. I ask also of my readers to

pardon me, where they may perceive me to have had the desire rather

than the power to speak, what they either understand better themselves,

or fail to understand through the obscurity of my language, just as I

myself pardon them what they cannot understand through their own

dullness.

2. And we shall mutually pardon one another the more easily, if we

know, or at any rate firmly believe and hold, that whatever is said of

a nature, unchangeable, invisible and having life absolutely and

sufficient to itself, must not be measured after the custom of things

visible, and changeable, and mortal, or not self-sufficient. But

although we labor, and yet fail, to grasp and know even those things

which are within the scope of our corporeal senses, or what we are

ourselves in the inner man; yet it is with no shamelessness that

faithful piety burns after those divine and unspeakable things which

are above: piety, I say, not inflated by the arrogance of its own

power, but inflamed by the grace of its Creator and Saviour Himself.

For with what understanding can man apprehend God, who does not yet

apprehend that very understanding itself of his own, by which he

desires to apprehend Him? And if he does already apprehend this, let

him carefully consider that there is nothing in his own nature better

than it; and let him see whether he can there see any outlines of

forms, or brightness of colors, or greatness of space, or distance of

parts, or extension of size, or any movements through intervals of

place, or any such thing at all. Certainly we find nothing of all this

in that, than which we find nothing better in our own nature, that is,

in our own intellect, by which we apprehend wisdom according to our

capacity. What, therefore, we do not find in that which is our own

best, we ought not to seek in Him who is far better than that best of

ours; that so we may understand God, if we are able, and as much as we

are able, as good without quality, great without quantity, a creator

though He lack nothing, ruling but from no position, sustaining all

things without "having" them, in His wholeness everywhere, yet without

place, eternal without time, making things that are changeable, without

change of Himself, and without passion. Whoso thus thinks of God,

although he cannot yet find out in all ways what He is, yet piously

takes heed, as much as he is able, to think nothing of Him that He is

not.

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[564] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[565] Ps. xxxiv. 1

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Chapter 2.--God the Only Unchangeable Essence.

3. He is, however, without doubt, a substance, or, if it be better so

to call it, an essence, which the Greeks call ousia. For as wisdom is

so called from the being wise, and knowledge from knowing; so from

being [566] comes that which we call essence. And who is there that is,

more than He who said to His servant Moses, "I am that I am;" and,

"Thus shall thou say unto the children of Israel, He who is hath sent

me unto you?" [567] But other things that are called essences or

substances admit of accidents, whereby a change, whether great or

small, is produced in them. But there can be no accident of this kind

in respect to God; and therefore He who is God is the only unchangeable

substance or essence, to whom certainly being itself, whence comes the

name of essence, most especially and most truly belongs. For that which

is changed does not retain its own being; and that which can be

changed, although it be not actually changed, is able not to be that

which it had been; and hence that which not only is not changed, but

also cannot at all be changed, alone falls most truly, without

difficulty or hesitation, under the category of being.

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[566] Esse

[567] Ex. iii. 14

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Chapter 3.--The Argument of the Arians is Refuted, Which is Drawn from

the Words Begotten and Unbegotten.

4. Wherefore,--to being now to answer the adversaries of our faith,

respecting those things also, which are neither said as they are

thought, nor thought as they really are:--among the many things which

the Arians are wont to dispute against the Catholic faith, they seem

chiefly to set forth this, as their most crafty device, namely, that

whatsoever is said or understood of God, is said not according to

accident, but according to substance, and therefore, to be unbegotten

belongs to the Father according to substance, and to be begotten

belongs to the Son according to substance; but to be unbegotten and to

be begotten are different; therefore the substance of the Father and

that of the Son are different. To whom we reply, If whatever is spoken

of God is spoken according to substance, then that which is said, "I

and the Father are one," [568] is spoken according to substance.

Therefore there is one substance of the Father and the Son. Or if this

is not said according to substance, then something is said of God not

according to substance, and therefore we are no longer compelled to

understand unbegotten and begotten according to substance. It is also

said of the Son, "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

[569] We ask, equal according to what? For if He is not said to be

equal according to substance, then they admit that something may be

said of God not according to substance. Let them admit, then, that

unbegotten and begotten are not spoken according to substance. And if

they do not admit this, on the ground that they will have all things to

be spoken of God according to substance, then the Son is equal to the

Father according to substance.

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[568] John x. 30

[569] Phil. ii. 6

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Chapter 4.--The Accidental Always Implies Some Change in the Thing.

5. That which is accidental commonly implies that it can be lost by

some change of the thing to which it is an accident. For although some

accidents are said to be inseparable, which in Greek are called

achorista, as the color black is to the feather of a raven; yet the

feather loses that color, not indeed so long as it is a feather, but

because the feather is not always. Wherefore the matter itself is

changeable; and whenever that animal or that feather ceases to be, and

the whole of that body is changed and turned into earth, it loses

certainly that color also. Although the kind of accident which is

called separable may likewise be lost, not by separation, but by

change; as, for instance, blackness is called a separable accident to

the hair of men, because hair continuing to be hair can grow white;

yet, if carefully considered, it is sufficiently apparent, that it is

not as if anything departed by separation away from the head when it

grows white, as though blackness departed thence and went somewhere and

whiteness came in its place, but that the quality of color there is

turned and changed. Therefore there is nothing accidental in God,

because there is nothing changeable or that may be lost. But if you

choose to call that also accidental, which, although it may not be

lost, yet can be decreased or increased,--as, for instance, the life of

the soul: for as long as it is a soul, so long it lives, and because

the soul is always, it always lives; but because it lives more when it

is wise, and less when it is foolish, here, too, some change comes to

pass, not such that life is absent, as wisdom is absent to the foolish,

but such that it is less;--nothing of this kind, either, happens to

God, because He remains altogether unchangeable.

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Chapter 5.--Nothing is Spoken of God According to Accident, But

According to Substance or According to Relation.

6. Wherefore nothing in Him is said in respect to accident, since

nothing is accidental to Him, and yet all that is said is not said

according to substance. For in created and changeable things, that

which is not said according to substance, must, by necessary

alternative, be said according to accident. For all things are

accidents to them, which can be either lost or diminished, whether

magnitudes or qualities; and so also is that which is said in relation

to something, as friendships, relationships, services, likenesses,

equalities, and anything else of the kind; so also positions and

conditions, [570] places and times, acts and passions. But in God

nothing is said to be according to accident, because in Him nothing is

changeable; and yet everything that is said, is not said, according to

substance. For it is said in relation to something, as the Father in

relation to the Son and the Son in relation to the Father, which is not

accident; because both the one is always Father, and the other is

always Son: yet not "always," meaning from the time when the Son was

born [natus], so that the Father ceases not to be the Father because

the Son never ceases to be the Son, but because the Son was always

born, and never began to be the Son. But if He had begun to be at any

time, or were at any time to cease to be, the Son, then He would be

called Son according to accident. But if the Father, in that He is

called the Father, were so called in relation to Himself, not to the

Son; and the Son, in that He is called the Son, were so called in

relation to Himself, not to the Father; then both the one would be

called Father, and the other Son, according to substance. But because

the Father is not called the Father except in that He has a Son, and

the Son is not called Son except in that He has a Father, these things

are not said according to substance; because each of them is not so

called in relation to Himself, but the terms are used reciprocally and

in relation each to the other; nor yet according to accident, because

both the being called the Father, and the being called the Son, is

eternal and unchangeable to them. Wherefore, although to be the Father

and to be the Son is different, yet their substance is not different;

because they are so called, not according to substance, but according

to relation, which relation, however, is not accident, because it is

not changeable.

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[570] Habitus

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Chapter 6.--Reply is Made to the Cavils of the Heretics in Respect to

the Same Words Begotten and Unbegotten.

7. But if they think they can answer this reasoning thus,--that the

Father indeed is so called in relation to the Son, and the Son in

relation to the Father, but that they are said to be unbegotten and

begotten in relation to themselves, not in relation each to the other;

for that it is not the same thing to call Him unbegotten as it is to

call Him the Father, because there would be nothing to hinder our

calling Him unbegotten even if He had not begotten the Son; and if any

one beget a son, he is not therefore himself unbegotten, for men, who

are begotten by other men, themselves also beget others; and therefore

they say the Father is called Father in relation to the Son, and the

Son is called Son in relation to the Father, but unbegotten is said in

relation to Himself, and begotten in relation to Himself; and

therefore, if whatever is said in relation to oneself is said according

to substance, while to be unbegotten and to be begotten are different,

then the substance is different:--if this is what they say, then they

do not understand that they do indeed say something that requires more

careful discussion in respect to the term unbegotten, because neither

is any one therefore a father because unbegotten, nor therefore

unbegotten because he is a father, and on that account he is supposed

to be called unbegotten, not in relation to anything else, but in

respect to himself; but, on the other hand, with a wonderful blindness,

they do not perceive that no one can be said to be begotten except in

relation to something. For he is therefore a son because begotten; and

because a son, therefore certainly begotten. And as is the relation of

son to father, so is the relation of the begotten to the begetter; and

as is the relation of father to son, so is the relation of the begetter

to the begotten. And therefore any one is understood to be a begetter

under one notion, but understood to be unbegotten under another. For

though both are said of God the Father, yet the former is said in

relation to the begotten, that is to the Son, which, indeed, they do

not deny; but that He is called unbegotten, they declare to be said in

respect to Himself. They say then, If anything is said to be a father

in respect to itself, which cannot be said to be a son in respect to

itself, and whatever is said in respect to self is said according to

substance; and He is said to be unbegotten in respect to Himself, which

the Son cannot be said to be; therefore He is said to be unbegotten

according to substance; and because the Son cannot be so said to be,

therefore He is not of the same substance. This subtlety is to be

answered by compelling them to say themselves according to what it is

that the Son is equal to the Father; whether according to that which is

said in relation to Himself, or according to that which is said in

relation to the Father. For it is not according to that which is said

in relation to the Father, since in relation to the Father He is said

to be Son, and the Father is not Son, but Father. Since Father and Son

are not so called in relation to each other in the same way as friends

and neighbors are; for a friend is so called relatively to his friend,

and if they love each other equally, then the same friendship is in

both; and a neighbor is so called relatively to a neighbor, and because

they are equally neighbors to each other (for each is neighbor to the

other, in the same degree as the other is neighbor to him), there is

the same neighborhood in both. But because the Son is not so called

relatively to the Son, but to the Father, it is not according to that

which is said in relation to the Father that the Son is equal to the

Father; and it remains that He is equal according to that which is said

in relation to Himself. But whatever is said in relation to self is

said according to substance: it remains therefore that He is equal

according to substance; therefore the substance of both is the same.

But when the Father is said to be unbegotten, it is not said what He

is, but what He is not; and when a relative term is denied, it is not

denied according to substance, since the relative itself is not

affirmed according to substance.

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Chapter 7.--The Addition of a Negative Does Not Change the Predicament.

8. This is to be made clear by examples. And first we must notice, that

by the word begotten is signified the same thing as is signified by the

word son. For therefore a son, because begotten, and because a son,

therefore certainly begotten. By the word unbegotten, therefore, it is

declared that he is not son. But begotten and unbegotten are both of

them terms suitably employed; whereas in Latin we can use the word

"filius," but the custom of the language does not allow us to speak of

"infilius." It makes no difference, however, in the meaning if he is

called "non filius;" just as it is precisely the same thing if he is

called "non genitus," instead of "ingenitus." For so the terms of both

neighbor and friend are used relatively, yet we cannot speak of

"invicinus" as we can of "inimicus." Wherefore, in speaking of this

thing or that, we must not consider what the usage of our own language

either allows or does not allow, but what clearly appears to be the

meaning of the things themselves. Let us not therefore any longer call

it unbegotten, although it can be so called in Latin; but instead of

this let us call it not begotten, which means the same. Is this then

anything else than saying that he is not a son? Now the prefixing of

that negative particle does not make that to be said according to

substance, which, without it, is said relatively; but that only is

denied, which, without it, was affirmed, as in the other predicaments.

When we say he is a man, we denote substance. He therefore who says he

is not a man, enunciates no other kind of predicament, but only denies

that. As therefore I affirm according to substance in saying he is a

man, so I deny according to substance in saying he is not a man. And

when the question is asked how large he is? and I say he is

quadrupedal, that is, four feet in measure, I affirm according to

quantity, and he who says he is not quadrupedal, denies according to

quantity. I say he is white, I affirm according to quality; if I say he

is not white, I deny according to quality. I say he is near, I affirm

according to relation; if I say he is not near, I deny according to

relation. I affirm according to position, when I say he lies down; I

deny according to position, when I say he does not lie down. I speak

according to condition, [571] when I say he is armed; I deny according

to condition, when I say he is not armed; and it comes to the same

thing as if I should say he is unarmed. I affirm according to time,

when I say he is of yesterday; I deny according to time, when I say he

is not of yesterday. And when I say he is at Rome, I affirm according

to place; and I deny according to place, when I say he is not at Rome.

I affirm according to the predicament of action, when I say he smites;

but if I say he does not smite, I deny according to action, so as to

declare that he does not so act. And when I say he is smitten, I affirm

according to the predicament of passion; and I deny according to the

same, when I say he is not smitten. And, in a word, there is no kind of

predicament according to which we may please to affirm anything,

without being proved to deny according to the same predicament, if we

prefix the negative particle. And since this is so, if I were to affirm

according to substance, in saying son, I should deny according to

substance, in saying not son. But because I affirm relatively when I

say he is a son, for I refer to the father; therefore I deny relatively

if I say he is not a son, for I refer the same negation to the father,

in that I wish to declare that he has not a parent. But if to be called

son is precisely equivalent to the being called begotten (as we said

before), then to be called not begotten is precisely equivalent to the

being called not son. But we deny relatively when we say he is not son,

therefore we deny relatively when we say he is not begotten. Further,

what is unbegotten, unless not begotten? We do not escape, therefore,

from the relative predicament, when he is called unbegotten. For as

begotten is not said in relation to self, but in that he is of a

begetter; so when one is called unbegotten, he is not so called in

relation to himself, but it is declared that he is not of a begetter.

Both meanings, however, turn upon the same predicament, which is called

that of relation. But that which is asserted relatively does not denote

substance, and accordingly, although begotten and unbegotten are

diverse, they do not denote a different substance; because, as son is

referred to father, and not son to not father, so it follows inevitably

that begotten must be referred to begetter, and not-begotten to

not-begetter. [572]

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[571] Habitus

[572] The terms "unbegotten" and "begotten" are interchangeable with

the terms Father and Son. This follows from the relation of a

substantive to its adjective. In whatever sense a substantive is

employed, in the same sense must the adjective formed from it be

employed. Consequently, if the first person of the Trinity may be

called Father in a sense that implies deity, he may be called

Unbegotten in the same sense. And if the second person may be called

Son in a sense implying deity, he may be called Begotten in the same

sense. The Ancient church often employed the adjective, and spoke of

God the Unbegotten and God the Begotten (Justin Martyr, Apol. i. 25,

53; ii. 12, 13. Clem. Alex. Stromata v. xii.). This phraseology sounds

strange to the Modern church, yet the latter really says the same thing

when it speaks of God the Father, and God the Son.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 8.--Whatever is Spoken of God According to Substance, is Spoken

of Each Person Severally, and Together of the Trinity Itself. One

Essence in God, and Three, in Greek, Hypostases, in Latin, Persons.

9. 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." [573] 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." [574] 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. For He is both said to dwell

between the cherubims, [575] which is spoken in respect to position;

and to be covered with the deep as with a garment, [576] which is said

in respect to condition; and "Thy years shall have no end," [577] which

is said in respect of time; and, "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art

there," [578] 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: [579] "For of Him are all

things, and through Him are all things, and in Him are all things; to

whom be glory." [580] 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 ousia, and which

we call more usually substance.

10. They indeed use also the word hypostasis; but they intend to put a

difference, I know not what, between ousia and hypostasis: so that most

of ourselves who treat these things in the Greek language, are

accustomed to say, mian ousian, treis hupostaseis or in Latin, one

essence, three substances. [581]

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[573] Ps. lxxxvi. 10

[574] Luke xviii. 18, 19

[575] Ps. lxxx. 1

[576] Ps. civ. 6

[577] Ps. cii. 27

[578] Ps. cxxxix. 8

[579] [This phraseology appears in the analytical statements of the

so-called Athanasian creed (cap. 11-16), and affords ground for the

opinion that this symbol is a Western one, originating in the school of

Augustin.--W.G.T.S.]

[580] Rom. xi. 36

[581] [It is remarkable that Augustin, understanding thoroughly the

distinction between essence and person, should not have known the

difference between ousia and hupostasis. It would seem as if his only

moderate acquaintance with the Greek language would have been more than

compensated by his profound trinitarian knowledge. In respect to the

term "substantia"--when it was discriminated from "essentia," as it is

here by Augustin--it corresponds to hupostasis, of which it is the

translation. In this case, God is one essence in three substances. But

when "substantia" was identified with "essentia," then to say that God

is one essence in three substances would be a self-contradiction. The

identification of the two terms led subsequently to the coinage, in the

medi�val Latin, of the term "subsistantia," to denote

hupostasis.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 9.--The Three Persons Not Properly So Called [in a Human

Sense].

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,

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." [582] 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 [completely] spoken, but

that it might not be left [wholly] unspoken.

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[582] John x. 30

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Chapter 10.--Those Things Which Belong Absolutely to God as an Essence,

are Spoken of the Trinity in the Singular, Not in the Plural.

11. As, therefore, we do not say three essences, so we do not say three

greatnesses, or three who are great. For in things which are great by

partaking of greatness, to which it is one thing to be, and another to

be great, as a great house, and a great mountain, and a great mind; in

these things, I say, greatness is one thing, and that which is great

because of greatness is another, and a great house, certainly, is not

absolute greatness itself. But that is absolute greatness by which not

only a great house is great, and any great mountain is great, but also

by which every other thing whatsoever is great, which is called great;

so that greatness itself is one thing, and those things are another

which are called great from it. And this greatness certainly is

primarily great, and in a much more excellent way than those things

which are great by partaking of it. But since God is not great with

that greatness which is not Himself, so that God, in being great, is,

as it were, partaker of that greatness;--otherwise that will be a

greatness greater than God, whereas there is nothing greater than God;

therefore, He is great with that greatness by which He Himself is that

same greatness. And, therefore, as we do not say three essences, so

neither do we say three greatnesses; for it is the same thing to God to

be, and to be great. For the same reason neither do we say three

greats, but one who is great; since God is not great by partaking of

greatness, but He is great by Himself being great, because He Himself

is His own greatness. Let the same be said also of the goodness, and of

the eternity, and of the omnipotence of God, and, in short, of all the

predicaments which can be predicated of God, as He is spoken of in

respect to Himself, not metaphorically and by similitude, but properly,

if indeed anything can be spoken of Him properly, by the mouth of man.

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Chapter 11.--What is Said Relatively in the Trinity.

12. But whereas, in the same Trinity, some things severally are

specially predicated, these are in no way said in reference to

themselves in themselves, but either in mutual reference, or in respect

to the creature; and, therefore, it is manifest that such things are

spoken relatively, not in the way of substance. For the Trinity is

called one God, great, good, eternal, omnipotent; and the same God

Himself may be called His own deity, His own magnitude, His own

goodness, His own eternity, His own omnipotence: but the Trinity cannot

in the same way be called the Father, except perhaps metaphorically, in

respect to the creature, on account of the adoption of sons. For that

which is written, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord," [583]

ought certainly not to be understood as if the Son were excepted, or

the Holy Spirit were excepted; which one Lord our God we rightly call

also our Father, as regenerating us by His grace. Neither can the

Trinity in any wise be called the Son, but it can be called, in its

entirety, the Holy Spirit, according to that which is written, "God is

a Spirit;" [584] because both the Father is a spirit and the Son is a

spirit, and the Father is holy and the Son is holy. Therefore, since

the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God, and certainly God

is holy, and God is a spirit, the Trinity can be called also the Holy

Spirit. But yet that Holy Spirit, who is not the Trinity, but is

understood as in the Trinity, is spoken of in His proper name of the

Holy Spirit relatively, since He is referred both to the Father and to

the Son, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit both of the Father and

of the Son. But the relation is not itself apparent in that name, but

it is apparent when He is called the gift of God; [585] for He is the

gift of the Father and of the Son, because "He proceeds from the

Father," [586] as the Lord says; and because that which the apostle

says, "Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of

His," [587] he says certainly of the Holy Spirit Himself. When we say,

therefore, the gift of the giver, and the giver of the gift, we speak

in both cases relatively in reciprocal reference. Therefore the Holy

Spirit is a certain unutterable communion of the Father and the Son;

and on that account, perhaps, He is so called, because the same name is

suitable to both the Father and the Son. For He Himself is called

specially that which they are called in common; because both the Father

is a spirit and the Son a spirit, both the Father is holy and the Son

holy. [588] In order, therefore, that the communion of both may be

signified from a name which is suitable to both, the Holy Spirit is

called the gift of both. And this Trinity is one God, alone, good,

great, eternal, omnipotent; itself its own unity, deity, greatness,

goodness, eternity, omnipotence.

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[583] Deut. vi. 4

[584] John iv. 24

[585] Acts viii. 20

[586] John xv. 26

[587] Rom. viii. 9

[588] [The reason which Augustin here assigns, why the name Holy Spirit

is given to the third person--namely, because spirituality is a

characteristic of both the Father and Son, from both of whom he

proceeds--is not that assigned in the more developed trinitarianism.

The explanation in this latter is, that the third person is denominated

the Spirit because of the peculiar manner in which the divine essence

is communicated to him--namely, by spiration or out-breathing: spiritus

quia spiratus. This is supported by the etymological signification of

pneuma, which is breath; and by the symbolical action of Christ in John

xx. 22, which suggests the eternal spiration, or out-breathing of the

third person. The third trinitarian person is no more spiritual, in the

sense of immaterial, than the first and second persons, and if the term

"Spirit" is to be taken in this the ordinary signification, the

"trinitarian relation," or personal peculiarity, as Augustin remarks,

"is not itself apparent in this name;" because it would mention nothing

distinctive of the third person, and not belonging to the first and

second. But taken technically to denote the spiration or out-breathing

by the Father and Son, the trinitarian peculiarity is apparent in the

name. And the epithet "Holy" is similarly explained. The third person

is the Holy Spirit, not because he is any more holy than the first and

second, but because he is the source and author of holiness in all

created spirits. This is eminently and officially his work. In this way

also, the epithet "Holy"--which in its ordinary use would specify

nothing peculiar to the third person,--mentions a characteristic that

differentiates him from the Father and Son.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 12.--In Relative Things that are Reciprocal, Names are

Sometimes Wanting.

13. Neither ought it to influence us--since we have said that the Holy

Spirit is so called relatively, not the Trinity itself, but He who is

in the Trinity--that the designation of Him to whom He is referred,

does not seem to answer in turn to His designation. For we cannot, as

we say the servant of a master, and the master of a servant, the son of

a father and the father of a son, so also say here--because these

things are said relatively. For we speak of the Holy Spirit of the

Father; but, on the other hand, we do not speak of the Father of the

Holy Spirit, lest the Holy Spirit should be understood to be His Son.

So also we speak of the Holy Spirit of the Son; but we do not speak of

the Son of the Holy Spirit, lest the Holy Spirit be understood to be

His Father. For it is the case in many relatives, that no designation

is to be found by which those things which bear relation to each other

may [in name] mutually correspond to each other. For what is more

clearly spoken relatively than the word earnest? Since it is referred

to that of which it is an earnest, and an earnest is always an earnest

of something. Can we then, as we say, the earnest of the Father and of

the Son, [589] say in turn, the Father of the earnest or the Son of the

earnest? But, on the other hand, when we say the gift of the Father and

of the Son, we cannot indeed say the Father of the gift, or the Son of

the gift; but that these may correspond mutually to each other, we say

the gift of the giver and the giver of the gift; because here a word in

use may be found, there it cannot.

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[589] 2 Cor. v. 5, and Eph. i. 14

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Chapter 13.--How the Word Beginning (Principium) is Spoken Relatively

in the Trinity.

14. The Father is called so, therefore, relatively, and He is also

relatively said to be the Beginning, and whatever else there may be of

the kind; but He is called the Father in relation to the Son, the

Beginning in relation to all things, which are from Him. So the Son is

relatively so called; He is called also relatively the Word and the

Image. And in all these appellations He is referred to the Father, but

the Father is called by none of them. And the Son is also called the

Beginning; for when it was said to Him, "Who art Thou?" He replied,

"Even the Beginning, who also speak to you." [590] But is He, pray, the

Beginning of the Father? For He intended to show Himself to be the

Creator when He said that He was the Beginning, as the Father also is

the beginning of the creature in that all things are from Him. For

creator, too, is spoken relatively to creature, as master to servant.

And so when we say, both that the Father is the Beginning, and that the

Son is the Beginning, we do not speak of two beginnings of the

creature; since both the Father and the Son together is one beginning

in respect to the creature, as one Creator, as one God. But if whatever

remains within itself and produces or works anything is a beginning to

that thing which it produces or works; then we cannot deny that the

Holy Spirit also is rightly called the Beginning, since we do not

separate Him from the appellation of Creator: and it is written of Him

that He works; and assuredly, in working, He remains within Himself;

for He Himself is not changed and turned into any of the things which

He works. And see what it is that He works: "But the manifestation of

the Spirit," he says, "is given to every man to profit withal. For to

one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of

knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to

another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working

of miracles; to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits;

to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of

tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit,

dividing to every man severally as He will;" certainly as God--for who

can work such great things but God?--but "it is the same God which

worketh all in all." [591] For if we are asked point by point

concerning the Holy Spirit, we answer most truly that He is God; and

with the Father and the Son together He is one God. Therefore, God is

spoken of as one Beginning in respect to the creature, not as two or

three beginnings.

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[590] John viii. 25

[591] 1 Cor. xii. 6-11

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Chapter 14.--The Father and the Son the Only Beginning (Principium) of

the Holy Spirit.

15. But in their mutual relation to one another in the Trinity itself,

if the begetter is a beginning in relation to that which he begets, the

Father is a beginning in relation to the Son, because He begets Him;

but whether the Father is also a beginning in relation to the Holy

Spirit, since it is said, "He proceeds from the Father," is no small

question. Because, if it is so, He will not only be a beginning to that

thing which He begets or makes, but also to that which He gives. And

here, too, that question comes to light, as it can, which is wont to

trouble many, Why the Holy Spirit is not also a son, since He, too,

comes forth from the Father, as it is read in the Gospel. [592] For the

Spirit came forth, not as born, but as given; and so He is not called a

son, because He was neither born, as the Only-begotten, nor made, so

that by the grace of God He might be born into adoption, as we are. For

that which is born of the Father, is referred to the Father only when

called Son, and so the Son is the Son of the Father, and not also our

Son; but that which is given is referred both to Him who gave, and to

those to whom He gave; and so the Holy Spirit is not only the Spirit of

the Father and of the Son who gave Him, but He is also called ours, who

have received Him: as "The salvation of the Lord," [593] who gives

salvation, is said also to be our salvation, who have received it.

Therefore, the Spirit is both the Spirit of God who gave Him, and ours

who have received Him. Not, indeed, that spirit of ours by which we

are, because that is the spirit of a man which is in him; but this

Spirit is ours in another mode, viz. that in which we also say, "Give

us this day our bread." [594] Although certainly we have received that

spirit also, which is called the spirit of a man. "For what hast thou,"

he says, "which thou didst not receive?" [595] But that is one thing,

which we have received that we might be; another, that which we have

received that we might be holy. Whence it is also written of John, that

he "came in the spirit and power of Elias;" [596] and by the spirit of

Elias is meant the Holy Spirit, whom Elias received. And the same thing

is to be understood of Moses, when the Lord says to him, "And I will

take of thy spirit, and will put it upon them;" [597] that is, I will

give to them of the Holy Spirit, which I have already given to thee.

If, therefore, that also which is given has him for a beginning by whom

it is given, since it has received from no other source that which

proceeds from him; it must be admitted that the Father and the Son are

a Beginning of the Holy Spirit, not two Beginnings; but as the Father

and Son are one God, and one Creator, and one Lord relatively to the

creature, so are they one Beginning relatively to the Holy Spirit. But

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one Beginning in respect to

the creature, as also one Creator and one God. [598]

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[592] John xv. 26

[593] Ps. iii. 8

[594] Matt. vi. 11

[595] 1 Cor. iv. 7

[596] Luke i. 17

[597] Num. xi. 17

[598] [The term "beginning" (principium), when referring to the

relation of the Trinity, or of any person of the Trinity, to the

creature, denotes creative energy, whereby a new substance is

originated from nothing. This is the reference in chapter 13. But when

the term refers to the relations of the persons of the Trinity to each

other, it denotes only a modifying energy, whereby an existing

uncreated substance is communicated by generation and spiration. This

is the reference in chapter 14. When it is said that the Father is the

"beginning" of the Son, and the Father and Son are the "beginning" of

the Spirit, it is not meant that the substance of the Son is created ex

nihilo by the Father, and the substance of the Spirit is created by the

Father and Son, but only that the Son by eternal generation receives

from the Father the one uncreated and undivided substance of the

Godhead, and the Spirit by eternal spiration receives the same

numerical substance from the Father and Son. The term "beginning"

relates not to the essence, but to the personal peculiarity. Sonship

originates in fatherhood; but deity is unoriginated. The Son as the

second person "begins" from the Father, because the Father communicates

the essence to him. His sonship, not his deity or godhood, "begins"

from the Father. And the same holds true of the term "beginning" as

applied to the Holy Spirit. The "procession" of the Holy Spirit

"begins" by spiration from the Father and Son, but not his deity or

godhood.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 15.--Whether the Holy Spirit Was a Gift Before as Well as After

He Was Given.

16. But it is asked further, whether, as the Son, by being born, has

not only this, that He is the Son, but that He is absolutely; and so

also the Holy Spirit, by being given, has not only this, that He is

given, but that He is absolutely--whether therefore He was, before He

was given, but was not yet a gift; or whether, for the very reason that

God was about to give Him, He was already a gift also before He was

given. But if He does not proceed unless when He is given, and

assuredly could not proceed before there was one to whom He might be

given; how, in that case, was He [absolutely] in His very substance, if

He is not unless because He is given? just as the Son, by being born,

not only has this, that He is a Son, which is said relatively, but His

very substance absolutely, so that He is. Does the Holy Spirit proceed

always, and proceed not in time, but from eternity, but because He so

proceeded that He was capable of being given, was already a gift even

before there was one to whom He might be given? For there is a

difference in meaning between a gift and a thing that has been given.

For a gift may exist even before it is given; but it cannot be called a

thing that has been given unless it has been given.

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Chapter 16.--What is Said of God in Time, is Said Relatively, Not

Accidentally.

17. Nor let it trouble us that the Holy Spirit, although He is

co-eternal with the Father and the Son, yet is called something which

exists in time; as, for instance, this very thing which we have called

Him, a thing that has been given. For the Spirit is a gift eternally,

but a thing that has been given in time. For if a lord also is not so

called unless when he begins to have a slave, that appellation likewise

is relative and in time to God; for the creature is not from all

eternity, of which He is the Lord. How then shall we make it good that

relative terms themselves are not accidental, since nothing happens

accidentally to God in time, because He is incapable of change, as we

have argued in the beginning of this discussion? Behold! to be the

Lord, is not eternal to God; otherwise we should be compelled to say

that the creature also is from eternity, since He would not be a lord

from all eternity unless the creature also was a servant from all

eternity. But as he cannot be a slave who has not a lord, neither can

he be a lord who has not a slave. And if there be any one who says that

God, indeed, is alone eternal, and that times are not eternal on

account of their variety and changeableness, but that times

nevertheless did not begin to be in time (for there was no time before

times began, and therefore it did not happen to God in time that He

should be Lord, since He was Lord of the very times themselves, which

assuredly did not begin in time): what will he reply respecting man,

who was made in time, and of whom assuredly He was not the Lord before

he was of whom He was to be Lord? Certainly to be the Lord of man

happened to God in time. And that all dispute may seem to be taken

away, certainly to be your Lord, or mine, who have only lately begun to

be, happened to God in time. Or if this, too, seems uncertain on

account of the obscure question respecting the soul, what is to be said

of His being the Lord of the people of Israel? since, although the

nature of the soul already existed, which that people had (a matter

into which we do not now inquire), yet that people existed not as yet,

and the time is apparent when it began to exist. Lastly, that He should

be Lord of this or that tree, or of this or that corn crop, which only

lately began to be, happened in time; since, although the matter itself

already existed, yet it is one thing to be Lord of the matter

(materi�), another to be Lord of the already created nature (natur�).

[599] For man, too, is lord of the wood at one time, and at another he

is lord of the chest, although fabricated of that same wood; which he

certainly was not at the time when he was already the lord of the wood.

How then shall we make it good that nothing is said of God according to

accident, except because nothing happens to His nature by which He may

be changed, so that those things are relative accidents which happen in

connection with some change of the things of which they are spoken. As

a friend is so called relatively: for he does not begin to be one,

unless when he has begun to love; therefore some change of will takes

place, in order that he may be called a friend. And money, when it is

called a price, is spoken of relatively, and yet it was not changed

when it began to be a price; nor, again, when it is called a pledge, or

any other thing of the kind. If, therefore, money can so often be

spoken of relatively with no change of itself, so that neither when it

begins, nor when it ceases to be so spoken of, does any change take

place in that nature or form of it, whereby it is money; how much more

easily ought we to admit, concerning that unchangeable substance of

God, that something may be so predicated relatively in respect to the

creature, that although it begin to be so predicated in time, yet

nothing shall be understood to have happened to the substance itself of

God, but only to that creature in respect to which it is predicated?

"Lord," it is said, "Thou hast been made our refuge." [600] God,

therefore, is said to be our refuge relatively, for He is referred to

us, and He then becomes our refuge when we flee to Him; pray does

anything come to pass then in His nature, which, before we fled to Him,

was not? In us therefore some change does take place; for we were worse

before we fled to Him, and we become better by fleeing to Him: but in

Him there is no change. So also He begins to be our Father, when we are

regenerated through His grace, since He gave us power to become the

sons of God. [601] Our substance therefore is changed for the better,

when we become His sons; and He at the same time begins to be our

Father, but without any change of His own substance. Therefore that

which begins to be spoken of God in time, and which was not spoken of

Him before, is manifestly spoken of Him relatively; yet not according

to any accident of God, so that anything should have happened to Him,

but clearly according to some accident of that, in respect to which God

begins to be called something relatively. When a righteous man begins

to be a friend of God, he himself is changed; but far be it from us to

say, that God loves any one in time with as it were a new love, which

was not in Him before, with whom things gone by have not passed away

and things future have been already done. Therefore He loved all His

saints before the foundation of the world, as He predestinated them;

but when they are converted and find them; then they are said to begin

to be loved by Him, that what is said may be said in that way in which

it can be comprehended by human affections. So also, when He is said to

be wroth with the unrighteous, and gentle with the good, they are

changed, not He: just as the light is troublesome to weak eyes,

pleasant to those that are strong; namely, by their change, not its

own.

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[599] ["Matter" denotes the material as created ex nihilo: "nature" the

material as formed into individuals. In this reference, Augustin speaks

of "the nature of the soul" of the people of Israel as existing while

"as yet that people existed not" individually-- having in mind their

race-existence in Adam.--W.G.T.S.]

[600] Ps. xc.1

[601] John i. 12

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Book VI.

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The question is proposed, how the apostle calls Christ "the power of

God, and the wisdom of God." And an argument is raised, whether the

Father is not wisdom Himself, but only the Father of wisdom; or whether

Wisdom begat Wisdom. But the answer to this is deferred for a little,

while the unity and equality of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Ghost, are proved; and that we ought to believe in a Trinity, not

in a threefold (triplicem) god. Lastly, that saying of Hilary is

explained, eternity in the Father, appearance in the image, use in the

gift.

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Chapter 1.--The Son, According to the Apostle, is the Power and Wisdom

of the Father. Hence the Reasoning of the Catholics Against the Earlier

Arians. A Difficulty is Raised, Whether the Father is Not Wisdom

Himself, But Only the Father of Wisdom.

1. Somethink themselves hindered from admitting the equality of the

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, because it is written, "Christ, the power

of God, and the wisdom of God;" in that, on this ground, there does not

appear to be equality; because the Father is not Himself power and

wisdom, but the begetter of power and wisdom. And, in truth, the

question is usually asked with no common earnestness, in what way God

can be called the Father of power and wisdom. For the apostle says,

"Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." [602] And hence some

on our side have reasoned in this way against the Arians, at least

against those who at first set themselves up against the Catholic

faith. For Arius himself is reported to have said, that if He is a Son,

then He was born; if He was born, there was a time when the Son was

not: not understanding that even to be born is, to God, from all

eternity; so that the Son is co-eternal with the Father, as the

brightness which is produced and is spread around by fire is co-eval

with it, and would be co-eternal, if fire were eternal. And therefore

some of the later Arians have abandoned that opinion, and have

confessed that the Son of God did not begin to be in time. But among

the arguments which those on our side used to hold against them who

said that there was a time when the Son was not, some were wont to

introduce such an argument as this: If the Son of God is the power and

wisdom of God, and God was never without power and wisdom, then the Son

is co-eternal with God the Father; but the apostle says, "Christ the

power of God, and the wisdom of God;" and a man must be senseless to

say that God at any time had not power or wisdom; therefore there was

no time when the Son was not.

2. Now this argument compels us to say that God the Father is not wise,

except by having the wisdom which He begat, not by the Father in

Himself being wisdom itself. Further, if it be so, just as the Son also

Himself is called God of God, Light of Light, we must consider whether

He can be called wisdom of wisdom, if God the Father is not wisdom

itself, but only the begetter of wisdom. And if we hold this, why is He

not the begetter also of His own greatness, and of His own goodness,

and of His own eternity, and of His own omnipotence; so that He is not

Himself His own greatness, and His own goodness, and His own eternity,

and His own omnipotence; but is great with that greatness which He

begat, and good with that goodness, and eternal with that eternity, and

omnipotent with that omnipotence, which was born of Him; just as He

Himself is not His own wisdom, but is wise with that wisdom which was

born of Him? For we need not be afraid of being compelled to say that

there are many sons of God, over and above the adoption of the

creature, co-eternal with the Father, if He be the begetter of His own

greatness, and goodness, and eternity, and omnipotence. Because it is

easy to reply to this cavil, that it does not at all follow, because

many things are named, that He should be the Father of many co-eternal

sons; just as it does not follow that He is the Father of two sons,

because Christ is said to be the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

For that certainly is the power which is the wisdom, and that is the

wisdom which is the power; and in like manner, therefore, of the rest

also; so that that is the greatness which is the power, or any other of

those things which either have been mentioned above, or may hereafter

be mentioned.

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[602] 1 Cor. i. 24

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Chapter 2 .--What is Said of the Father and Son Together, and What Not.

3. But if nothing is spoken of the Father as such, except that which is

spoken of Him in relation to the Son, that is, that He is His father,

or begetter, or beginning; and if also the begetter is by consequence a

beginning to that which he begets of himself; but whatever else is

spoken of Him is so spoken as with the Son, or rather in the Son;

whether that He is great with that greatness which He begat, or just

with that justice which He begat, or good with that goodness which He

begat, or powerful with that force or power which He begat, or wise

with that wisdom which He begat: yet the Father is not said to be

greatness itself, but the begetter of greatness; but the Son, as He is

called the Son as such, is not so called with the Father but in

relation to the Father, so is not great in and by himself, but with the

Father, of whom He is the greatness; and so also is called wise with

the Father, of whom He Himself is the wisdom; just as the Father is

called wise with the Son, because He is wise with that wisdom which He

begat; therefore the one is not called without the other, whatever they

are called in respect to themselves; that is, whatever they are called

that manifests their essential nature, both are so called together;--if

these things are so, then the Father is not God without the Son, nor

the Son God without the Father, but both together are God. And that

which is said, "In the beginning was the Word," means that the Word was

in the Father. Or if "In the beginning" is intended to mean, Before all

things; then in that which follows, "And the Word was with God," the

Son alone is understood to be the Word, not the Father and Son

together, as though both were one Word (for He is the Word in the same

way as He is the Image, but the Father and Son are not both together

the Image, but the Son alone is the Image of the Father: just as He is

also the Son of the Father, for both together are not the Son). But in

that which is added, "And the Word was with God," there is much reason

to understand thus: "The Word," which is the Son alone, "was with God,"

which is not the Father alone, but God the Father and the Son together.

[603] But what wonder is there, if this can be said in the case of some

twofold things widely different from each other? For what are so

different as soul and body? Yet we can say the soul was with a man,

that is, in a man; although the soul is not the body, and man is both

soul and body together. So that what follows in the Scripture, "And the

Word was God," [604] may be understood thus: The Word, which is not the

Father, was God together with the Father. Are we then to say thus, that

the Father is the begetter of His own greatness, that is, the begetter

of His own power, or the begetter of His own wisdom; and that the Son

is greatness, and power, and wisdom; but that the great, omnipotent,

and wise God, is both together? How then God of God, Light of Light?

For not both together are God of God, but only the Son is of God, that

is to say, of the Father; nor are both together Light of Light, but the

Son only is of Light, that is, of the Father. Unless, perhaps, it was

in order to intimate and inculcate briefly that the Son is co-eternal

with the Father, that it is said, God of God, and Light of Light, or

anything else of the like kind: as if to say, This which is not the Son

without the Father, of this which is not the Father without the Son;

that is, this Light which is not Light without the Father, of that

Light, viz. the Father, which is not Light without the Son; so that,

when it is said, God which is not the Son without the Father, and of

God which is not the Father without the Son, it may be perfectly

understood that the Begetter did not precede that which He begot. And

if this be so, then this alone cannot be said of them, namely, this or

that of this or that, which they are not both together. Just as the

Word cannot be said to be of the Word, because both are not the Word

together, but only the Son; nor image of image, since they are not both

together the image; nor Son of Son, since both together are not the

Son, according to that which is said, "I and my Father are one." [605]

For "we are one" means, what He is, that am I also; according to

essence, not according to relation.

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[603] [The term "God," in the proposition, "the Word was with God,"

must refer to the Father, not to "the Father and Son together," because

the Son could not be said to be "with" himself. St. John says that "the

word was God" (theos). The absence of the article with theos denotes

the abstract deity, or the divine nature without reference to the

persons in it. He also says that "the Word was with God" (ton theon).

The presence of the article in this instance denotes one of the divine

persons in the essence: namely, the Father, with whom the Word was from

eternity, and upon whose "bosom" he was from eternity. (John i.

18).--W.G.T.S.]

[604] John i. 1

[605] John x. 30

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Chapter 3.--That the Unity of the Essence of the Father and the Son is

to Be Gathered from the Words, "We are One." The Son is Equal to the

Father Both in Wisdom and in All Other Things.

4. And I know not whether the words, "They are one," are ever found in

Scripture as spoken of things of which the nature is different. But if

there are more things than one of the same nature, and they differ in

sentiment, they are not one, and that so far as they differ in

sentiment. For if the disciples were already one by the fact of being

men, He would not say, "That they may be one, as we are one," [606]

when commending them to the Father. But because Paul and Apollos were

both alike men, and also of like sentiments, "He that planteth," he

says, "and he that watereth are one." [607] When, therefore, anything

is so called one, that it is not added in what it is one, and yet more

things than one are called one, then the same essence and nature is

signified, not differing nor disagreeing. But when it is added in what

it is one, it may be meant that something is made one out of things

more than one, though they are different in nature. As soul and body

are assuredly not one; for, what are so different? unless there be

added, or understood in what they are one, that is, one man, or one

animal [person]. Thence the apostle says, "He who is joined to a

harlot, is one body;" he does not say, they are one or he is one; but

he has added "body," as though it were one body composed by being

joined together of two different bodies, masculine and feminine. [608]

And, "He that is joined unto the Lord," he says," is one spirit:" he

did not say, he that is joined unto the Lord is one, or they are one;

but he added, "spirit." For the spirit of man and the Spirit of God are

different in nature; but by being joined they become one spirit of two

different spirits, so that the Spirit of God is blessed and perfect

without the human spirit, but the spirit of man cannot be blessed

without God. Nor is it without cause, I think, that when the Lord said

so much in the Gospel according to John, and so often, of unity itself,

whether of His own with the Father, or of ours interchangeably with

ourselves; He has nowhere said, that we are also one with Himself, but,

"that they maybe one as we also are one." [609] Therefore the Father

and the Son are one, undoubtedly according to unity of substance; and

there is one God, and one great, and one wise, as we have argued.

5. Whence then is the Father greater? For if greater, He is greater by

greatness; but whereas the Son is His greatness, neither assuredly is

the Son greater than He who begat Him, nor is the Father greater than

that greatness, whereby He is great; therefore they are equal. For

whence is He equal, if not in that which He is, to whom it is not one

thing to be, and another to be great? Or if the Father is greater in

eternity, the Son is not equal in anything whatsoever. For whence

equal? If you say in greatness, that greatness is not equal which is

less eternal, and so of all things else. Or is He perhaps equal in

power, but not equal in wisdom? But how is that power which is less

wise, equal? Or is He equal in wisdom, but not equal in power? But how

is that wisdom equal which is less powerful? It remains, therefore,

that if He is not equal in anything, He is not equal in all. But

Scripture proclaims, that "He thought it not robbery to be equal with

God." [610] Therefore any adversary of the truth whatever, provided he

feels bound by apostolical authority, must needs confess that the Son

is equal with God in each one thing whatsoever. Let him choose that

which he will; from it he will be shown, that He is equal in all things

which are said of His substance.

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[606] John xvii. 11

[607] 1 Cor. iii. 8

[608] 1 Cor. vi. 16, 17

[609] John xvii. 11

[610] Phil. ii. 6

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Chapter 4.--The Same Argument Continued.

6. For in like manner the virtues which are in the human mind, although

each has its own several and different meaning, yet are in no way

mutually separable; so that, for instance, whosoever were equal in

courage, are equal also in prudence, and temperance, and justice. For

if you say that such and such men are equal in courage, but that one of

them is greater in prudence, it follows that the courage of the other

is less prudent, and so neither are they equal in courage, since the

courage of the former is more prudent. And so you will find it to be

the case with the other virtues, if you consider them one by one. For

the question is not of the strength of the body, but of the courage of

the mind. How much more therefore is this the case in that unchangeable

and eternal substance, which is incomparably more simple than the human

mind is? Since, in the human mind, to be is not the same as to be

strong, or prudent, or just, or temperate; for a mind can exist, and

yet have none of these virtues. But in God to be is the same as to be

strong, or to be just, or to be wise, or whatever is said of that

simple multiplicity, or multifold simplicity, whereby to signify His

substance. Wherefore, whether we say God of God in such way that this

name belongs to each, yet not so that both together are two Gods, but

one God; for they are in such way united with each other, as according

to the apostle's testimony may take place even in diverse and differing

substances; for both the Lord alone is a Spirit, and the spirit of a

man alone is assuredly a spirit; yet, if it cleave to the Lord, "it is

one spirit:" how much more there, where there is an absolutely

inseparable and eternal union, so that He may not seem absurdly to be

called as it were the Son of both, when He is called the Son of God, if

that which is called God is only said of both together. Or perhaps it

is, that whatever is said of God so as to indicate His substance, is

not said except of both together, nay of the Trinity itself together?

Whether therefore it be this or that (which needs a closer inquiry), it

is enough for the present to see from what has been said, that the Son

is in no respect equal with the Father, if He is found to be unequal in

anything which has to do with signifying His substance, as we have

already shown. But the apostle has said that He is equal. Therefore the

Son is equal with the Father in all things, and is of one and the same

substance.

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Chapter 5.--The Holy Spirit Also is Equal to the Father and the Son in

All Things.

7. Wherefore also the Holy Spirit consists in the same unity of

substance, and in the same equality. For whether He is the unity of

both, or the holiness, or the love, or therefore the unity because the

love, and therefore the love because the holiness, it is manifest that

He is not one of the two, through whom the two are joined, through whom

the Begotten is loved by the Begetter, and loves Him that begat Him,

and through whom, not by participation, but by their own essence,

neither by the gift of any superior, but by their own, they are

"keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" [611] which we

are commanded to imitate by grace, both towards God and towards

ourselves. "On which two commandments hang all the law and the

prophets." [612] So those three are God, one, alone, great, wise, holy,

blessed. But we are blessed from Him, and through Him, and in Him;

because we ourselves are one by His gift, and one spirit with Him,

because our soul cleaves to Him so as to follow Him. And it is good for

us to cleave to God, since He will destroy every man who is estranged

from Him. Therefore the Holy Spirit, whatever it is, is something

common both to the Father and Son. But that communion itself is

consubstantial and co-eternal; and if it may fitly be called

friendship, let it be so called; but it is more aptly called love. And

this is also a substance, since God is a substance, and "God is love,"

as it is written. [614] But as He is a substance together with the

Father and the Son, so that substance is together with them great, and

together with them good, and together with them holy, and whatsoever

else is said in reference to substance; since it is not one thing to

God to be, and another to be great or to be good, and the rest, as we

have shown above. For if love is less great therein [i.e. in God] than

wisdom, then wisdom is loved in less degree than according to what it

is; love is therefore equal, in order that wisdom may be loved

according to its being; but wisdom is equal with the Father, as we have

proved above; therefore also the Holy Spirit is equal; and if equal,

equal in all things, on account of the absolute simplicity which is in

that substance. And therefore they are not more than three: One who

loves Him who is from Himself, and One who loves Him from whom He is,

and Love itself. And if this last is nothing, how is "God love"? If it

is not substance, how is God substance?

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[611] Eph. iv. 3

[612] Matt. xxii. 37-40

[614] 1 John iv. 16

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Chapter 6.--How God is a Substance Both Simple and Manifold.

8. But if it is asked how that substance is both simple and manifold:

consider, first, why the creature is manifold, but in no way really

simple. And first, all that is body is composed certainly of parts; so

that therein one part is greater, another less, and the whole is

greater than any part whatever or how great soever. For the heaven and

the earth are parts of the whole bulk of the world; and the earth

alone, and the heaven alone, is composed of innumerable parts; and its

third part is less than the remainder, and the half of it is less than

the whole; and the whole body of the world, which is usually called by

its two parts, viz. the heaven and the earth, is certainly greater than

the heaven alone or the earth alone. And in each several body, size is

one thing, color another, shape another; for the same color and the

same shape may remain with diminished size; and the same shape and the

same size may remain with the color changed; and the same shape not

remaining, yet the thing may be just as great, and of the same color.

And whatever other things are predicated together of body can be

changed either all together, or the larger part of them without the

rest. And hence the nature of body is conclusively proved to be

manifold, and in no respect simple. The spiritual creature also, that

is, the soul, is indeed the more simple of the two if compared with the

body; but if we omit the comparison with the body, it is manifold, and

itself also not simple. For it is on this account more simple than the

body, because it is not diffused in bulk through extension of place,

but in each body, it is both whole in the whole, and whole in each

several part of it; and, therefore, when anything takes place in any

small particle whatever of the body, such as the soul can feel,

although it does not take place in the whole body, yet the whole soul

feels it, since the whole soul is not unconscious of it. But,

nevertheless, since in the soul also it is one thing to be skillful,

another to be indolent, another to be intelligent, another to be of

retentive memory; since cupidity is one thing, fear another, joy

another, sadness another; and since things innumerable, and in

innumerable ways, are to be found in the nature of the soul, some

without others, and some more, some less; it is manifest that its

nature is not simple, but manifold. For nothing simple is changeable,

but every creature is changeable.

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Chapter 7.--God is a Trinity, But Not Triple (Triplex).

But God is truly called in manifold ways, great, good, wise, blessed,

true, and whatsoever other thing seems to be said of Him not

unworthily: but His greatness is the same as His wisdom; for He is not

great by bulk, but by power; and His goodness is the same as His wisdom

and greatness, and His truth the same as all those things; and in Him

it is not one thing to be blessed, and another to be great, or wise, or

true, or good, or in a word to be Himself.

9. Neither, since He is a Trinity, is He therefore to be thought triple

(triplex) [615] otherwise the Father alone, or the Son alone, will be

less than the Father and Son together. Although, indeed, it is hard to

see how we can say, either the Father alone, or the Son alone; since

both the Father is with the Son, and the Son with the Father, always

and inseparably: not that both are the Father, or both are the Son; but

because they are always one in relation to the other, and neither the

one nor the other alone. But because we call even the Trinity itself

God alone, although He is always with holy spirits and souls, but say

that He only is God, because they are not also God with Him; so we call

the Father the Father alone, not because He is separate from the Son,

but because they are not both together the Father.

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[615] [The Divine Unity is trinal, not triple. The triple is composed

of three different substances. It has parts, and is complex. The trinal

is without parts, and is incomplex. It denotes one simple substance in

three modes or forms. "We may speak of the trinal, but not of the

triple deity." Hollaz, in Hase's Hutterus, 172.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 8.--No Addition Can Be Made to the Nature of God.

Since, therefore, the Father alone, or the Son alone, or the Holy

Spirit alone, is as great as is the Father and the Son and the Holy

Spirit together, [616] in no manner is He to be called threefold.

Forasmuch as bodies increase by union of themselves. For although he

who cleaves to his wife is one body; yet it is a greater body than if

it were that of the husband alone, or of the wife alone. But in

spiritual things, when the less adheres to the greater, as the creature

to the Creator, the former becomes greater than it was, not the latter.

[617] For in those things which are not great by bulk, to be greater is

to be better. And the spirit of any creature becomes better, when it

cleaves to the Creator, than if it did not so cleave; and therefore

also greater because better. "He," then, "that is joined unto the Lord

is one spirit:" [618] but yet the Lord does not therefore become

greater, although he who is joined to the Lord does so. In God Himself,

therefore when the equal Son, or the Holy Spirit equal to the Father

and the Son, is joined to the equal Father, God does not become greater

than each of them severally; because that perfectness cannot increase.

But whether it be the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, He is

perfect, and God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit is perfect; and

therefore He is a Trinity rather than triple.

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[616] [Each trinitarian person is as great as the Trinity, if reference

be had to the essence, but not if reference be had to the persons. Each

person has the entire essence, and the Trinity has the entire essence.

But each person has the essence with only one personal characteristic;

while the Trinity has the essence with all three personal

characteristics. No trinitarian person is as comprehensive as the

triune Godhead, because he does not possess the two personal

characteristics belonging to the other two persons. The Father is God,

but he is not God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.--W.G.T.S.]

[617] [The addition of finite numbers, however great, to an infinite

number, does not increase the infinite. Similarly, any addition of

finite being to the Infinite Being is no increase. God plus the

universe is no larger an infinite than God minus the universe. The

creation of the universe adds nothing to the infinite being and

attributes of God. To add contingent being to necessary being, does not

make the latter any more necessary. To add imperfect being to perfect

being, does not make the latter more perfect. To add finite knowledge

to infinite knowledge, does not produce a greater amount of knowledge.

This truth has been overlooked by Hamilton, Mansell, and others, in the

argument against the personality of the Infinite, in which the Infinite

is confounded with the All, and which assumes that the All is greater

than the Infinite--in other words, that God plus the universe is

greater than God minus the universe.--W.G.T.S.]

[618] 1 Cor. vi. 17

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Chapter 9.--Whether One or the Three Persons Together are Called the

Only God.

10. And since we are showing how we can say the Father alone, because

there is no Father in the Godhead except Himself, we must consider also

the opinion which holds that the only true God is not the Father alone,

but the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For if any one should

ask whether the Father alone is God, how can it be replied that He is

not, unless perhaps we were to say that the Father indeed is God, but

that He is not God alone, but that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are

God alone? But then what shall we do with that testimony of the Lord?

For He was speaking to the Father, and had named the Father as Him to

whom He was speaking, when He says, "And this is life eternal, that

they may know Thee the one true God." [619] And this the Arians indeed

usually take, as if the Son were not true God. Passing them by,

however, we must see whether, when it is said to the Father, "That they

may know Thee the one true God," we are forced to understand it as if

He wished to intimate that the Father alone is the true God; lest we

should not understand any to be God, except the three together, the

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Are we therefore, from the testimony of

the Lord, both to call the Father the one true God, and the Son the one

true God, and the Holy Spirit the one true God, and the Father, the

Son, and the Holy Spirit together, that is, the Trinity itself

together, not three true Gods but one true God? Or because He added,

"And Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent," are we to supply "the one true

God;" so that the order of the words is this, "That they may know Thee,

and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, the one true God?" Why then did

He omit to mention the Holy Spirit? Is it because it follows, that

whenever we name One who cleaves to One by a harmony so great that

through this harmony both are one, this harmony itself must be

understood, although it is not mentioned? For in that place, too, the

apostle seems as it were to pass over the Holy Spirit; and yet there,

too, He is understood, where he says, "All are yours, and ye are

Christ's, and Christ is God's." [620] And again, "The head of the woman

is the man, the head of the man is Christ, and the head of Christ is

God." [621] But again, if God is only all three together, how can God

be the head of Christ, that is, the Trinity the head of Christ, since

Christ is in the Trinity in order that it may be the Trinity? Is that

which is the Father with the Son, the head of that which is the Son

alone? For the Father with the Son is God, but the Son alone is Christ:

especially since it is the Word already made flesh that speaks; and

according to this His humiliation also, the Father is greater than He,

as He says, "for my Father is greater than I;" [622] so that the very

being of God, which is one to Him with the Father, is itself the head

of the man who is mediator, which He is alone. [623] For if we rightly

call the mind the chief thing of man, that is, as it were the head of

the human substance, although the man himself together with the mind is

man; why is not the Word with the Father, which together is God, much

more suitably and much more the head of Christ, although Christ as man

cannot be understood except with the Word which was made flesh? But

this, as we have already said, we shall consider somewhat more

carefully hereafter. At present the equality and one and the same

substance of the Trinity has been demonstrated as briefly as possible,

that in whatever way that other question be determined, the more

rigorous discussion of which we have deferred, nothing may hinder us

from confessing the absolute equality of the Father, Son, and Holy

Spirit.

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[619] John xvii. 3

[620] 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23

[621] 1 Cor. xi. 3

[622] John xiv. 28

[623] 1 Tim. ii. 5

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Chapter 10.--Of the Attributes Assigned by Hilary to Each Person. The

Trinity is Represented in Things that are Made.

11. A certain writer, when he would briefly intimate the special

attributes of each of the persons in the Trinity, tells us that

"Eternity is in the Father, form in the Image, use in the Gift." And

since he was a man of no mean authority in handling the Scriptures, and

in the assertion of the faith, for it is Hilary who put this in his

book (On the Trinity, ii.); I have searched into the hidden meaning of

these words as far as I can, that is, of the Father, and the Image, and

the Gift, of eternity, and of form, and of use. And I do not think that

he intended more by the word eternity, than that the Father has not a

father from whom He is; but the Son is from the Father, so as to be,

and so as to be co-eternal with Him. For if an image perfectly fills

the measure of that of which it is the image, then the image is made

equal to that of which it is the image, not the latter to its own

image. And in respect to this image he has named form, I believe on

account of the quality of beauty, where there is at once such great

fitness, and prime equality, and prime likeness, differing in nothing,

and unequal in no respect, and in no part unlike, but answering exactly

to Him whose image it is: where there is prime and absolute life, to

whom it is not one thing to live, and another to be, but the same thing

to be and to live; and prime and absolute intellect, to whom it is not

one thing to live, another to understand, but to understand is to live,

and is to be, and all things are one: as though a perfect Word (John i.

1), to which nothing is wanting, and a certain skill of the omnipotent

and wise God, full of all living, unchangeable sciences, and all one in

it, as itself is one from one, with whom it is one. Therein God knew

all things which He made by it; and therefore, while times pass away

and succeed, nothing passes away or succeeds to the knowledge of God.

For things which are created are not therefore known by God, because

they have been made; and not rather have been therefore made, even

although changeable, because they are known unchangeably by Him.

Therefore that unspeakable conjunction of the Father and His image is

not without fruition, without love, without joy. Therefore that love,

delight, felicity, or blessedness, if indeed it can be worthily

expressed by any human word, is called by him, in short, Use; and is

the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, not begotten, but the sweetness of the

begetter and of the begotten, filling all creatures according to their

capacity with abundant bountifulness and copiousness, that they may

keep their proper order and rest satisfied in their proper place.

12. Therefore all these things which are made by divine skill, show in

themselves a certain unity, and form, and order; for each of them is

both some one thing, as are the several natures of bodies and

dispositions of souls; and is fashioned in some form, as are the

figures or qualities of bodies, and the various learning or skill of

souls; and seeks or preserves a certain order, as are the several

weights or combinations of bodies and the loves or delights of souls.

When therefore we regard the Creator, who is understood by the things

that are made [624] we must needs understand the Trinity of whom there

appear traces in the creature, as is fitting. For in that Trinity is

the supreme source of all things, and the most perfect beauty, and the

most blessed delight. Those three, therefore, both seem to be mutually

determined to each other, and are in themselves infinite. But here in

corporeal things, one thing alone is not as much as three together, and

two are something more than one; but in that highest Trinity one is as

much as the three together, nor are two anything more than one. And

They are infinite in themselves. So both each are in each, and all in

each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one. Let him who

sees this, whether in part, or "through a glass and in an enigma,"

[625] rejoice in knowing God; and let him honor Him as God, and give

thanks; but let him who does not see it, strive to see it through

piety, not to cavil at it through blindness. Since God is one, but yet

is a Trinity. Neither are we to take the words, "of whom, and through

whom, and to whom are all things," as used indiscriminately [i.e., to

denote a unity without distinctions]; nor yet to denote many gods, for

"to Him, be glory for ever and ever. Amen." [626]

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[624] Rom. i. 20

[625] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Darkly, A.V.

[626] Rom. xi. 36, in A.V.

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Book VII.

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The question is explained, which had been deferred in the previous

book, viz. that God the Father, who begat the Son, His power and

wisdom, is not only the Father of power and wisdom, but also Himself

power and wisdom; and similarly the Holy Spirit: yet that there are not

three powers or three wisdoms, but one power and one wisdom, as there

is one God and one essence. Inquiry is then made, why the Latins say

one essence, three persons, in God; but the Greeks, one essence, three

substances or hypostases: and both modes of expression are shown to

arise from the necessities of speech, that we might have an answer to

give when asked, what three, while truly confessing that there are

three, viz. the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

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Chapter 1.--Augustin Returns to the Question, Whether Each Person of

the Trinity by Itself is Wisdom. With What Difficulty, or in What Way,

the Proposed Question is to Be Solved.

1. Let us now inquire more carefully, so far as God grants, into that

which a little before we deferred; whether each person also in the

Trinity can also by Himself and not with the other two be called God,

or great, or wise, or true, or omnipotent, or just, or anything else

that can be said of God, not relatively, but absolutely; or whether

these things cannot be said except when the Trinity is understood. For

the question is raised,--because it is written, "Christ the power of

God, and the wisdom of God," [627] --whether He is so the Father of His

own wisdom and His own power, as that He is wise with that wisdom which

He begat, and powerful with that power which He begat; and whether,

since He is always powerful and wise, He always begat power and wisdom.

For if it be so, then, as we have said, why is He not also the Father

of His own greatness by which He is great, and of His own goodness by

which He is good, and of His own justice by which He is just, and

whatever else there is? Or if all these things are understood, although

under more names than one, to be in the same wisdom and power, so that

that is greatness which is power, that is goodness which is wisdom, and

that again is wisdom which is power, as we have already argued; then

let us remember, that when I mention any one of these, I am to be taken

as if I mentioned all. It is asked, then, whether the Father also by

Himself is wise, and is Himself His own wisdom itself; or whether He is

wise in the same way as He speaks. For He speaks by the Word which He

begat, not by the word which is uttered, and sounds, and passes away,

but by the Word which was with God, and the Word was God, and all

things were made by Him: [628] by the Word which is equal to Himself,

by whom He always and unchangeably utters Himself. For He is not

Himself the Word, as He is not the Son nor the image. But in speaking

(putting aside those words of God in time which are produced in the

creature, for they sound and pass away,--in speaking then) by that

co-eternal Word, He is not understood singly, but with that Word

itself, without whom certainly He does not speak. Is He then in such

way wise as He is one who speaks, so as to be in such way wisdom, as He

is the Word, and so that to be the Word is to be wisdom, that is, also

to be power, so that power and wisdom and the Word may be the same, and

be so called relatively as the Son and the image: and that the Father

is not singly powerful or wise, but together with the power and wisdom

itself which He begat (genuit); just as He is not singly one who

speaks, but by that Word and together with that Word which He begat;

and in like way great by that and together with that greatness, which

He begat? And if He is not great by one thing, and God by another, but

great by that whereby He is God, because it is not one thing to Him to

be great and another to be God; it follows that neither is He God

singly, but by that and together with that deity (deitas) which He

begat; so that the Son is the deity of the Father, as He is the wisdom

and power of the Father, and as He is the Word and image of the Father.

And because it is not one thing to Him to be, another to be God, the

Son is also the essence of the Father, as He is His Word and image. And

hence also--except that He is the Father [the Unbegotten]--the Father

is not anything unless because He has the Son; so that not only that

which is meant by Father (which it is manifest He is not called

relatively to Himself but to the Son, and therefore is the Father

because He has the Son), but that which He is in respect to His own

substance is so called, because He begat His own essence. For as He is

great, only with that greatness which He begat, so also He is, only

with that essence which He begat; because it is not one thing to Him to

be, and another to be great. Is He therefore the Father of His own

essence, in the same way as He is the Father of His own greatness, as

He is the Father of His own power and wisdom? since His greatness is

the same as His power, and His essence the same as His greatness.

2. This discussion has arisen from that which is written, that "Christ

is the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Wherefore our discourse is

compressed into these narrow limits, while we desire to speak things

unspeakable; that either we must say that Christ is not the power of

God and the wisdom of God, and so shamelessly and impiously resist the

apostle; or we must acknowledge that Christ is indeed the power of God

and the wisdom of God, but that His Father is not the Father of His own

power and wisdom, which is not less impious; for so neither will He be

the Father of Christ, because Christ is the power of God and the wisdom

of God; or that the Father is not powerful with His own power, or wise

with His own wisdom: and who shall dare to say this? Or yet, again,

that we must understand, that in the Father it is one thing to be,

another thing to be wise, so that He is not by that by which He is

wise: a thing usually understood of the soul, which is at some times

unwise, at others wise; as being by nature changeable, and not

absolutely and perfectly simple. Or, again, that the Father is not

anything in respect to His own substance; and that not only that He is

the Father, but that He is, is said relatively to the Son. How then can

the Son be of the same essence as the Father, seeing that the Father,

in respect to Himself, is neither His own essence, nor is at all in

respect to Himself, but even His essence is in relation to the Son?

But, on the contrary, much more is He of one and the same essence,

since the Father and Son are one and the same essence; seeing that the

Father has His being itself not in respect to Himself, but to the Son,

which essence He begat, and by which essence He is whatever He is.

Therefore neither [person] is in respect to Himself alone; and both

exist relatively the one to the other. Or is the Father alone not

called Father of himself, but whatever He is called, is called

relatively to the Son, but the Son is predicated of in reference to

Himself? And if it be so, what is predicated of Him in reference to

Himself? Is it His essence itself? But the Son is the essence of the

Father, as He is the power and wisdom of the Father, as He is the Word

of the Father, and the image of the Father. Or if the Son is called

essence in reference to Himself, but the Father is not essence, but the

begetter of the essence, and is not in respect to Himself, but is by

that very essence which He begat; as He is great by that greatness

which He begat: therefore the Son is also called greatness in respect

to Himself; therefore He is also called, in like manner, power, and

wisdom, and word, and image. But what can be more absurd than that He

should be called image in respect to Himself? Or if image and word are

not the very same with power and wisdom, but the former are spoken

relatively, and the latter in respect to self, not to another; then we

get to this, that the Father is not wise with that wisdom which He

begat, because He Himself cannot be spoken relatively to it, and it

cannot be spoken relatively to Him. For all things which are said

relatively are said reciprocally; therefore it remains that even in

essence the Son is spoken of relatively to the Father. But from this is

educed a most unexpected sense: that essence itself is not essence, or

at least that, when it is called essence, not essence but something

relative is intimated. As when we speak of a master, essence is not

intimated, but a relative which has reference to a slave; but when we

speak of a man, or any such thing which is said in respect to self not

to something else, then essence is intimated. Therefore when a man is

called a master, man himself is essence, but he is called master

relatively; for he is called man in respect to himself, but master in

respect to his slave. But in regard to the point from which we started,

if essence itself is spoken relatively, essence itself is not essence.

Add further, that all essence which is spoken of relatively, is also

something, although the relation be taken away; as e.g. in the case of

a man who is a master, and a man who is a slave, and a horse that is a

beast of burden, and money that is a pledge, the man, and the horse,

and the money are spoken in respect to themselves, and are substances

or essences; but master, and slave, and beast of burden, and pledge,

are spoken relatively to something. But if there were not a man, that

is, some substance, there would be none who could be called relatively

a master; and if there were no horse having a certain essence, there

would be nothing that could be called relatively a beast of burden; so

if money were not some kind of substance, it could not be called

relatively a pledge. Wherefore, if the Father also is not something in

respect to Himself then there is no one at all that can be spoken of

relatively to something. For it is not as it is with color. The color

of a thing is referred to the thing colored, and color is not spoken at

all in reference to substance, but is always of something that is

colored; but that thing of which it is the color, even if it is

referred to color in respect to its being colored, is yet, in respect

to its being a body, spoken of in respect to substance. But in no way

may we think, in like manner, that the Father cannot be called anything

in respect to His own substance, but that whatever He is called, He is

called in relation to the Son; while the same Son is spoken of both in

respect to His own substance and in relation to the Father, when He is

called great greatness, and powerful power, plainly in respect to

Himself, and the greatness and power of the great and powerful Father,

by which the Father is great and powerful. It is not so; but both are

substance, and both are one substance. And as it is absurd to say that

whiteness is not white, so is it absurd to say that wisdom is not wise;

and as whiteness is called white in respect to itself, so also wisdom

is called wise in respect to itself. But the whiteness of a body is not

an essence, since the body itself is the essence, and that is a quality

of it; and hence also a body is said from that quality to be white, to

which body to be is not the same thing as to be white. For the form in

it is one thing, and the color another; and both are not in themselves,

but in a certain bulk, which bulk is neither form nor color, but is

formed and colored. True wisdom is both wise, and wise in itself. And

since in the case of every soul that becomes wise by partaking of

wisdom, if it again becomes foolish, yet wisdom in itself remains; nor

when that soul was changed into folly is the wisdom likewise so

changed; therefore wisdom is not in him who becomes wise by it, in the

same manner as whiteness is in the body which is by it made white. For

when the body has been changed into another color, that whiteness will

not remain, but will altogether cease to be. But if the Father who

begat wisdom is also made wise by it, and to be is not to Him the same

as to be wise, then the Son is His quality, not His offspring; and

there will no longer be absolute simplicity in the Godhead. But far be

it from being so, since in truth in the Godhead is absolutely simple

essence, and therefore to be is there the same as to be wise. But if to

be is there the same as to be wise, then the Father is not wise by that

wisdom which He begat; otherwise He did not beget it, but it begat Him.

For what else do we say when we say, that to Him to be is the same as

to be wise, unless that He is by that whereby He is wise? Wherefore,

that which is the cause to Him of being wise, is itself also the cause

to Him that He is; and accordingly, if the wisdom which He begat is the

cause to Him of being wise, it is also the cause to Him that He is; and

this cannot be the case, except either by begetting or by creating Him.

But no one ever said in any sense that wisdom is either the begetter or

the creator of the Father; for what could be more senseless? Therefore

both the Father Himself is wisdom, and the Son is in such way called

the wisdom of the Father, as He is called the light of the Father; that

is, that in the same manner as light from light, and yet both one

light, so we are to understand wisdom of wisdom, and yet both one

wisdom; and therefore also one essence, since, in God, to be, is the

same as to be wise. For what to be wise is to wisdom, and to be able is

to power, and to be eternal is to eternity, and to be just to justice,

and to be great to greatness, that being itself is to essence. And

since in the Divine simplicity, to be wise is nothing else than to be,

therefore wisdom there is the same as essence.

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[627] 1 Cor. i. 24

[628] John i. 1, 3

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Chapter 2.--The Father and the Son are Together One Wisdom, as One

Essence, Although Not Together One Word.

3. Therefore the Father and the Son together are one essence, and one

greatness, and one truth, and one wisdom. But the Father and Son both

together are not one Word, because both together are not one Son. For

as the Son is referred to the Father, and is not so called in respect

to Himself, so also the Word is referred to him whose Word it is, when

it is called the Word. Since He is the Son in that He is the Word, and

He is the Word in that He is the Son. Inasmuch, therefore, as the

Father and the Son together are certainly not one Son, it follows that

the Father and the Son together are not the one Word of both. And

therefore He is not the Word in that He is wisdom; since He is not

called the Word in respect to Himself, but only relatively to Him whose

Word He is, as He is called the Son in relation to the Father; but He

is wisdom by that whereby He is essence. And therefore, because one

essence, one wisdom. But since the Word is also wisdom, yet is not

thereby the Word because He is wisdom for He is understood to be the

Word relatively, but wisdom essentially: let us understand, that when

He is called the Word, it is meant, wisdom that is born, so as to be

both the Son and the Image; and that when these two words are used,

namely wisdom (is) born, in one of the two, namely born, [629] both

Word, and Image, and Son, are understood, and in all these names

essence is not expressed, since they are spoken relatively; but in the

other word, namely wisdom, since it is spoken also in respect to

substance, for wisdom is wise in itself, essence also is expressed, and

that being of His which is to be wise. Whence the Father and Son

together are one wisdom, because one essence, and singly wisdom of

wisdom, as essence of essence. And hence they are not therefore not one

essence, because the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the

Father, or because the Father is un-begotten, but the Son is begotten:

since by these names only their relative attributes are expressed. But

both together are one wisdom and one essence; in which to be, is the

same as to be wise. And both together are not the Word or the Son,

since to be is not the same as to be the Word or the Son, as we have

already sufficiently shown that these terms are spoken relatively.

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[629] [Augustin sometimes denominates the Son "begotten" (genitus), and

sometimes "born" (natus). Both terms signify that the Son is of the

Father; God of God, Light of Light, Essence of Essence.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 3.--Why the Son Chiefly is Intimated in the Scriptures by the

Name of Wisdom, While Both the Father and the Holy Spirit are Wisdom.

That the Holy Spirit, Together with the Father and the Son, is One

Wisdom.

4. Why, then, is scarcely anything ever said in the Scriptures of

wisdom, unless to show that it is begotten or created of God?--begotten

in the case of that Wisdom by which all things are made; but created or

made, as in men, when they are converted to that Wisdom which is not

created and made but begotten, and are so enlightened; for in these men

themselves there comes to be something which may be called their

wisdom: even as the Scriptures foretell or narrate, that "the Word was

made flesh, and dwelt among us;" [630] for in this way Christ was made

wisdom, because He was made man. Is it on this account that wisdom does

not speak in these books, nor is anything spoken of it, except to

declare that it is born of God, or made by Him (although the Father is

Himself wisdom), namely, because wisdom ought to be commended and

imitated by us, by the imitation of which we are fashioned [rightly]?

For the Father speaks it, that it may be His Word: yet not as a word

producing a sound proceeds from the mouth, or is thought before it is

pronounced. For this word is completed in certain spaces of time, but

that is eternal, and speaks to us by enlightening us, what ought to be

spoken to men, both of itself and of the Father. And therefore He says,

"No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the

Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him:"

[631] since the Father reveals by the Son, that is, by His Word. For if

that word which we utter, and which is temporal and transitory,

declares both itself, and that of which we speak, how much more the

Word of God, by which all things are made? For this Word so declares

the Father as He is the Father; because both itself so is, and is that

which is the Father, in so far as it is wisdom and essence. For in so

far as it is the Word, it is not what the Father is; because the Word

is not the Father, and Word is spoken relatively, as is also Son, which

assuredly is not the Father. And therefore Christ is the power and

wisdom of God, because He Himself, being also power and wisdom, is from

the Father, who is power and wisdom; as He is light of the Father, who

is light, and the fountain of life with God the Father, who is Himself

assuredly the fountain of life. For "with Thee," He says, "is the

fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light." [632] Because,

"as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to

have life in Himself:" [633] and, "He was the true Light, which

lighteth every man that cometh into the world:" and this light, "the

Word," was "with God;" but "the Word also was God;" [634] and "God is

light, and in Him is no darkness at all:" [635] but a light that is not

corporeal, but spiritual; yet not in such way spiritual, that it was

wrought by illumination, as it was said to the apostles, "Ye are the

light of the world," [636] but "the light which lighteth every man,"

that very supreme wisdom itself who is God, of whom we now treat. The

Son therefore is Wisdom of wisdom, namely the Father, as He is Light of

light, and God of God; so that both the Father singly is light, and the

Son singly is light; and the Father singly is God, and the Son singly

is God: therefore the Father also singly is wisdom, and the Son singly

is wisdom. And as both together are one light and one God, so both are

one wisdom. But the Son is "by God made unto us wisdom, and

righteousness, and sanctification;" [637] because we turn ourselves to

Him in time, that is, from some particular time, that we may remain

with Him for ever. And He Himself from a certain time was "the Word

made flesh, and dwelt among us."

5. On this account, then, when anything concerning wisdom is declared

or narrated in the Scriptures, whether as itself speaking, or where

anything is spoken of it, the Son chiefly is intimated to us. And by

the example of Him who is the image, let us also not depart from God,

since we also are the Image of God: not indeed that which is equal to

Him, since we are made so by the Father through the Son, and not born

of the Father, as that is. And we are so, because we are enlightened

with light; but that is so, because it is the light that enlightens;

and which, therefore, being without pattern, is to us a pattern. For He

does not imitate any one going before Him, in respect to the Father,

from whom He is never separable at all, since He is the very same

substance with Him from whom He is. But we by striving imitate Him who

abides, and follow Him who stands still, and walking in Him, reach out

towards Him; because He is made for us a way in time by His

humiliation, which is to us an eternal abiding-place by His divinity.

For since to pure intellectual spirits, who have not fallen through

pride, He gives an example in the form of God and as equal with God and

as God; so, in order that He might also give Himself as an example of

returning to fallen man who on account of the uncleanness of sins and

the punishment of mortality cannot see God, "He emptied Himself;" not

by changing His own divinity, but by assuming our changeableness: and

"taking upon Him the form of a servant" [638] He came to us into this

world," [639] who "was in this world," because "the world was made by

Him;" [640] that He might be an example upwards to those who see God,

an example downwards to those who admire man, an example to the sound

to persevere, an example to the sick to be made whole, an example to

those who are to die that they may not fear, an example to the dead

that they may rise again, "that in all things He might have the

pre-eminence." [641] So that, because man ought not to follow any

except God to blessedness, and yet cannot perceive God; by following

God made man, he might follow at once Him whom he could perceive, and

whom he ought to follow. Let us then love Him and cleave to Him, by

charity spread abroad in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit which is

given unto us. [642] It is not therefore to be wondered at, if, on

account of the example which the Image, which is equal to the Father,

gives to us, in order that we may be refashioned after the image of

God, Scripture, when it speaks of wisdom, speaks of the Son, whom we

follow by living wisely; although the Father also is wisdom, as He is

both light and God.

6. The Holy Spirit also, whether we are to call Him that absolute love

which joins together Father and Son, and joins us also from beneath,

that so that is not unfitly said which is written, "God is love;" [643]

how is He not also Himself wisdom, since He is light, because "God is

light"? or whether after any other way the essence of the Holy Spirit

is to be singly and properly named; then, too, since He is God, He is

certainly light; and since He is light, He is certainly wisdom. But

that the Holy Spirit is God, Scripture proclaims by the apostle, who

says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" and immediately

subjoins, "And the Spirit of God dwelleth in you;" [644] for God

dwelleth in His own temple. For the Spirit of God does not dwell in the

temple of God as a servant, since he says more plainly in another

place, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost

which is in you, and which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For

ye are bought with a great price: therefore glorify God in your body."

[645] But what is wisdom, except spiritual and unchangeable light? For

yonder sun also is light, but it is corporeal; and the spiritual

creature also is light, but it is not unchangeable. Therefore the

Father is light, the Son is light, and the Holy Spirit is light; but

together not three lights, but one light. And so the Father is wisdom,

the Son is wisdom, and the Holy Spirit is wisdom, and together not

three wisdoms, but one wisdom: and because in the Trinity to be is the

same as to be wise, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one essence.

Neither in the Trinity is it one thing to be and another to be God;

therefore the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one God.

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[630] John i. 14

[631] Matt. xi. 27

[632] Ps. xxxvi. 9

[633] John v. 2

[634] John i. 9, 1

[635] 1 John i. 5

[636] Matt. v. 14

[637] 1 Cor. i. 30

[638] Phil. ii. 7

[639] 1 Tim. i. 15

[640] John i. 10

[641] Col. i. 18

[642] Rom. v. 5

[643] 1 John iv. 8

[644] 1 Cor. iii. 16

[645] 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20

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Chapter 4.--How It Was Brought About that the Greeks Speak of Three

Hypostases, the Latins of Three Persons. Scripture Nowhere Speaks of

Three Persons in One God.

7. For the sake, then, of speaking of things that cannot be uttered,

that we may be able in some way to utter what we are able in no way to

utter fully, our Greek friends have spoken of one essence, three

substances; but the Latins of one essence or substance, three persons;

because, as we have already said, [646] essence usually means nothing

else than substance in our language, that is, in Latin. And provided

that what is said is understood only in a mystery, such a way of

speaking was sufficient, in order that there might be something to say

when it was asked what the three are, which the true faith pronounces

to be three, when it both declares that the Father is not the Son, and

that the Holy Spirit, which is the gift of God, is neither the Father

nor the Son. When, then, it is asked what the three are, or who the

three are, we betake ourselves to the finding out of some special or

general name under which we may embrace these three; and no such name

occurs to the mind, because the super-eminence of the Godhead surpasses

the power of customary speech. For God is more truly thought than He is

altered, and exists more truly than He is thought. For when we say that

Jacob was not the same as Abraham, but that Isaac was neither Abraham

nor Jacob, certainly we confess that they are three, Abraham, Isaac,

and Jacob. But when it is asked what three, we reply three men, calling

them in the plural by a specific name; but if we were to say three

animals, then by a generic name; for man, as the ancients have defined

him, is a rational, mortal animal: or again, as our Scriptures usually

speak, three souls, since it is fitting to denominate the whole from

the better part, that is, to denominate both body and soul, which is

the whole man, from the soul; for so it is said that seventy-five souls

went down into Egypt with Jacob, instead of saying so many men. [647]

Again, when we say that your horse is not mine, and that a third

belonging to some one else is neither mine nor yours, then we confess

that there are three; and if any one ask what three, we answer three

horses by a specific name, but three animals by a generic one. And yet

again, when we say that an ox is not a horse, but that a dog is neither

an ox nor a horse, we speak of a three; and if any one questions us

what three, we do not speak now by a specific name of three horses, or

three oxen, or three dogs, because the three are not contained under

the same species, but by a generic name, three animals; or if under a

higher genus, three substances, or three creatures, or three natures.

But whatsoever things are expressed in the plural number specifically

by one name, can also be expressed generically by one name. But all

things which are generically called by one name cannot also be called

specifically by one name. For three horses, which is a specific name,

we also call three animals; but, a horse, and an ox, and a dog, we call

only three animals or substances, which are generic names, or anything

else that can be spoken generically concerning them; but we cannot

speak of them as three horses, or oxen, or dogs, which are specific

names; for we express those things by one name, although in the plural

number, which have that in common that is signified by the name. For

Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, have in common that which is man;

therefore they are called three men: a horse also, and an ox, and a

dog, have in common that which is animal; therefore they are called

three animals. So three several laurels we also call three trees; but a

laurel, and a myrtle, and an olive, we call only three trees, or three

substances, or three natures: and so three stones we call also three

bodies; but stone, and wood, and iron, we call only three bodies, or by

any other higher generic name by which they can be called. Of the

Father, therefore, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, seeing that they are

three, let us ask what three they are, and what they have in common.

For the being the Father is not common to them, so that they should be

interchangeably fathers to one another: as friends, since they are so

called relatively to each other, can be called three friends, because

they are so mutually to each other. But this is not the case in the

Trinity, since the Father only is there father; and not Father of two,

but of the Son only. Neither are they three Sons, since the Father

there is not the Son, nor is the Holy Spirit. Neither three Holy

Spirits, because the Holy Spirit also, in that proper meaning by which

He is also called the gift of God, is neither the Father nor the Son.

What three therefore? For if three persons, then that which is meant by

person is common to them; therefore this name is either specific or

generic to them, according to the manner of speaking. But where there

is no difference of nature, there things that are several in number are

so expressed generically, that they can also be expressed specifically.

For the difference of nature causes, that a laurel, and a myrtle, and

an olive, or a horse, and an ox, and a dog, are not called by the

specific name, the former of three laurels, or the latter of three

oxen, but by the generic name, the former of three trees, and the

latter of three animals. But here, where there is no difference of

essence, it is necessary that these three should have a specific name,

which yet is not to be found. For person is a generic name, insomuch

that man also can be so called, although there is so great a difference

between man and God.

8. Further, in regard to that very generic (generalis) word, if on this

account we say three persons, because that which person means is common

to them (otherwise they can in no way be so called, just as they are

not called three sons, because that which son means is not common to

them); why do we not also say three Gods? For certainly, since the

Father is a person, and the Son a person, and the Holy Spirit a person,

therefore there are three persons: since then the Father is God, and

the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God, why not three Gods? Or else,

since on account of their ineffable union these three are together one

God, why not also one person; so that we could not say three persons,

although we call each a person singly, just as we cannot say three

Gods, although we call each singly God, whether the Father, or the Son,

or the Holy Spirit? Is it because Scripture does not say three Gods?

But neither do we find that Scripture anywhere mentions three persons.

Or is it because Scripture does not call these three, either three

persons or one person (for we read of the person of the Lord, but not

of the Lord as a person), that therefore it was lawful through the mere

necessity of speaking and reasoning to say three persons, not because

Scripture says it, but because Scripture does not contradict it:

whereas, if we were to say three Gods, Scripture would contradict it,

which says, "Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one God?" [648] Why

then is it not also lawful to say three essences; which, in like

manner, as Scripture does not say, so neither does it contradict? For

if essence is a specific (specialis) name common to three, why are They

not to be called three essences, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are

called three men, because man is the specific name common to all men?

But if essence is not a specific name, but a generic one, since man,

and cattle, and tree, and constellation, and angel, are called

essences; why are not these called three essences, as three horses are

called three animals, and three laurels are called three trees, and

three stones three bodies? Or if they are not called three essences,

but one essence, on account of the unity of the Trinity, why is it not

the case, that on account of the same unity of the Trinity they are not

to be called three substances or three persons, but one substance and

one person? For as the name of essence is common to them, so that each

singly is called essence, so the name of either substance or person is

common to them. For that which must be understood of persons according

to our usage, this is to be understood of substances according to the

Greek usage; for they say three substances, one essence, in the same

way as we say three persons, one essence or substance.

9. What therefore remains, except that we confess that these terms

sprang from the necessity of speaking, when copious reasoning was

required against the devices or errors of the heretics? For when human

weakness endeavored to utter in speech to the senses of man what it

grasps in the secret places of the mind in proportion to its

comprehension respecting the Lord God its creator, whether by devout

faith, or by any discernment whatsoever; it feared to say three

essences, lest any difference should be understood to exist in that

absolute equality. Again, it could not say that there were not three

somewhats (tria qu�dam), for it was because Sabellius said this that he

fell into heresy. For it must be devoutly believed, as most certainly

known from the Scriptures, and must be grasped by the mental eye with

undoubting perception, that there is both Father, and Son, and Holy

Spirit; and that the Son is not the same with the Father, nor the Holy

Spirit the same with the Father or the Son. It sought then what three

it should call them, and answered substances or persons; by which names

it did not intend diversity to be meant, but singleness to be denied:

that not only unity might be understood therein from the being called

one essence, but also Trinity from the being called three substances or

persons. For if it is the same thing with God to be (esse) as to

subsist (subsistere), they were not to be called three substances, in

such sense as they are not called three essences; just as, because it

is the same thing with God to be as to be wise, as we do not say three

essences, so neither three wisdoms. For so, because it is the same

thing to Him to be God as to be, it is not right to say three essences,

as it is not right to say three Gods. But if it is one thing to God to

be, another to subsist, as it is one thing to God to be, another to be

the Father or the Lord (for that which He is, is spoken in respect to

Himself, but He is called Father in relation to the Son, and Lord in

relation to the creature which serves Him); therefore He subsists

relatively, as He begets relatively, and bears rule relatively: so then

substance will be no longer substance, because it will be relative. For

as from being, He is called essence, so from subsisting, we speak of

substance. But it is absurd that substance should be spoken relatively,

for everything subsists in respect to itself; how much more God? [649]

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[646] Bk. v. c. 28.

[647] Gen. xlvi. 27, and Deut. x. 22

[648] Deut. vi. 4

[649] [Augustin's meaning is, that the term "substance" is not an

adequate one whereby to denote a trinitarian distinction, because in

order to denote such a distinction it must be employed relatively,

while in itself it has an absolute signification. In the next chapter

he proceeds to show this.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 5.--In God, Substance is Spoken Improperly, Essence Properly.

10. If, however, it is fitting that God should be said to subsist--(For

this word is rightly applied to those things, in which as subjects

those things are, which are said to be in a subject, as color or shape

in body. For body subsists, and so is substance; but those things are

in the body, which subsists and is their subject, and they are not

substances, but are in a substance: and so, if either that color or

that shape ceases to be, it does not deprive the body of being a body,

because it is not of the being of body, that it should retain this or

that shape or color; therefore neither changeable nor simple things are

properly called substances.)--If, I say, God subsists so that He can be

properly called a substance, then there is something in Him as it were

in a subject, and He is not simple, i.e. such that to Him to be is the

same as is anything else that is said concerning Him in respect to

Himself; as, for instance, great, omnipotent, good, and whatever of

this kind is not unfitly said of God. But it is an impiety to say that

God subsists, and is a subject in relation to His own goodness, and

that this goodness is not a substance or rather essence, and that God

Himself is not His own goodness, but that it is in Him as in a subject.

And hence it is clear that God is improperly called substance, in order

that He may be understood to be, by the more usual name essence, which

He is truly and properly called; so that perhaps it is right that God

alone should be called essence. For He is truly alone, because He is

unchangeable; and declared this to be His own name to His servant

Moses, when He says, "I am that I am;" and, "Thus shalt thou say unto

the children of Israel: He who is hath sent me unto you." [650]

However, whether He be called essence, which He is properly called, or

substance, which He is called improperly, He is called both in respect

to Himself, not relatively to anything; whence to God to be is the same

thing as to subsist; and so the Trinity, if one essence, is also one

substance. Perhaps therefore they are more conveniently called three

persons than three substances.

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[650] Ex. iii. 14

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Chapter 6.--Why We Do Not in the Trinity Speak of One Person, and Three

Essences. What He Ought to Believe Concerning the Trinity Who Does Not

Receive What is Said Above. Man is Both After the Image, and is the

Image of God.

11. But lest I should seem to favor ourselves [the Latins], let us make

this further inquiry. Although they [the Greeks] also, if they pleased,

as they call three substances three hypostases, so might call three

persons three "prosopa," yet they preferred that word which, perhaps,

was more in accordance with the usage of their language. For the case

is the same with the word persons also; for to God it is not one thing

to be, another to be a person, but it is absolutely the same thing. For

if to be is said in respect to Himself, but person relatively; in this

way we should say three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; just

as we speak of three friends, or three relations, or three neighbors,

in that they are so mutually, not that each one of them is so in

respect to himself. Wherefore any one of these is the friend of the

other two, or the relation, or the neighbor, because these names have a

relative signification. What then? Are we to call the Father the person

of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, or the Son the person of the Father

and of the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit the person of the Father and

of the Son? But neither is the word person commonly so used in any

case; nor in this Trinity, when we speak of the person of the Father,

do we mean anything else than the substance of the Father. Wherefore,

as the substance of the Father is the Father Himself, not as He is the

Father, but as He is, so also the person of the Father is not anything

else than the Father Himself; for He is called a person in respect to

Himself, not in respect to the Son, or the Holy Spirit: just as He is

called in respect to Himself both God and great, and good, and just,

and anything else of the kind; and just as to Him to be is the same as

to be God, or as to be great, or as to be good, so it is the same thing

to Him to be, as to be a person. Why, therefore, do we not call these

three together one person, as one essence and one God, but say three

persons, while we do not say three Gods or three essences; unless it be

because we wish some one word to serve for that meaning whereby the

Trinity is understood, that we might not be altogether silent, when

asked, what three, while we confessed that they are three? For if

essence is the genus, and substance or person the species, as some

think, then I must omit what I just now said, that they ought to be

called three essences, as they are called three substances or persons;

as three horses are called three horses, and the same are called three

animals, since horse is the species, animal the genus. For in this case

the species is not spoken of in the plural, and the genus in the

singular, as if we were to say that three horses were one animal; but

as they are three horses by the special name, so they are three animals

by the generic one. But if they say that the name of substance or

person does not signify species, but something singular and individual;

so that any one is not so called a substance or person as he is called

a man, for man is common to all men, but in the same manner as he is

called this or that man, as Abraham, as Isaac, as Jacob, or anyone else

who, if present, could be pointed out with the finger: so will the same

reason reach these too. For as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are called

three individuals, so are they called three men, and three souls. Why

then are both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, if we are to

reason about them also according to genus and species and individual,

not so called three essences, as they are called three substances or

persons? But this, as I said, I pass over: but I do affirm, that if

essence is a genus, then a single essence has no species; just as,

because animal is a genus, a single animal has no species. Therefore

the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three species of one essence.

But if essence is a species, as man is a species, but those are three

which we call substances or persons, then they have the same species in

common, in such way as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have in common the

species which is called man; not as man is subdivided into Abraham,

Isaac, and Jacob, so can one man also be subdivided into several single

men; for this is altogether impossible, since one man is already a

single man. Why then is one essence subdivided into three substances or

persons? For if essence is a species, as man is, then one essence is as

one man is: or do we, as we say that any three human beings of the same

sex, of the same constitution of body, of the same mind, are one

nature,--for they are three human beings, but one nature,--so also say

in the Trinity three substances one essence, or three persons one

substance or essence? But this is somehow a parallel case, since the

ancients also who spoke Latin, before they had these terms, which have

not long come into use, that is, essence or substance, used for them to

say nature. We do not therefore use these terms according to genus or

species, but as if according to a matter that is common and the same.

Just as if three statues were made of the same gold, we should say

three statues one gold, yet should neither call the gold genus, and the

statues species; nor the gold species, and the statues individuals. For

no species goes beyond its own individuals, so as to comprehend

anything external to them. For when I define what man is, which is a

specific name, every several man that exists is contained in the same

individual definition, neither does anything belong to it which is not

a man. But when I define gold, not statues alone, if they be gold, but

rings also, and anything else that is made of gold, will belong to

gold; and even if nothing were made of it, it would still be called

gold; since, even if there were no gold statues, there will not

therefore be no statues at all. Likewise no species goes beyond the

definition of its genus. For when I define animal, since horse is a

species of this genus, every horse is an animal; but every statue is

not gold. So, although in the case of three golden statues we should

rightly say three statues, one gold; yet we do not so say it, as to

understand gold to be the genus, and the statues to be species.

Therefore neither do we so call the Trinity three persons or

substances, one essence and one God, as though three somethings

subsisted out of one matter [leaving a remainder, i. e.]; although

whatever that is, it is unfolded in these three. For there is nothing

else of that essence besides the Trinity. Yet we say three persons of

the same essence, or three persons one essence; but we do not say three

persons out of the same essence, as though therein essence were one

thing, and person another, as we can say three statues out of the same

gold; for there it is one thing to be gold, another to be statues. And

when we say three men one nature, or three men of the same nature, they

also can be called three men out of the same nature, since out of the

same nature there can be also three other such men. But in that essence

of the Trinity, in no way can any other person whatever exist out of

the same essence. Further, in these things, one man is not as much as

three men together; and two men are something more than one man: and in

equal statues, three together amount to more of gold than each singly,

and one amounts to less of gold than two. But in God it is not so; for

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit together is not a greater

essence than the Father alone or the Son alone; but these three

substances or persons, if they must be so called, together are equal to

each singly: which the natural man does not comprehend. For he cannot

think except under the conditions of bulk and space, either small or

great, since phantasms or as it were images of bodies flit about in his

mind.

12. And until he be purged from this uncleanness, let him believe in

the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, alone, great, omnipotent,

good, just, merciful, Creator of all things visible and invisible, and

whatsoever can be worthily and truly said of Him in proportion to human

capacity. And when he is told that the Father only is God, let him not

separate from Him the Son or the Holy Spirit; for together with Him He

is the only God, together with whom also He is one God; because, when

we are told that the Son also is the only God, we must needs take it

without any separation of the Father or the Holy Spirit. And let him so

say one essence, as not to think one to be either greater or better

than, or in any respect differing from, another. Yet not that the

Father Himself is both Son and Holy Spirit, or whatever else each is

singly called in relation to either of the others; as Word, which is

not said except of the Son, or Gift, which is not said except of the

Holy Spirit. And on this account also they admit the plural number, as

it is written in the Gospel, "I and my Father are one." [651] He has

both said "one," [652] and "we are [653] one," according to essence,

because they are the same God; "we are," according to relation, because

the one is Father, the other is Son. Sometimes also the unity of the

essence is left unexpressed, and the relatives alone are mentioned in

the plural number: "My Father and I will come unto him, and make our

abode with him." [654] We will come, and we will make our abode, is the

plural number, since it was said before, "I and my Father," that is,

the Son and the Father, which terms are used relatively to one another.

Sometimes the meaning is altogether latent, as in Genesis: "Let us make

man after our image and likeness." [655] Both let us make and our is

said in the plural, and ought not to be received except as of

relatives. For it was not that gods might make, or make after the image

and likeness of gods; but that the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit

might make after the image of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit,

that man might subsist as the image of God. And God is the Trinity. But

because that image of God was not made altogether equal to Him, as

being not born of Him, but created by Him; in order to signify this, he

is in such way the image as that he is "after the image," that is, he

is not made equal by parity, but approaches to Him by a sort of

likeness. For approach to God is not by intervals of place, but by

likeness, and withdrawal from Him is by unlikeness. For there are some

who draw this distinction, that they will have the Son to be the image,

but man not to be the image, but "after the image." But the apostle

refutes them, saying, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head,

forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." [656] He did not say

after the image, but the image. And this image, since it is elsewhere

spoken of as after the image, is not as if it were said relatively to

the Son, who is the image equal to the Father; otherwise he would not

say after our image. For how our, when the Son is the image of the

Father alone? But man is said to be "after the image," on account, as

we have said, of the inequality of the likeness; and therefore after

our image, that man might be the image of the Trinity; [657] not equal

to the Trinity as the Son is equal to the Father, but approaching to

it, as has been said, by a certain likeness; just as nearness may in a

sense be signified in things distant from each other, not in respect of

place, but of a sort of imitation. For it is also said, "Be ye

transformed by the renewing of your mind;" [658] to whom he likewise

says, "Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children." [659] For it

is said to the new man, "which is renewed to the knowledge of God,

after the image of Him that created him." [660] Or if we choose to

admit the plural number, in order to meet the needs of argument, even

putting aside relative terms, that so we may answer in one term when it

is asked what three, and say three substances or three persons; then

let no one think of any bulk or interval, or of any distance of

howsoever little unlikeness, so that in the Trinity any should be

understood to be even a little less than another, in whatsoever way one

thing can be less than another: in order that there may be neither a

confusion of persons, nor such a distinction as that there should be

any inequality. And if this cannot be grasped by the understanding, let

it be held by faith, until He shall dawn in the heart who says by the

prophet, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not understand."

[661]

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[651] John x. 30

[652] Unum

[653] Sumus

[654] John xiv. 23

[655] Gen. i. 26

[656] 1 Cor. xi. 7

[657] [Augustin would find this "image" in the ternaries of nature and

the human mind which illustrate the Divine trinality. The remainder of

the treatise is mainly devoted to this abstruse subject; and is one of

the most metaphysical pieces of composition in patristic literature.

The exegetical portion of the work ends substantially with the seventh

chapter. The remainder is ontological, yet growing out of, and founded

upon the biblical data and results of the first part.--W.G.T.S.]

[658] Rom. xii. 2

[659] Eph. v. 1

[660] Col. iii. 10

[661] Isa. vii. 9

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Book VIII.

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Explains and proves that not only the Father is not greater than the

Son, but neither are both together anything greater than the Holy

Spirit, nor any two together in the same trinity anything greater than

one, nor all three together anything greater than each severally. It is

then shown how the nature itself of God may be understood from our

understanding of truth, and from our knowledge of the supreme good, and

from the innate love of righteousness, whereby a righteous soul is

loved even by a soul that is itself not yet righteous. But it is urged

above all, that the knowledge of God is to be sought by love, which God

is said to be in the Scriptures; and in this love is also pointed out

the existence of some trace of a trinity.

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Preface.--The Conclusion of What Has Been Said Above. The Rule to Be

Observed in the More Difficult Questions of the Faith.

We have said elsewhere that those things are predicated specially in

the Trinity as belonging severally to each person, which are predicated

relatively the one to the other, as Father and Son, and the gift of

both, the Holy Spirit; for the Father is not the Trinity, nor the Son

the Trinity, nor the gift the Trinity: but what whenever each is singly

spoken of in respect to themselves, then they are not spoken of as

three in the plural number, but one, the Trinity itself, as the Father

God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; the Father good, the Son

good, and the Holy Spirit good; and the Father omnipotent, the Son

omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit omnipotent: yet neither three Gods, nor

three goods, nor three omnipotents, but one God, good, omnipotent, the

Trinity itself; and whatsoever else is said of them not relatively in

respect to each other, but individually in respect to themselves. For

they are thus spoken of according to essence, since in them to be is

the same as to be great, as to be good, as to be wise, and whatever

else is said of each person individually therein, or of the Trinity

itself, in respect to themselves. And that therefore they are called

three persons, or three substances, not in order that any difference of

essence may be understood, but that we may be able to answer by some

one word, should any one ask what three, or what three things? And that

there is so great an equality in that Trinity, that not only the Father

is not greater than the Son, as regards divinity, but neither are the

Father and Son together greater than the Holy Spirit; nor is each

individual person, whichever it be of the three, less than the Trinity

itself. This is what we have said; and if it is handled and repeated

frequently, it becomes, no doubt, more familiarly known: yet some

limit, too, must be put to the discussion, and we must supplicate God

with most devout piety, that He will open our understanding, and take

away the inclination of disputing, in order that our minds may discern

the essence of the truth, that has neither bulk nor moveableness. Now,

therefore, so far as the Creator Himself aids us in His marvellous

mercy, let us consider these subjects, into which we will enter more

deeply than we entered into those which preceded, although they are in

truth the same; preserving the while this rule, that what has not yet

been made clear to our intellect, be nevertheless not loosened from the

firmness of our faith.

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Chapter 1.--It is Shown by Reason that in God Three are Not Anything

Greater Than One Person.

2. For we say that in this Trinity two or three persons are not

anything greater than one of them; which carnal perception does not

receive, for no other reason except because it perceives as it can the

true things which are created, but cannot discern the truth itself by

which they are created; for if it could, then the very corporeal light

would in no way be more clear than this which we have said. For in

respect to the substance of truth, since it alone truly is, nothing is

greater, unless because it more truly is. [662] But in respect to

whatsoever is intelligible and unchangeable, no one thing is more truly

than another, since all alike are unchangeably eternal; and that which

therein is called great, is not great from any other source than from

that by which it truly is. Wherefore, where magnitude itself is truth,

whatsoever has more of magnitude must needs have more of truth;

whatsoever therefore has not more of truth, has not also more of

magnitude. Further, whatsoever has more of truth is certainly more

true, just as that is greater which has more of magnitude; therefore in

respect to the substance of truth that is more great which is more

true. But the Father and the Son together are not more truly than the

Father singly, or the Son singly. Both together, therefore, are not

anything greater than each of them singly. And since also the Holy

Spirit equally is truly, the Father and Son together are not anything

greater than He, since neither are they more truly. The Father also and

the Holy Spirit together, since they do not surpass the Son in truth

(for they are not more truly), do not surpass Him either in magnitude.

And so the Son and the Holy Spirit together are just as great as the

Father alone, since they are as truly. So also the Trinity itself is as

great as each several person therein. For where truth itself is

magnitude, that is not more great which is not more true: since in

regard to the essence of truth, to be true is the same as to be, and to

be is the same as to be great; therefore to be great is the same as to

be true. And in regard to it, therefore, what is equally true must

needs also be equally great.

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[662] [In this and the following chapter, the meaning of Augustin will

be clearer, if the Latin "veritas," "vera," and "vere," are rendered

occasionally, by "reality," "real," and "really." He is endeavoring to

prove the equality of the three persons, by the fact that they are

equally real (true), and the degree of their reality (truth) is the

same. Real being is true being; reality is truth. In common

phraseology, truth and reality are synonymous.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 2.--Every Corporeal Conception Must Be Rejected, in Order that

It May Be Understood How God is Truth.

3. But in respect to bodies, it may be the case that this gold and that

gold may be equally true [real], but this may be greater than that,

since magnitude is not the same thing in this case as truth; and it is

one thing for it to be gold, another to be great. So also in the nature

of the soul; a soul is not called great in the same respect in which it

is called true. For he, too, has a true [real] soul who has not a great

soul; since the essence of body and soul is not the essence of the

truth [reality] itself; as is the Trinity, one God, alone, great, true,

truthful, the truth. Of whom if we endeavor to think, so far as He

Himself permits and grants, let us not think of any touch or embrace in

local space, as if of three bodies, or of any compactness of

conjunction, as fables tell of three-bodied Geryon; but let whatsoever

may occur to the mind, that is of such sort as to be greater in three

than in each singly, and less in one than in two, be rejected without

any doubt; for so everything corporeal is rejected. But also in

spiritual things let nothing changeable that may have occurred to the

mind be thought of God. For when we aspire from this depth to that

height, it is a step towards no small knowledge, if, before we can know

what God is, we can already know what He is not. For certainly He is

neither earth nor heaven; nor, as it were, earth and heaven; nor any

such thing as we see in the heaven; nor any such thing as we do not

see, but which perhaps is in heaven. Neither if you were to magnify in

the imagination of your thought the light of the sun as much as you are

able, either that it may be greater, or that it may be brighter, a

thousand times as much, or times without number; neither is this God.

Neither as [663] we think of the pure angels as spirits animating

celestial bodies, and changing and dealing with them after the will by

which they serve God; not even if all, and there are "thousands of

thousands," [664] were brought together into one, and became one;

neither is any such thing God. Neither if you were to think of the same

spirits as without bodies--a thing indeed most difficult for carnal

thought to do. Behold and see, if thou canst, O soul pressed down by

the corruptible body, and weighed down by earthly thoughts, many and

various; behold and see, if thou canst, that God is truth. [665] For it

is written that "God is light;" [666] not in such way as these eyes

see, but in such way as the heart sees, when it is said, He is truth

[reality]. Ask not what is truth [reality] for immediately the darkness

of corporeal images and the clouds of phantasms will put themselves in

the way, and will disturb that calm which at the first twinkling shone

forth to thee, when I said truth [reality]. See that thou remainest, if

thou canst, in that first twinkling with which thou art dazzled, as it

were, by a flash, when it is said to thee, Truth [Reality]. But thou

canst not; thou wilt glide back into those usual and earthly things.

And what weight, pray, is it that will cause thee so to glide back,

unless it be the bird-lime of the stains of appetite thou hast

contracted, and the errors of thy wandering from the right path?

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[663] Read si for sicut, if for as. Bened. ed.

[664] Apoc. v. 11

[665] Wisd. ix. 15

[666] 1 John i. 5

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Chapter 3.--How God May Be Known to Be the Chief Good. The Mind Does

Not Become Good Unless by Turning to God.

4. Behold again, and see if thou canst. Thou certainly dost not love

anything except what is good, since good is the earth, with the

loftiness of its mountains, and the due measure of its hills, and the

level surface of its plains; and good is an estate that is pleasant and

fertile; and good is a house that is arranged in due proportions, and

is spacious and bright; and good are animal and animate bodies; and

good is air that is temperate, and salubrious; and good is food that is

agreeable and fit for health; and good is health, without pains or

lassitude; and good is the countenance of man that is disposed in fit

proportions, and is cheerful in look, and bright in color; and good is

the mind of a friend, with the sweetness of agreement, and with the

confidence of love; and good is a righteous man; and good are riches,

since they are readily useful; and good is the heaven, with its sun,

and moon, and stars; and good are the angels, by their holy obedience;

and good is discourse that sweetly teaches and suitably admonishes the

hearer; and good is a poem that is harmonious in its numbers and

weighty in its sense. And why add yet more and more? This thing is good

and that good, but take away this and that, and regard good itself if

thou canst; so wilt thou see God, not good by a good that is other than

Himself, but the good of all good. For in all these good things,

whether those which I have mentioned, or any else that are to be

discerned or thought, we could not say that one was better than

another, when we judge truly, unless a conception of the good itself

had been impressed upon us, such that according to it we might both

approve some things as good, and prefer one good to another. So God is

to be loved, not this and that good, but the good itself. For the good

that must be sought for the soul is not one above which it is to fly by

judging, but to which it is to cleave by loving; and what can this be

except God? Not a good mind, or a good angel, or the good heaven, but

the good good. For perhaps what I wish to say may be more easily

perceived in this way. For when, for instance, a mind is called good,

as there are two words, so from these words I understand two

things--one whereby it is mind, and another whereby it is good. And

itself had no share in making itself a mind, for there was nothing as

yet to make itself to be anything; but to make itself to be a good

mind, I see, must be brought about by the will: not because that by

which it is mind is not itself anything good;--for how else is it

already called, and most truly called, better than the body?--but it is

not yet called a good mind, for this reason, that the action of the

will still is wanted, by which it is to become more excellent; and if

it has neglected this, then it is justly blamed, and is rightly called

not a good mind. For it then differs from the mind which does perform

this; and since the latter is praiseworthy, the former doubtless, which

does not perform, it is blameable. But when it does this of set

purpose, and becomes a good mind, it yet cannot attain to being so

unless it turn itself to something which itself is not. And to what can

it turn itself that it may become a good mind, except to the good which

it loves, and seeks, and obtains? And if it turns itself back again

from this, and becomes not good, then by the very act of turning away

from the good, unless that good remain in it from which it turns away,

it cannot again turn itself back thither if it should wish to amend.

5. Wherefore there would be no changeable goods, unless there were the

unchangeable good. Whenever then thou art told of this good thing and

that good thing, which things can also in other respects be called not

good, if thou canst put aside those things which are good by the

participation of the good, and discern that good itself by the

participation of which they are good (for when this or that good thing

is spoken of, thou understandest together with them the good itself

also): if, then, I say thou canst remove these things, and canst

discern the good in itself, then thou wilt have discerned God. And if

thou shalt cleave to Him with love, thou shalt be forthwith blessed.

But whereas other things are not loved, except because they are good,

be ashamed, in cleaving to them, not to love the good itself whence

they are good. That also, which is a mind, only because it is a mind,

while it is not yet also good by the turning itself to the unchangeable

good, but, as I said, is only a mind; whenever it so pleases us, as

that we prefer it even, if we understand aright, to all corporeal

light, does not please us in itself, but in that skill by which it was

made. For it is thence approved as made, wherein it is seen to have

been to be made. This is truth, and simple good: for it is nothing else

than the good itself, and for this reason also the chief good. For no

good can be diminished or increased, except that which is good from

some other good. Therefore the mind turns itself, in order to be good,

to that by which it comes to be a mind. Therefore the will is then in

harmony with nature, so that the mind may be perfected in good, when

that good is loved by the turning of the will to it, whence that other

good also comes which is not lost by the turning away of the will from

it. For by turning itself from the chief good, the mind loses the being

a good mind; but it does not lose the being a mind. And this, too, is a

good already, and one better than the body. The will, therefore, loses

that which the will obtains. For the mind already was, that could wish

to be turned to that from which it was: but that as yet was not, that

could wish to be before it was. And herein is our [supreme] good, when

we see whether the thing ought to be or to have been, respecting which

we comprehend that it ought to be or to have been, and when we see that

the thing could not have been unless it ought to have been, of which we

also do not comprehend in what manner it ought to have been. This good

then is not far from every one of us: for in it we live, and move, and

have our being. [667]

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[667] Acts xvii. 27, 28

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Chapter 4.--God Must First Be Known by an Unerring Faith, that He May

Be Loved.

6. But it is by love that we must stand firm to this and cleave to

this, in order that we may enjoy the presence of that by which we are,

and in the absence of which we could not be at all. For as "we walk as

yet by faith, and not by sight," [668] we certainly do not yet see God,

as the same [apostle] saith, "face to face:" [669] whom however we

shall never see, unless now already we love. But who loves what he does

not know? For it is possible something may be known and not loved: but

I ask whether it is possible that what is not known can be loved; since

if it cannot, then no one loves God before he knows Him. And what is it

to know God except to behold Him and steadfastly perceive Him with the

mind? For He is not a body to be searched out by carnal eyes. But

before also that we have power to behold and to perceive God, as He can

be beheld and perceived, which is permitted to the pure in heart; for

"blessed are the pure in heart. for they shall see God;" [670] except

He is loved by faith, it will not be possible for the heart to be

cleansed, in order that it may be apt and meet to see Him. For where

are there those three, in order to build up which in the mind the whole

apparatus of the divine Scriptures has been raised up, namely Faith,

Hope, and Charity, [671] except in a mind believing what it does not

yet see, and hoping and loving what it believes? Even He therefore who

is not known, but yet is believed, can be loved. But indisputably we

must take care, lest the mind believing that which it does not see,

feign to itself something which is not, and hope for and love that

which is false. For in that case, it will not be charity out of a pure

heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned, which is the

end of the commandment, as the same apostle says. [672]

7. But it must needs be, that, when by reading or hearing of them we

believe in any corporeal things which we have not seen, the mind frames

for itself something under bodily features and forms, just as it may

occur to our thoughts; which either is not true, or even if it be true,

which can most rarely happen, yet this is of no benefit to us to

believe in by faith, but it is useful for some other purpose, which is

intimated by means of it. For who is there that reads or hears what the

Apostle Paul has written, or what has been written of him, that does

not imagine to himself the countenance both of the apostle himself, and

of all those whose names are there mentioned? And whereas, among such a

multitude of men to whom these books are known, each imagines in a

different way those bodily features and forms, it is assuredly

uncertain which it is that imagines them more nearly and more like the

reality. Nor, indeed, is our faith busied therein with the bodily

countenance of those men; but only that by the grace of God they so

lived and so acted as that Scripture witnesses: this it is which it is

both useful to believe, and which must not be despaired of, and must be

sought. For even the countenance of our Lord Himself in the flesh is

variously fancied by the diversity of countless imaginations, which yet

was one, whatever it was. Nor in our faith which we have of our Lord

Jesus Christ, is that wholesome which the mind imagines for itself,

perhaps far other than the reality, but that which we think of man

according to his kind: for we have a notion of human nature implanted

in us, as it were by rule, according to which we know forthwith, that

whatever such thing we see is a man or the form of a man.

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[668] 2 Cor. v. 7

[669] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[670] Matt. v. 8

[671] 1 Cor. xiii. 13

[672] 1 Tim. i. 5

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Chapter 5.--How the Trinity May Be Loved Though Unknown.

Our conception is framed according to this notion, when we believe that

God was made man for us, as an example of humility, and to show the

love of God towards us. For this it is which it is good for us to

believe, and to retain firmly and unshakenly in our heart, that the

humility by which God was born of a woman, and was led to death through

contumelies so great by mortal men, is the chiefest remedy by which the

swelling of our pride may be cured, and the profound mystery by which

the bond of sin may be loosed. So also, because we know what

omnipotence is, we believe concerning the omnipotent God in the power

of His miracles and of His resurrection, and we frame conceptions

respecting actions of this kind, according to the species and genera of

things that are either ingrafted in us by nature, or gathered by

experience, that our faith may not be feigned. For neither do we know

the countenance of the Virgin Mary; from whom, untouched by a husband,

nor tainted in the birth itself, He was wonderfully born. Neither have

we seen what were the lineaments of the body of Lazarus; nor yet

Bethany; nor the sepulchre, and that stone which He commanded to be

removed when He raised Him from the dead; nor the new tomb cut out in

the rock, whence He Himself arose; nor the Mount of Olives, from whence

He ascended into heaven. And, in short, whoever of us have not seen

these things, know not whether they are as we conceive them to be, nay

judge them more probably not to be so. For when the aspect either of a

place, or a man, or of any other body, which we happened to imagine

before we saw it, turns out to be the same when it occurs to our sight

as it was when it occurred to our mind, we are moved with no little

wonder. So scarcely and hardly ever does it happen. And yet we believe

those things most steadfastly, because we imagine them according to a

special and general notion, of which we are certain. For we believe our

Lord Jesus Christ to be born of a virgin who was called Mary. But what

a virgin is, or what it is to be born, and what is a proper name, we do

not believe, but certainly know. And whether that was the countenance

of Mary which occurred to the mind in speaking of those things or

recollecting them, we neither know at all, nor believe. It is

allowable, then, in this case to say without violation of the faith,

perhaps she had such or such a countenance, perhaps she had not: but no

one could say without violation of the Christian faith, that perhaps

Christ was born of a virgin.

8. Wherefore, since we desire to understand the eternity, and equality,

and unity of the Trinity, as much as is permitted us, but ought to

believe before we understand; and since we must watch carefully, that

our faith be not feigned; since we must have the fruition of the same

Trinity, that we may live blessedly; but if we have believed anything

false of it, our hope would be worthless, and our charity not pure: how

then can we love, by believing, that Trinity which we do not know? Is

it according to the special or general notion, according to which we

love the Apostle Paul? In whose case, even if he was not of that

countenance which occurs to us when we think of him (and this we do not

know at all), yet we know what a man is. For not to go far away, this

we are; and it is manifest he, too, was this, and that his soul joined

to his body lived after the manner of mortals. Therefore we believe

this of him, which we find in ourselves, according to the species or

genus under which all human nature alike is comprised. What then do we

know, whether specially or generally, of that most excellent Trinity,

as if there were many such trinities, some of which we had learned by

experience, so that we may believe that Trinity, too, to have been such

as they, through the rule of similitude, impressed upon us, whether a

special or a general notion; and thus love also that thing which we

believe and do not yet know, from the parity of the thing which we do

know? But this certainly is not so. Or is it that, as we love in our

Lord Jesus Christ, that He rose from the dead, although we never saw

any one rise from thence, so we can believe in and love the Trinity

which we do not see, and the like of which we never have seen? But we

certainly know what it is to die, and what it is to live; because we

both live, and from time to time have seen and experienced both dead

and dying persons. And what else is it to rise again, except to live

again, that is, to return to life from death? When, therefore, we say

and believe that there is a Trinity, we know what a Trinity is, because

we know what three are; but this is not what we love. For we can easily

have this whenever we will, to pass over other things, by just holding

up three fingers. Or do we indeed love, not every trinity, but the

Trinity, that is God? We love then in the Trinity, that it is God: but

we never saw or knew any other God, because God is One; He alone whom

we have not yet seen, and whom we love by believing. But the question

is, from what likeness or comparison of known things can we believe, in

order that we may love God, whom we do not yet know?

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Chapter 6.--How the Man Not Yet Righteous Can Know the Righteous Man

Whom He Loves.

9. Return then with me, and let us consider why we love the apostle. Is

it at all on account of his human kind, which we know right well, in

that we believe him to have been a man? Assuredly not; for if it were

so, he now is not him whom we love, since he is no longer that man, for

his soul is separated from his body. But we believe that which we love

in him to be still living, for we love his righteous mind. From what

general or special rule then, except that we know both what a mind is,

and what it is to be righteous? And we say, indeed, not unfitly, that

we therefore know what a mind is, because we too have a mind. For

neither did we ever see it with our eyes, and gather a special or

general notion from the resemblance of more minds than one, which we

had seen; but rather, as I have said before, because we too have it.

For what is known so intimately, and so perceives itself to be itself,

as that by which also all other things are perceived, that is, the mind

itself? For we recognize the movements of bodies also, by which we

perceive that others live besides ourselves, from the resemblance of

ourselves; since we also so move our body in living as we observe those

bodies to be moved. For even when a living body is moved, there is no

way opened to our eyes to see the mind, a thing which cannot be seen by

the eyes; but we perceive something to be contained in that bulk, such

as is contained in ourselves, so as to move in like manner our own

bulk, which is the life and the soul. Neither is this, as it were, the

property of human foresight and reason, since brute animals also

perceive that not only they themselves live, but also other brute

animals interchangeably, and the one the other, and that we ourselves

do so. Neither do they see our souls, save from the movements of the

body, and that immediately and most easily by some natural agreement.

Therefore we both know the mind of any one from our own, and believe

also from our own of him whom we do not know. For not only do we

perceive that there is a mind, but we can also know what a mind is, by

reflecting upon our own: for we have a mind. But whence do we know what

a righteous man is? For we said above that we love the apostle for no

other reason except that he is a righteous mind. We know, then, what a

righteous man also is, just as we know what a mind is. But what a mind

is, as has been said, we know from ourselves, for there is a mind in

us. But whence do we know what a righteous man is, if we are not

righteous? But if no one but he who is righteous knows what is a

righteous man, no one but a righteous man loves a righteous man; for

one cannot love him whom one believes to be righteous, for this very

reason that one does believe him to be righteous, if one does not know

what it is to be righteous; according to that which we have shown

above, that no one loves what he believes and does not see, except by

some rule of a general or special notion. And if for this reason no one

but a righteous man loves a righteous man, how will any one wish to be

a righteous man who is not yet so? For no one wishes to be that which

he does not love. But, certainly, that he who is not righteous may be

so, it is necessary that he should wish to be righteous; and in order

that he may wish to be righteous, he loves the righteous man.

Therefore, even he who is not yet righteous, loves the righteous man.

[673] But he cannot love the righteous man, who is ignorant what a

righteous man is. Accordingly, even he who is not yet righteous, knows

what a righteous man is. Whence then does he know this? Does he see it

with his eyes? Is any corporeal thing righteous, as it is white, or

black, or square, or round? Who could say this? Yet with one's eyes one

has seen nothing except corporeal things. But there is nothing

righteous in a man except the mind; and when a man is called a

righteous man, he is called so from the mind, not from the body. For

righteousness is in some sort the beauty of the mind, by which men are

beautiful; very many too who are misshapen and deformed in body. And as

the mind is not seen with the eyes, so neither is its beauty. From

whence then does he who is not yet righteous know what a righteous man

is, and love the righteous man that he may become righteous? Do certain

signs shine forth by the motion of the body, by which this or that man

is manifested to be righteous? But whence does any one know that these

are the signs of a righteous mind when he is wholly ignorant what it is

to be righteous? Therefore he does know. But whence do we know what it

is to be righteous, even when we are not yet righteous? If we know from

without ourselves, we know it by some bodily thing. But this is not a

thing of the body. Therefore we know in ourselves what it is to be

righteous. For I find this nowhere else when I seek to utter it, except

within myself; and if I ask another what it is to be righteous, he

seeks within himself what to answer; and whosoever hence can answer

truly, he has found within himself what to answer. And when indeed I

wish to speak of Carthage, I seek within myself what to speak, and I

find within myself a notion or image of Carthage; but I have received

this through the body, that is, through the perception of the body,

since I have been present in that city in the body, and I saw and

perceived it, and retained it in my memory, that I might find within

myself a word concerning it, whenever I might wish to speak of it. For

its word is the image itself of it in my memory, not that sound of two

syllables when Carthage is named, or even when that name itself is

thought of silently from time to time, but that which I discern in my

mind, when I utter that dissyllable with my voice, or even before I

utter it. So also, when I wish to speak of Alexandria, which I never

saw, an image of it is present with me. For whereas I had heard from

many and had believed that city to be great, in such way as it could be

told me, I formed an image of it in my mind as I was able; and this is

with me its word when I wish to speak of it, before I utter with my

voice the five syllables which make the name that almost every one

knows. And yet if I could bring forth that image from my mind to the

eyes of men who know Alexandria, certainly all either would say, It is

not it; or if they said, It is, I should greatly wonder; and as I gazed

at it in my mind, that is, at the image which was as it were its

picture, I should yet not know it to be it, but should believe those

who retained an image they had seen. But I do not so ask what it is to

be righteous, nor do I so find it, nor do I so gaze upon it, when I

utter it; neither am I so approved when I am heard, nor do I so approve

when I hear; as though I have seen such a thing with my eyes, or

learned it by some perception of the body, or heard it from those who

had so learned it. For when I say, and say knowingly, that mind is

righteous which knowingly and of purpose assigns to every one his due

in life and behavior, I do not think of anything absent, as Carthage,

or imagine it as I am able, as Alexandria, whether it be so or not; but

I discern something present, and I discern it within myself, though I

myself am not that which I discern; and many if they hear will approve

it. And whoever hears me and knowingly approves, he too discerns this

same thing within himself, even though he himself be not what he

discerns. But when a righteous man says this, he discerns and says that

which he himself is. And whence also does he discern it, except within

himself? But this is not to be wondered at; for whence should he

discern himself except within himself? The wonderful thing is, that the

mind should see within itself that which it has seen nowhere else, and

should see truly, and should see the very true righteous mind, and

should itself be a mind, and yet not a righteous mind, which

nevertheless it sees within itself. Is there another mind that is

righteous in a mind that is not yet righteous? Or if there is not, what

does it there see when it sees and says what is a righteous mind, nor

sees it anywhere else but in itself, when itself is not a righteous

mind? Is that which it sees an inner truth present to the mind which

has power to behold it? Yet all have not that power; and they who have

power to behold it, are not all also that which they behold, that is,

they are not also righteous minds themselves, just as they are able to

see and to say what is a righteous mind. And whence will they be able

to be so, except by cleaving to that very same form itself which they

behold, so that from thence they may be formed and may be righteous

minds; not only discerning and saying that the mind is righteous which

knowingly and of purpose assigns to every one that which is his due in

life and behavior, but so likewise that they themselves may live

righteously and be righteous in character, by assigning to every one

that which is his due, so as to owe no man anything, but to love one

another. [674] And whence can any one cleave to that form but by loving

it? Why then do we love another whom we believe to be righteous, and do

not love that form itself wherein we see what is a righteous mind, that

we also may be able to be righteous? Is it that unless we loved that

also, we should not love him at all, whom through it we love; but

whilst we are not righteous, we love that form too little to allow of

our being able to be righteous? The man therefore who is believed to be

righteous, is loved through that form and truth which he who loves

discerns and understands within himself; but that very form and truth

itself cannot be loved from any other source than itself. For we do not

find any other such thing besides itself, so that by believing we might

love it when it is unknown, in that we here already know another such

thing. For whatsoever of such a kind one may have seen, is itself; and

there is not any other such thing, since itself alone is such as itself

is. He therefore who loves men, ought to love them either because they

are righteous, or that they may become righteous. For so also he ought

to love himself, either because he is righteous, or that he may become

righteous; for in this way he loves his neighbor as himself without any

risk. For he who loves himself otherwise, loves himself wrongfully,

since he loves himself to this end that he may be unrighteous;

therefore to this end that he may be wicked; and hence it follows next

that he does not love himself; for, "He who loveth iniquity, [675]

hateth his own soul." [676]

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[673] [The "wish" and "love" which Augustin here attributes to the

non-righteous man is not true and spiritual, but selfish. In chapter

vii. 10, he speaks of true love as distinct from that kind of desire

which is a mere wish. The latter he calls cupiditas. "That is to be

called love which is true, otherwise it is desire (cupiditas); and so

those who desire (cupidi) are improperly said to love (diligere), just

as they who love (diligunt) are said improperly to desire

(cupere)."--W.G.T.S.]

[674] Rom. xiii. 8

[675] Violence--A.V.

[676] Ps. xi. 6

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Chapter 7.--Of True Love, by Which We Arrive at the Knowledge of the

Trinity. God is to Be Sought, Not Outwardly, by Seeking to Do Wonderful

Things with the Angels, But Inwardly, by Imitating the Piety of Good

Angels.

10. No other thing, then, is chiefly to be regarded in this inquiry,

which we make concerning the Trinity and concerning knowing God, except

what is true love, nay, rather what is love. For that is to be called

love which is true, otherwise it is desire; and so those who desire are

said improperly to love, just as they who love are said improperly to

desire. But this is true love, that cleaving to the truth we may live

righteously, and so may despise all mortal things in comparison with

the love of men, whereby we wish them to live righteously. For so we

should be prepared also to die profitably for our brethren, as our Lord

Jesus Christ taught us by His example. For as there are two

commandments on which hang all the Law and the prophets, love of God

and love of our neighbor; [677] not without cause the Scripture mostly

puts one for both: whether it be of God only, as is that text, "For we

know that all things work together for good to them that love God;"

[678] and again, "But if any man love God, the same is known of Him;"

[679] and that, "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts

by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us;" [680] and many other

passages; because he who loves God must both needs do what God has

commanded, and loves Him just in such proportion as he does so;

therefore he must needs also love his neighbor, because God has

commanded it: or whether it be that Scripture only mentions the love of

our neighbor, as in that text, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so

fulfill the law of Christ;" [681] and again, "For all the law is

fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as

thyself;" [682] and in the Gospel, "All things whatsoever ye would that

men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and

the prophets." [683] And many other passages occur in the sacred

writings, in which only the love of our neighbor seems to be commanded

for perfection, while the love of God is passed over in silence;

whereas the Law and the prophets hang on both precepts. But this, too,

is because he who loves his neighbor must needs also love above all

else love itself. But "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love,

dwelleth in God." [684] Therefore he must needs above all else love

God.

11. Wherefore they who seek God through those Powers which rule over

the world, or parts of the world, are removed and cast away far from

Him; not by intervals of space, but by difference of affections: for

they endeavor to find a path outwardly, and forsake their own inward

things, within which is God. Therefore, even although they may either

have heard some holy heavenly Power, or in some way or another may have

thought of it, yet they rather covet its deeds at which human weakness

marvels, but do not imitate the piety by which divine rest is acquired.

For they prefer, through pride, to be able to do that which an angel

does, more than, through devotion, to be that which an angel is. For no

holy being rejoices in his own power, but in His from whom he has the

power which he fitly can have; and he knows it to be more a mark of

power to be united to the Omnipotent by a pious will, than to be able,

by his own power and will, to do what they may tremble at who are not

able to do such things. Therefore the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in

doing such things, in order that He might teach better things to those

who marvelled at them, and might turn those who were intent and in

doubt about unusual temporal things to eternal and inner things, says,

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give

you rest. Take my yoke upon you." And He does not say, Learn of me,

because I raise those who have been dead four days; but He says, "Learn

of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." For humility, which is most

solid, is more powerful and safer than pride, that is most inflated.

And so He goes on to say, "And ye shall find rest unto your souls,"

[685] for "Love [686] is not puffed up;" [687] and "God is Love;" [688]

and "such as be faithful in love shall rest in [689] Him," [690] called

back from the din which is without to silent joys. Behold, "God is

Love:" why do we go forth and run to the heights of the heavens and the

lowest parts of the earth, seeking Him who is within us, if we wish to

be with Him?

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[677] Matt. xxii. 37-40

[678] Rom. viii. 28

[679] 1 Cor. viii. 3

[680] Rom. v. 5

[681] Gal. vi. 2

[682] Gal. v. 14

[683] Matt. vii. 12

[684] 1 John iv. 6

[685] Matt. xi. 28, 29

[686] Charity.--A.V.

[687] 1 Cor. xiii. 4

[688] 1 John iv. 8

[689] Abide with.--A.V.

[690] Wisd. iii. 9

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Chapter 8.--That He Who Loves His Brother, Loves God; Because He Loves

Love Itself, Which is of God, and is God.

12. Let no one say, I do not know what I love. Let him love his

brother, and he will love the same love. For he knows the love with

which he loves, more than the brother whom he loves. So now he can know

God more than he knows his brother: clearly known more, because more

present; known more, because more within him; known more, because more

certain. Embrace the love of God, and by love embrace God. That is love

itself, which associates together all good angels and all the servants

of God by the bond of sanctity, and joins together us and them mutually

with ourselves, and joins us subordinately to Himself. In proportion,

therefore, as we are healed from the swelling of pride, in such

proportion are we more filled with love; and with what is he full, who

is full of love, except with God? Well, but you will say, I see love,

and, as far as I am able, I gaze upon it with my mind, and I believe

the Scripture, saying, that "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love,

dwelleth in God;" [691] but when I see love, I do not see in it the

Trinity. Nay, but thou dost see the Trinity if thou seest love. But if

I can I will put you in mind, that thou mayest see that thou seest it;

only let itself be present, that we may be moved by love to something

good. Since, when we love love, we love one who loves something, and

that on account of this very thing, that he does love something;

therefore what does love love, that love itself also may be loved? For

that is not love which loves nothing. But if it loves itself it must

love something, that it may love itself as love. For as a word

indicates something, and indicates also itself, but does not indicate

itself to be a word, unless it indicates that it does indicate

something; so love also loves indeed itself, but except it love itself

as loving something, it loves itself not as love. What therefore does

love love, except that which we love with love? But this, to begin from

that which is nearest to us, is our brother. And listen how greatly the

Apostle John commends brotherly love: "He that loveth his brother

abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."

[692] It is manifest that he placed the perfection of righteousness in

the love of our brother; for he certainly is perfect in whom "there is

no occasion of stumbling." And yet he seems to have passed by the love

of God in silence; which he never would have done, unless because he

intends God to be understood in brotherly love itself. For in this same

epistle, a little further on, he says most plainly thus: "Beloved, let

us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is

born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for

God is love." And this passage declares sufficiently and plainly, that

this same brotherly love itself (for that is brotherly love by which we

love each other) is set forth by so great authority, not only to be

from God, but also to be God. When, therefore, we love our brother from

love, we love our brother from God; neither can it be that we do not

love above all else that same love by which we love our brother: whence

it may be gathered that these two commandments cannot exist unless

interchangeably. For since "God is love," he who loves love certainly

loves God; but he must needs love love, who loves his brother. And so a

little after he says, "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath

seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen"? [693] because the

reason that he does not see God is, that he does not love his brother.

For he who does not love his brother, abideth not in love; and he who

abideth not in love, abideth not in God, because God is love. Further,

he who abideth not in God, abideth not in light; for "God is light, and

in Him is no darkness at all." [694] He therefore who abideth not in

light, what wonder is it if he does not see light, that is, does not

see God, because he is in darkness? But he sees his brother with human

sight, with which God cannot be seen. But if he loved with spiritual

love him whom he sees with human sight, he would see God, who is love

itself, with the inner sight by which He can be seen. Therefore he who

does not love his brother whom he sees, how can he love God, whom on

that account he does not see, because God is love, which he has not who

does not love his brother? Neither let that further question disturb

us, how much of love we ought to spend upon our brother, and how much

upon God: incomparably more upon God than upon ourselves, but upon our

brother as much as upon ourselves; and we love ourselves so much the

more, the more we love God. Therefore we love God and our neighbor from

one and the same love; but we love God for the sake of God, and

ourselves and our neighbors for the sake of God.

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[691] 1 John iv. 16

[692] 1 John ii. 10

[693] 1 John iv. 7, 8, 20

[694] 1 John i. 5

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Chapter 9.--Our Love of the Righteous is Kindled from Love Itself of

the Unchangeable Form of Righteousness.

13. For why is it, pray, that we burn when we hear and read, "Behold,

now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation: giving

no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all

things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience,

in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in

imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by

pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy

Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by

the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor

and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet

true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live;

as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as

poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all

things?" [695] Why is it that we are inflamed with love of the Apostle

Paul, when we read these things, unless that we believe him so to have

lived? But we do not believe that the ministers of God ought so to live

because we have heard it from any one, but because we behold it

inwardly within ourselves, or rather above ourselves, in the truth

itself. Him, therefore, whom we believe to have so lived, we love for

that which we see. And except we loved above all else that form which

we discern as always steadfast and unchangeable, we should not for that

reason love him, because we hold fast in our belief that his life, when

he was living in the flesh, was adapted to, and in harmony with, this

form. But somehow we are stirred up the more to the love of this form

itself, through the belief by which we believe some one to have so

lived; and to the hope by which we no more at all despair, that we,

too, are able so to live; we who are men, from this fact itself, that

some men have so lived, so that we both desire this more ardently, and

pray for it more confidently. So both the love of that form, according

to which they are believed to have lived, makes the life of these men

themselves to be loved by us; and their life thus believed stirs up a

more burning love towards that same form; so that the more ardently we

love God, the more certainly and the more calmly do we see Him, because

we behold in God the unchangeable form of righteousness, according to

which we judge that man ought to live. Therefore faith avails to the

knowledge and to the love of God, not as though of one altogether

unknown, or altogether not loved; but so that thereby He may be known

more clearly, and loved more steadfastly.

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[695] 2 Cor. vi. 2-10

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Chapter 10.--There are Three Things in Love, as It Were a Trace of the

Trinity.

14. 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.

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Book IX.

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That a kind of trinity exists in man, who is the image of God, viz. the

mind, and the knowledge wherewith the mind knows itself, and the love

wherewith it loves both itself and its own knowledge; and these three

are shown to be mutually equal, and of one essence.

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Chapter 1.--In What Way We Must Inquire Concerning the Trinity.

1. We certainly seek a trinity,--not any trinity, but that Trinity

which is God, and the true and supreme and only 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;" [696] and lest any one should rashly rejoice

that he has, as it were, apprehended it, "Seek," he says, "His face

evermore." [697] 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." [698] 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." [699] 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 [700] 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." [701] 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. [702] 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

therefore 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." [703] 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." [704] 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.

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[696] Ps. lxix. 32

[697] Ps. cv. 4

[698] 1 Cor. viii. 2

[699] Gal. iv. 9

[700] In purpose, om. in A.V.

[701] Phil. iii. 13-15

[702] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[703] Ecclus. xviii. 7

[704] 1 John iv. 16

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Chapter 2.--The Three Things Which are Found in Love Must Be

Considered. [705]

2. And this being so, let us direct our attention to those three things

which we fancy we have found. We are not 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 him

that loves, then there is no love; and 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.

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[705] [Augustin here begins his discussion of some ternaries that are

found in the Finite, that illustrate the trinality of the Infinite.

Like all finite analogies, they fail at certain points. In the case

chosen--namely, the lover, the loved, and love--the first two are

substances, the last is not. The mind is a substance, but its activity

in loving is not. In chapter iv. 5, Augustin asserts that "love and

knowledge exist substantially, as the mind itself does." But no

psychology, ancient or modern, has ever maintained that the agencies of

a spiritual entity or substance are themselves spiritual entity or

substances. The activities of the human mind in cognizing, loving,

etc., are only its energizing, not its substance. The ambiguity of the

Latin contributes to this error. The mind and its loving, and also the

mind and its cognizing, are denominated "duo qu�dam" the mind, love,

and knowledge, are denominated "tria qu�dem." By bringing the mind and

its love and knowledge under the one term "qu�dam," and then giving the

meaning of "substance" to "thing," in "something," the result follows

that all three are alike and equally "substantial." This analogy taken

from the mind and its activities illustrates the trinality of the

Divine essence, but fails to illustrate the substantiality of the three

persons. The three Divine persons are not the Divine essence together

with two of its activities (such, e.g., as creation and redemption),

but the essence in three modes, or "forms," as St. Paul denominates

them in Phil. iii. 6 If Augustin could prove his assertion that the

activities of the human spirit in knowing and loving are strictly

"substantial," then this ternary would illustrate not only the

trinality of the essence, but the essentiality and objectivity of the

persons. The fact which he mentions, that knowledge and love are

inseparable from the knowing and loving mind, does not prove their

equal substantiality with the mind.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 3.--The Image of the Trinity in the Mind of Man Who Knows

Himself and Loves Himself. The Mind Knows Itself Through Itself.

3. For the mind cannot love itself, except also it know itself; for how

can it love what it does not know? Or if any body says that the mind,

from either general or special knowledge, believes itself of such a

character as it has by experience found others to be and therefore

loves itself, he speaks most foolishly. For whence does a mind know

another mind, if it does not know itself? For the mind does not know

other minds and not know itself, as the eye of the body sees other eyes

and does not see itself; for we see bodies through the eyes of the

body, because, unless we are looking into a mirror, we cannot refract

and reflect the rays into themselves which shine forth through those

eyes, and touch whatever we discern,--a subject, indeed, which is

treated of most subtlely and obscurely, until it be clearly

demonstrated whether the fact be so, or whether it be not. But whatever

is the nature of the power by which we discern through the eyes,

certainly, whether it be rays or anything else, we cannot discern with

the eyes that power itself; but we inquire into it with the mind, and

if possible, understand even this with the mind. As the mind, then,

itself gathers the knowledge of corporeal things through the senses of

the body, so of incorporeal things through itself. Therefore it knows

itself also through itself, since it is incorporeal; for if it does not

know itself, it does not love itself.

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Chapter 4.--The Three are One, and Also Equal, Viz The Mind Itself, and

the Love, and the Knowledge of It. That the Same Three Exist

Substantially, and are Predicated Relatively. That the Same Three are

Inseparable. That the Same Three are Not Joined and Commingled Like

Parts, But that They are of One Essence, and are Relatives.

4. But as there are two things (duo qu�dam), the mind and the love of

it, when it loves itself; so there are two things, the mind and the

knowledge of it, when it knows itself. Therefore the mind itself, and

the love of it, and the knowledge of it, are three things (tria

qu�dam), and these three are one; and when they are perfect they are

equal. For if one loves himself less than as he is,--as for example,

suppose that the mind of a man only loves itself as much as the body of

a man ought to be loved, whereas the mind is more than the body,--then

it is in fault, and its love is not perfect. Again, if it loves itself

more than as it is,--as if, for instance, it loves itself as much as

God is to be loved, whereas the mind is incomparably less than

God,--here also it is exceedingly in fault, and its love of self is not

perfect. But it is in fault more perversely and wrongly still, when it

loves the body as much as God is to be loved. Also, if knowledge is

less than that thing which is known, and which can be fully known, then

knowledge is not perfect; but if it is greater, then the nature which

knows is above that which is known, as the knowledge of the body is

greater than the body itself, which is known by that knowledge. For

knowledge is a kind of life in the reason of the knower, but the body

is not life; and any life is greater than any body, not in bulk, but in

power. But when the mind knows itself, its own knowledge does not rise

above itself, because itself knows, and itself is known. When,

therefore, it knows itself entirely, and no other thing with itself,

then its knowledge is equal to itself; because its knowledge is not

from another nature, since it knows itself. And when it perceives

itself entirely, and nothing more, then it is neither less nor greater.

We said therefore rightly, that these three things, [mind, love, and

knowledge], when they are perfect, are by consequence equal.

5. Similar reasoning suggests to us, if indeed we can any way

understand the matter, that these things [i.e. love and knowledge]

exist in the soul, and that, being as it were involved in it, they are

so evolved from it as to be perceived and reckoned up substantially,

or, so to say, essentially. Not as though in a subject; as color, or

shape, or any other quality or quantity, are in the body. For anything

of this [material] kind does not go beyond the subject in which it is;

for the color or shape of this particular body cannot be also those of

another body. But the mind can also love something besides itself, with

that love with which it loves itself. And further, the mind does not

know itself only, but also many other things. Wherefore love and

knowledge are not contained in the mind as in a subject, but these also

exist substantially, as the mind itself does; because, even if they are

mutually predicated relatively, yet they exist each severally in their

own substance. Nor are they so mutually predicated relatively as color

and the colored subject are; so that color is in the colored subject,

but has not any proper substance in itself, since colored body is a

substance, but color is in a substance; but as two friends are also two

men, which are substances, while they are said to be men not

relatively, but friends relatively.

6. But, further, although one who loves or one who knows is a

substance, and knowledge is a substance, and love is a substance, but

he that loves and love, or, he that knows and knowledge, are spoken of

relatively to each other, as are friends: yet mind or spirit are not

relatives, as neither are men relatives: nevertheless he that loves and

love, or he that knows and knowledge, cannot exist separately from each

other, as men can that are friends. Although it would seem that

friends, too, can be separated in body, not in mind, in as far as they

are friends: nay, it can even happen that a friend may even also begin

to hate a friend and on this account cease to be a friend while the

other does not know it, and still loves him. But if the love with which

the mind loves itself ceases to be, then the mind also will at the same

time cease to love. Likewise, if the knowledge by which the mind knows

itself ceases to be, then the mind will also at the same time cease to

know itself. Just as the head of anything that has a head is certainly

a head, and they are predicated relatively to each other, although they

are also substances: for both a head is a body, and so is that which

has a head; and if there be no head, then neither will there be that

which has a head. Only these things can be separated from each other by

cutting off, those cannot.

7. And even if there are some bodies which cannot be wholly separated

and divided, yet they would not be bodies unless they consisted of

their own proper parts. A part then is predicated relatively to a

whole, since every part is a part of some whole, and a whole is a whole

by having all its parts. But since both part and whole are bodies,

these things are not only predicated relatively, but exist also

substantially. Perhaps, then, the mind is a whole, and the love with

which it loves itself, and the knowledge with which it knows itself,

are as it were its parts, of which two parts that whole consists. Or

are there three equal parts which make up the one whole? But no part

embraces the whole, of which it is a part; whereas, when the mind knows

itself as a whole, that is, knows itself perfectly, then the knowledge

of it extends through the whole of it; and when it loves itself

perfectly, then it loves itself as a whole, and the love of it extends

through the whole of it. Is it, then, as one drink is made from wine

and water and honey, and each single part extends through the whole,

and yet they are three things (for there is no part of the drink which

does not contain these three things; for they are not joined as if they

were water and oil, but are entirely commingled: and they are all

substances, and the whole of that liquor which is composed of the three

is one substance),--is it, I say, in some such way as this we are to

think these three to be together, mind, love, and knowledge? But water,

wine, and honey are not of one substance, although one substance

results in the drink made from the commingling of them. And I cannot

see how those other three are not of the same substance, since the mind

itself loves itself, and itself knows itself; and these three so exist,

as that the mind is neither loved nor known by any other thing at all.

These three, therefore, must needs be of one and the same essence; and

for that reason, if they were confounded together as it were by a

commingling, they could not be in any way three, neither could they be

mutually referred to each other. Just as if you were to make from one

and the same gold three similar rings, although connected with each

other, they are mutually referred to each other, because they are

similar. For everything similar is similar to something, and there is a

trinity of rings, and one gold. But if they are blended with each

other, and each mingled with the other through the whole of their own

bulk, then that trinity will fall through, and it will not exist at

all; and not only will it be called one gold, as it was called in the

case of those three rings, but now it will not be called three things

of gold at all.

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Chapter 5.--That These Three are Several in Themselves, and Mutually

All in All.

8. But in these three, when the mind knows itself and loves itself,

there remains a trinity: mind, love, knowledge; and this trinity is not

confounded together by any commingling: although they are each

severally in themselves and mutually all in all, or each severally in

each two, or each two in each. Therefore all are in all. For certainly

the mind is in itself, since it is called mind in respect to itself:

although it is said to be knowing, or known, or knowable, relatively to

its own knowledge; and although also as loving, and loved, or lovable,

it is referred to love, by which it loves itself. And knowledge,

although it is referred to the mind that knows or is known,

nevertheless is also predicated both as known and knowing in respect to

itself: for the knowledge by which the mind knows itself is not unknown

to itself. And although love is referred to the mind that loves, whose

love it is; nevertheless it is also love in respect to itself, so as to

exist also in itself: since love too is loved, yet cannot be loved with

anything except with love, that is with itself. So these things are

severally in themselves. But so are they in each other; because both

the mind that loves is in love, and love is in the knowledge of him

that loves, and knowledge is in the mind that knows. And each severally

is in like manner in each two, because the mind which knows and loves

itself, is in its own love and knowledge: and the love of the mind that

loves and knows itself, is in the mind and in its knowledge: and the

knowledge of the mind that knows and loves itself is in the mind and in

its love, because it loves itself that knows, and knows itself that

loves. And hence also each two is in each severally, since the mind

which knows and loves itself, is together with its own knowledge in

love, and together with its own love in knowledge; and love too itself

and knowledge are together in the mind, which loves and knows itself.

But in what way all are in all, we have already shown above; since the

mind loves itself as a whole, and knows itself as a whole, and knows

its own love wholly, and loves its own knowledge wholly, when these

three things are perfect in respect to themselves. Therefore these

three things are marvellously inseparable from each other, and yet each

of them is severally a substance, and all together are one substance or

essence, whilst they are mutually predicated relatively. [706]

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[706] [Augustin here illustrates, by the ternary of mind, love, and

knowledge, what the Greek Trinitarians denominate the perichoresis of

the divine essence. By the figure of a circulation, they describe the

eternal inbeing and indwelling of one person in another. This is

founded on John xiv. 10, 11; xvii. 21, 23. "Believest thou not that I

am in the Father, and the Father in Me? I pray that they all may be

one, as thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee." Athanasius (Oratio, iii.

21) remarks that Christ here prays that the disciples "may imitate the

trinitarian unity of essence, in their unity of affection." Had it been

possible for the disciples to be in the essence of the Father as the

Son is, he would have prayed that they all may be "one in Thee,"

instead of "one in Us." The Platonists, also, employed this figure of

circulatory movement, to explain the self-reflecting and self-communing

nature of the human mind. "It is not possible for us to know what our

souls are, but only by their kineseis kuklikai, their circular and

reflex motions and converse with themselves, which only can steal from

them their own secrets." J. Smith: Immortality of the Soul, Ch. ii.

Augustin's illustration, however, is imperfect, because "the three

things" which circulate are not "each of them severally a substance."

Only one of them, namely, the mind, is a substance.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 6.--There is One Knowledge of the Thing in the Thing Itself,

and Another in Eternal Truth Itself. That Corporeal Things, Too, are to

Be Judged the Rules of Eternal Truth.

9. But when the human mind knows itself and loves itself, it does not

know and love anything unchangeable: and each individual man declares

his own particular mind by one manner of speech, when he considers what

takes place in himself; but defines the human mind abstractly by

special or general knowledge. And so, when he speaks to me of his own

individual mind, as to whether he understands this or that, or does not

understand it, or whether he wishes or does not wish this or that, I

believe; but when he speaks the truth of the mind of man generally or

specially, I recognize and approve. Whence it is manifest, that each

sees a thing in himself, in such way that another person may believe

what he says of it, yet may not see it; but another [sees a thing] in

the truth itself, in such way that another person also can gaze upon

it; of which the former undergoes changes at successive times, the

latter consists in an unchangeable eternity. For we do not gather a

generic or specific knowledge of the human mind by means of resemblance

by seeing many minds with the eyes of the body: but we gaze upon

indestructible truth, from which to define perfectly, as far as we can,

not of what sort is the mind of any one particular man, but of what

sort it ought to be upon the eternal plan.

10. Whence also, even in the case of the images of things corporeal

which are drawn in through the bodily sense, and in some way infused

into the memory, from which also those things which have not been seen

are thought under a fancied image, whether otherwise than they really

are, or even perchance as they are;--even here too, we are proved

either to accept or reject, within ourselves, by other rules which

remain altogether unchangeable above our mind, when we approve or

reject anything rightly. For both when I recall the walls of Carthage

which I have seen, and imagine to myself the walls of Alexandria which

I have not seen, and, in preferring this to that among forms which in

both cases are imaginary, make that preference upon grounds of reason;

the judgment of truth from above is still strong and clear, and rests

firmly upon the utterly indestructible rules of its own right; and if

it is covered as it were by cloudiness of corporeal images, yet is not

wrapt up and confounded in them.

11. But it makes a difference, whether, under that or in that darkness,

I am shut off as it were from the clear heaven; or whether (as usually

happens on lofty mountains), enjoying the free air between both, I at

once look up above to the calmest light, and down below upon the

densest clouds. For whence is the ardor of brotherly love kindled in

me, when I hear that some man has borne bitter torments for the

excellence and steadfastness of faith? And if that man is shown to me

with the finger, I am eager to join myself to him, to become acquainted

with him, to bind him to myself in friendship. And accordingly, if

opportunity offers, I draw near, I address him, I converse with him, I

express my goodwill towards him in what words I can, and wish that in

him too in turn should be brought to pass and expressed goodwill

towards me; and I endeavor after a spiritual embrace in the way of

belief, since I cannot search out so quickly and discern altogether his

innermost heart. I love therefore the faithful and courageous man with

a pure and genuine love. But if he were to confess to me in the course

of conversation, or were through unguardedness to show in any way, that

either he believes something unseemly of God, and desires also

something carnal in Him, and that he bore these torments on behalf of

such an error, or from the desire of money for which he hoped, or from

empty greediness of human praise: immediately it follows that the love

with which I was borne towards him, displeased, and as it were

repelled, and taken away from an unworthy man, remains in that form,

after which, believing him such as I did, I had loved him; unless

perhaps I have come to love him to this end, that he may become such,

while I have found him not to be such in fact. And in that man, too,

nothing is changed: although it can be changed, so that he may become

that which I had believed him to be already. But in my mind there

certainly is something changed, viz., the estimate I had formed of him,

which was before of one sort, and now is of another: and the same love,

at the bidding from above of unchangeable righteousness, is turned

aside from the purpose of enjoying, to the purpose of taking counsel.

But the form itself of unshaken and stable truth, wherein I should have

enjoyed the fruition of the man, believing him to be good, and wherein

likewise I take counsel that he may be good, sheds in an immoveable

eternity the same light of incorruptible and most sound reason, both

upon the sight of my mind, and upon that cloud of images, which I

discern from above, when I think of the same man whom I had seen.

Again, when I call back to my mind some arch, turned beautifully and

symmetrically, which, let us say, I saw at Carthage; a certain reality

that had been made known to the mind through the eyes, and transferred

to the memory, causes the imaginary view. But I behold in my mind yet

another thing, according to which that work of art pleases me; and

whence also, if it displeased me, I should correct it. We judge

therefore of those particular things according to that [form of eternal

truth], and discern that form by the intuition of the rational mind.

But those things themselves we either touch if present by the bodily

sense, or if absent remember their images as fixed in our memory, or

picture, in the way of likeness to them, such things as we ourselves

also, if we wished and were able, would laboriously build up: figuring

in the mind after one fashion the images of bodies, or seeing bodies

through the body; but after another, grasping by simple intelligence

what is above the eye of the mind, viz., the reasons and the

unspeakably beautiful skill of such forms.

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Chapter 7.--We Conceive and Beget the Word Within, from the Things We

Have Beheld in the Eternal Truth. The Word, Whether of the Creature or

of the Creator, is Conceived by Love.

12. We behold, then, by the sight of the mind, in that eternal truth

from which all things temporal are made, the form according to which we

are, and according to which we do anything by true and right reason,

either in ourselves, or in things corporeal; and we have the true

knowledge of things, thence conceived, as it were as a word within us,

and by speaking we beget it from within; nor by being born does it

depart from us. And when we speak to others, we apply to the word,

remaining within us, the ministry of the voice or of some bodily sign,

that by some kind of sensible remembrance some similar thing may be

wrought also in the mind of him that hears,--similar, I say, to that

which does not depart from the mind of him that speaks. We do nothing,

therefore, through the members of the body in our words and actions, by

which the behavior of men is either approved or blamed, which we do not

anticipate by a word uttered within ourselves. For no one willingly

does anything, which he has not first said in his heart.

13. And this word is conceived by love, either of the creature or of

the Creator, that is, either of changeable nature or of unchangeable

truth. [707]

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[707] [The inward production of a thought in the finite essence of the

human spirit which is expressed outwardly in a spoken word, is

analogous to the eternal generation of the Eternal Wisdom in the

infinite essence of God expressed in the Eternal Word. Both are alike,

in that something spiritual issues from something spiritual, without

division or diminution of substance. But a thought of the human mind is

not an objective thing or substance; while the Eternal Word

is.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 8.--In What Desire and Love Differ.

[Conceived] therefore, either by desire or by love: not that the

creature ought not to be loved; but if that love [of the creature] is

referred to the Creator, then it will not be desire (cupiditas), but

love (charitas). For it is desire when the creature is loved for

itself. And then it does not help a man through making use of it, but

corrupts him in the enjoying it. When, therefore, the creature is

either equal to us or inferior, we must use the inferior in order to

God, but we must enjoy the equal duly in God. For as thou oughtest to

enjoy thyself, not in thyself, but in Him who made thee, so also him

whom thou lovest as thyself. Let us enjoy, therefore, both ourselves

and our brethren in the Lord; and hence let us not dare to yield, and

as it were to relax, ourselves to ourselves in the direction downwards.

Now a word is born, when, being thought out, it pleases us either to

the effect of sinning, or to that of doing right. Therefore love, as it

were a mean, conjoins our word and the mind from which it is conceived,

and without any confusion binds itself as a third with them, in an

incorporeal embrace.

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Chapter 9.--In the Love of Spiritual Things the Word Born is the Same

as the Word Conceived. It is Otherwise in the Love of Carnal Things.

14. But the word conceived and the word born are the very same when the

will finds rest in knowledge itself, as is the case in the love of

spiritual things. For instance, he who knows righteousness perfectly,

and loves it perfectly, is already righteous; even if no necessity

exist of working according to it outwardly through the members of the

body. But in the love of carnal and temporal things, as in the

offspring of animals, the conception of the word is one thing, the

bringing forth another. For here what is conceived by desiring is born

by attaining. Since it does not suffice to avarice to know and to love

gold, except it also have it; nor to know and love to eat, or to lie

with any one, unless also one does it; nor to know and love honors and

power, unless they actually come to pass. Nay, all these things, even

if obtained, do not suffice. "Whosoever drinketh of this water," He

says, "shall thirst again." [708] And so also the Psalmist, "He hath

conceived pain and brought forth iniquity." [709] And he speaks of pain

or labor as conceived, when those things are conceived which it is not

sufficient to know and will, and when the mind burns and grows sick

with want, until it arrives at those things, and, as it were, brings

them forth. Whence in the Latin language we have the word "parta" used

elegantly for both "reperta" and "comperta," which words sound as if

derived from bringing forth. [710] Since "lust, when it hath conceived,

bringeth forth sin." [711] Wherefore the Lord proclaims, "Come unto me

all ye that labor and are heavy laden;" [712] and in another place "Woe

unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those

days!" [713] And when therefore He referred all either right actions or

sins to the bringing forth of the word, "By thy mouth," [714] He says,

"thou shalt be justified, and by thy mouth [715] thou shalt be

condemned," [716] intending thereby not the visible mouth, but that

which is within and invisible, of the thought and of the heart.

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[708] John iv. 13

[709] Ps. vii. 14

[710] Partus

[711] Jas. i. 15

[712] Matt. xi. 28

[713] Matt. xxiv. 19

[714] Words.

[715] Words.--A.V.

[716] Matt. xii. 37

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Chapter 10.--Whether Only Knowledge that is Loved is the Word of the

Mind.

15. It is rightly asked then, whether all knowledge is a word, or only

knowledge that is loved. For we also know the things which we hate; but

what we do not like, cannot be said to be either conceived or brought

forth by the mind. For not all things which in anyway touch it, are

conceived by it; but some only reach the point of being known, but yet

are not spoken as words, as for instance those of which we speak now.

For those are called words in one way, which occupy spaces of time by

their syllables, whether they are pronounced or only thought; and in

another way, all that is known is called a word imprinted on the mind,

as long as it can be brought forth from the memory and defined, even

though we dislike the thing itself; and in another way still, when we

like that which is conceived in the mind. And that which the apostle

says, must be taken according to this last kind of word, "No man can

say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;" [717] since those

also say this, but according to another meaning of the term "word," of

whom the Lord Himself says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord,

Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." [718] Nay, even in the

case of things which we hate, when we rightly dislike and rightly

censure them, we approve and like the censure bestowed upon them, and

it becomes a word. Nor is it the knowledge of vices that displeases us,

but the vices themselves. For I like to know and define what

intemperance is; and this is its word. Just as there are known faults

in art, and the knowledge of them is rightly approved, when a

connoisseur discerns the species or the privation of excellence, as to

affirm and deny that it is or that it is not; yet to be without

excellence and to fall away into fault, is worthy of condemnation. And

to define intemperance, and to say its word, belongs to the art of

morals; but to be intemperate belongs to that which that art censures.

Just as to know and define what a solecism is, belongs to the art of

speaking; but to be guilty of one, is a fault which the same art

reprehends. A word, then, which is the point we wish now to discern and

intimate, is knowledge together with love. Whenever, then, the mind

knows and loves itself, its word is joined to it by love. And since it

loves knowledge and knows love, both the word is in love and love is in

the word, and both are in him who loves and speaks. [719]

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[717] 1 Cor. xii. 3

[718] Matt. vii. 21

[719] [The meaning of this obscure chapter seems to be, that only what

the mind is pleased with, is the real expression and index of the

mind--its true "word." The true nature of the mind is revealed in its

sympathies. But this requires some qualification. For in the case of

contrary qualities, like right and wrong, beauty and ugliness, the real

nature of the mind is seen also in its antipathy as well as in its

sympathy; in its hatred of wrong as well as in its love of right. Each

alike is a true index of the mind, because each really implies the

other.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 11.--That the Image or Begotten Word of the Mind that Knows

Itself is Equal to the Mind Itself.

16. But all knowledge according to species is like the thing which it

knows. For there is another knowledge according to privation, according

to which we speak a word only when we condemn. And this condemnation of

a privation is equivalent to praise of the species, and so is approved.

The mind, then, contains some likeness to a known species, whether when

liking that species or when disliking its privation. And hence, in so

far as we know God, we are like Him, but not like to the point of

equality, since we do not know Him to the extent of His own being. And

as, when we speak of bodies by means of the bodily sense, there arises

in our mind some likeness of them, which is a phantasm of the memory;

for the bodies themselves are not at all in the mind, when we think

them, but only the likenesses of those bodies; therefore, when we

approve the latter for the former, we err, for the approving of one

thing for another is an error; yet the image of the body in the mind is

a thing of a better sort than the species of the body itself, inasmuch

as the former is in a better nature, viz. in a living substance, as the

mind is: so when we know God, although we are made better than we were

before we knew Him, and above all when the same knowledge being also

liked and worthily loved becomes a word, and so that knowledge becomes

a kind of likeness of God; yet that knowledge is of a lower kind, since

it is in a lower nature; for the mind is creature, but God is Creator.

And from this it may be inferred, that when the mind knows and approves

itself, this same knowledge is in such way its word, as that it is

altogether on a par and equal with it, and the same; because it is

neither the knowledge of a lower essence, as of the body, nor of a

higher, as of God. And whereas knowledge bears a likeness to that which

it knows, that is, of which it is the knowledge; in this case it has

perfect and equal likeness, when the mind itself, which knows, is

known. And so it is both image and word; because it is uttered

concerning that mind to which it is equalled in knowing, and that which

is begotten is equal to the begetter.

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Chapter 12.--Why Love is Not the Offspring of the Mind, as Knowledge is

So. The Solution of the Question. The Mind with the Knowledge of Itself

and the Love of Itself is the Image of the Trinity.

17. What then is love? Will it not be an image? Will it not be a word?

Will it not be begotten? For why does the mind beget its knowledge when

it knows itself, and not beget its love when it loves itself? For if it

is the cause of its own knowing, for the reason that it is knowable, it

is also the cause of its own love because it is lovable. It is hard,

then, to say why it does not beget both. For there is a further

question also respecting the supreme Trinity itself, the omnipotent God

the Creator, after whose image man is made, which troubles men, whom

the truth of God invites to the faith by human speech; viz. why the

Holy Spirit is not also to be either believed or understood to be

begotten by God the Father, so that He also may be called a Son. And

this question we are endeavoring in some way to investigate in the

human mind, in order that from a lower image, in which our own nature

itself as it were answers, upon being questioned, in a way more

familiar to ourselves, we may be able to direct a more practised mental

vision from the enlightened creature to the unchangeable light;

assuming, however, that the truth itself has persuaded us, that as no

Christian doubts the Word of God to be the Son, so that the Holy Spirit

is love. Let us return, then, to a more careful questioning and

consideration upon this subject of that image which is the creature,

that is, of the rational mind; wherein the knowledge of some things

coming into existence in time, but which did not exist before, and the

love of some things which were not loved before, opens to us more

clearly what to say: because to speech also itself, which must be

disposed in time, that thing is easier of explanation which is

comprehended in the order of time.

18. First, therefore, it is clear that a thing may possibly be

knowable, that is, such as can be known, and yet that it may be

unknown; but that it is not possible for that to be known which is not

knowable. Wherefore it must be clearly held that everything whatsoever

that we know begets at the same time in us the knowledge of itself; for

knowledge is brought forth from both, from the knower and from the

thing known. When, therefore, the mind knows itself, it alone is the

parent of its own knowledge; for it is itself both the thing known and

the knower of it. But it was knowable to itself also before it knew

itself, only the knowledge of itself was not in itself so long as it

did not know itself. In knowing itself, then, it begets a knowledge of

itself equal to itself; since it does not know itself as less than

itself is, nor is its knowledge the knowledge of the essence of some

one else, not only because itself knows, but also because it knows

itself, as we have said above. What then is to be said of love; why,

when the mind loves itself, it should not seem also to have begotten

the love of itself? For it was lovable to itself even before it loved

itself since it could love itself; just as it was knowable to itself

even before it knew itself, since it could know itself. For if it were

not knowable to itself, it never could have known itself; and so, if it

were not lovable to itself, it never could have loved itself. Why

therefore may it not be said by loving itself to have begotten its own

love, as by knowing itself it has begotten its own knowledge? Is it

because it is thereby indeed plainly shown that this is the principle

of love, whence it proceeds? for it proceeds from the mind itself,

which is lovable to itself before it loves itself, and so is the

principle of its own love by which it loves itself: but that this love

is not therefore rightly said to be begotten by the mind, as is the

knowledge of itself by which the mind knows itself, because in the case

of knowledge the thing has been found already, which is what we call

brought forth or discovered; [720] and this is commonly preceded by an

inquiry such as to find rest when that end is attained. For inquiry is

the desire of finding, or, what is the same thing, of discovering.

[721] But those things which are discovered are as it were brought

forth, whence they are like offspring; but wherein, except in the case

itself of knowledge? For in that case they are as it were uttered and

fashioned. For although the things existed already which we found by

seeking, yet the knowledge of them did not exist, which knowledge we

regard as an offspring that is born. Further, the desire (appetitus)

which there is in seeking proceeds from him who seeks, and is in some

way in suspense, and does not rest in the end whither it is directed,

except that which is sought be found and conjoined with him who seeks.

And this desire, that is, inquiry,--although it does not seem to be

love, by which that which is known is loved, for in this case we are

still striving to know,--yet it is something of the same kind. For it

can be called will (voluntas),since every one who seeks wills (vult) to

find; and if that is sought which belongs to knowledge, every one who

seeks wills to know. But if he wills ardently and earnestly, he is said

to study (studere): a word that is most commonly employed in the case

of pursuing and obtaining any branches of learning. Therefore, the

bringing forth of the mind is preceded by some desire, by which,

through seeking and finding what we wish to know, the offspring, viz.

knowledge itself, is born. And for this reason, that desire by which

knowledge is conceived and brought forth, cannot rightly be called the

bringing forth and the offspring; and the same desire which led us to

long for the knowing of the thing, becomes the love of the thing when

known, while it holds and embraces its accepted offspring, that is,

knowledge, and unites it to its begetter. And so there is a kind of

image of the Trinity in the mind itself, and the knowledge of it, which

is its offspring and its word concerning itself, and love as a third,

and these three are one, and one substance. [722] Neither is the

offspring less, since the mind knows itself according to the measure of

its own being; nor is the love less, since it loves itself according to

the measure both of its own knowledge and of its own being.

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[720] "Partum" or "repertum."

[721] "Reperiendi."

[722] [It is not these three together that constitute the one

substance. The mind alone is the substance--the knowledge and the love

being only two activities of it. When the mind is not cognizing or

loving, it is still an entire mind. As previously remarked in the

annotation on IX. ii. this ternary will completely illustrate a

trinality of a certain kind, but not that of the Trinity; in which the

"tria qu�dam" are three subsistences, each of which is so substantial

as to be the subject of attributes, and to be able to employ them. The

human mind is substantial enough to possess and employ the attributes

of knowledge and love. We say that the mind knows and loves. But an

activity of the mind is not substantial enough to possess and employ

the attributes of knowledge and love. We cannot say that the loving

loves; or the loving knows; or the knowing loves, etc.--W.G.T.S.]

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Book X.

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In which there is shown to be another trinity in the mind of man, and

one that appears much more evidently, viz. in his memory,

understanding, and will.

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Chapter 1.--The Love of the Studious Mind, that Is, of One Desirous to

Know, is Not the Love of a Thing Which It Does Not Know.

1. Let us now proceed, then, in due order, with a more exact purpose,

to explain this same point more thoroughly. And first, since no one can

love at all a thing of which he is wholly ignorant, we must carefully

consider of what sort is the love of those who are studious, that is,

of those who do not already know, but are still desiring to know any

branch of learning. Now certainly, in those things whereof the word

study is not commonly used, love often arises from hearsay, when the

reputation of anything for beauty inflames the mind to the seeing and

enjoying it; since the mind knows generically wherein consist the

beauties of corporeal things, from having seen them very frequently,

and since there exists within a faculty of approving that which

outwardly is longed for. And when this happens, the love that is called

forth is not of a thing wholly unknown, since its genus is thus known.

But when we love a good man whose face we never saw, we love him from

the knowledge of his virtues, which virtues we know [abstractly] in the

truth itself. But in the case of learning, it is for the most part the

authority of others who praise and commend it that kindles our love of

it; although nevertheless we could not burn with any zeal at all for

the study of it, unless we had already in our mind at least a slight

impression of the knowledge of each kind of learning. For who, for

instance, would devote any care and labor to the learning of rhetoric,

unless he knew before that it was the science of speaking? Sometimes,

again, we marvel at the results of learning itself, which we have heard

of or experienced; and hence burn to obtain, by learning, the power of

attaining these results. Just as if it were said to one who did not

know his letters, that there is a kind of learning which enables a man

to send words, wrought with the hand in silence, to one who is ever so

far absent, for him in turn to whom they are sent to gather these

words, not with his ears, but with his eyes; and if the man were to see

the thing actually done, is not that man, since he desires to know how

he can do this thing, altogether moved to study with a view to the

result which he already knows and holds? So it is that the studious

zeal of those who learn is kindled: for that of which any one is

utterly ignorant, he can in no way love.

2. So also, if any one hear an unknown sign, as, for instance, the

sound of some word of which he does not know the signification, he

desires to know what it is; that is, he desires to know what thing it

is which it is agreed shall be brought to mind by that sound: as if he

heard the word temetum [723] uttered, and not knowing, should ask what

it is. He must then know already that it is a sign, i.e. that the word

is not an empty sound, but that something is signified by it; for in

other respects this trisyllabic word is known to him already, and has

already impressed its articulate form upon his mind through the sense

of hearing. And then what more is to be required in him, that he may go

on to a greater knowledge of that of which all the letters and all the

spaces of its several sounds are already known, unless that it shall at

the same time have become known to him that it is a sign, and shall

have also moved him with the desire of knowing of what it is the sign?

The more, then, the thing is known, yet not fully known, the more the

mind desires to know concerning it what remains to be known. For if he

knew it to be only such and such a spoken word, and did not know that

it was the sign of something, he would seek nothing further, since the

sensible thing is already perceived as far as it can be by the sense.

But because he knows it to be not only a spoken word, but also a sign,

he wishes to know it perfectly; and no sign is known perfectly, except

it be known of what it is the sign. He then who with ardent carefulness

seeks to know this, and inflamed by studious zeal perseveres in the

search; can such an one be said to be without love? What then does he

love? For certainly nothing can be loved unless it is known. For that

man does not love those three syllables which he knows already. But if

he loves this in them, that he knows them to signify something, this is

not the point now in question, for it is not this which he seeks to

know. But we are now asking what it is he loves, in that which he is

desirous to know, but which certainly he does not yet know; and we are

therefore wondering why he loves, since we know most assuredly that

nothing can be loved unless it be known. What then does he love, except

that he knows and perceives in the reason of things what excellence

there is in learning, in which the knowledge of all signs is contained;

and what benefit there is in the being skilled in these, since by them

human fellowship mutually communicates its own perceptions, lest the

assemblies of men should be actually worse than utter solitude, if they

were not to mingle their thoughts by conversing together? The soul,

then, discerns this fitting and serviceable species, and knows it, and

loves it; and he who seeks the meaning of any words of which he is

ignorant, studies to render that species perfect in himself as much as

he can: for it is one thing to behold it in the light of truth, another

to desire it as within his own capacity. For he beholds in the light of

truth how great and how good a thing it is to understand and to speak

all tongues of all nations, and so to hear no tongue and to be heard by

none as from a foreigner. The beauty, then, of this knowledge is

already discerned by thought, and the thing being known is loved; and

that thing is so regarded, and so stimulates the studious zeal of

learners, that they are moved with respect to it, and desire it eagerly

in all the labor which they spend upon the attainment of such a

capacity, in order that they may also embrace in practice that which

they know beforehand by reason. And so every one, the nearer he

approaches that capacity in hope, the more fervently desires it with

love; for those branches of learning are studied the more eagerly,

which men do not despair of being able to attain; for when any one

entertains no hope of attaining his end, then he either loves

lukewarmly or does not love at all, howsoever he may see the excellence

of it. Accordingly, because the knowledge of all languages is almost

universally felt to be hopeless, every one studies most to know that of

his own nation; but if he feels that he is not sufficient even to

comprehend this perfectly, yet no one is so indolent in this knowledge

as not to wish to know, when he hears an unknown word, what it is, and

to seek and learn it if he can. And while he is seeking it, certainly

he has a studious zeal of learning, and seems to love a thing he does

not know; but the case is really otherwise. For that species touches

the mind, which the mind knows and thinks, wherein the fitness is

clearly visible which accrues from the associating of minds with one

another, in the hearing and returning of known and spoken words. And

this species kindles studious zeal in him who seeks what indeed he

knows not, but gazes upon and loves the unknown form to which that

pertains. If then, for example, any one were to ask, What is temetum

(for I had instanced this word already), and it were said to him, What

does this matter to you? he will answer, Lest perhaps I hear some one

speaking, and understand him not; or perhaps read the word somewhere,

and know not what the writer meant. Who, pray, would say to such an

inquirer, Do not care about understanding what you hear; do not care

about knowing what you read? For almost every rational soul quickly

discerns the beauty of that knowledge, through which the thoughts of

men are mutually made known by the enunciation of significant words;

and it is on account of this fitness thus known, and because known

therefore loved, that such an unknown word is studiously sought out.

When then he hears and learns that wine was called "temetum" by our

forefathers, but that the word is already quite obsolete in our present

usage of language, he will think perhaps that he has still need of the

word on account of this or that book of those forefathers. But if he

holds these also to be superfluous, perhaps he does now come to think

the word not worth remembering, since he sees it has nothing to do with

that species of learning which he knows with the mind, and gazes upon,

and so loves.

3. Wherefore in all cases the love of a studious mind, that is, of one

that wishes to know what it does not know, is not the love of that

thing which it does not know, but of that which it knows; on account of

which it wishes to know what it does not know. Or if it is so

inquisitive as to be carried away, not for any other cause known to it,

but by the mere love of knowing things unknown; then such an

inquisitive person is, doubtless distinguishable from an ordinary

student, yet does not, any more than he, love things he does not know;

nay, on the contrary, he is more fitly said to hate things he knows

not, of which he wishes that there should be none, in wishing to know

everything. But lest any one should lay before us a more difficult

question, by declaring that it is just as impossible for any one to

hate what he does not know, as to love what he does not know, we will

not withstand what is true; but it must be understood that it is not

the same thing to say he loves to know things unknown, as to say he

loves things unknown. For it is possible that a man may love to know

things unknown; but it is not possible that he should love things

unknown. For the word to know is not placed there without meaning;

since he who loves to know things unknown, does not love the unknown

things themselves, but the knowing of them. And unless he knew what

knowing means, no one could say confidently, either that he knew or

that he did not know. For not only he who says I know, and says so

truly, must needs know what knowing is; but he also who says, I do not

know, and says so confidently and truly, and knows that he says so

truly, certainly knows what knowing is; for he both distinguishes him

who does not know from him who knows, when he looks into himself and

says truly I do not know; and whereas he knows that he says this truly,

whence should he know it, if he did not know what knowing is?

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[723] Wine.

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Chapter 2.--No One at All Loves Things Unknown.

4. No studious person, then, no inquisitive person, loves things he

does not know, even while he is urgent with the most vehement desire to

know what he does not know. For he either knows already generically

what he loves, and longs to know it also in some individual or

individuals, which perhaps are praised, but not yet known to him; and

he pictures in his mind an imaginary form by which he may be stirred to

love. And whence does he picture this, except from those things which

he has already known? And yet perhaps he will not love it, if he find

that form which was praised to be unlike that other form which was

figured and in thought most fully known to his mind. And if he has

loved it, he will begin to love it from that time when he learned it;

since a little before, that form which was loved was other than that

which the mind that formed it had been wont to exhibit to itself. But

if he shall find it similar to that form which report had proclaimed,

and to be such that he could truly say I was already loving thee; yet

certainly not even then did he love a form he did not know, since he

had known it in that likeness. Or else we see somewhat in the species

of the eternal reason, and therein love it; and when this is manifested

in some image of a temporal thing, and we believe the praises of those

who have made trial of it, and so love it, then we do not love anything

unknown, according to that which we have already sufficiently discussed

above. Or else, again, we love something known, and on account of it

seek something unknown; and so it is by no means the love of the thing

unknown that possesses us, but the love of the thing known, to which we

know the unknown thing belongs, so that we know that too which we seek

still as unknown; as a little before I said of an unknown word. Or

else, again, every one loves the very knowing itself, as no one can

fail to know who desires to know anything. For these reasons they seem

to love things unknown who wish to know anything which they do not

know, and who, on account of their vehement desire of inquiry, cannot

be said to be without love. But how different the case really is, and

that nothing at all can be loved which is not known, I think I must

have persuaded every one who carefully looks upon truth. But since the

examples which we have given belong to those who desire to know

something which they themselves are not, we must take thought lest

perchance some new notion appear, when the mind desires to know itself.

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Chapter 3.--That When the Mind Loves Itself, It is Not Unknown to

Itself.

5. What, then, does the mind love, when it seeks ardently to know

itself, whilst it is still unknown to itself? For, behold, the mind

seeks to know itself, and is excited thereto by studious zeal. It

loves, therefore; but what does it love? Is it itself? But how can this

be when it does not yet know itself, and no one can love what he does

not know? Is it that report has declared to it its own species, in like

way as we commonly hear of people who are absent? Perhaps, then, it

does not love itself, but loves that which it imagines of itself, which

is perhaps widely different from what itself is: or if the phantasy in

the mind is like the mind itself, and so when it loves this fancied

image, it loves itself before it knew itself, because it gazes upon

that which is like itself; then it knew other minds from which to

picture itself, and so is known to itself generically. Why, then, when

it knows other minds, does it not know itself, since nothing can

possibly be more present to it than itself? But if, as other eyes are

more known to the eyes of the body, than those eyes are to themselves;

then let it not seek itself, because it never will find itself. For

eyes can never see themselves except in looking-glasses; and it cannot

be supposed in any way that anything of that kind can be applied also

to the contemplation of incorporeal things, so that the mind should

know itself, as it were, in a looking-glass. Or does it see in the

reason of eternal truth how beautiful it is to know one's self, and so

loves this which it sees, and studies to bring it to pass in itself?

because, although it is not known to itself, yet it is known to it how

good it is, that it should be known to itself. And this, indeed, is

very wonderful, that it does not yet know itself, and yet knows already

how excellent a thing it is to know itself. Or does it see some most

excellent end, viz. its own serenity and blessedness, by some hidden

remembrance, which has not abandoned it, although it has gone far

onwards, and believes that it cannot attain to that same end unless it

know itself? And so while it loves that, it seeks this; and loves that

which is known, on account of which it seeks that which is unknown. But

why should the remembrance of its own blessedness be able to last, and

the remembrance of itself not be able to last as well; that so it

should know itself which wishes to attain, as well as know that to

which it wishes to attain? Or when it loves to know itself, does it

love, not itself, which it does not yet know, but the very act of

knowing; and feel the more annoyed that itself is wanting to its own

knowledge wherewith it wishes to embrace all things? And it knows what

it is to know; and whilst it loves this, which it knows, desires also

to know itself. Whereby, then, does it know its own knowing, if it does

not know itself? For it knows that it knows other things, but that it

does not know itself; for it is from hence that it knows also what

knowing is. In what way, then, does that which does not know itself,

know itself as knowing anything? For it does not know that some other

mind knows, but that itself does so. Therefore it knows itself.

Further, when it seeks to know itself, it knows itself now as seeking.

Therefore again it knows itself. And hence it cannot altogether not

know itself, when certainly it does so far know itself as that it knows

itself as not knowing itself. But if it does not know itself not to

know itself, then it does not seek to know itself. And therefore, in

the very fact that it seeks itself, it is clearly convicted of being

more known to itself than unknown. For it knows itself as seeking and

as not knowing itself, in that it seeks to know itself.

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Chapter 4.--How the Mind Knows Itself, Not in Part, But as a Whole.

6. What then shall we say? Does that which knows itself in part, not

know itself in part? But it is absurd to say, that it does not as a

whole know what it knows. I do not say, it knows wholly; but what it

knows, it as a whole knows. When therefore it knows anything about

itself, which it can only know as a whole, it knows itself as a whole.

But it does know that itself knows something, while yet except as a

whole it cannot know anything. Therefore it knows itself as a whole.

Further, what in it is so known to itself, as that it lives? And it

cannot at once be a mind, and not live, while it has also something

over and above, viz., that it understands: for the souls of beasts also

live, but do not understand. As therefore a mind is a whole mind, so it

lives as a whole. But it knows that it lives. Therefore it knows itself

as a whole. Lastly, when the mind seeks to know itself, it already

knows that it is a mind: otherwise it knows not whether it seeks

itself, and perhaps seeks one thing while intending to seek another.

For it might happen that itself was not a mind, and so, in seeking to

know a mind, that it did not seek to know itself. Wherefore since the

mind, when it seeks to know what mind is, knows that it seeks itself,

certainly it knows that itself is a mind. Furthermore, if it knows this

in itself, that it is a mind, and a whole mind, then it knows itself as

a whole. But suppose it did not know itself to be a mind, but in

seeking itself only knew that it did seek itself. For so, too, it may

possibly seek one thing for another, if it does not know this: but that

it may not seek one thing for another, without doubt it knows what it

seeks. But if it knows what it seeks, and seeks itself, then certainly

it knows itself. What therefore more does it seek? But if it knows

itself in part, but still seeks itself in part, then it seeks not

itself, but part of itself. For when we speak of the mind itself, we

speak of it as a whole. Further, because it knows that it is not yet

found by itself as a whole, it knows how much the whole is. And so it

seeks that which is wanting, as we are wont to seek to recall to the

mind something that has slipped from the mind, but has not altogether

gone away from it; since we can recognize it, when it has come back, to

be the same thing that we were seeking. But how can mind come into

mind, as though it were possible for the mind not to be in the mind?

Add to this, that if, having found a part, it does not seek itself as a

whole, yet it as a whole seeks itself. Therefore as a whole it is

present to itself, and there is nothing left to be sought: for that is

wanting which is sought, not the mind which seeks. Since therefore it

as a whole seeks itself, nothing of it is wanting. Or if it does not as

a whole seek itself, but the part which has been found seeks the part

which has not yet been found then the mind does not seek itself, of

which no part seeks itself. For the part which has been found, does not

seek itself; nor yet does the part itself which has not yet been found,

seek itself; since it is sought by that part which has been already

found. Wherefore, since neither the mind as a whole seeks itself, nor

does any part of it seek itself, the mind does not seek itself at all.

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Chapter 5.--Why the Soul is Enjoined to Know Itself. Whence Come the

Errors of the Mind Concerning Its Own Substance.

7. Why therefore is it enjoined upon it, that it should know itself? I

suppose, in order that, it may consider itself, and live according to

its own nature; that is, seek to be regulated according to its own

nature, viz., under Him to whom it ought to be subject, and above those

things to which it is to be preferred; under Him by whom it ought to be

ruled, above those things which it ought to rule. For it does many

things through vicious desire, as though in forgetfulness of itself.

For it sees some things intrinsically excellent, in that more excellent

nature which is God: and whereas it ought to remain steadfast that it

may enjoy them, it is turned away from Him, by wishing to appropriate

those things to itself, and not to be like to Him by His gift, but to

be what He is by its own, and it begins to move and slip gradually down

into less and less, which it thinks to be more and more; for it is

neither sufficient for itself, nor is anything at all sufficient for

it, if it withdraw from Him who is alone sufficient: and so through

want and distress it becomes too intent upon its own actions and upon

the unquiet delights which it obtains through them: and thus, by the

desire of acquiring knowledge from those things that are without, the

nature of which it knows and loves, and which it feels can be lost

unless held fast with anxious care, it loses its security, and thinks

of itself so much the less, in proportion as it feels the more secure

that it cannot lose itself. So, whereas it is one thing not to know

oneself, and another not to think of oneself (for we do not say of the

man that is skilled in much learning, that he is ignorant of grammar,

when he is only not thinking of it, because he is thinking at the time

of the art of medicine);--whereas, then, I say it is one thing not to

know oneself, and another not to think of oneself, such is the strength

of love, that the mind draws in with itself those things which it has

long thought of with love, and has grown into them by the close

adherence of diligent study, even when it returns in some way to think

of itself. And because these things are corporeal which it loved

externally through the carnal senses; and because it has become

entangled with them by a kind of daily familiarity, and yet cannot

carry those corporeal things themselves with itself internally as it

were into the region of incorporeal nature; therefore it combines

certain images of them, and thrusts them thus made from itself into

itself. For it gives to the forming of them somewhat of its own

substance, yet preserves the while something by which it may judge

freely of the species of those images; and this something is more

properly the mind, that is, the rational understanding, which is

preserved that it may judge. For we see that we have those parts of the

soul which are informed by the likenesses of corporeal things, in

common also with beasts.

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Chapter 6.--The Opinion Which the Mind Has of Itself is Deceitful.

8. But the mind errs, when it so lovingly and intimately connects

itself with these images, as even to consider itself to be something of

the same kind. For so it is conformed to them to some extent, not by

being this, but by thinking it is so: not that it thinks itself to be

an image, but outright that very thing itself of which it entertains

the image. For there still lives in it the power of distinguishing the

corporeal thing which it leaves without, from the image of that

corporeal thing which it contains therefrom within itself: except when

these images are so projected as if felt without and not thought

within, as in the case of people who are asleep, or mad, or in a

trance.

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Chapter 7.--The Opinions of Philosophers Respecting the Substance of

the Soul. The Error of Those Who are of Opinion that the Soul is

Corporeal, Does Not Arise from Defective Knowledge of the Soul, But

from Their Adding There to Something Foreign to It. What is Meant by

Finding.

9. When, therefore, it thinks itself to be something of this kind, it

thinks itself to be a corporeal thing; and since it is perfectly

conscious of its own superiority, by which it rules the body, it has

hence come to pass that the question has been raised what part of the

body has the greater power in the body; and the opinion has been held

that this is the mind, nay, that it is even the whole soul altogether.

And some accordingly think it to be the blood, others the brain, others

the heart; not as the Scripture says, "I will praise Thee, O Lord, with

my whole heart;" and, "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thine

heart;" [724] for this word by misapplication or metaphor is

transferred from the body to the soul; but they have simply thought it

to be that small part itself of the body, which we see when the inward

parts are rent asunder. Others, again, have believed the soul to be

made up of very minute and individual corpustules, which they call

atoms, meeting in themselves and cohering. Others have said that its

substance is air, others fire. Others have been of opinion that it is

no substance at all, since they could not think any substance unless it

is body, and they did not find that the soul was body; but it was in

their opinion the tempering together itself of our body, or the

combining together of the elements, by which that flesh is as it were

conjoined. And hence all of these have held the soul to be mortal;

since, whether it were body, or some combination of body, certainly it

could not in either case continue always without death. But they who

have held its substance to be some kind of life the reverse of

corporeal, since they have found it to be a life that animates and

quickens every living body, have by consequence striven also, according

as each was able, to prove it immortal, since life cannot be without

life.

For as to that fifth kind of body, I know not what, which some have

added to the four well-known elements of the world, and have said that

the soul was made of this, I do not think we need spend time in

discussing it in this place. For either they mean by body what we mean

by it, viz., that of which a part is less than the whole in extension

of place, and they are to be reckoned among those who have believed the

mind to be corporeal: or if they call either all substance, or all

changeable substance, body, whereas they know that not all substance is

contained in extension of place by any length and breadth and height,

we need not contend with them about a question of words.

10. Now, in the case of all these opinions, any one who sees that the

nature of the mind is at once substance, and yet not corporeal,--that

is, that it does not occupy a less extension of place with a less part

of itself, and a greater with a greater,--must needs see at the same

time that they who are of opinion that it is corporeal [725] do not err

from defect of knowledge concerning mind, but because they associate

with it qualities without which they are not able to conceive any

nature at all. For if you bid them conceive of existence that is

without corporeal phantasms, they hold it merely nothing. And so the

mind would not seek itself, as though wanting to itself. For what is so

present to knowledge as that which is present to the mind? Or what is

so present to the mind as the mind itself? And hence what is called

"invention," if we consider the origin of the word, what else does it

mean, unless that to find out [726] is to "come into" that which is

sought? Those things accordingly which come into the mind as it were of

themselves, are not usually said to be found out, [727] although they

may be said to be known; since we did not endeavor by seeking to come

into them, that is to invent or find them out. And therefore, as the

mind itself really seeks those things which are sought by the eyes or

by any other sense of the body (for the mind directs even the carnal

sense, and then finds out or invents, when that sense comes to the

things which are sought); so, too, it finds out or invents other things

which it ought to know, not with the medium of corporeal sense, but

through itself, when it "comes into" them; and this, whether in the

case of the higher substance that is in God, or of the other parts of

the soul; just as it does when it judges of bodily images themselves,

for it finds these within, in the soul, impressed through the body.

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[724] Ps. ix., cxi., and cxxxviii., Deut. vi. 5, and Matt. xxii. 37

[725] [The distinction between corporeal and incorporeal substance is

one that Augustin often insists upon. See Confessions VII. i-iii. The

doctrine that all substance is extended body, and that there is no such

entity as spiritual unextended substance, is combatted by Plato in the

Theatetus. For a history of the contest and an able defence of the

substantiality of spirit, see Cudworth's Intellectual System, III. 384

sq. Harrison's Ed.--W.G.T.S.]

[726] Invenire

[727] Inventa

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Chapter 8.--How the Soul Inquires into Itself. Whence Comes the Error

of the Soul Concerning Itself.

11. It is then a wonderful question, in what manner the soul seeks and

finds itself; at what it aims in order to seek, or whither it comes,

that it may come into or find out. For what is so much in the mind as

the mind itself? But because it is in those things which it thinks of

with love, and is wont to be in sensible, that is, in corporeal things

with love, it is unable to be in itself without the images of those

corporeal things. And hence shameful error arises to block its way,

whilst it cannot separate from itself the images of sensible things, so

as to see itself alone. For they have marvellously cohered with it by

the close adhesion of love. And herein consists its uncleanness; since,

while it strives to think of itself alone, it fancies itself to be

that, without which it cannot think of itself. When, therefore, it is

bidden to become acquainted with itself, let it not seek itself as

though it were withdrawn from itself; but let it withdraw that which it

has added to itself. For itself lies more deeply within, not only than

those sensible things, which are clearly without, but also than the

images of them; which are indeed in some part of the soul, viz., that

which beasts also have, although these want understanding, which is

proper to the mind. As therefore the mind is within, it goes forth in

some sort from itself, when it exerts the affection of love towards

these, as it were, footprints of many acts of attention. And these

footprints are, as it were, imprinted on the memory, at the time when

the corporeal things which are without are perceived in such way, that

even when those corporeal things are absent, yet the images of them are

at hand to those who think of them. Therefore let the mind become

acquainted with itself, and not seek itself as if it were absent; but

fix upon itself the act of [voluntary] attention, by which it was

wandering among other things, and let it think of itself. So it will

see that at no time did it ever not love itself, at no time did it ever

not know itself; but by loving another thing together with itself it

has confounded itself with it, and in some sense has grown one with it.

And so, while it embraces diverse things, as though they were one, it

has come to think those things to be one which are diverse.

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Chapter 9.--The Mind Knows Itself, by the Very Act of Understanding the

Precept to Know Itself.

12. Let it not therefore seek to discern itself as though absent, but

take pains to discern itself as present. Nor let it take knowledge of

itself as if it did not know itself, but let it distinguish itself from

that which it knows to be another. For how will it take pains to obey

that very precept which is given it, "Know thyself," if it knows not

either what "know" means or what "thyself" means? But if it knows both,

then it knows also itself. Since "know thyself" is not so said to the

mind as is "Know the cherubim and the seraphim;" for they are absent,

and we believe concerning them, and according to that belief they are

declared to be certain celestial powers. Nor yet again as it is said,

Know the will of that man: for this it is not within our reach to

perceive at all, either by sense or understanding, unless by corporeal

signs actually set forth; and this in such a way that we rather believe

than understand. Nor again as it is said to a man, Behold thy own face;

which he can only do in a looking-glass. For even our own face itself

is out of the reach of our own seeing it; because it is not there where

our look can be directed. But when it is said to the mind, Know

thyself; then it knows itself by that very act by which it understands

the word "thyself;" and this for no other reason than that it is

present to itself. But if it does not understand what is said, then

certainly it does not do as it is bid to do. And therefore it is bidden

to do that thing which it does do, when it understands the very precept

that bids it.

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Chapter 10.--Every Mind Knows Certainly Three Things Concerning

Itself--That It Understands, that It Is, and that It Lives.

13. Let it not then add anything to that which it knows itself to be,

when it is bidden to know itself. For it knows, at any rate, that this

is said to itself; namely, to the self that is, and that lives, and

that understands. But a dead body also is, and cattle live; but neither

a dead body nor cattle understand. Therefore it so knows that it so is,

and that it so lives, as an understanding is and lives. When,

therefore, for example's sake, the mind thinks itself air, it thinks

that air understands; it knows, however, that itself understands, but

it does not know itself to be air, but only thinks so. Let it separate

that which it thinks itself; let it discern that which it knows; let

this remain to it, about which not even have they doubted who have

thought the mind to be this corporeal thing or that. For certainly

every mind does not consider itself to be air; but some think

themselves fire, others the brain, and some one kind of corporeal

thing, others another, as I have mentioned before; yet all know that

they themselves understand, and are, and live; but they refer

understanding to that which they understand, but to be, and to live, to

themselves. And no one doubts, either that no one understands who does

not live, or that no one lives of whom it is not true that he is; and

that therefore by consequence that which understands both is and lives;

not as a dead body is which does not live, nor as a soul lives which

does not understand, but in some proper and more excellent manner.

Further, they know that they will, and they equally know that no one

can will who is not and who does not live; and they also refer that

will itself to something which they will with that will. They know also

that they remember; and they know at the same time that nobody could

remember, unless he both was and lived; but we refer memory itself also

to something, in that we remember those things. Therefore the knowledge

and science of many things are contained in two of these three, memory

and understanding; but will must be present, that we may enjoy or use

them. For we enjoy things known, in which things themselves the will

finds delight for their own sake, and so reposes; but we use those

things, which we refer to some other thing which we are to enjoy.

Neither is the life of man vicious and culpable in any other way, than

as wrongly using and wrongly enjoying. But it is no place here to

discuss this.

14. But since we treat of the nature of the mind, let us remove from

our consideration all knowledge which is received from without, through

the senses of the body; and attend more carefully to the position which

we have laid down, that all minds know and are certain concerning

themselves. For men certainly have doubted whether the power of living,

of remembering, of understanding, of willing, of thinking, of knowing,

of judging, be of air, or of fire, or of the brain, or of the blood, or

of atoms, or besides the usual four elements of a fifth kind of body, I

know not what; or ,whether the combining or tempering together of this

our flesh itself has power to accomplish these things. And one has

attempted to establish this, and another to establish that. Yet who

ever doubts that he himself lives, and remembers, and understands, and

wills, and thinks, and knows, and judges? Seeing that even if he

doubts, he lives; if he doubts, he remembers why he doubts; if he

doubts, he understands that he doubts; if he doubts, he wishes to be

certain; if he doubts, he thinks; if he doubts, he knows that he does

not know; if he doubts, he judges that he ought not to assent rashly.

Whosoever therefore doubts about anything else, ought not to doubt of

all these things; which if they were not, he would not be able to doubt

of anything.

15. They who think the mind to be either a body or the combination or

tempering of the body, will have all these things to seem to be in a

subject, so that the substance is air, or fire, or some other corporeal

thing, which they think to be the mind; but that the understanding

(intelligentia) is in this corporeal thing as its quality, so that this

corporeal thing is the subject, but the understanding is in the

subject: viz. that the mind is the subject, which they judge to be a

corporeal thing, but the understanding [intelligence], or any other of

those things which we have mentioned as certain to us, is in that

subject. They also hold nearly the same opinion who deny the mind

itself to be body, but think it to be the combination or tempering

together of the body; for there is this difference, that the former say

that the mind itself is the substance, in which the understanding

[intelligence] is, as in a subject; but the latter say that the mind

itself is in a subject, viz. in the body, of which it is the

combination or tempering together. And hence, by consequence, what else

can they think, except that the understanding also is in the same body

as in a subject?

16. And all these do not perceive that the mind knows itself, even when

it seeks for itself, as we have already shown. But nothing is at all

rightly said to be known while its substance is not known. And

therefore, when the mind knows itself, it knows its own substance; and

when it is certain about itself, it as certain about its own substance.

But it is certain about itself, as those things which are said above

prove convincingly; although it is not at all certain whether itself is

air, or fire, or some body, or some function of body. Therefore it is

not any of these. And to that whole which is bidden to know itself,

belongs this, that it is certain that it is not any of those things of

which it is uncertain, and is certain that it is that only, which only

it is certain that it is. For it thinks in this way of fire, or air,

and whatever else of the body it thinks of. Neither can it in any way

be brought to pass that it should so think that which itself is, as it

thinks that which itself is not. Since it thinks all these things

through an imaginary phantasy, whether fire, or air, or this or that

body, or that part or combination and tempering together of the body:

nor assuredly is it said to be all those things, but some one of them.

But if it were any one of them, it would think this one in a different

manner from the rest viz. not through an imaginary phantasy, as absent

things are thought, which either themselves or some of like kind have

been touched by the bodily sense; but by some inward, not feigned, but

true presence (for nothing is more present to it than itself); just as

it thinks that itself lives, and remembers, and understands, and wills.

For it knows these things in itself, and does not imagine them as

though it had touched them by the sense outside itself, as corporeal

things are touched. And if it attaches nothing to itself from the

thought of these things, so as to think itself to be something of the

kind, then whatsoever remains to it from itself that alone is itself.

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Chapter 11.--In Memory, Understanding [or Intelligence], and Will, We

Have to Note Ability, Learning, and Use. Memory, Understanding, and

Will are One Essentially, and Three Relatively.

17. Putting aside, then, for a little while all other things, of which

the mind is certain concerning itself, let us especially consider and

discuss these three--memory, understanding, will. For we may commonly

discern in these three the character of the abilities of the young

also; since the more tenaciously and easily a boy remembers, and the

more acutely he understands, and the more ardently he studies, the more

praiseworthy is he in point of ability. But when the question is about

any one's learning, then we ask not how solidly and easily he

remembers, or how shrewdly he understands; but what it is that he

remembers, and what it is that he understands. And because the mind is

regarded as praiseworthy, not only as being learned, but also as being

good, one gives heed not only to what he remembers and what he

understands, but also to what he wills (velit); not how ardently he

wills, but first what it is he wills, and then how greatly he wills it.

For the mind that loves eagerly is then to be praised, when it loves

that which ought to be loved eagerly. Since, then, we speak of these

three--ability, knowledge, use--the first of these is to be considered

under the three heads, of what a man can do in memory, and

understanding, and will. The second of them is to be considered in

regard to that which any one has in his memory and in his

understanding, which he has attained by a studious will. But the third,

viz. use, lies in the will, which handles those things that are

contained in the memory and understanding, whether it refer them to

anything further, or rest satisfied with them as an end. For to use, is

to take up something into the power of the will; and to enjoy, is to

use with joy, not any longer of hope, but of the actual thing.

Accordingly, every one who enjoys, uses; for he takes up something into

the power of the will, wherein he also is satisfied as with an end. But

not every one who uses, enjoys, if he has sought after that, which he

takes up into the power of the will, not on account of the thing

itself, but on account of something else.

18. Since, then, these three, memory, understanding, will, are not

three lives, but one life; nor three minds, but one mind; it follows

certainly that neither are they three substances, but one substance.

Since memory, which is called life, and mind, and substance, is so

called in respect to itself; but it is called memory, relatively to

something. And I should say the same also of understanding and of will,

since they are called understanding and will relatively to something;

but each in respect to itself is life, and mind, and essence. And hence

these three are one, in that they are one life, one mind, one essence;

and whatever else they are severally called in respect to themselves,

they are called also together, not plurally, but in the singular

number. But they are three, in that wherein they are mutually referred

to each other; and if they were not equal, and this not only each to

each, but also each to all, they certainly could not mutually contain

each other; for not only is each contained by each, but also all by

each. For I remember that I have memory and understanding, and will;

and I understand that I understand, and will, and remember; and I will

that I will, and remember, and understand; and I remember together my

whole memory, and understanding, and will. For that of my memory which

I do not remember, is not in my memory; and nothing is so much in the

memory as memory itself. Therefore I remember the whole memory. Also,

whatever I understand I know that I understand, and I know that I will

whatever I will; but whatever I know I remember. Therefore I remember

the whole of my understanding, and the whole of my will. Likewise, when

I understand these three things, I understand them together as whole.

For there is none of things intelligible which I do not understand,

except what I do not know; but what I do not know, I neither remember,

nor will. Therefore, whatever of things intelligible I do not

understand, it follows also that I neither remember nor will. And

whatever of things intelligible I remember and will, it follows that I

understand. My will also embraces my whole understanding and my whole

memory whilst I use the whole that I understand and remember. And,

therefore, while all are mutually comprehended by each, and as wholes,

each as a whole is equal to each as a whole, and each as a whole at the

same time to all as wholes; and these three are one, one life, one

mind, one essence. [728]

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[728] [This ternary of memory, understanding, and will, is a better

analogue to the Trinity than the preceding one in chapter IX--namely,

mind, knowledge, and love. Memory, understanding, and will have equal

substantiality, while mind, knowledge, and love have not. The former

are three faculties, in each of which is the whole mind or spirit. The

memory is the whole mind as remembering; the understanding is the whole

mind as cognizing; and the will is the whole mind as determining. The

one essence of the mind is in each of these three modes, each of which

is distinct from the others; and yet there are not three essences or

minds. In the other ternary, of mind, knowledge, and love, the last two

are not faculties but single acts of the mind. A particular act of

cognition is not the whole mind in the general mode of cognition. This

would make it a faculty. A particular act of loving, or of willing, is

not the whole mind in the general mode of loving, or of willing. This

would make the momentary and transient act a permanent faculty. This

ternary fails, as we have noticed in a previous annotation (IX. ii. 2),

in that only the mind is a substance. The ternary of memory,

understanding, and will is an adequate analogue to the Trinity in

respect to equal substantiality. But it fails when the separate

consciousness of the Trinitarian distinctions is brought into

consideration. The three faculties of memory, understanding, and will,

are not so objective to each other as to admit of three forms of

consciousness, of the use of the personal pronouns, and of the personal

actions that are ascribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It also

fails, in that these three are not all the modes of the mind. There are

other faculties: e. g., the imagination. The whole essence of the mind

is in this also.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 12.--The Mind is an Image of the Trinity in Its Own Memory, and

Understanding, and Will.

19. Are we, then, now to go upward, with whatever strength of purpose

we may, to that chiefest and highest essence, of which the human mind

is an inadequate image, yet an image? Or are these same three things to

be yet more distinctly made plain in the soul, by means of those things

which we receive from without, through the bodily sense, wherein the

knowledge of corporeal things is impressed upon us in time? Since we

found the mind itself to be such in its own memory, and understanding,

and will, that since it was understood always to know and always to

will itself, it was understood also at the same time always to remember

itself, always to understand and love itself, although not always to

think of itself as separate from those things which are not itself; and

hence its memory of itself, and understanding of itself, are with

difficult discerned in it. For in this case, where these two things are

very closely conjoined, and one is not preceded by the other by any

time at all, it looks as if they were not two things, but one called by

two names; and love itself is not so plainly felt to exist when the

sense of need does not disclose it, since what is loved is always at

hand. And hence these things may be more lucidly set forth, even to men

of duller minds, if such topics are treated of as are brought within

reach of the mind in time, and happen to it in time; while it remembers

what it did not remember before, and sees what it did not see before,

and loves what it did not love before. But this discussion demands now

another beginning, by reason of the measure of the present book.

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Book XI.

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A kind of image of the Trinity is pointed out, even in the outer man;

first of all, in those things which are perceived from without, viz. in

the bodily object that is seen, and in the form that is impressed by it

upon the sight of the seer, and in the purpose of the will that

combines the two; although these three are neither mutually equal, nor

of one substance. Next, a kind of trinity, in three somewhats of one

substance, is observed to exist in the mind itself, as it were

introduced there from those things that are perceived from without;

viz. the image of the bodily object which is in the memory, and the

impression formed therefrom when the mind's eye of the thinker is

turned to it, and the purpose of the will combining both. And this

latter trinity is also said to pertain to the outer man, in that it is

introduced into the mind from bodily objects, which are perceived from

without.

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Chapter 1.--A Trace of the Trinity Also In the Outer Man.

1. No one doubts that, as the inner man is endued with understanding,

so is the outer with bodily sense. Let us try, then, if we can, to

discover in this outer man also, some trace, however slight, of the

Trinity, not that itself also is in the same manner the image of God.

For the opinion of the apostle is evident, which declares the inner man

to be renewed in the knowledge of God after the image of Him that

created him: [729] whereas he says also in another place, "But though

our outer man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." [730]

Let us seek, then, so far as we can, in that which perishes, some image

of the Trinity, if not so express, yet perhaps more easy to be

discerned. For that outer man also is not called man to no purpose, but

because there is in it some likeness of the inner man. And owing to

that very order of our condition whereby we are made mortal and

fleshly, we handle things visible more easily and more familiarly than

things intelligible; since the former are outward, the latter inward;

and the former are perceived by the bodily sense, the latter are

understood by the mind; and we ourselves, i.e. our minds, are not

sensible things, that is, bodies, but intelligible things, since we are

life. And yet, as I said, we are so familiarly occupied with bodies,

and our thought has projected itself outwardly with so wonderful a

proclivity towards bodies, that, when it has been withdrawn from the

uncertainty of things corporeal, that it may be fixed with a much more

certain and stable knowledge in that which is spirit, it flies back to

those bodies, and seeks rest there whence it has drawn weakness. And to

this its feebleness we must suit our argument; so that, if we would

endeavor at any time to distinguish more aptly, and intimate more

readily, the inward spiritual thing, we must take examples of

likenesses from outward things pertaining to the body. The outer man,

then, endued as he is with the bodily sense, is conversant with bodies.

And this bodily sense, as is easily observed, is fivefold; seeing,

hearing, smelling, tasting, touching. But it is both a good deal of

trouble, and is not necessary, that we should inquire of all these five

senses about that which we seek. For that which one of them declares to

us, holds also good in the rest. Let us use, then, principally the

testimony of the eyes. For this bodily sense far surpasses the rest;

and in proportion to its difference of kind, is nearer to the sight of

the mind.

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[729] Col. iii. 10

[730] 2 Cor. iv. 16

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Chapter 2.--A Certain Trinity in the Sight. That There are Three Things

in Sight, Which Differ in Their Own Nature. In What Manner from a

Visible Thing Vision is Produced, or the Image of that Thing Which is

Seen. The Matter is Shown More Clearly by an Example. How These Three

Combine in One.

2. When, then, we see any corporeal object, these three things, as is

most easy to do, are to be considered and distinguished: First, the

object itself which we see; whether a stone, or flame, or any other

thing that can be seen by the eyes; and this certainly might exist also

already before it was seen; next, vision or the act of seeing, which

did not exist before we perceived the object itself which is presented

to the sense; in the third place, that which keeps the sense of the eye

in the object seen, so long as it is seen, viz. the attention of the

mind. In these three, then, not only is there an evident distinction,

but also a diverse nature. For, first, that visible body is of a far

different nature from the sense of the eyes, through the incidence of

which sense upon it vision arises. And what plainly is vision itself

other than perception informed by that thing which is perceived?

Although there is no vision if the visible object be withdrawn, nor

could there be any vision of the kind at all if there were no body that

could be seen; yet the body by which the sense of the eyes is informed,

when that body is seen, and the form itself which is imprinted by it

upon the sense, which is called vision, are by no means of the same

substance. For the body that is seen is, in its own nature, separable;

but the sense, which was already in the living subject, even before it

saw what it was able to see, when it fell in with something

visible,--or the vision which comes to be in the sense from the visible

body when now brought into connection with it and seen,--the sense,

then, I say, or the vision, that is, the sense informed from without,

belongs to the nature of the living subject, which is altogether other

than that body which we perceive by seeing, and by which the sense is

not so formed as to be sense, but as to be vision. For unless the sense

were also in us before the presentation to us of the sensible object,

we should not differ from the blind, at times when we are seeing

nothing, whether in darkness, or when our eyes are closed. But we

differ from them in this, that there is in us, even when we are not

seeing, that whereby we are able to see, which is called the sense;

whereas this is not in them, nor are they called blind for any other

reason than because they have it not. Further also, that attention of

the mind which keeps the sense in that thing which we see, and connects

both, not only differs from that visible thing in its nature; in that

the one is mind, and the other body; but also from the sense and the

vision itself: since this attention is the act of the mind alone; but

the sense of the eyes is called a bodily sense, for no other reason

than because the eyes themselves also are members of the body; and

although an inanimate body does not perceive, yet the soul commingled

with the body perceives through a corporeal instrument, and that

instrument is called sense. And this sense, too, is cut off and

extinguished by suffering on the part of the body, when any one is

blinded; while the mind remains the same; and its attention, since the

eyes are lost, has not, indeed, the sense of the body which it may

join, by seeing, to the body without it, and so fix its look thereupon

and see it, yet by the very effort shows that, although the bodily

sense be taken away, itself can neither perish nor be diminished. For

there remains unimpaired a desire [appetitus] of seeing, whether it can

be carried into effect or not. These three, then, the body that is

seen, and vision itself, and the attention of mind which joins both

together, are manifestly distinguishable, not only on account of the

properties of each, but also on account of the difference of their

natures.

3. And since, in this case, the sensation does not proceed from that

body which is seen, but from the body of the living being that

perceives, with which the soul is tempered together in some wonderful

way of its own; yet vision is produced, that is, the sense itself is

informed, by the body which is seen; so that now, not only is there the

power of sense, which can exist also unimpaired even in darkness,

provided the eyes are sound, but also a sense actually informed, which

is called vision. Vision, then, is produced from a thing that is

visible; but not from that alone, unless there be present also one who

sees. Therefore vision is produced from a thing that is visible,

together with one who sees; in such way that, on the part of him who

sees, there is the sense of seeing and the intention of looking and

gazing at the object; while yet that information of the sense, which is

called vision, is imprinted only by the body which is seen, that is, by

some visible thing; which being taken away, that form remains no more

which was in the sense so long as that which was seen was present: yet

the sense itself remains, which existed also before anything was

perceived; just as the trace of a thing in water remains so long as the

body itself, which is impressed on it, is in the water; but if this has

been taken away, there will no longer be any such trace, although the

water remains, which existed also before it took the form of that body.

And therefore we cannot, indeed, say that a visible thing produces the

sense; yet it produces the form, which is, as it were, its own

likeness, which comes to be in the sense, when we perceive anything by

seeing. But we do not distinguish, through the same sense, the form of

the body which we see, from the form which is produced by it in the

sense of him who sees; since the union of the two is so close that

there is no room for distinguishing them. But we rationally infer that

we could not have sensation at all, unless some similitude of the body

seen was wrought in our own sense. For when a ring is imprinted on wax,

it does not follow that no image is produced, because we cannot discern

it unless when it has been separated. But since, after the wax is

separated, what was made remains, so that it can be seen; we are on

that account easily persuaded that there was already also in the wax a

form impressed from the ring before it was separated from it. But if

the ring were imprinted upon a fluid, no image at all would appear when

it was withdrawn; and yet none the less for this ought the reason to

discern that there was in that fluid before the ring was withdrawn a

form of the ring produced from the ring, which is to be distinguished

from that form which is in the ring, whence that form was produced

which ceases to be when the ring is withdrawn, although that in the

ring remains, whence the other was produced. And so the [sensuous]

perception of the eyes may not be supposed to contain no image of the

body, which is seen as long as it is seen, [merely] because when that

is withdrawn the image does not remain. And hence it is very difficult

to persuade men of duller mind that an image of the visible thing is

formed in our sense, when we see it, and that this same form is vision.

4. But if any perhaps attend to what I am about to mention, they will

find no such trouble in this inquiry. Commonly, when we have looked for

some little time at a light, and then shut our eyes, there seem to play

before our eyes certain bright colors variously changing themselves,

and shining less and less until they wholly cease; and these we must

understand to be the remains of that form which was wrought in the

sense, while the shining body was seen, and that these variations take

place in them as they slowly and step by step fade away. For the

lattices, too, of windows, should we happen to be gazing at them,

appear often in these colors; so that it is evident that our sense is

affected by such impressions from that thing which is seen. That form

therefore existed also while we were seeing, and at that time it was

more clear and express. But it was then closely joined with the species

of that thing which was being perceived, so that it could not be at all

distinguished from it; and this was vision itself. Why, even when the

little flame of a lamp is in some way, as it were, doubled by the

divergent rays of the eyes, a twofold vision comes to pass, although

the thing which is seen is one. For the same rays, as they shoot forth

each from its own eye, are affected severally, in that they are not

allowed to meet evenly and conjointly, in regarding that corporeal

thing, so that one combined view might be formed from both. And so, if

we shut one eye, we shall not see two flames, but one as it really is.

But why, if we shut the left eye, that appearance ceases to be seen,

which was on the right; and if, in turn, we shut the right eye, that

drops out of existence which was on the left, is a matter both tedious

in itself, and not necessary at all to our present subject to inquire

and discuss. For it is enough for the business in hand to consider,

that unless some image, precisely like the thing we perceive, were

produced in our sense, the appearance of the flame would not be doubled

according to the number of the eyes; since a certain way of perceiving

has been employed, which could separate the union of rays. Certainly

nothing that is really single can be seen as if it were double by one

eye, draw it down, or press, or distort it as you please, if the other

is shut.

5. The case then being so, let us remember how these three things,

although diverse in nature, are tempered together into a kind of unity;

that is, the form of the body which is seen, and the image of it

impressed on the sense, which is vision or sense informed, and the will

of the mind which applies the sense to the sensible thing, and retains

the vision itself in it. The first of these, that is, the visible thing

itself, does not belong to the nature of the living being, except when

we discern our own body. But the second belongs to that nature to this

extent, that it is wrought in the body, and through the body in the

soul; for it is wrought in the sense, which is neither without the body

nor without the soul. But the third is of the soul alone, because it is

the will. Although then the substances of these three are so different,

yet they coalesce into such a unity that the two former can scarcely be

distinguished, even with the intervention of the reason as judge,

namely the form of the body which is seen, and the image of it which is

wrought in the sense, that is, vision. And the will so powerfully

combines these two, as both to apply the sense, in order to be

informed, to that thing which is perceived, and to retain it when

informed in that thing. And if it is so vehement that it can be called

love, or desire, or lust, it vehemently affects also the rest of the

body of the living being; and where a duller and harder matter does not

resist, changes it into like shape and color. One may see the little

body of a chameleon vary with ready change, according to the colors

which it sees. And in the case of other animals, since their grossness

of flesh does not easily admit change, the offspring, for the most

part, betray the particular fancies of the mothers, whatever it is that

they have beheld with special delight. For the more tender, and so to

say, the more formable, are the primary seeds, the more effectually and

capably they follow the bent of the soul of the mother, and the

phantasy that is wrought in it through that body, which it has greedily

beheld. Abundant instances might be adduced, but one is sufficient,

taken from the most trustworthy books; viz. what Jacob did, that the

sheep and goats might give birth to offspring of various colors, by

placing variegated rods before them in the troughs of water for them to

look at as they drank, at the time they had conceived. [731]

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[731] Gen. xxx. 37-41

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Chapter 3.--The Unity of the Three Takes Place in Thought, Viz Of

Memory, of Ternal Vision,and of Will Combining Both.

6. The rational soul, however, lives in a degenerate fashion, when it

lives according to a trinity of the outer man; that is, when it applies

to those things which form the bodily sense from without, not a

praiseworthy will, by which to refer them to some useful end, but a

base desire, by which to cleave to them. Since even if the form of the

body, which was corporeally perceived, be withdrawn, its likeness

remains in the memory, to which the will may again direct its eye, so

as to be formed thence from within, as the sense was formed from

without by the presentation of the sensible body. And so that trinity

is produced from memory, from internal vision, and from the will which

unites both. And when these three things are combined into one, from

that combination [732] itself they are called conception. [733] And in

these three there is no longer any diversity of substance. For neither

is the sensible body there, which is altogether distinct from the

nature of the living being, nor is the bodily sense there informed so

as to produce vision, nor does the will itself perform its office of

applying the sense, that is to be informed, to the sensible body, and

of retaining it in it when informed; but in place of that bodily

species which was perceived from without, there comes the memory

retaining that species which the soul has imbibed through the bodily

sense; and in place of that vision which was outward when the sense was

informed through the sensible body, there comes a similar vision

within, while the eye of the mind is informed from that which the

memory retains, and the corporeal things that are thought of are

absent; and the will itself, as before it applied the sense yet to be

informed to the corporeal thing presented from without, and united it

thereto when informed, so now converts the vision of the recollecting

mind to memory, in order that the mental sight may be informed by that

which the memory has retained, and so there may be in the conception a

like vision. And as it was the reason that distinguished the visible

appearance by which the bodily sense was informed, from the similitude

of it, which was wrought in the sense when informed in order to produce

vision (otherwise they had been so united as to be thought altogether

one and the same); so, although that phantasy also, which arises from

the mind thinking of the appearance of a body that it has seen,

consists of the similitude of the body which the memory retains,

together with that which is thence formed in the eye of the mind that

recollects; yet it so seems to be one and single, that it can only be

discovered to be two by the judgment of reason, by which we understand

that which remains in the memory, even when we think it from some other

source, to be a different thing from that which is brought into being

when we remember, that is, come back again to the memory, and there

find the same appearance. And if this were not now there, we should say

that we had so forgotten as to be altogether unable to recollect. And

if the eye of him who recollects were not informed from that thing

which was in the memory, the vision of the thinker could in no way take

place; but the conjunction of both, that is, of that which the memory

retains, and of that which is thence expressed so as to inform the eye

of him who recollects, makes them appear as if they were one, because

they are exceedingly like. But when the eye of the concipient is turned

away thence, and has ceased to look at that which was perceived in the

memory, then nothing of the form that was impressed thereon will remain

in that eye, and it will be informed by that to which it had again been

turned, so as to bring about another conception. Yet that remains which

it has left in the memory, to which it may again be turned when we

recollect it, and being turned thereto may be informed by it, and

become one with that whence it is informed.

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[732] Coactus

[733] Cogitatio

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Chapter 4.--How This Unity Comes to Pass.

7. But if that will which moves to and fro, hither and thither, the eye

that is to be informed, and unites it when formed, shall have wholly

converged to the inward phantasy, and shall have absolutely turned the

mind's eye from the presence of the bodies which lie around the senses,

and from the very bodily senses themselves, and shall have wholly

turned it to that image, which is perceived within; then so exact a

likeness of the bodily species expressed from the memory is presented,

that not even reason itself is permitted to discern whether the body

itself is seen without, or only something of the kind thought of

within. For men sometimes either allured or frightened by over-much

thinking of visible things, have even suddenly uttered words

accordingly, as if in real fact they were engaged in the very midst of

such actions or sufferings. And I remember some one telling me that he

was wont to perceive in thought, so distinct and as it were solid, a

form of a female body, as to be moved, as though it were a reality.

Such power has the soul over its own body, and such influence has it in

turning and changing the quality of its [corporeal] garment; just as a

man may be affected when clothed, to whom his clothing sticks. It is

the same kind of affection, too, with which we are beguiled through

imaginations in sleep. But it makes a very great difference, whether

the senses of the body are lulled to torpor, as in the case of

sleepers, or disturbed from their inward structure, as in the case of

madmen, or distracted in some other mode, as in that of diviners or

prophets; and so from one or other of these causes, the intention of

the mind is forced by a kind of necessity upon those images which occur

to it, either from memory, or by some other hidden force through

certain spiritual commixtures of a similarly spiritual substance: or

whether, as sometimes happens to people in health and awake, that the

will occupied by thought turns itself away from the senses, and so

informs the eye of the mind by various images of sensible things, as

though those sensible things themselves were actually perceived. But

these impressions of images not only take place when the will is

directed upon such things by desiring them, but also when, in order to

avoid and guard against them, the mind is carried away to look upon

these very thing so as to flee from them. And hence, not only desire,

but fear, causes both the bodily eye to be informed by the sensible

things themselves, and the mental eye (acies) by the images of those

sensible things. Accordingly, the more vehement has been either fear or

desire, the more distinctly is the eye informed, whether in the case of

him who [sensuously] perceives by means of the body that which lies

close to him in place, or in the case of him who conceives from the

image of the body which is contained in the memory. What then a body in

place is to the bodily sense, that, the similitude of a body in memory

is to the eye of the mind; and what the vision of one who looks at a

thing is to that appearance of the body from which the sense is

informed, that, the vision of a concipient is to the image of the body

established in the memory, from which the eye of the mind is informed;

and what the intention of the will is towards a body seen and the

vision to be combined with it, in order that a certain unity of three

things may therein take place, although their nature is diverse, that,

the same intention of the will is towards combining the image of the

body which is in the memory, and the vision of the concipient, that is,

the form which the eye of the mind has taken in returning to the

memory, in order that here too a certain unity may take place of three

things, not now distinguished by diversity of nature, but of one and

the same substance; because this whole is within, and the whole is one

mind.

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Chapter 5.--The Trinity of the Outer Man, or of External Vision, is Not

an Image of God. The Likeness of God is Desired Even in Sins. In

External Vision the Form of the Corporeal Thing is as It Were the

Parent, Vision the Offspring; But the Will that Unites These Suggests

the Holy Spirit.

8. But as, when [both] the form and species of a body have perished,

the will cannot recall to it the sense of perceiving; so, when the

image which memory bears is blotted out by forgetfulness, the will will

be unable to force back the eye of the mind by recollection, so as to

be formed thereby. But because the mind has great power to imagine not

only things forgotten, but also things that it never saw, or

experienced, either by increasing, or diminishing, or changing, or

compounding, after its pleasure, those which have not dropped out of

its remembrance, it often imagines things to be such as either it knows

they are not, or does not know that they are. And in this case we have

to take care, lest it either speak falsely that it may deceive, or hold

an opinion so as to be deceived. And if it avoid these two evils, then

imagined phantasms do not hinder it: just as sensible things

experienced or retained by memory do not hinder it, if they are neither

passionately sought for when pleasant, nor basely shunned when

unpleasant. But when the will leaves better things, and greedily

wallows in these, then it becomes unclean; and they are so thought of

hurtfully, when they are present, and also more hurtfully when they are

absent. And he therefore lives badly and degenerately who lives

according to the trinity of the outer man; because it is the purpose of

using things sensible and corporeal, that has begotten also that

trinity, which although it imagines within, yet imagines things

without. For no one could use those things even well, unless the images

of things perceived by the senses were retained in the memory. And

unless the will for the greatest part dwells in the higher and interior

things, and unless that will itself, which is accommodated either to

bodies without, or to the images of them within, refers whatever it

receives in them to a better and truer life, and rests in that end by

gazing at which it judges that those things ought to be done; what else

do we do, but that which the apostle prohibits us from doing, when he

says, "Be not conformed to this world"? [734] And therefore that

trinity is not an image of God since it is produced in the mind itself

through the bodily sense, from the lowest, that is, the corporeal

creature, than which the mind is higher. Yet neither is it altogether

dissimilar: for what is there that has not a likeness of God, in

proportion to its kind and measure, seeing that God made all things

very good, [735] and for no other reason except that He Himself is

supremely good? In so far, therefore, as anything that is, is good, in

so far plainly it has still some likeness of the supreme good, at

however great a distance; and if a natural likeness, then certainly a

right and well-ordered one; but if a faulty likeness, then certainly a

debased and perverse one. For even souls in their very sins strive

after nothing else but some kind of likeness of God, in a proud and

preposterous, and, so to say, slavish liberty. So neither could our

first parents have been persuaded to sin unless it had been said, "Ye

shall be as gods." [736] No doubt every thing in the creatures which is

in any way like God, is not also to be called His image; but that alone

than which He Himself alone is higher. For that only is in all points

copied from Him, between which and Himself no nature is interposed.

9. Of that vision then; that is, of the form which is wrought in the

sense of him who sees; the form of the bodily thing from which it is

wrought, is, as it were, the parent. But it is not a true parent;

whence neither is that a true offspring; for it is not altogether born

therefrom, since something else is applied to the bodily thing in order

that it may be formed from it, namely, the sense of him who sees. And

for this reason, to love this is to be estranged. [737] Therefore the

will which unites both, viz. the quasi-parent and the quasi-child, is

more spiritual than either of them. For that bodily thing which is

discerned, is not spiritual at all. But the vision which comes into

existence in the sense, has something spiritual mingled with it, since

it cannot come into existence without the soul. But it is not wholly

spiritual; since that which is formed is a sense of the body. Therefore

the will which unites both is confessedly more spiritual, as I have

said; and so it begins to suggest (insinuare), as it were, the person

of the Spirit in the Trinity. But it belongs more to the sense that is

formed, than to the bodily thing whence it is formed. For the sense and

will of an animate being belongs to the soul, not to the stone or other

bodily thing that is seen. It does not therefore proceed from that

bodily thing as from a parent; yet neither does it proceed from that

other as it were offspring, namely, the vision and form that is in the

sense. For the will existed before the vision came to pass, which will

applied the sense that was to be formed to the bodily thing that was to

be discerned; but it was not yet satisfied. For how could that which

was not yet seen satisfy? And satisfaction means a will that rests

content. And, therefore, we can neither call the will the

quasi-offspring of vision, since it existed before vision; nor the

quasi-parent, since that vision was not formed and expressed from the

will, but from the bodily thing that was seen.

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[734] Rom. xii. 2

[735] Ecclus. xxxix. 16

[736] Gen. iii. 5

[737] Vid. Retract. Bk. II. c. 15, where Augustin adds that it is

possible to love the bodily species to the praise of the Creator, in

which case there is no "estrangement."

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Chapter 6.--Of What Kind We are to Reckon the Rest (Requies), and End

(Finis), of the Will in Vision.

10. Perhaps we can rightly call vision the end and rest of the will,

only with respect to this one object [namely, the bodily thing that is

visible]. For it will not will nothing else merely because it sees

something which it is now willing. It is not therefore the whole will

itself of the man, of which the end is nothing else than blessedness;

but the will provisionally directed to this one object, which has as

its end in seeing, nothing but vision, whether it refer the thing seen

to any other thing or not. For if it does not refer the vision to

anything further, but wills only to see this, there can be no question

made about showing that the end of the will is the vision; for it is

manifest. But if it does refer it to anything further, then certainly

it does will something else, and it will not be now a will merely to

see; or if to see, not one to see the particular thing. Just as, if any

one wished to see the scar, that from thence he might learn that there

had been a wound; or wished to see the window, that through the window

he might see the passers-by: all these and other such acts of will have

their own proper [proximate] ends, which are referred to that [final]

end of the will by which we will to live blessedly, and to attain to

that life which is not referred to anything else, but suffices of

itself to him who loves it. The will then to see, has as its end

vision; and the will to see this particular thing, has as its end the

vision of this particular thing. Therefore the will to see the scar,

desires its own end, that is, the vision of the scar, and does not

reach beyond it; for the will to prove that there had been a wound, is

a distinct will, although dependent upon that, of which the end also is

to prove that there had been a wound. And the will to see the window,

has as its end the vision of the window; for that is another and

further will which depends upon it, viz. to see the passers-by through

the window, of which also the end is the vision of the passers-by. But

all the several wills that are bound to each other, are at once right,

if that one is good, to which all are referred; and if that is bad,

then all are bad. And so the connected series of right wills is a sort

of road which consists as it were of certain steps, whereby to ascend

to blessedness; but the entanglement of depraved and distorted wills is

a bond by which he will be bound who thus acts, so as to be cast into

outer darkness. [738] Blessed therefore are they who in act and

character sing the song of the steps [degrees]; [739] and woe to those

that draw sin, as it were a long rope. [740] And it is just the same to

speak of the will being in repose, which we call its end, if it is

still referred to something further, as if we should say that the foot

is at rest in walking, when it is placed there, whence yet another foot

may be planted in the direction of the man's steps. But if something so

satisfies, that the will acquiesces in it with a certain delight; it is

nevertheless not yet that to which the man ultimately tends; but this

too is referred to something further, so as to be regarded not as the

native country of a citizen, but as a place of refreshment, or even of

stopping, for a traveller.

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[738] Matt. xxii. 13

[739] Psalms cxx., and following.

[740] Isa. v. 18

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Chapter 7.--There is Another Trinity in the Memory of Him Who Thinks

Over Again What He Has Seen.

11. But yet again, take the case of another trinity, more inward indeed

than that which is in things sensible, and in the senses, but which is

yet conceived from thence; while now it is no longer the sense of the

body that is informed from the body, but the eye of the mind that is

informed from the memory, since the species of the body which we

perceived from without has inhered in the memory itself. And that

species, which is in the memory, we call the quasi-parent of that which

is wrought in the phantasy of one who conceives. For it was in the

memory also, before we conceived it, just as the body was in place also

before we [sensuously] perceived it, in order that vision might take

place. But when it is conceived, then from that form which the memory

retains, there is copied in the mind's eye (acie) of him who conceives,

and by remembrance is formed, that species, which is the

quasi-offspring of that which the memory retains. But neither is the

one a true parent, nor the other a true offspring. For the mind's

vision which is formed from memory when we think anything by

recollection, does not proceed from that species which we remember as

seen; since we could not indeed have remembered those things, unless we

had seen them; yet the mind's eye, which is informed by the

recollection, existed also before we saw the body that we remember; and

therefore how much more before we committed it to memory? Although

therefore the form which is wrought in the mind's eye of him who

remembers, is wrought from that form which is in the memory; yet the

mind's eye itself does not exist from thence, but existed before it.

And it follows, that if the one is not a true parent, neither is the

other a true offspring. But both that quasi-parent and that

quasi-offspring suggest something, whence the inner and truer things

may appear more practically and more certainly.

12. Further, it is more difficult to discern clearly, whether the will

which connects the vision to the memory is not either the parent or the

offspring of some one of them; and the likeness and equality of the

same nature and substance cause this difficulty of distinguishing. For

it is not possible to do in this case, as with the sense that is formed

from without (which is easily discerned from the sensible body, and

again the will from both), on account of the difference of nature which

is mutually in all three, and of which we have treated sufficiently

above. For although this trinity, of which we at present speak, is

introduced into the mind from without; yet it is transacted within, and

there is no part of it outside of the nature of the mind itself. In

what way, then, can it be demonstrated that the will is neither the

quasi-parent, nor the quasi-offspring, either of the corporeal likeness

which is contained in the memory, or of that which is copied thence in

recollecting; when it so unites both in the act of conceiving, as that

they appear singly as one, and cannot be discerned except by reason? It

is then first to be considered that there cannot be any will to

remember, unless we retain in the recesses of the memory either the

whole, or some part, of that thing which we wish to remember. For the

very will to remember cannot arise in the case of a thing which we have

forgotten altogether and absolutely; since we have already remembered

that the thing which we wish to remember is or has been, in our memory.

For example, if I wish to remember what I supped on yesterday, either I

have already remembered that I did sup, or if not yet this, at least I

have remembered something about that time itself, if nothing else; at

all events, I have remembered yesterday, and that part of yesterday in

which people usually sup, and what supping is. For if I had not

remembered anything at all of this kind, I could not wish to remember

what I supped on yesterday. Whence we may perceive that the will of

remembering proceeds, indeed, from those things which are retained in

the memory, with the addition also of those which, by the act of

discerning, are copied thence through recollection; that is, from the

combination of something which we have remembered, and of the vision

which was thence wrought, when we remembered, in the mind's eye of him

who thinks. But the will itself which unites both requires also some

other thing, which is, as it were, close at hand, and adjacent to him

who remembers. There are, then, as many trinities of this kind as there

are remembrances; because there is no one of them wherein there are not

these three things, viz. that which was stored up in the memory also

before it was thought, and that which takes place in the conception

when this is discerned, and the will that unites both, and from both

and itself as a third, completes one single thing. Or is it rather that

we so recognize some one trinity in this kind, as that we are to speak

generally, of whatever corporeal species lie hidden in the memory, as

of a single unity, and again of the general vision of the mind which

remembers and conceives such things, as of a single unity, to the

combination of which two there is to be joined as a third the will that

combines them, that this whole may be a certain unity made up from

three?

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Chapter 8.--Different Modes of Conceiving.

But since the eye of the mind cannot look at all things together, in

one glance, which the memory retains, these trinities of thought

alternate in a series of withdrawals and successions, and so that

trinity becomes most innumerably numerous; and yet not infinite, if it

pass not beyond the number of things stored up in the memory. For,

although we begin to reckon from the earliest perception which any one

has of material things through any bodily sense, and even take in also

those things which he has forgotten, yet the number would undoubtedly

be certain and determined, although innumerable. For we not only call

infinite things innumerable, but also those, which, although finite,

exceed any one's power of reckoning.

13. But we can hence perceive a little more clearly that what the

memory stores up and retains is a different thing from that which is

thence copied in the conception of the man who remembers, although,

when both are combined together, they appear to be one and the same;

because we can only remember just as many species of bodies as we have

actually seen, and so great, and such, as we have actually seen; for

the mind imbibes them into the memory from the bodily sense; whereas

the things seen in conception, although drawn from those things which

are in the memory, yet are multiplied and varied innumerably, and

altogether without end. For I remember, no doubt, but one sun, because

according to the fact, I have seen but one; but if I please, I conceive

of two, or three, or as many as I will; but the vision of my mind, when

I conceive of many, is formed from the same memory by which I remember

one. And I remember it just as large as I saw it. For if I remember it

as larger or smaller than I saw it, then I no longer remember what I

saw, and so I do not remember it. But because I remember it, I remember

it as large as I saw it; yet I conceive of it as greater or as less

according to my will. And I remember it as I saw it; but I conceive of

it as running its course as I will, and as standing still where I will,

and as coming whence I will, and whither I will. For it is in my power

to conceive of it as square, although I remember it as round; and

again, of what color I please, although I have never seen, and

therefore do not remember, a green sun; and as the sun, so all other

things. But owing to the corporeal and sensible nature of these forms

of things, the mind falls into error when it imagines them to exist

without, in the same mode in which it conceives them within, either

when they have already ceased to exist without, but are still retained

in the memory, or when in any other way also, that which we remember is

formed in the mind, not by faithful recollection, but after the

variations of thought.

14. Yet it very often happens that we believe also a true narrative,

told us by others, of things which the narrators have themselves

perceived by their senses. And in this case, when we conceive the

things narrated to us, as we hear them, the eye of the mind does not

seem to be turned back to the memory, in order to bring up visions in

our thoughts; for we do not conceive these things from our own

recollection, but upon the narration of another; and that trinity does

not here seem to come to its completion, which is made when the species

lying hid in the memory, and the vision of the man that remembers, are

combined by will as a third. For I do not conceive that which lay hid

in my memory, but that which I hear, when anything is narrated to me. I

am not speaking of the words themselves of the speaker, lest any one

should suppose that I have gone off to that other trinity, which is

transacted without, in sensible things, or in the senses: but I am

conceiving of those species of material things, which the narrator

signifies to me by words and sounds; which species certainly I conceive

of not by remembering, but by hearing. But if we consider the matter

more carefully, even in this case, the limit of the memory is not

overstepped. For I could not even understand the narrator, if I did not

remember generically the individual things of which he speaks, even

although I then hear them for the first time as connected together in

one tale. For he who, for instance, describes to me some mountain

stripped of timber, and clothed with olive trees, describes it to me

who remembers the species both of mountains, and of timber, and of

olive trees; and if I had forgotten these, I should not know at all of

what he was speaking, and therefore could not conceive that

description. And so it comes to pass, that every one who conceives

things corporeal, whether he himself imagine anything, or hear, or

read, either a narrative of things past, or a foretelling of things

future, has recourse to his memory, and finds there the limit and

measure of all the forms at which he gazes in his thought. For no one

can conceive at all, either a color or a form of body, which he never

saw, or a sound which he never heard, or a flavor which he never

tasted, or a scent which he never smelt, or any touch of a corporeal

thing which he never felt. But if no one conceives anything corporeal

except what he has [sensuously] perceived, because no one remembers

anything corporeal except what he has thus perceived, then, as is the

limit of perceiving in bodies, so is the limit of thinking in the

memory. For the sense receives the species from that body which we

perceive, and the memory from the sense; but the mental eye of the

concipient, from the memory.

15. Further, as the will applies the sense to the bodily object, so it

applies the memory to the sense, and the eye of the mind of the

concipient to the memory. But that which harmonizes those things and

unites them, itself also disjoins and separates them, that is, the

will. But it separates the bodily senses from the bodies that are to be

perceived, by movement of the body, either to hinder our perceiving the

thing, or that we may cease to perceive it: as when we avert our eyes

from that which we are unwilling to see, or shut them; so, again, the

ears from sounds, or the nostrils from smells. So also we turn away

from tastes, either by shutting the mouth, or by casting the thing out

of the mouth. In touch, also, we either remove the bodily thing, that

we may not touch what we do not wish, or if we were already touching

it, we fling or push it away. Thus the will acts by movement of the

body, so that the bodily sense shall not be joined to the sensible

things. And it does this according to its power; for when it endures

hardship in so doing, on account of the condition of slavish mortality,

then torment is the result, in such wise that nothing remains to the

will save endurance. But the will averts the memory from the sense;

when, through its being intent on something else, it does not suffer

things present to cleave to it. As any one may see, when often we do

not seem to ourselves to have heard some one who was speaking to us,

because we were thinking of something else. But this is a mistake; for

we did hear, but we do not remember, because the words of the speaker

presently slipped out of the perception of our ears, through the

bidding of the will being diverted elsewhere, by which they are usually

fixed in the memory. Therefore, we should say more accurately in such a

case, we do not remember, than, we did not hear; for it happens even in

reading, and to myself very frequently, that when I have read through a

page or an epistle, I do not know what I have read, and I begin it

again. For the purpose of the will being fixed on something else, the

memory was not so applied to the bodily sense, as the sense itself was

applied to the letters. So, too, any one who walks with the will intent

on something else, does not know where he has got to; for if he had not

seen, he would not have walked thither, or would have felt his way in

walking with greater attention, especially if he was passing through a

place he did not know; yet, because he walked easily, certainly he saw;

but because the memory was not applied to the sense itself in the same

way as the sense of the eyes was applied to the places through which he

was passing, he could not remember at all even the last thing he saw.

Now, to will to turn away the eye of the mind from that which is in the

memory, is nothing else but not to think thereupon.

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Chapter 9.--Species is Produced by Species in Succession.

16. In this arrangement, then, while we begin from the bodily species

and arrive finally at the species which comes to be in the intuition

(contuitu) of the concipient, we find four species born, as it were,

step by step one from the other, the second from the first, the third

from the second, the fourth from the third: since from the species of

the body itself, there arises that which comes to be in the sense of

the percipient; and from this, that which comes to be in the memory;

and from this, that which comes to be in the mind's eye of the

concipient. And the will, therefore, thrice combines as it were parent

with offspring: first the species of the body with that to which it

gives birth in the sense of the body; and that again with that which

from it comes to be in the memory; and this also, thirdly, with that

which is born from it in the intuition of the concipient's mind. But

the intermediate combination which is the second, although it is nearer

to the first, is yet not so like the first as the third is. For there

are two kinds of vision, the one of [sensuous] perception (sentientis),

the other of conception (cogitantis). But in order that the vision of

conception may come to be, there is wrought for the purpose, in the

memory, from the vision of [sensuous] perception something like it, to

which the eye of the mind may turn itself in conceiving, as the glance

(acies) of the eyes turns itself in [sensuously] perceiving to the

bodily object. I have, therefore, chosen to put forward two trinities

in this kind: one when the vision of [sensuous] perception is formed

from the bodily object, the other when the vision of conception is

formed from the memory. But I have refrained from commending an

intermediate one; because we do not commonly call it vision, when the

form which comes to be in the sense of him who perceives, is entrusted

to the memory. Yet in all cases the will does not appear unless as the

combiner as it were of parent and offspring; and so, proceed from

whence it may, it can be called neither parent nor offspring. [741]

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[741] [Augustin's map of consciousness is as follows: (1). The

corporeal species=the external object (outward appearance). (2). The

sensible species=the sensation (appearance for the sense). (3). The

mental species in its first form=present perception. (4). The mental

species in its second form=remembered perception. These three "species"

or appearances of the object: namely, corporeal, sensible, and mental,

according to him, are combined in one synthesis with the object by the

operation of the will. By "will," he does not mean distinct and

separate volitions: but the spontaneity of the ego--what Kant

denominates the mechanism of the understanding, seen in the spontaneous

employment of the categories of thought, as the mind ascends from

empirical sensation to rational conception. The English translator has

failed to make clear the sharply defined psychology of these chapters,

by loosely rendering "sentire," "to perceive," and "cogitare" to

think.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 10.--The Imagination Also Adds Even to Things We Have Not Seen,

Those Things Which We Have Seen Elsewhere.

17. But if we do not remember except what we have [sensuously]

perceived, nor conceive except what we remember; why do we often

conceive things that are false, when certainly we do not remember

falsely those things which we have perceived, unless it be because that

will (which I have already taken pains to show as much as I can to be

the uniter and the separater of things of this kind) leads the vision

of the conceiver that is to be formed, after its own will and pleasure,

through the hidden stores of the memory; and, in order to conceive

[imagine] those things which we do not remember, impels it to take one

thing from hence, and another from thence, from those which we do

remember; and these things combining into one vision make something

which is called false, because it either does not exist externally in

the nature of corporeal things, or does not seem copied from the

memory, in that we do not remember that we ever saw such a thing. For

who ever saw a black swan? And therefore no one remembers a black swan;

yet who is there that cannot conceive it? For it is easy to apply to

that shape which we have come to know by seeing it, a black color,

which we have not the less seen in other bodies; and because we have

seen both, we remember both. Neither do I remember a bird with four

feet, because I never saw one; but I contemplate such a phantasy very

easily, by adding to some winged shape such as I have seen, two other

feet, such as I have likewise seen. [742] And therefore, in conceiving

conjointly, what we remember to have seen singly, we seem not to

conceive that which we remember; while we really do this under the law

of the memory, whence we take everything which we join together after

our own pleasure in manifold and diverse ways. For we do not conceive

even the very magnitudes of bodies, which magnitudes we never saw,

without help of the memory; for the measure of space to which our gaze

commonly reaches through the magnitude of the world, is the measure

also to which we enlarge the bulk of bodies, whatever they may be, when

we conceive them as great as we can. And reason, indeed, proceeds still

beyond, but phantasy does not follow her; as when reason announces the

infinity of number also, which no vision of him who conceives according

to corporeal things can apprehend. The same reason also teaches that

the most minute atoms are infinitely divisible; yet when we have come

to those slight and minute particles which we remember to have seen,

then we can no longer behold phantasms more slender and more minute,

although reason does not cease to continue to divide them. So we

conceive no corporeal things, except either those we remember, or from

those things which we remember.

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[742] Vid. Retract. 11. xv. 2. [Augustin here says that when he wrote

the above, he forgot what is said in Leviticus xi. 20, of "fowls that

creep, going upon all four, which have legs above their feet to leap

withal upon the earth."--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 11.--Number, Weight, Measure.

18. But because those things which are impressed on the memory singly,

can be conceived according to number, measure seems to belong to the

memory, but number to the vision; because, although the multiplicity of

such visions is innumerable, yet a limit not to be transgressed is

prescribed for each in the memory. Therefore, measure appears in the

memory, number in the vision of things: as there is some measure in

visible bodies themselves, to which measure the sense of those who see

is most numerously adjusted, and from one visible object is formed the

vision of many beholders, so that even a single person sees commonly a

single thing under a double appearance, on account of the number of his

two eyes, as we have laid down above. Therefore there is some measure

in those things whence visions are copied, but in the visions

themselves there is number. But the will which unites and regulates

these things, and combines them into a certain unity, and does not

quietly rest its desire of [sensuously] perceiving or of conceiving,

except in those things from whence the visions are formed, resembles

weight. And therefore I would just notice by way of anticipation these

three things, measure, number, weight, which are to be perceived in all

other things also. In the meantime, I have now shown as much as I can,

and to whom I can, that the will is the uniter of the visible thing and

of the vision; as it were, of parent and of offspring; whether in

[sensuous] perception or in conception, and that it cannot be called

either parent or offspring. Wherefore time admonishes us to seek for

this same trinity in the inner man, and to strive to pass inwards from

that animal and carnal and (as he is called) outward man, of whom I

have so long spoken. And here we hope to be able to find an image of

God according to the Trinity, He Himself helping our efforts, who as

things themselves show, and as Holy Scripture also witnesses, has

regulated all things in measure, and number, and weight. [743]

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[743] Wisd. xi. 21

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Book XII.

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Commencing with a distinction between wisdom and knowledge, points out

a kind of trinity, of a peculiar sort, in that which is properly called

knowledge, and which is the lower of the two; and this trinity,

although it certainly pertains to the inner man, is still not yet to be

called or thought an image of God.

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Chapter 1.--Of What Kind are the Outer and the Inner Man.

1. Come now, and let us see where lies, as it were, the boundary line

between the outer and inner man. For whatever we have in the mind

common with the beasts, thus much is rightly said to belong to the

outer man. For the outer man is not to be considered to be the body

only, but with the addition also of a certain peculiar life of the

body, whence the structure of the body derives its vigor, and all the

senses with which he is equipped for the perception of outward things;

and when the images of these outward things already perceived, that

have been fixed in the memory, are seen again by recollection, it is

still a matter pertaining to the outer man. And in all these things we

do not differ from the beasts, except that in shape of body we are not

prone, but upright. And we are admonished through this, by Him who made

us, not to be like the beasts in that which is our better part--that

is, the mind--while we differ from them by the uprightness of the body.

Not that we are to throw our mind into those bodily things which are

exalted; for to seek rest for the will, even in such things, is to

prostrate the mind. But as the body is naturally raised upright to

those bodily things which are most elevated, that is, to things

celestial; so the mind, which is a spiritual substance, must be raised

upright to those things which are most elevated in spiritual things,

not by the elation of pride, but by the dutifulness of righteousness.

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Chapter 2.--Man Alone of Animate Creatures Perceives the Eternal

Reasons of Things Pertaining to the Body.

2. And the beasts, too, are able both to perceive things corporeal from

without, through the senses of the body, and to fix them in the memory,

and remember them, and in them to seek after things suitable, and shun

things inconvenient. But to note these things, and to retain them not

only as caught up naturally but also as deliberately committed to

memory, and to imprint them again by recollection and conception when

now just slipping away into forgetfulness; in order that as conception

is formed from that which the memory contains, so also the contents

themselves of the memory may be fixed firmly by thought: to combine

again imaginary objects of sight, by taking this or that of what the

memory remembers, and, as it were, tacking them to one another: to

examine after what manner it is that in this kind things like the true

are to be distinguished from the true, and this not in things

spiritual, but in corporeal things themselves;--these acts, and the

like, although performed in reference to things sensible, and those

which the mind has deduced through the bodily senses, yet, as they are

combined with reason, so are not common to men and beasts. But it is

the part of the higher reason to judge of these corporeal things

according to incorporeal and eternal reasons; which, unless they were

above the human mind, would certainly not be unchangeable; and yet,

unless something of our own were subjoined to them, we should not be

able to employ them as our measures by which to judge of corporeal

things. But we judge of corporeal things from the rule of dimensions

and figures, which the mind knows to remain unchangeably. [744]

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[744] [The distinction drawn here is between that low form of

intelligence which exists in the brute, and that high form

characteristic of man. In the Kantian nomenclature, the brute has

understanding, but unenlightened by reason; either theoretical or

practical. He has intelligence, but not as modified by the forms of

space and time and the categories of quantity, quality, relation etc.;

and still less as modified and exalted by the ideas of reason--namely,

the mathematical ideas, and the moral ideas of God, freedom, and

immortality. The animal has no rational intelligence. He has mere

understanding without reason.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 3.--The Higher Reason Which Belongs to Contemplation, and the

Lower Which Belongs to Action, are in One Mind.

3. But that of our own which thus has to do with the handling of

corporeal and temporal things, is indeed rational, in that it is not

common to us with the beasts; but it is drawn, as it were, out of that

rational substance of our mind, by which we depend upon and cleave to

the intelligible and unchangeable truth, and which is deputed to handle

and direct the inferior things. For as among all the beasts there was

not found for the man a help like unto him, unless one were taken from

himself, and formed to be his consort: so for that mind, by which we

consult the supernal and inward truth, there is no like help for such

employment as man's nature requires among things corporeal out of those

parts of the soul which we have in common with the beasts. And so a

certain part of our reason, not separated so as to sever unity, but, as

it were, diverted so as to be a help to fellowship, is parted off for

the performing of its proper work. And as the twain is one flesh in the

case of male and female, so in the mind one nature embraces our

intellect and action, or our counsel and performance, or our reason and

rational appetite, or whatever other more significant terms there may

be by which to express them; so that, as it was said of the former,

"And they two shall be in one flesh," [745] it may be said of these,

they two are in one mind.

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[745] Gen. ii. 24

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Chapter 4.--The Trinity and the Image of God is in that Part of the

Mind Alone Which Belongs to the Contemplation of Eternal Things.

4. When, therefore, we discuss the nature of the human mind, we discuss

a single subject, and do not double it into those two which I have

mentioned, except in respect to its functions. Therefore, when we seek

the trinity in the mind, we seek it in the whole mind, without

separating the action of the reason in things temporal from the

contemplation of things eternal, so as to have further to seek some

third thing, by which a trinity may be completed. But this trinity must

needs be so discovered in the whole nature of the mind, as that even if

action upon temporal things were to be withdrawn, for which work that

help is necessary, with a view to which some part of the mind is

diverted in order to deal with these inferior things, yet a trinity

would still be found in the one mind that is no where parted off; and

that when this distribution has been already made, not only a trinity

may be found, but also an image of God, in that alone which belongs to

the contemplation of eternal things; while in that other which is

diverted from it in the dealing with temporal things, although there

may be a trinity, yet there cannot be found an image of God.

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Chapter 5.--The Opinion Which Devises an Image of the Trinity in the

Marriage of Male and Female, and in Their Offspring.

5. Accordingly they do not seem to me to advance a probable opinion,

who lay it down that a trinity of the image of God in three persons, so

far as regards human nature, can so be discovered as to be completed in

the marriage of male and female and in their offspring; in that the man

himself, as it were, indicates the person of the Father, but that which

has so proceeded from him as to be born, that of the Son; and so the

third person as of the Spirit, is, they say, the woman, who has so

proceeded from the man as not herself to be either son or daughter,

[746] although it was by her conception that the offspring was born.

For the Lord hath said of the Holy Spirit that He proceedeth from the

Father, [747] and yet he is not a son. In this erroneous opinion, then,

the only point probably alleged, and indeed sufficiently shown

according to the faith of the Holy Scripture, is this,--in the account

of the original creation of the woman,--that what so comes into

existence from some person as to make another person, cannot in every

case be called a son; since the person of the woman came into existence

from the person of the man, and yet she is not called his daughter. All

the rest of this opinion is in truth so absurd, nay indeed so false,

that it is most easy to refute it. For I pass over such a thing, as to

think the Holy Spirit to be the mother of the Son of God, and the wife

of the Father; since perhaps it may be answered that these things

offend us in carnal things, because we think of bodily conceptions and

births. Although these very things themselves are most chastely thought

of by the pure, to whom all things are pure; but to the defiled and

unbelieving, of whom both the mind and conscience are polluted, nothing

is pure; [748] so that even Christ, born of a virgin according to the

flesh, is a stumbling-block to some of them. But yet in the case of

those supreme spiritual things, after the likeness of which those kinds

of the inferior creature also are made although most remotely, and

where there is nothing that can be injured and nothing corruptible,

nothing born in time, nothing formed from that which is formless, or

whatever like expressions there may be; yet they ought not to disturb

the sober prudence of any one, lest in avoiding empty disgust he run

into pernicious error. Let him accustom himself so to find in corporeal

things the traces of things spiritual, that when he begins to ascend

upwards from thence, under the guidance of reason, in order to attain

to the unchangeable truth itself through which these things were made,

he may not draw with himself to things above what he despises in things

below. For no one ever blushed to choose for himself wisdom as a wife,

because the name of wife puts into a man's thoughts the corruptible

connection which consists in begetting children; or because in truth

wisdom itself is a woman in sex, since it is expressed in both Greek

and Latin tongues by a word of the feminine gender.

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[746] Gen. ii. 22

[747] John xv. 26

[748] Tit. i. 15

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Chapter 6. --Why This Opinion is to Be Rejected.

6. We do not therefore reject this opinion, because we fear to think of

that holy and inviolable and unchangeable Love, as the spouse of God

the Father, existing as it does from Him, but not as an offspring in

order to beget the Word by which all things are made; but because

divine Scripture evidently shows it to be false. For God said, "Let us

make man in our image, after our likeness;" and a little after it is

said, "So God created man in the image of God." [749] Certainly, in

that it is of the plural number, the word "our" would not be rightly

used if man were made in the image of one person, whether of the

Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit; but because he was made

in the image of the Trinity, on that account it is said, "After our

image." But again, lest we should think that three Gods were to be

believed in the Trinity, whereas the same Trinity is one God, it is

said, "So God created man in the image of God," instead of saying, "In

His own image."

7. For such expressions are customary in the Scriptures; and yet some

persons, while maintaining the Catholic faith, do not carefully attend

to them, in such wise that they think the words, "God made man in the

image of God," to mean that the Father made man after the image of the

Son; and they thus desire to assert that the Son also is called God in

the divine Scriptures, as if there were not other most true and clear

proofs wherein the Son is called not only God, but also the true God.

For whilst they aim at explaining another difficulty in this text, they

become so entangled that they cannot extricate themselves. For if the

Father made man after the image of the Son, so that he is not the image

of the Father, but of the Son, then the Son is unlike the Father. But

if a pious faith teaches us, as it does, that the Son is like the

Father after an equality of essence, then that which is made in the

likeness of the Son must needs also be made in the likeness of the

Father. Further, if the Father made man not in His own image, but in

the image of His Son, why does He not say, "Let us make man after Thy

image and likeness," whereas He does say, "our;" unless it be because

the image of the Trinity was made in man, that in this way man should

be the image of the one true God, because the Trinity itself is the one

true God? Such expressions are innumerable in the Scriptures, but it

will suffice to have produced these. It is so said in the Psalms,

"Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; Thy blessing is upon Thy people;"

[750] as if the words were spoken to some one else, not to Him of whom

it had been said, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." And again, "For

by Thee," he says, "I shall be delivered from temptation, and by hoping

in my God I shall leap over the wall;" [751] as if he said to some one

else, "By Thee I shall be delivered from temptation." And again, "In

the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under Thee;"

[752] as if he were to say, in the heart of Thy enemies. For he had

said to that King, that is, to our Lord Jesus Christ, "The people fall

under Thee," whom he intended by the word King, when he said, "In the

heart of the king's enemies." Things of this kind are found more rarely

in the New Testament. But yet the apostle says to the Romans,

"Concerning His Son who was made to Him of the seed of David according

to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according

to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus

Christ our Lord;" [753] as though he were speaking above of some one

else. For what is meant by the Son of God declared by the resurrection

of the dead of Jesus Christ, except of the same Jesus Christ who was

declared to be Son of God with power? And as then in this passage, when

we are told, "the Son of God with power of Jesus Christ," or "the Son

of God according to the spirit of holiness of Jesus Christ," or "the

Son of God by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ," whereas it

might have been expressed in the ordinary way, In His own power, or

according to the spirit of His own holiness, or by the resurrection of

His dead, or of their dead: as, I say, we are not compelled to

understand another person, but one and the same, that is, the person of

the Son of God our Lord Jesus Christ; so, when we are told that "God

made man in the image of God," although it might have been more usual

to say, after His own image, yet we are not compelled to understand any

other person in the Trinity, but the one and selfsame Trinity itself,

who is one God, and after whose image man is made.

8. And since the case stands thus, if we are to accept the same image

of the Trinity, as not in one, but in three human beings, father and

mother and son, then the man was not made after the image of God before

a wife was made for him, and before they procreated a son; because

there was not yet a trinity. Will any one say there was already a

trinity, because, although not yet in their proper form, yet in their

original nature, both the woman was already in the side of the man, and

the son in the loins of his father? Why then, when Scripture had said,

"God made man after the image of God," did it go on to say, "God

created him; male and female created He them: and God blessed them"?

[754] (Or if it is to be so divided, "And God created man," so that

thereupon is to be added, "in the image of God created He him," and

then subjoined in the third place, "male and female created He them;"

for some have feared to say, He made him male and female, lest

something monstrous, as it were, should be understood, as are those

whom they call hermaphrodites, although even so both might be

understood not falsely in the singular number, on account of that which

is said, "Two in one flesh.") Why then, as I began by saying, in regard

to the nature of man made after the image of God, does Scripture

specify nothing except male and female? Certainly, in order to complete

the image of the Trinity, it ought to have added also son, although

still placed in the loins of his father, as the woman was in his side.

Or was it perhaps that the woman also had been already made, and that

Scripture had combined in a short and comprehensive statement, that of

which it was going to explain afterwards more carefully, how it was

done; and that therefore a son could not be mentioned, because no son

was yet born? As if the Holy Spirit could not have comprehended this,

too, in that brief statement, while about to narrate the birth of the

son afterwards in its own place; as it narrated afterwards in its own

place, that the woman was taken from the side of the man, [755] and yet

has not omitted here to name her.

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[749] Gen. i. 26, 27

[750] Ps. iii. 8

[751] Ps. xviii. 29

[752] Ps. xlv. 5

[753] Rom. i. 3, 4

[754] Gen. i. 27, 28

[755] Gen. ii. 24, 22

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Chapter 7.--How Man is the Image of God. Whether the Woman is Not Also

the Image of God. How the Saying of the Apostle, that the Man is the

Image of God, But the Woman is the Glory of the Man, is to Be

Understood Figuratively and Mystically.

9. We ought not therefore so to understand that man is made in the

image of the supreme Trinity, that is, in the image of God, as that the

same image should be understood to be in three human beings; especially

when the apostle says that the man is the image of God, and on that

account removes the covering from his head, which he warns the woman to

use, speaking thus: "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head,

forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the

glory of the man." What then shall we say to this? If the woman fills

up the image of the trinity after the measure of her own person, why is

the man still called that image after she has been taken out of his

side? Or if even one person of a human being out of three can be called

the image of God, as each person also is God in the supreme Trinity

itself, why is the woman also not the image of God? For she is

instructed for this very reason to cover her head, which he is

forbidden to do because he is the image of God. [756]

10. But we must notice how that which the apostle says, that not the

woman but the man is the image of God, is not contrary to that which is

written in Genesis, "God created man: in the image of God created He

him; male and female created He them: and He blessed them." For this

text says that human nature itself, which is complete [only] in both

sexes, was made in the image of God; and it does not separate the woman

from the image of God which it signifies. For after saying that God

made man in the image of God, "He created him," it says, "male and

female:" or at any rate, punctuating the words otherwise, "male and

female created He them." How then did the apostle tell us that the man

is the image of God, and therefore he is forbidden to cover his head;

but that the woman is not so, and therefore is commanded to cover hers?

Unless, forsooth, according to that which I have said already, when I

was treating of the nature of the human mind, that the woman together

with her own husband is the image of God, so that that whole substance

may be one image; but when she is referred separately to her quality of

help-meet, which regards the woman herself alone, then she is not the

image of God; but as regards the man alone, he is the image of God as

fully and completely as when the woman too is joined with him in one.

As we said of the nature of the human mind, that both in the case when

as a whole it contemplates the truth it is the image of God; and in the

case when anything is divided from it, and diverted in order to the

cognition of temporal things; nevertheless on that side on which it

beholds and consults truth, here also it is the image of God, but on

that side whereby it is directed to the cognition of the lower things,

it is not the image of God. And since it is so much the more formed

after the image of God, the more it has extended itself to that which

is eternal, and is on that account not to be restrained, so as to

withhold and refrain itself from thence; therefore the man ought not to

cover his head. But because too great a progression towards inferior

things is dangerous to that rational cognition that is conversant with

things corporeal and temporal; this ought to have power on its head,

which the covering indicates, by which it is signified that it ought to

be restrained. For a holy and pious meaning is pleasing to the holy

angels. [757] For God sees not after the way of time, neither does

anything new take place in His vision and knowledge, when anything is

done in time and transitorily, after the way in which such things

affect the senses, whether the carnal senses of animals and men, or

even the heavenly senses of the angels.

11. For that the Apostle Paul, when speaking outwardly of the sex of

male and female, figured the mystery of some more hidden truth, may be

understood from this, that when he says in another place that she is a

widow indeed who is desolate, without children and nephews, and yet

that she ought to trust in God, and to continue in prayers night and

day, [758] he here indicates, that the woman having been brought into

the transgression by being deceived, is brought to salvation by

child-bearing; and then he has added, "If they continue in faith, and

charity, and holiness, with sobriety." [759] As if it could possibly

hurt a good widow, if either she had not sons, or if those whom she had

did not choose to continue in good works. But because those things

which are called good works are, as it were, the sons of our life,

according to that sense of life in which it answers to the question,

What is a man's life? that is, How does he act in these temporal

things? which life the Greeks do not call xoe but bios; and because

these good works are chiefly performed in the way of offices of mercy,

while works of mercy are of no profit, either to Pagans, or to Jews who

do not believe in Christ, or to any heretics or schismstics whatsoever

in whom faith and charity and sober holiness are not found: what the

apostle meant to signify is plain, and in so far figuratively and

mystically, because he was speaking of covering the head of the woman,

which will remain mere empty words, unless referred to some hidden

sacrament.

12. For, as not only most true reason but also the authority of the

apostle himself declares, man was not made in the image of God

according to the shape of his body, but according to his rational mind.

For the thought is a debased and empty one, which holds God to be

circumscribed and limited by the lineaments of bodily members. But

further, does not the same blessed apostle say, "Be renewed in the

spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which is created after

God;" [760] and in another place more clearly, "Putting off the old

man," he says, "with his deeds; put on the new man, which is renewed to

the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him?" [761]

If, then, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and he is the new

man who is renewed to the knowledge of God after the image of Him that

created him; no one can doubt, that man was made after the image of Him

that created him, not according to the body, nor indiscriminately

according to any part of the mind, but according to the rational mind,

wherein the knowledge of God can exist. And it is according to this

renewal, also, that we are made sons of God by the baptism of Christ;

and putting on the new man, certainly put on Christ through faith. Who

is there, then, who will hold women to be alien from this fellowship,

whereas they are fellow-heirs of grace with us; and whereas in another

place the same apostle says, "For ye are all the children of God by

faith in Christ Jesus; for as many as have been baptized into Christ

have put on Christ: there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither

bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in

Christ Jesus?" [762] Pray, have faithful women then lost their bodily

sex? But because they are there renewed after the image of God, where

there is no sex; man is there made after the image of God, where there

is no sex, that is, in the spirit of his mind. Why, then, is the man on

that account not bound to cover his head, because he is the image and

glory of God, while the woman is bound to do so, because she is the

glory of the man; as though the woman were not renewed in the spirit of

her mind, which spirit is renewed to the knowledge of God after the

image of Him who created him? But because she differs from the man in

bodily sex, it was possible rightly to represent under her bodily

covering that part of the reason which is diverted to the government of

temporal things; so that the image of God may remain on that side of

the mind of man on which it cleaves to the beholding or the consulting

of the eternal reasons of things; and this, it is clear, not men only,

but also women have.

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[756] 1 Cor. xi. 7, 5

[757] 1 Cor. xi. 10

[758] 1 Tim. v. 5

[759] 1 Tim. ii. 15

[760] Eph. iv. 23, 24

[761] Col. iii. 9, 10

[762] Gal. iii. 26-28

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Chapter 8.--Turning Aside from the Image of God.

13. A common nature, therefore, is recognized in their minds, but in

their bodies a division of that one mind itself is figured. As we

ascend, then, by certain steps of thought within, along the succession

of the parts of the mind, there where something first meets us which is

not common to ourselves with the beasts reason begins, so that here the

inner man can now be recognized. And if this inner man himself, through

that reason to which the administering of things temporal has been

delegated, slips on too far by over-much progress into outward things,

that which is his head moreover consenting, that is, the (so to call

it) masculine part which presides in the watch-tower of counsel not

restraining or bridling it: then he waxeth old because of all his

enemies, [763] viz. the demons with their prince the devil, who are

envious of virtue; and that vision of eternal things is withdrawn also

from the head himself, eating with his spouse that which was forbidden,

so that the light of his eyes is gone from him; [764] and so both being

naked from that enlightenment of truth, and with the eyes of their

conscience opened to behold how they were left shameful and unseemly,

like the leaves of sweet fruits, but without the fruits themselves,

they so weave together good words without the fruit of good works, as

while living wickedly to cover over their disgrace as it were by

speaking well. [765]

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[763] Ps. vi. 7

[764] Ps. xxxviii. 10

[765] Gen. iii. 4

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Chapter 9.--The Same Argument is Continued.

14. For the soul loving its own power, slips onwards from the whole

which is common, to a part, which belongs especially to itself. And

that apostatizing pride, which is called "the beginning of sin," [766]

whereas it might have been most excellently governed by the laws of

God, if it had followed Him as its ruler in the universal creature, by

seeking something more than the whole, and struggling to govern this by

a law of its own, is thrust on, since nothing is more than the whole,

into caring for a part; and thus by lusting after something more, is

made less; whence also covetousness is called "the root of all evil."

[767] And it administers that whole, wherein it strives to do something

of its own against the laws by which the whole is governed, by its own

body, which it possesses only in part; and so being delighted by

corporeal forms and motions, because it has not the things themselves

within itself, and because it is wrapped up in their images, which it

has fixed in the memory, and is foully polluted by fornication of the

phantasy, while it refers all its functions to those ends, for which it

curiously seeks corporeal and temporal things through the senses of the

body, either it affects with swelling arrogance to be more excellent

than other souls that are given up to the corporeal senses, or it is

plunged into a foul whirlpool of carnal pleasure.

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[766] Ecclus. x. 15

[767] 1 Tim. vi. 10

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Chapter 10.--The Lowest Degradation Reached by Degrees.

15. When the soul then consults either for itself or for others with a

good will towards perceiving the inner and higher things, such as are

possessed in a chaste embrace, without any narrowness or envy, not

individually, but in common by all who love such things; then even if

it be deceived in anything, through ignorance of things temporal (for

its action in this case is a temporal one), and if it does not hold

fast to that mode of acting which it ought, the temptation is but one

common to man. And it is a great thing so to pass through this life, on

which we travel, as it were, like a road on our return home, that no

temptation may take us, but what is common to man. [768] For this is a

sin, without the body, and must not be reckoned fornication, and on

that account is very easily pardoned. But when the soul does anything

in order to attain those things which are perceived through the body,

through lust of proving or of surpassing or of handling them, in order

that it may place in them its final good, then whatever it does, it

does wickedly, and commits fornication, sinning against its own body:

[769] and while snatching from within the deceitful images of corporeal

things, and combining them by vain thought, so that nothing seems to it

to be divine, unless it be of such a kind as this; by selfish

greediness it is made fruitful in errors, and by selfish prodigality it

is emptied of strength. Yet it would not leap on at once from the

commencement to such shameless and miserable fornication, but, as it is

written, "He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and

little." [770]

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[768] 1 Cor. x. 13

[769] 1 Cor. vi. 18

[770] Ecclus. xix. 1

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Chapter 11.--The Image of the Beast in Man.

16. For as a snake does not creep on with open steps, but advances by

the very minutest efforts of its several scales; so the slippery motion

of falling away [from what is good] takes possession of the negligent

only gradually, and beginning from a perverse desire for the likeness

of God, arrives in the end at the likeness of beasts. Hence it is that

being naked of their first garment, they earned by mortality coats of

skins. [771] For the true honor of man is the image and likeness of

God, which is not preserved except it be in relation to Him by whom it

is impressed. The less therefore that one loves what is one's own, the

more one cleaves to God. But through the desire of making trial of his

own power, man by his own bidding falls down to himself as to a sort of

intermediate grade. And so, while he wishes to be as God is, that is,

under no one, he is thrust on, even from his own middle grade, by way

of punishment, to that which is lowest, that is, to those things in

which beasts delight: and thus, while his honor is the likeness of God,

but his dishonor is the likeness of the beast, "Man being in honor

abideth not: he is compared to the beasts that are foolish, and is made

like to them." [772] By what path, then, could he pass so great a

distance from the highest to the lowest, except through his own

intermediate grade? For when he neglects the love of wisdom, which

remains always after the same fashion, and lusts after knowledge by

experiment upon things temporal and mutable, that knowledge puffeth up,

it does not edify: [773] so the mind is overweighed and thrust out, as

it were, by its own weight from blessedness; and learns by its own

punishment, through that trial of its own intermediateness, what the

difference is between the good it has abandoned and the bad to which it

has committed itself; and having thrown away and destroyed its

strength, it cannot return, unless by the grace of its Maker calling it

to repentance, and forgiving its sins. For who will deliver the unhappy

soul from the body of this death, unless the grace of God through Jesus

Christ our Lord? [774] of which grace we will discourse in its place,

so far as He Himself enables us.

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[771] Gen. iii. 21

[772] Ps. xlix. 12

[773] 1 Cor. viii. 1

[774] Rom. vii. 24, 25

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Chapter 12.--There is a Kind of Hidden Wedlock in the Inner Man.

Unlawful Pleasures of the Thoughts.

17. Let us now complete, so far as the Lord helps us, the discussion

which we have undertaken, respecting that part of reason to which

knowledge belongs, that is, the cognizance of things temporal and

changeable, which is necessary for managing the affairs of this life.

For as in the case of that visible wedlock of the two human beings who

were made first, the serpent did not eat of the forbidden tree, but

only persuaded them to eat of it; and the woman did not eat alone, but

gave to her husband, and they eat together; although she alone spoke

with the serpent, and she alone was led away by him: [775] so also in

the case of that hidden and secret kind of wedlock, which is transacted

and discerned in a single human being, the carnal, or as I may say,

since it is directed to the senses of the body, the sensuous movement

of the soul, which is common to us with beasts, is shut off from the

reason of wisdom. For certainly bodily things are perceived by the

sense of the body; but spiritual things, which are eternal and

unchangeable, are understood by the reason of wisdom. But the reason of

knowledge has appetite very near to it: seeing that what is called the

science or knowledge of actions reasons concerning the bodily things

which are perceived by the bodily sense; if well, in order that it may

refer that knowledge to the end of the chief good; but if ill, in order

that it may enjoy them as being such good things as those wherein it

reposes with a false blessedness. Whenever, then, that carnal or animal

sense introduces into this purpose of the mind which is conversant

about things temporal and corporeal, with a view to the offices of a

man's actions, by the living force of reason, some inducement to enjoy

itself, that is, to enjoy itself as if it were some private good of its

own, not as the public and common, which is the unchangeable, good;

then, as it were, the serpent discourses with the woman. And to consent

to this allurement, is to eat of the forbidden tree. But if that

consent is satisfied by the pleasure of thought alone, but the members

are so restrained by the authority of higher counsel that they are not

yielded as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; [776] this, I

think, is to be considered as if the woman alone should have eaten the

forbidden food. But if, in this consent to use wickedly the things

which are perceived through the senses of the body, any sin at all is

so determined upon, that if there is the power it is also fulfilled by

the body; then that woman must be understood to have given the unlawful

food to her husband with her, to be eaten together. For it is not

possible for the mind to determine that a sin is not only to be thought

of with pleasure, but also to be effectually committed, unless also

that intention of the mind yields, and serves the bad action, with

which rests the chief power of applying the members to an outward act,

or of restraining them from one.

18. And yet, certainly, when the mind is pleased in thought alone with

unlawful things, while not indeed determining that they are to be done,

but yet holding and pondering gladly things which ought to have been

rejected the very moment they touched the mind, it cannot be denied to

be a sin, but far less than if it were also determined to accomplished

it in outward act. And therefore pardon must be sought for such

thoughts too, and the breast must be smitten, and it must be said,

"Forgive us our debts;" and what follows must be done, and must be

joined in our prayer, "As we also forgive our debtors." [777] For it is

not as it was with those two first human beings, of which each one bare

his own person; and so, if the woman alone had eaten the forbidden

food, she certainly alone would have been smitten with the punishment

of death: it cannot, I say, be so said also in the case of a single

human being now, that if the thought, remaining alone, be gladly fed

with unlawful pleasures, from which it ought to turn away directly,

while yet there is no determination that the bad actions are to be

done, but only that they are retained with pleasure in remembrance, the

woman as it were can be condemned without the man. Far be it from us to

believe this. For here is one person, one human being, and he as a

whole will be condemned, unless those things which, as lacking the will

to do, and yet having the will to please the mind with them, are

perceived to be sins of thought alone, are pardoned through the grace

of the Mediator. [778]

19. This reasoning, then, whereby we have sought in the mind of each

several human being a certain rational wedlock of contemplation and

action, with functions distributed through each severally, yet with the

unity of the mind preserved in both; saving meanwhile the truth of that

history which divine testimony hands down respecting the first two

human beings, that is, the man and his wife, from whom the human

species is propagated; [779] --this reasoning, I say, must be listened

to only thus far, that the apostle may be understood to have intended

to signify something to be sought in one individual man, by assigning

the image of God to the man only, and not also to the woman, although

in the merely different sex of two human beings.

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[775] Gen. iii. 1-6

[776] Rom. vi. 13

[777] Matt. vi. 12

[778] [Augustin here teaches that the inward lust is guilt as well as

the outward action prompted by it. This is in accordance with Matt. v.

28; Acts viii. 21-22; Rom. vii. 7; James i. 14.--W.G.T.S.]

[779] [Augustin means, that while he has given an allegorical and

mystical interpretation to the narrative of the fall, in Genesis, he

also holds to its historical sense.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 13.--The Opinion of Those Who Have Thought that the Mind Was

Signified by the Man, the Bodily Sense by the Woman.

20. Nor does it escape me, that some who before us were eminent

defenders of the Catholic faith and expounders of the word of God,

while they looked for these two things in one human being, whose entire

soul they perceived to be a sort of excellent paradise, asserted that

the man was the mind, but that the woman was the bodily sense. And

according to this distribution, by which the man is assumed to be the

mind, but the woman the bodily sense, all things seem aptly to agree

together if they are handled with due attention: unless that it is

written, that in all the beasts and flying things there was not found

for man an helpmate like to himself; and then the woman was made out of

his side. [780] And on this account I, for my part, have not thought

that the bodily sense should be taken for the woman, which we see to be

common to ourselves and to the beasts; but I have desired to find

something which the beasts had not; and I have rather thought the

bodily sense should be understood to be the serpent, whom we read to

have been more subtle than all beasts of the field. [781] For in those

natural good things which we see are common to ourselves and to the

irrational animals, the sense excels by a kind of living power; not the

sense of which it is written in the epistle addressed to the Hebrews,

where we read, that "strong meat belongeth to them that are of full

age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to

discern both good and evil;" [782] for these "senses" belong to the

rational nature and pertain to the understanding; but that sense which

is divided into five parts in the body, through which corporeal species

and motion is perceived not only by ourselves, but also by the beasts.

21. But whether that the apostle calls the man the image and glory of

God, but the woman the glory of the man, [783] is to be received in

this, or that, or in any other way; yet it is clear, that when we live

according to God, our mind which is intent on the invisible things of

Him ought to be fashioned with proficiency from His eternity, truth,

charity; but that something of our own rational purpose, that is, of

the same mind, must be directed to the using of changeable and

corporeal things, without which this life does not go on; not that we

may be conformed to this world, [784] by placing our end in such good

things, and by forcing the desire of blessedness towards them, but that

whatever we do rationally in the using of temporal things, we may do it

with the contemplation of attaining eternal things, passing through the

former, but cleaving to the latter.

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[780] Gen. ii. 20-22

[781] Gen. iii. 1

[782] Heb. v. 14

[783] 1 Cor. xi. 7

[784] Rom. xii. 2

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Chapter 14.--What is the Difference Between Wisdom and Knowledge. The

Worship of God is the Love of Him. How the Intellectual Cognizance of

Eternal Things Comes to Pass Through Wisdom.

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. [785] 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.

22. 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;" [786] 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," [787]

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 evil is knowledge." [788] 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 theosebeia. 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." [789] 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." [790]

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.

23. 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 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 rumiuate 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.

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[785] 1 Cor. viii. 1

[786] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[787] 1 Cor. xii. 8

[788] Job xxviii. 28

[789] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[790] 1 John iii. 2

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Chapter 15.--In Opposition to the Reminiscence of Plato and Pythagoras.

Pythagoras the Samian. Of the Difference Between Wisdom and Knowledge,

and of Seeking the Trinity in the Knowledge of Temporal Things.

24. 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. [791] 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 an 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 conjectured 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.

25. 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. Let us then find a trinity in this also, if we can, as we found

one in the senses of the body, and in those things which through them

entered in the way of images into our soul or spirit; so that instead

of corporeal things which we touch by corporeal sense, placed as they

are without us, we might have resemblances of bodies impressed within

on the memory from which thought might be formed, while the will as a

third united them; just as the sight of the eyes was formed from

without, which the will applied to the visible thing in order to

produce vision, and united both, while itself also added itself thereto

as a third. But this subject must not be compressed into this book; so

that in that which follows, if God help, it may be suitably examined,

and the conclusions to which we come may be unfolded.

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[791] [This fine specimen of the "obstetric method" of Socrates is

given in Plato's dialogue, Meno.--W.G.T.S.]

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Book XIII.

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The inquiry is prosecuted respecting knowledge, in which, as

distinguished from wisdom, Augustin had begun in the former book to

look for a kind of trinity. And occasion is taken of commending

Christian faith, and of explaining how the faith of believers is one

and common. Next, that all desire blessedness, yet that all have not

the faith whereby we arrive at blessedness; and that this faith is

defined in Christ, who in the flesh rose from the dead; and that no one

is set free from the dominion of the devil through forgiveness of sins,

save through Him. It is shown also at length that it was needful that

the devil should be conquered by Christ, not by power, but by

righteousness. Finally, that when the words of this faith are committed

to memory, there is in the mind a kind of trinity, since there are,

first, in the memory the sounds of the words, and this even when the

man is not thinking of them; and next, the mind's eye of his

recollection is formed thereupon when he thinks of them; and, lastly,

the will, when he so thinks and remembers, combines both.

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Chapter 1.--The Attempt is Made to Distinguish Out of the Scriptures

the Offices of Wisdom and of Knowledge. That in the Beginning of John

Some Things that are Said Belong to Wisdom, Some to Knowledge. Some

Things There are Only Known by the Help of Faith. How We See the Faith

that is in Us. In the Same Narrative of John, Some Things are Known by

the Sense of the Body, Others Only by the Reason of the Mind.

1. In the book before this, viz. the twelfth of this work, we have done

enough to distinguish the office of the rational mind in temporal

things, wherein not only our knowing but our action is concerned, from

the more excellent office of the same mind, which is employed in

contemplating eternal things, and is limited to knowing alone. But I

think it more convenient that I should insert somewhat out of the Holy

Scriptures, by which the two may more easily be distinguished.

2. John the Evangelist has thus begun his Gospel: "In the beginning was

the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was

in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without was

Him not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was

the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness

comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was

John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that

all men through Him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent

to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth

every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the

world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. 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, even to them that believe on

His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,

nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and

dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the

only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." [792] This

entire passage, which I have here taken from the Gospel, contains in

its earlier portions what is immutable and eternal, the contemplation

of which makes us blessed; but in those which follow, eternal things

are mentioned in conjunction with temporal things. And hence some

things there belong to knowledge, some to wisdom, according to our

previous distinction in the twelfth book. For the words,--"In the

beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was

God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by

Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was

life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in

darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not:"--require a

contemplative life, and must be discerned by the intellectual mind; and

the more any one has profited in this, the wiser without doubt will he

become. But on account of the verse, "The light shineth in darkness,

and the darkness comprehended it not," faith certainly was necessary,

whereby that which was not seen might be believed. For by "darkness" he

intended to signify the hearts of mortals turned away from light of

this kind, and hardly able to behold it; for which reason he subjoins,

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for

a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might

believe." But here we come to a thing that was done in time, and

belongs to knowledge, which is comprised in the cognizance of facts.

And we think of the man John under that phantasy which is impressed on

our memory from the notion of human nature. And whether men believe or

not, they think this in the same manner. For both alike know what man

is, the outer part of whom, that is, his body, they have learned

through the eyes of the body; but of the inner, that is, the soul, they

possess the knowledge in themselves, because they also themselves are

men, and through intercourse with men; so that they are able to think

what is said, "There was a man, whose name was John," because they know

the names also by interchange of speech. But that which is there also,

viz. "sent from God," they who hold at all, hold by faith; and they who

do not hold it by faith, either hesitate through doubt, or deride it

through unbelief. Yet both, if they are not in the number of those

over-foolish ones, who say in their heart "There is no God," [793] when

they hear these words, think both things, viz. both what God is, and

what it is to be sent from God; and if they do not do this as the

things themselves really are, they do it at any rate as they can.

3. Further, we know from other sources the faith itself which a man

sees to be in his own heart, if he believes, or not to be there, if he

does not believe: but not as we know bodies, which we see with the

bodily eyes, and think of even when absent through the images of

themselves which we retain in memory; nor yet as those things which we

have not seen, and which we frame howsoever we can in thought from

those which we have seen, and commit them to memory, that we may recur

to them when we will, in order that therein we may similarly by

recollection discern them, or rather discern the images of them, of

what sort soever these are which we have fixed there; nor again as a

living man, whose soul we do not indeed see, but conjecture from our

own, and from corporeal motions gaze also in thought upon the living

man, as we have learnt him by sight. Faith as not so seen in the heart

in which it is, by him whose it is; but most certain knowledge holds it

fast, and conscience proclaims it. Although therefore we are bidden to

believe on this account, because we cannot see what we are bidden to

believe; nevertheless we see faith itself in ourselves, when that faith

is in us; because faith even in absent things is present, and faith in

things which are without us is within, and faith in things which are

not seen is itself seen, and itself none the less comes into the hearts

of men in time; and if any cease to be faithful and become unbelievers,

then it perishes from them. And sometimes faith is accommodated even to

falsehoods; for we sometimes so speak as to say, I put faith in him,

and he deceived me. And this kind of faith, if indeed it too is to be

called faith, perishes from the heart without blame, when truth is

found and expels it. But faith in things that are true, passes, as one

should wish it to pass, into the things themselves. For we must not say

that faith perishes, when those things which were believed are seen.

For is it indeed still to be called faith, when faith, according to the

definition in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is the evidence of things not

seen? [794]

4. In the words which follow next, "The same came for a witness, to

bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe;" the

action, as we have said, is one done in time. For to bear witness even

to that which is eternal, as is that light that is intelligible, is a

thing done in time. And of this it was that John came to bear witness

who "was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light."

For he adds "That was the true Light that lighteth every man that

cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by

Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own

received Him not." Now they who know the Latin language, understand all

these words, from those things which they know: and of these, some have

become known to us through the senses of the body, as man, as the world

itself, of which the greatness is so evident to our sight; as again the

sounds of the words themselves, for hearing also is a sense of the

body; and some through the reason of the mind, as that which is said,

"And His own received Him not;" for this means, that they did not

believe in Him; and what belief is, we do not know by any sense of the

body, but by the reason of the mind. We have learned, too, not the

sounds, but the meanings of the words themselves, partly through the

sense of the body, partly through the reason of the mind. Nor have we

now heard those words for the first time, but they are words we had

heard before. And we were retaining in our memory as things known, and

we here recognized, not only the words themselves, but also what they

meant. For when the bisyllabic word mundus is uttered, then something

that is certainly corporeal, for it is a sound, has become known

through the body, that is, through the ear. But that which it means

also, has become known through the body, that is, through the eyes of

the flesh. For so far as the world is known to us at all, it is known

through sight. But the quadri-syllabic word crediderunt reaches us, so

far as its sound, since that is a corporeal thing, through the ear of

the flesh; but its meaning is discoverable by no sense of the body, but

by the reason of the mind. For unless we knew through the mind what the

word crediderunt meant, we should not understand what they did not do,

of whom it is said, "And His own received Him not." The sound then of

the word rings upon the ears of the body from without, and reaches the

sense which is called hearing. The species also of man is both known to

us in ourselves, and is presented to the senses of the body from

without, in other men; to the eyes, when it is seen; to the ears, when

it is heard; to the touch, when it is held and touched; and it has,

too, its image in our memory, incorporeal indeed, but like the body.

Lastly, the wonderful beauty of the world itself is at hand from

without, both to our gaze, and to that sense which is called touch, if

we come in contact with any of it: and this also has its image within

in our memory, to which we revert, when we think of it either in the

enclosure of a room, or again in darkness. But we have already

sufficiently spoken in the eleventh book of these images of corporeal

things; incorporeal indeed, yet having the likeness of bodies, and

belonging to the life of the outer man. But we are treating now of the

inner man, and of his knowledge, namely, that knowledge which is of

things temporal and changeable; into the purpose and scope of which,

when anything is assumed, even of things belonging to the outer man, it

must be assumed for this end, that something may thence be taught which

may help rational knowledge. And hence the rational use of those things

which we have in common with irrational animals belongs to the inner

man; neither can it rightly be said that this is common to us with the

irrational animals.

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[792] John i. 1-14

[793] Ps. xiv. 1

[794] Heb. xi. 1

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Chapter 2.--Faith a Thing of the Heart, Not of the Body; How It is

Common and One and the Same in All Believers. The Faith of Believers is

One, No Otherwise than the Will of Those Who Will is One.

5. But faith, of which we are compelled, by reason of the arrangement

of our subject, to dispute somewhat more at length in this book: faith

I say, which they who have are called the faithful, and they who have

not, unbelievers, as were those who did not receive the Son of God

coming to His own; although it is wrought in us by hearing, yet does

not belong to that sense of the body which is called hearing, since it

is not a sound; nor to the eyes of this our flesh, since it is neither

color nor bodily form; nor to that which is called touch, since it has

nothing of bulk; nor to any sense of the body at all, since it is a

thing of the heart, not of the body; nor is it without apart from us,

but deeply seated within us; nor does any man see it in another, but

each one in himself. Lastly, it is a thing that can both be feigned by

pretence, and be thought to be in him in whom it is not. Therefore

every one sees his own faith in himself; but does not see, but

believes, that it is in another; and believes this the more firmly, the

more he knows the fruits of it, which faith is wont to work by love.

[795] And therefore this faith is common to all of whom the evangelist

subjoins, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become

the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were

born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of

man, but of God;" common I say, not as any form of a bodily object is

common, as regards sight, to the eyes of all to whom it is present, for

in some way the gaze of all that behold it is informed by the same one

form; but as the human countenance can be said to be common to all men;

for this is so said that yet each certainly has his own. We say

certainly with perfect truth, that the faith of believers is impressed

from one doctrine upon the heart of each several person who believes

the same thing. But that which is believed is a different thing from

the faith by which it is believed. For the former is in things which

are said either to be, or to have been or to be about to be; but the

latter is in the mind of the believer, and is visible to him only whose

it is; although not indeed itself but a faith like it, is also in

others. For it is not one in number, but in kind; yet on account of the

likeness, and the absence of all difference, we rather call it one than

many. For when, too, we see two men exceedingly alike, we wonder, and

say that both have one countenance. It is therefore more easily said

that the souls were many,--a several soul, of course, for each several

person--of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that they were of

one soul, [796] --than it is, where the apostle speaks of "one faith,"

[797] for any one to venture to say that there are as many faiths as

there are faithful. And yet He who says, "O woman, great is thy faith;"

[798] and to another, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou

doubt?" [799] intimates that each has his own faith. But the like faith

of believers is said to be one, in the same way as a like will of those

who will is said to be one; since in the case also of those who have

the same will, the will of each is visible to himself, but that of the

other is not visible, although he wills the same thing; and if it

intimate itself by any signs, it is believed rather than seen. But each

being conscious of his own mind certainly does not believe, but

manifestly sees outright, that this is his own will.

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[795] Gal. v. 6

[796] Acts iv. 32

[797] Eph. iv. 5

[798] Matt. xv. 28

[799] Matt. xiv. 31

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Chapter 3.--Some Desires Being the Same in All, are Known to Each. The

Poet Ennius.

6. There is, indeed, so closely conspiring a harmony in the same nature

living and using reason, that although one knows not what the other

wills, yet there are some wills of all which are also known to each;

and although each man does not know what any other one man wills, yet

in some things he may know what all will. And hence comes that story of

the comic actor's witty joke, who promised that he would say in the

theatre, in some other play, what all had in their minds, and what all

willed; and when a still greater crowd had come together on the day

appointed, with great expectation, all being in suspense and silent, is

affirmed to have said: You will to buy cheap, and sell dear. And mean

actor though he was, yet all in his words recognized what themselves

were conscious of, and applauded him with wonderful goodwill, for

saying before the eyes of all what was confessedly true, yet what no

one looked for. And why was so great expectation raised by his

promising that he would say what was the will of all, unless because no

man knows the wills of other men? But did not he know that will? Is

there any one who does not know it? Yet why, unless because there are

some things which not unfitly each conjectures from himself to be in

others, through sympathy or agreement either in vice or virtue? But it

is one thing to see one's own will; another to conjecture, however

certainly, what is another's. For, in human affairs, I am as certain

that Rome was built as that Constantinople was, although I have seen

Rome with my eyes, but know nothing of the other city, except what I

have believed on the testimony of others. And truly that comic actor

believed it to be common to all to will to buy cheap and sell dear,

either by observing himself or by making experiment also of others. But

since such a will is in truth a fault, every one can attain the counter

virtue, or run into the mischief of some other fault which is contrary

to it, whereby to resist and conquer it. For I myself know a case where

a manuscript was offered to a man for purchase, who perceived that the

vendor was ignorant of its value, and was therefore asking something

very small, and who thereupon gave him, though not expecting it, the

just price, which was much more. Suppose even the case of a man

possessed with wickedness so great as to sell cheap what his parents

left to him, and to buy dear, in order to waste it on his own lusts?

Such wanton extravagance, I fancy, is not incredible; and if such men

are sought, they may be found, or even fall in one's way although not

sought; who, by a wickedness more than that of the theatre, make a mock

of the theatrical proposition or declaration, by buying dishonor at a

great price, while selling lands at a small one. We have heard, too, of

persons that, for the sake of distribution, have bought corn at a

higher price, and sold it to their fellow-citizens at a lower one. And

note also what the old poet Ennius has said: that "all mortals wish

themselves to be praised;" wherein, doubtless, he conjectured what was

in others, both by himself, and by those whom he knew by experience;

and so seems to have declared what it is that all men will. Lastly, if

that comic actor himself, too, had said, You all will to be praised, no

one of you wills to be abused; he would have seemed in like manner to

have expressed what all will. Yet there are some who hate their own

faults, and do not desire to be praised by others for that for which

they are displeased with themselves; and who thank the kindness of

those who rebuke them, when the purpose of that rebuke is their own

amendment. But if he had said, You all will to be blessed, you do not

will to be wretched; he would have said something which there is no one

that would not recognize in his own will. For whatever else a man may

will secretly, he does not withdraw from that will, which is well known

to all men, and well known to be in all men.

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Chapter 4.--The Will to Possess Blessedness is One in All, But the

Variety of Wills is Very Great Concerning that Blessedness Itself.

7. It is wonderful, however, since the will to obtain and retain

blessedness is one in all, whence comes, on the other hand, such a

variety and diversity of wills concerning that blessedness itself; not

that any one is unwilling to have it, but that all do not know it. For

if all knew it, it would not be thought by some to be in goodness of

mind; by others, in pleasure of body; by others, in both; and by some

in one thing, by others in another. For as men find special delight in

this thing or that, so have they placed in it their idea of a blessed

life. How, then, do all love so warmly what not all know? Who can love

what he does not know?--a subject which I have already discussed in the

preceding books. [800] Why, therefore, is blessedness loved by all,

when it is not known by all? Is it perhaps that all know what it is

itself, but all do not know where it is to be found, and that the

dispute arises from this?--as if, forsooth, the business was about some

place in this world, where every one ought to will to live who wills to

live blessedly; and as if the question where blessedness is were not

implied in the question what it is. For certainly, if it is in the

pleasure of the body, he is blessed who enjoys the pleasure of the

body; if in goodness of mind, he has it who enjoys this; if in both, he

who enjoys both. When, therefore, one says, to live blessedly is to

enjoy the pleasure of the body; but another, to live blessedly is to

enjoy goodness of mind; is it not, that either both know, or both do

not know, what a blessed life is? How, then, do both love it, if no one

can love what he does not know? Or is that perhaps false which we have

assumed to be most true and most certain, viz. that all men will to

live blessedly? For if to live blessedly is, for argument's sake, to

live according to goodness of mind, how does he will to live blessedly

who does not will this? Should we not say more truly, That man does not

will to live blessedly, because he does not wish to live according to

goodness, which alone is to live blessedly? Therefore all men do not

will to live blessedly; on the contrary, few wish it; if to live

blessedly is nothing else but to live according to goodness of mind,

which many do not will to do. Shall we, then, hold that to be false of

which the Academic Cicero himself did not doubt (although Academics

doubt every thing), who, when he wanted in the dialogue Hortensius to

find some certain thing, of which no one doubted, from which to start

his argument, says, We certainly all will to be blessed? Far be it from

me to say this is false. But what then? Are we to say that, although

there is no other way of living blessedly than living according to

goodness of mind, yet even he who does not will this, wills to live

blessedly? This, indeed, seems too absurd. For it is much as if we

should say, Even he who does not will to live blessedly, wills to live

blessedly. Who could listen to, who could endure, such a contradiction?

And yet necessity thrusts us into this strait, if it is both true that

all will to live blessedly, and yet all do not will to live in that way

in which alone one can live blessedly.

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[800] Bks. viii. c. 4, etc., x. c. 1.

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Chapter 5.--Of the Same Thing.

8. Or is, perhaps, the deliverance from our difficulties to be found in

this, that, since we have said that every one places his idea of a

blessed life in that which has most pleased him, as pleasure pleased

Epicurus, and goodness Zeno, and something else pleased other people,

we say that to live blessedly is nothing else but to live according to

one's own pleasure: so that it is not false that all will to live

blessedly, because all will that which pleases each? For if this, too,

had been proclaimed to the people in the theatre, all would have found

it in their own wills. But when Cicero, too, had propounded this in

opposition to himself, he so refuted it as to make them blush who

thought so. For he says: "But, behold! people who are not indeed

philosophers, but who yet are prompt to dispute, say that all are

blessed, whoever live as they will;" which is what we mean by, as

pleases each. But by and by he has subjoined: "But this is indeed

false. For to will what is not fitting, is itself most miserable;

neither is it so miserable not to obtain what one wills, as to will to

obtain what one ought not." Most excellently and altogether most truly

does he speak. For who can be so blind in his mind, so alienated from

all light of decency, and wrapped up in the darkness of indecency, as

to call him blessed, because he lives as he will, who lives wickedly

and disgracefully; and with no one restraining him, no one punishing,

and no one daring even to blame him, nay more, too, with most people

praising him, since, as divine Scripture says, "The wicked is praised

in his heart's desire: and he who works iniquity is blessed," [801]

gratifies all his most criminal and flagitious desires; when,

doubtless, although even so he would be wretched, yet he would be less

wretched, if he could have had nothing of those things which he had

wrongly willed? For every one is made wretched by a wicked will also,

even though it stop short with will but more wretched by the power by

which the longing of a wicked will is fulfilled. And, therefore, since

it is true that all men will to be blessed, and that they seek for this

one thing with the most ardent love, and on account of this seek

everything which they do seek; nor can any one love that of which he

does not know at all what or of what sort it is, nor can be ignorant

what that is which he knows that he wills; it follows that all know a

blessed life. But all that are blessed have what they will, although

not all who have what they will are forewith blessed. But they are

forewith wretched, who either have not what they will, or have that

which they do not rightly will. Therefore he only is a blessed man, who

both has all things which he wills, and wills nothing ill.

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[801] Ps. x. 3

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Chapter 6.--Why, When All Will to Be Blessed, that is Rather Chosen by

Which One Withdraws from Being So.

9. Since, then, a blessed life consists of these two things, and is

known to all, and dear to all; what can we think to be the cause why,

when they cannot have both, men choose, out of these two, to have all

things that they will, rather than to will all things well, even

although they do not have them? Is it the depravity itself of the human

race, in such wise that, while they are not unaware that neither is he

blessed who has not what he wills, nor he who has what he wills

wrongly, but he who both has whatsoever good things he wills, and wills

no evil ones, yet, when both are not granted of those two things in

which the blessed life consists, that is rather chosen by which one is

withdrawn the more from a blessed life (since he certainly is further

from it who obtains things which he wickedly desired, than he who only

does not obtain the things which he desired); whereas the good will

ought rather to be chosen, and to be preferred, even if it do not

obtain the things which it seeks? For he comes near to being a blessed

man, who wills well whatsoever he wills, and wills things, which when

he obtains, he will be blessed. And certainly not bad things, but good,

make men blessed, when they do so make them. And of good things he

already has something, and that, too, a something not to be lightly

esteemed,--namely, the very good will itself; who longs to rejoice in

those good things of which human nature is capable, and not in the

performance or the attainment of any evil; and who follows diligently,

and attains as much as he can, with a prudent, temperate, courageous,

and right mind, such good things as are possible in the present

miserable life; so as to be good even in evils, and when all evils have

been put an end to, and all good things fulfilled, then to be blessed.

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Chapter 7.--Faith is Necessary, that Man May at Some Time Be Blessed,

Which He Will Only Attain in the Future Life. The Blessedness of Proud

Philosophers Ridiculous and Pitiable.

10. And on this account, faith, by which men believe in God, is above

all things necessary in this mortal life, most full as it is of errors

and hardships. For there are no good things whatever, and above all,

not those by which any one is made good, or those by which he will

become blessed, of which any other source can be found whence they come

to man, and are added to man, unless it be from God. But when he who is

good and faithful in these miseries shall have come from this life to

the blessed life, then will truly come to pass what now is absolutely

impossible,--namely, that a man may live as he will. [802] For he will

not will to live badly in the midst of that felicity, nor will he will

anything that will be wanting, nor will there be wanting anything which

he shall have willed. Whatever shall be loved, will be present; nor

will that be longed for, which shall not be present. Everything which

will be there will be good, and the supreme God will be the supreme

good and will be present for those to enjoy who love Him; and what

altogether is most blessed, it will be certain that it will be so

forever. But now, indeed, philosophers have made for themselves,

according to the pleasure of each, their own ideals of a blessed life;

that they might be able, as it were by their own power, to do that,

which by the common conditions of mortals they were not able to

do,--namely, to live as they would. For they felt that no one could be

blessed otherwise than by having what he would, and by suffering

nothing which he would not. And who would not will, that the life

whatsoever it be, with which he is delighted, and which he therefore

calls blessed, were so in his own power, that he could have it

continually? And yet who is in this condition? Who wills to suffer

troubles in order that he may endure them manfully, although he both

wills and is able to endure them if he does suffer them? Who would will

to live in torments, even although he is able to live laudably by

holding fast to righteousness in the midst of them through patience?

They who have endured these evils, either in wishing to have or in

fearing to lose what they loved, whether wickedly or laudably, have

thought of them as transitory. For many have stretched boldly through

transitory evils to good things which will last. And these, doubtless,

are blessed through hope, even while actually suffering such transitory

evils, through which they arrive at good things which will not be

transitory. But he who is blessed through hope is not yet blessed: for

he expects, through patience, a blessedness which he does not yet

grasp. Whereas he, on the other hand, who is tormented without any such

hope, without any such reward, let him use as much endurance as he

pleases, is not truly blessed, but bravely miserable. For he is not on

that account not miserable, because he would be more so if he also bore

misery impatiently. Further, even if he does not suffer those things

which he would not will to suffer in his own body, not even then is he

to be esteemed blessed, inasmuch as he does not live as he wills. For

to omit other things, which, while the body remains unhurt, belong to

those annoyances of the mind, without which we should will to live, and

which are innumerable; he would will, at any rate, if he were able, so

to have his body safe and sound, and so to suffer no inconveniences

from it, as to have it within his own control, or even to have it with

an imperishableness of the body itself; and because he does not possess

this, and hangs in doubt about it, he certainly does not live as he

wills. For although he may be ready from fortitude to accept, and bear

with an equal mind, whatever adversities may happen to him, yet he had

rather they should not happen, and prevents them if he is able; and he

is in such way ready for both alternatives, that, as much as is in him,

he wishes for the one and shuns the other; and if he have fallen into

that which he shuns, he therefore bears it willingly, because that

could not happen which he willed. He bears it, therefore, in order that

he may not be crushed; but he would not willingly be even burdened.

How, then, does he live as he wills? Is it because he is willingly

strong to bear what he would not will to be put upon him? Then he only

wills what he can, because he cannot have what he wills. And here is

the sum-total of the blessedness of proud mortals, I know not whether

to be laughed at, or not rather to be pitied, who boast that they live

as they will, because they willingly bear patiently what they are

unwilling should happen to them. For this, they say, is like Terence's

wise saying,--

"Since that cannot be which you will, will that which thou canst."

[803]

That this is aptly said, who denies? But it is advice given to the

miserable man, that he may not be more miserable. And it is not rightly

or truly said to the blessed man, such as all wish themselves to be,

That cannot be which you will. For if he is blessed, whatever he wills

can be; since he does not will that which cannot be. But such a life is

not for this mortal state, neither will it come to pass unless when

immortality also shall come to pass. And if this could not be given at

all to man, blessedness too would be sought in vain, since it cannot be

without immortality.

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[802] [The prophet Nathan enunciates the same truth, in his words to

David, "Go do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee." 2

Sam. vii. 3.--W.G.T.S.]

[803] Andreia, Act ii. Scene i, v. 5, 6.

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Chapter 8.--Blessedness Cannot Exist Without Immortality.

11. As, therefore, all men will to be blessed, certainly, if they will

truly, they will also to be immortal; for otherwise they could not be

blessed. And further, if questioned also concerning immortality, as

before concerning blessedness, all reply that they will it. But

blessedness of what quality soever, such as is not so, but rather is so

called, is sought, nay indeed is feigned in this life, whilst

immortality is despaired of, without which true blessedness cannot be.

Since he lives blessedly, as we have already said before, and have

sufficiently proved and concluded, who lives as he wills, and wills

nothing wrongly. But no one wrongly wills immortality, if human nature

is by God's gift capable of it; and if it is not capable of it, it is

not capable of blessedness. For, that a man may live blessedly, he must

needs live. And if life quits him by his dying, how can a blessed life

remain with him? And when it quits him, without doubt it either quits

him unwilling, or willing, or neither. If unwilling, how is the life

blessed which is so within his will as not to be within his power? And

whereas no one is blessed who wills something that he does not have,

how much less is he blessed who is quitted against his will, not by

honor, nor by possessions, nor by any other thing, but by the blessed

life itself, since he will have no life at all? And hence, although no

feeling is left for his life to be thereby miserable (for the blessed

life quits him, because life altogether quits him), yet he is wretched

as long as he feels, because he knows that against his will that is

being destroyed for the sake of which he loves all else, and which he

loves beyond all else. A life therefore cannot both be blessed, and yet

quit a man against his will, since no one becomes blessed against his

will; and hence how much more does it make a man miserable by quitting

him against his will, when it would make him miserable if he had it

against his will! But if it quit him with his will, even so how was

that a blessed life, which he who had it willed should perish? It

remains then for them to say, that neither of these is in the mind of

the blessed man; that is, that he is neither unwilling nor willing to

be quitted by a blessed life, when through death life quits him

altogether; for that he stands firm with an even heart, prepared alike

for either alternative. But neither is that a blessed life which is

such as to be unworthy of his love whom it makes blessed. For how is

that a blessed life which the blessed man does not love? Or how is that

loved, of which it is received indifferently, whether it is to flourish

or to perish? Unless perhaps the virtues, which we love in this way on

account of blessedness alone, venture to persuade us that we do not

love blessedness itself. Yet if they did this, we should certainly

leave off loving the virtues themselves, when we do not love that on

account of which alone we loved them. And further, how will that

opinion be true, which has been so tried, and sifted, and thoroughly

strained, and is so certain, viz. that all men will to be blessed, if

they themselves who are already blessed neither will nor do not will to

be blessed? Or if they will it, as truth proclaims, as nature

constrains, in which indeed the supremely good and unchangeably blessed

Creator has implanted that will: if, I say, they will to be blessed who

are blessed, certainly they do not will to be not blessed. But if they

do not will not to be blessed, without doubt they do not will to be

annihilated and perish in regard to their blessedness. But they cannot

be blessed except they are alive; therefore they do not will so to

perish in regard to their life. Therefore, whoever are either truly

blessed or desire to be so, will to be immortal. But he does not live

blessedly who has not that which he wills. Therefore it follows that in

no way can life be truly blessed unless it be eternal.

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Chapter 9.--We Say that Future Blessedness is Truly Eternal, Not

Through Human Reasonings, But by the Help of Faith. The Immortality of

Blessedness Becomes Credible from the Incarnation of the Son of God.

12. Whether human nature can receive this, which yet it confesses to be

desirable, is no small question. But if faith be present, which is in

those to whom Jesus has given power to become the sons of God, then

there is no question. Assuredly, of those who endeavor to discover it

from human reasonings, scarcely a few, and they endued with great

abilities, and abounding in leisure, and learned with the most subtle

learning, have been able to attain to the investigation of the

immortality of the soul alone. And even for the soul they have not

found a blessed life that is stable, that is, true; since they have

said that it returns to the miseries of this life even after

blessedness. And they among them who are ashamed of this opinion, and

have thought that the purified soul is to be placed in eternal

happiness without a body, hold such opinions concerning the past

eternity of the world, as to confute this opinion of theirs concerning

the soul; a thing which here it is too long to demonstrate; but it has

been, as I think, sufficiently explained by us in the twelfth book of

the City of God. [804] But that faith promises, not by human reasoning,

but by divine authority, that the whole man, who certainly consists of

soul and body, shall be immortal, and on this account truly blessed.

And so, when it had been said in the Gospel, that Jesus has given

"power to become the sons of God to them who received Him;" and what it

is to have received Him had been shortly explained by saying, "To them

that believe on His name;" and it was further added in what way they

are to become sons of God, viz., "Which were born not of blood, nor of

the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;"--lest that

infirmity of men which we all see and bear should despair of attaining

so great excellence, it is added in the same place, "And the Word was

made flesh, and dwelt among us;" [805] that, on the contrary, men might

be convinced of that which seemed incredible. For if He who is by

nature the Son of God was made the Son of man through mercy for the

sake of the sons of men,--for this is what is meant by "The Word was

made flesh, and dwelt among us" men,--how much more credible is it that

the sons of men by nature should be made the sons of God by the grace

of God, and should dwell in God, in whom alone and from whom alone the

blessed can be made partakers of that immortality; of which that we

might be convinced, the Son of God was made partaker of our mortality?

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[804] C. 20.

[805] John i. 12-14

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Chapter 10.--There Was No Other More Suitable Way of Freeing Man from

the Misery of Mortality Than The Incarnation of the Word. The Merits

Which are Called Ours are the Gifts of God.

13. Those then who say, What, had God no other way by which He might

free men from the misery of this mortality, that He should will the

only-begotten Son, God co-eternal with Himself, to become man, by

putting on a human soul and flesh, and being made mortal to endure

death?--these, I say, it is not enough so to refute, as to assert that

that mode by which God deigns to free us through the Mediator of God

and men, the man Christ Jesus, is good and suitable to the dignity of

God; but we must show also, not indeed that no other mode was possible

to God, to whose power all things are equally subject, but that there

neither was nor need have been any other mode more appropriate for

curing our misery. For what was so necessary for the building up of our

hope, and for the freeing the minds of mortals cast down by the

condition of mortality itself, from despair of immortality, than that

it should be demonstrated to us at how great a price God rated us, and

how greatly He loved us? But what is more manifest and evident in this

so great proof hereof, than that the Son of God, unchangeably good,

remaining what He was in Himself, and receiving from us and for us what

He was not, apart from any loss of His own nature, and deigning to

enter into the fellowship of ours, should first, without any evil

desert of His own, bear our evils; and so with unobligated munificence

should bestow His own gifts upon us, who now believe how much God loves

us, and who now hope that of which we used to despair, without any good

deserts of our own, nay, with our evil deserts too going before?

14. Since those also which are called our deserts, are His gifts. For,

that faith may work by love, [806] "the love of God is shed abroad in

our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." [807] And He was

then given, when Jesus was glorified by the resurrection. For then He

promised that He Himself would send Him, and He sent Him; [808] because

then, as it was written and foretold of Him, "He ascended up on high,

He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." [809] These gifts

constitute our deserts, by which we arrive at the chief good of an

immortal blessedness. "But God," says the apostle, "commendeth His love

towards as, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more, then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved

from wrath through Him." To this he goes on to add, "For if, when we

were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much

more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Those whom he

first calls sinners he afterwards calls the enemies of God; and those

whom he first speaks of as justified by His blood, he afterwards speaks

of as reconciled by the death of the Son of God; and those whom he

speaks of first as saved from wrath through Him, he afterwards speaks

of as saved by His life. We were not, therefore, before that grace

merely anyhow sinners, but in such sins that we were enemies of God.

But the same apostle calls us above several times by two appellations,

viz. sinners and enemies of God,--one as if the most mild, the other

plainly the most harsh,--saying, "For if when we were yet weak, in due

time Christ died for the ungodly." [810] Those whom he called weak, the

same he called ungodly. Weakness seems something slight; but sometimes

it is such as to be called impiety. Yet except it were weakness, it

would not need a physician, who is in the Hebrew Jesus, in the Greek

Soter, but in our speech Saviour. And this word the Latin language had

not previously, but could have seeing that it could have it when it

wanted it. And this foregoing sentence of the apostle, where he says,

"For when we were yet weak, in due time He died for the ungodly,"

coheres with those two following sentences; in the one of which he

spoke of sinners, in the other of enemies of God, as though he referred

each severally to each, viz. sinners to the weak, the enemies of God to

the ungodly.

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[806] Gal. v. 5

[807] Rom. v. 4, 5

[808] John xx. 22, vii. 39, and xv. 26

[809] Eph. iv. 8 and Ps. lxviii. 18

[810] Rom. v. 6-10

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Chapter 11.--A Difficulty, How We are Justified in the Blood of the Son

of God.

15. But what is meant by "justified in His blood?" What power is there

in this blood, I beseech you, that they who believe should be justified

in it? And what is meant by "being reconciled by the death of His Son?"

Was it indeed so, that when God the Father was wroth with us, He saw

the death of His Son for us, and was appeased towards us? Was then His

Son already so far appeased towards us, that He even deigned to die for

us; while the Father was still so far wroth, that except His Son died

for us, He would not be appeased? And what, then, is that which the

same teacher of the Gentiles himself says in another place: "What shall

we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how

has He not with Him also freely given us all things?" [811] Pray,

unless the Father had been already appeased, would He have delivered up

His own Son, not sparing Him for us? Does not this opinion seem to be

as it were contrary to that? In the one, the Son dies for us, and the

Father is reconciled to us by His death; in the other, as though the

Father first loved us, He Himself on our account does not spare the

Son, He Himself for us delivers Him up to death. But I see that the

Father loved us also before, not only before the Son died for us, but

before He created the world; the apostle himself being witness, who

says, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of

the world." [812] Nor was the Son delivered up for us as it were

unwillingly, the Father Himself not sparing Him; for it is said also

concerning Him, "Who loved me, and delivered up Himself for me." [813]

Therefore together both the Father and the Son, and the Spirit of both,

work all things equally and harmoniously; yet we are justified in the

blood of Christ, and we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son.

And I will explain, as I shall be able, here also, how this was done,

as much as may seem sufficient.

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[811] Rom. viii. 31, 32

[812] Eph. i. 4

[813] Gal. ii. 20

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Chapter 12.--All, on Account of the Sin of Adam, Were Delivered into

the Power of the Devil.

16. By the justice of God in some sense, the human race was delivered

into the power of the devil; the sin of the first man passing over

originally into all of both sexes in their birth through conjugal

union, and the debt of our first parents binding their whole posterity.

This delivering up is first signified in Genesis, where, when it had

been said to the serpent, "Dust shalt thou eat," it was said to the

man, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shall return." [814] In the

words, "Unto dust shalt thou return," the death of the body is

fore-announced, because he would not have experienced that either, if

he had continued to the end upright as he was made; but in that it is

said to him whilst still living, "Dust thou art," it is shown that the

whole man was changed for the worse. For "Dust thou art" is much the

same as, "My spirit shall not always remain in these men, for that they

also are flesh." [815] Therefore it was at that time shown, that he was

delivered to him, in that it had been said to him, "Dust shall thou

eat." But the apostle declares this more clearly, where he says: "And

you who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye

walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince

of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of

unfaithfulness; among whom we also had our conversation in times past,

in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of

the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

[816] The "children of unfaithfulness" are the unbelievers; and who is

not this before he becomes a believer? And therefore all men are

originally under the prince of the power of the air, "who worketh in

the children of unfaithfulness." And that which I have expressed by

"originally" is the same that the apostle expresses when he speaks of

themselves who "by nature" were as others; viz. by nature as it has

been depraved by sin, not as it was created upright from the beginning.

But the way in which man was thus delivered into the power of the

devil, ought not to be so understood as if God did this, or commanded

it to be done; but that He only permitted it, yet that justly. For when

He abandoned the sinner, the author of the sin immediately entered. Yet

God did not certainly so abandon His own creature as not to show

Himself to him as God creating and quickening, and among penal evils

bestowing also many good things upon the evil. For He hath not in anger

shut up His tender mercies. [817] Nor did He dismiss man from the law

of His own power, when He permitted him to be in the power of the

devil; since even the devil himself is not separated from the power of

the Omnipotent, as neither from His goodness. For whence do even the

evil angels subsist in whatever manner of life they have, except

through Him who quickens all things? If, therefore, the commission of

sins through the just anger of God subjected man to the devil,

doubtless the remission of sins through the merciful reconciliation of

God rescues man from the devil.

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[814] Gen. iii. 14-19

[815] Gen. vi. 3. "Strive with man," A.V.

[816] Eph. ii. 1-3

[817] Ps. lxxvii. 9

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Chapter 13.--Man Was to Be Rescued from the Power of the Devil, Not by

Power, But by Righteousness.

17. But the devil was to be overcome, not by the power of God, but by

His righteousness. For what is more powerful than the Omnipotent? Or

what creature is there of which the power can be compared to the power

of the Creator? But since the devil, by the fault of his own

perversity, was made a lover of power, and a forsaker and assailant of

righteousness,--for thus also men imitate him so much the more in

proportion as they set their hearts on power, to the neglect or even

hatred of righteousness, and as they either rejoice in the attainment

of power, or are inflamed by the lust of it,--it pleased God, that in

order to the rescuing of man from the grasp of the devil, the devil

should be conquered, not by power, but by righteousness; and that so

also men, imitating Christ, should seek to conquer the devil by

righteousness, not by power. Not that power is to be shunned as as

though it were something evil; but the order must be preserved, whereby

righteousness is before it. For how great can be the power of mortals?

Therefore let mortals cleave to righteousness; power will be given to

immortals. And compared to this, the power, how great soever, of those

men who are called powerful on earth, is found to be ridiculous

weakness, and a pitfall is dug there for the sinner, where the wicked

seem to be most powerful. And the righteous man says in his song,

"Blessed is the man whom Thou chasteneth, O Lord, and teachest him out

of Thy law: that Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity,

until the pit be digged for the wicked. For the Lord will not cast off

His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance, until

righteousness return unto judgment, and all who follow it are upright

in heart." [818] At this present time, then, in which the might of the

people of God is delayed, "the Lord will not cast off His people,

neither will He forsake His inheritance," how bitter and unworthy

things soever it may suffer in its humility and weakness; "until the

righteousness," which the weakness of the pious now possesses, "shall

return to judgment," that is, shall receive the power of judging; which

is preserved in the end for the righteous when power in its due order

shall have followed after righteousness going before. For power joined

to righteousness, or righteousness added to power, constitutes a

judicial authority. But righteousness belongs to a good will; whence it

was said by the angels when Christ was born: "Glory to God in the

highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." [819] But power ought

to follow righteousness, not to go before it; and accordingly it is

placed in "second," that is, prosperous fortune; and this is called

"second," [820] from "following." For whereas two things make a man

blessed, as we have argued above, to will well, and to be able to do

what one wills, people ought not to be so perverse, as has been noted

in the same discussion, as that a man should choose from the two things

which make him blessed, the being able to do what he wills, and should

neglect to will what he ought; whereas he ought first to have a good

will, but great power afterwards. Further, a good will must be purged

from vices, by which if a man is overcome, he is in such wise overcome

as that he wills evil; and then how will his will be still good? It is

to be wished, then, that power may now be given, but power against

vices, to conquer which men do not wish to be powerful, while they wish

to be so in order to conquer men; and why is this, unless that, being

in truth conquered, they feignedly conquer, and are conquerors not in

truth, but in opinion? Let a man will to be prudent, will to be strong,

will to be temperate, will to be just; and that he may be able to have

these things truly, let him certainly desire power, and seek to be

powerful in himself, and (strange though it be) against himself for

himself. But all the other things which he wills rightly, and yet is

not able to have, as, for instance, immortality and true and full

felicity, let him not cease to long for, and let him patiently expect.

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[818] Ps. xciv. 12-15

[819] Luke ii. 14

[820] Res secundoe

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Chapter 14.--The Unobligated Death of Christ Has Freed Those Who Were

Liable to Death.

18. What, then, is the righteousness by which the devil was conquered?

What, except the righteousness of Jesus Christ? And how was he

conquered? Because, when he found in Him nothing worthy of death, yet

he slew Him. And certainly it is just, that we whom he held as debtors,

should be dismissed free by believing in Him whom he slew without any

debt. In this way it is that we are said to be justified in the blood

of Christ. [821] For so that innocent blood was shed for the remission

of our sins. Whence He calls Himself in the Psalms, "Free among the

dead." [822] For he only that is dead is free from the debt of death.

Hence also in another psalm He says, "Then I restored that which I

seized not;" [823] meaning sin by the thing seized, because sin is laid

hold of against what is lawful. Whence also He says, by the mouth of

His own Flesh, as is read in the Gospel: "For the prince of this world

cometh, and hath nothing in me," that is, no sin; but "that the world

may know," He says, "that I do the commandment of the Father; arise,

let us go hence." [824] And hence He proceeds to His passion, that He

might pay for us debtors that which He Himself did not owe. Would then

the devil be conquered by this most just right, if Christ had willed to

deal with him by power, not by righteousness? But He held back what was

possible to Him, in order that He might first do what was fitting. And

hence it was necessary that He should be both man and God. For unless

He had been man, He could not have been slain; unless He had been God,

men would not have believed that He would not do what He could, but

that He could not do what He would; nor should we have thought that

righteousness was preferred by Him to power, but that He lacked power.

But now He suffered for us things belonging to man, because He was man;

but if He had been unwilling, it would have been in His power to not so

to suffer, because He was also God. And righteousness was therefore

made more acceptable in humility, because so great power as was in His

Divinity, if He had been unwilling, would have been able not to suffer

humility; and thus by Him who died, being thus powerful, both

righteousness was commended, and power promised, to us, weak mortals.

For He did one of these two things by dying, the other by rising again.

For what is more righteous, than to come even to the death of the cross

for righteousness? And what more powerful, than to rise from the dead,

and to ascend into heaven with that very flesh in which He was slain?

And therefore He conquered the devil first by righteousness, and

afterwards by power: namely, by righteousness, because He had no sin,

and was slain by him most unjustly; but by power, because having been

dead He lived again, never afterwards to die. [825] But He would have

conquered the devil by power, even though He could not have been slain

by him: although it belongs to a greater power to conquer death itself

also by rising again, than to avoid it by living. But the reason is

really a different one, why we are justified in the blood of Christ,

when we are rescued from the power of the devil through the remission

of sins: it pertains to this, that the devil is conquered by Christ by

righteousness, not by power. For Christ was crucified, not through

immortal power, but through the weakness which He took upon Him in

mortal flesh; of which weakness nevertheless the apostle says, "that

the weakness of God is stronger than men." [826]

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[821] Rom. v. 9

[822] Ps. lxxxviii. 5

[823] Ps. lxix. 4

[824] John xiv. 30-31

[825] Rom. vi. 9

[826] 1 Cor. i. 25

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Chapter 15.--Of the Same Subject.

19. It is not then difficult to see that the devil was conquered, when

he who was slain by Him rose again. It is something more, and more

profound of comprehension, to see that the devil was conquered when he

thought himself to have conquered, that is, when Christ was slain. For

then that blood, since it was His who had no sin at all, was poured out

for the remission of our sins; that, because the devil deservedly held

those whom, as guilty of sin, he bound by the condition of death, he

might deservedly loose them through Him, whom, as guilty of no sin, the

punishment of death undeservedly affected. The strong man was conquered

by this righteousness, and bound with this chain, that his vessels

might be spoiled, [827] which with himself and his angels had been

vessels of wrath while with him, and might be turned into vessels of

mercy. [828] For the Apostle Paul tells us, that these words of our

Lord Jesus Christ Himself were spoken from heaven to him when he was

first called. For among the other things which he heard, he speaks also

of this as said to him thus: "For I have appeared unto thee for this

purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things

which thou hast seen from me, and of those things in the which I will

appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the

Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open the eyes of the blind, and

to turn them from darkness [to light], and from the power of Satan unto

God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among

them which are sanctified, and faith that is in me." [829] And hence

the same apostle also, exhorting believers to the giving of thanks to

God the Father, says: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness

and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we

have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins." [830] In this

redemption, the blood of Christ was given, as it were, as a price for

us, by accepting which the devil was not enriched, but bound: [831]

that we might be loosened from his bonds, and that he might not with

himself involve in the meshes of sins, and so deliver to the

destruction of the second and eternal death, [832] any one of those

whom Christ, free from all debt, had redeemed by pouring out His own

blood unindebtedly; but that they who belong to the grace of Christ,

foreknown, and predestinated, and elected before the foundation of the

world [833] should only so far die as Christ Himself died for them,

i.e. only by the death of the flesh, not of the spirit.

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[827] Mark iii. 27

[828] Rom. ix. 22, 23

[829] Acts xxvi. 16-18

[830] Col. i. 13, 14

[831] [In this representation of Augustin, the relics of that

misconception which appears in the earlier soteriology, paricularly

that of Iren�us, are seen: namely, that the death of Christ ransoms the

sinner from Satan. Certain texts which teach that redemption delivers

from the captivity to sin and Satan, were interpreted to teach

deliverance from the claims of Satan. Augustin's soteriology is more

free from this error than that of Iren�us, yet not entirely free from

it. The doctrine of justification did not obtain its most consistent

and complete statement in the Patristic church.--W.G.T.S.]

[832] Apoc. xxi. 8

[833] 1 Pet. i. 20

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Chapter 16.--The Remains of Death and the Evil Things of the World Turn

to Good for the Elect. How Fitly the Death of Christ Was Chosen, that

We Might Be Justified in His Blood. What the Anger of God is.

20. For although the death, too, of the flesh itself came originally

from the sin of the first man, yet the good use of it has made most

glorious martyrs. And so not only that death itself, but all the evils

of this world, and the griefs and labors of men, although they come

from the deserts of sins, and especially of original sin, whence life

itself too became bound by the bond of death, yet have fitly remained,

even when sin is forgiven; that man might have wherewith to contend for

truth, and whereby the goodness of the faithful might be exercised; in

order that the new man through the new covenant might be made ready

among the evils of this world for a new world, by bearing wisely the

misery which this condemned life deserved, and by rejoicing soberly

because it will be finished, but expecting faithfully and patiently the

blessedness which the future life, being set free, will have for ever.

For the devil being cast forth from his dominion, and from the hearts

of the faithful, in the condemnation and faithlessness of whom he,

although himself also condemned, yet reigned, is only so far permitted

to be an adversary according to the condition of this mortality, as God

knows to be expedient for them: concerning which the sacred writings

speak through the mouth of the apostle: "God is faithful, who will not

suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the

temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

[834] And those evils which the faithful endure piously, are of profit

either for the correction of sins, or for the exercising and proving of

righteousness, or to manifest the misery of this life, that the life

where will be that true and perpetual blessedness may be desired more

ardently, and sought out more earnestly. But it is on their account

that these evils are still kept in being, of whom the apostle says:

"For we know that all things work together for good to them that love

God, to them who are called to be holy according to His purpose. For

whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the

image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.

Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He

called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also

glorified." It is of these who are predestinated, that not one shall

perish with the devil; not one shall remain even to death under the

power of the devil. And then follows what I have already cited above:

[835] "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who

can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up

for us all; how has He not with Him also freely given us all things?"

[836]

21. Why then should the death of Christ not have come to pass? Nay,

rather, why should not that death itself have been chosen above all

else to be brought to pass, to the passing by of the other innumerable

ways which He who is omnipotent could have employed to free us; that

death, I say, wherein neither was anything diminished or changed from

His divinity, and so great benefit was conferred upon men, from the

humanity which He took upon Him, that a temporal death, which was not

due, was rendered by the eternal Son of God, who was also the Son of

man, whereby He might free them from an eternal death which was due?

The devil was holding fast our sins, and through them was fixing us

deservedly in death. He discharged them, who had none of His own, and

who was led by him to death undeservedly. That blood was of such price,

that he who even slew Christ for a time by a death which was not due,

can as his due detain no one, who has put on Christ, in the eternal

death which was due. Therefore "God commendeth His love towards us, in

that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then,

being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through

Him." Justified, he says, in His blood,--justified plainly, in that we

are freed from all sin; and freed from all sin, because the Son of God,

who knew no sin, was slain for us. Therefore "we shall be saved from

wrath through Him;" from the wrath certainly of God, which is nothing

else but just retribution. For the wrath of God is not, as is that of

man, a perturbation of the mind; but it is the wrath of Him to whom

Holy Scripture says in another place, "But Thou, O Lord, mastering Thy

power, judgest with calmness." [837] If, therefore, the just

retribution of God has received such a name, what can be the right

understanding also of the reconciliation of God, unless that then such

wrath comes to an end? Neither were we enemies to God, except as sins

are enemies to righteousness; which being forgiven, such enmities come

to an end, and they whom He Himself justifies are reconciled to the

Just One. And yet certainly He loved them even while still enemies,

since "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,"

when we were still enemies. And therefore the apostle has rightly

added: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the

death of His Son," by which that remission of sins was made, "much

more, being reconciled, we shall be saved in His life." Saved in life,

who were reconciled by death. For who can doubt that He will give His

life for His friends, for whom, when enemies, He gave His death? "And

not only so," he says, "but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus

Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." "Not only," he

says, "shall we be saved," but "we also joy;" and not in ourselves, but

"in God;" nor through ourselves, "but through our Lord Jesus Christ, by

whom we have now received the atonement," as we have argued above. Then

the apostle adds, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world,

and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have

sinned;" [838] etc.: in which he disputes at some length concerning the

two men; the one the first Adam, through whose sin and death we, his

descendants, are bound by, as it were, hereditary evils; and the other

the second Adam, who is not only man, but also God, by whose payment

for us of what He owed not, we are freed from the debts both of our

first father and of ourselves. Further, since on account of that one

the devil held all who were begotten through his corrupted carnal

concupiscence, it is just that on account of this one he should loose

all who are regenerated through His immaculate spiritual grace.

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[834] 1 Cor. x. 13

[835] C. 2.

[836] Rom. viii. 28-32

[837] Wisd. xii. 18

[838] Rom. v. 8, 12

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Chapter 17.--Other Advantages of the Incarnation.

22. There are many other things also in the incarnation of Christ,

displeasing as it is to the proud, that are to be observed and thought

of advantageously. And one of them is, that it has been demonstrated to

man what place he has in the things which God has created; since human

nature could so be joined to God, that one person could be made of two

substances, and thereby indeed of three--God, soul, and flesh: so that

those proud malignant spirits, who interpose themselves as mediators to

deceive, although as if to help, do not therefore dare to place

themselves above man because they have not flesh; and chiefly because

the Son of God deigned to die also in the same flesh, lest they,

because they seem to be immortal, should therefore succeed in getting

themselves worshipped as gods. Further, that the grace of God might be

commended to us in the man Christ without any precedent merits; because

not even He Himself obtained by any precedent merits that He should be

joined in such great unity with the true God, and should become the Son

of God, one Person with Him; but from the time when He began to be man,

from that time He is also God; whence it is said, "The Word was made

flesh." [839] Then, again, there is this, that the pride of man, which

is the chief hindrance against his cleaving to God, can be confuted and

healed through such great humility of God. Man learns also how far he

has gone away from God; and what it is worth to him as a pain to cure

him, when he returns through such a Mediator, who both as God assists

men by His divinity, and as man agrees with men by His weakness. For

what greater example of obedience could be given to us, who had

perished through disobedience, than God the Son obedient to God the

Father, even to the death of the cross? [840] Nay, wherein could the

reward of obedience itself be better shown, than in the flesh of so

great a Mediator, which rose again to eternal life? It belonged also to

the justice and goodness of the Creator, that the devil should be

conquered by the same rational creature which he rejoiced to have

conquered, and by one that came from that same race which, by the

corruption of its origin through one, he held altogether.

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[839] John i. 14

[840] Phil. ii. 8

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Chapter 18.--Why the Son of God Took Man Upon Himself from the Race of

Adam, and from a Virgin.

23. For assuredly God could have taken upon Himself to be man, that in

that manhood He might be the Mediator between God and men, from some

other source, and not from the race of that Adam who bound the human

race by his sin; as He did not create him whom He first created, of the

race of some one else. Therefore He was able, either so, or in any

other mode that He would, to create yet one other, by whom the

conqueror of the first might be conquered. But God judged it better

both to take upon Him man through whom to conquer the enemy of the

human race, from the race itself that had been conquered; and yet to do

this of a virgin, whose conception, not flesh but spirit, not lust but

faith, preceded. [841] Nor did that concupiscence of the flesh

intervene, by which the rest of men, who derive original sin, are

propagated and conceived; but holy virginity became pregnant, not by

conjugal intercourse, but by faith,--lust being utterly absent,--so

that that which was born from the root of the first man might derive

only the origin of race, not also of guilt. For there was born, not a

nature corrupted by the contagion of transgression, but the one only

remedy of all such corruptions. There was born, I say, a Man having

nothing at all, and to have nothing at all, of sin; through whom they

were to be born again so as to be freed from sin, who could not be born

without sin. For although conjugal chastity makes a right use of the

carnal concupiscence which is in our members; yet it is liable to

motions not voluntary, by which it shows either that it could not have

existed at all in paradise before sin, or if it did, that it was not

then such as that sometimes it should resist the will. But now we feel

it to be such, that in opposition to the law of the mind, and even if

there is no question of begetting, it works in us the incitement of

sexual intercourse; and if in this men yield to it, then it is

satisfied by an act of sin; if they do not, then it is bridled by an

act of refusal: which two things who could doubt to have been alien

from paradise before sin? For neither did the chastity that then was do

anything indecorous, nor did the pleasure that then was suffer anything

unquiet. It was necessary, therefore, that this carnal concupiscence

should be entirely absent, when the offspring of the Virgin was

conceived; in whom the author of death was to find nothing worthy of

death, and yet was to slay Him in order that he might be conquered by

the death of the Author of life: the conqueror of the first Adam, who

held fast the human race, conquered by the second Adam, and losing the

Christian race, freed out of the human race from human guilt, through

Him who was not in the guilt, although He was of the race; that that

deceiver might be conquered by that race which he had conquered by

guilt. And this was so done, in order that man may not be lifted up,

but "that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord." [842] For he who

was conquered was only man; and he was therefore conquered, because he

lusted proudly to be a god. But He who conquered was both man and God;

and therefore He so conquered, being born of a virgin, because God in

humility did not, as He governs other saints, so govern that Man, but

bare Him [as a Son]. These so great gifts of God, and whatever else

there are, which it is too long for us now upon this subject both to

inquire and to discuss, could not exist unless the Word had been made

flesh.

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[841] Luke i. 26-32

[842] 2 Cor. x. 17

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Chapter 19.--What in the Incarnate Word Belongs to Knowledge, What to

Wisdom.

24. And all these things which the Word made flesh did and bare for us

in time and place, belong, according to the distinction which we have

undertaken to demonstrate, to knowledge, not to wisdom. And as the Word

is without time and without place, it is co-eternal with the Father,

and in its wholeness everywhere; and if any one can, and as much as he

can, speak truly concerning this Word, then his discourse will pertain

to wisdom. And hence the Word made flesh, which is Christ Jesus, has

the treasures both of wisdom and of knowledge. For the apostle, writing

to the Colossians, says: "For I would that ye knew what great conflict

I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not

seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being

knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of

understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God which is

Christ Jesus: in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and

knowledge." [843] To what extent the apostle knew all those treasures,

how much of them he had penetrated, and in them to how great things he

had reached, who can know? Yet, for my part, according to that which is

written, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to

profit withal; for to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to

another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;" [844] if these two

are in such way to be distinguished from each other, that wisdom is to

be assigned to divine things, knowledge to human, I acknowledge both in

Christ, and so with me do all His faithful ones. And when I read, "The

Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," I understand by the Word the

true Son of God, I acknowledge in the flesh the true Son of man, and

both together joined into one Person of God and man, by an ineffable

copiousness of grace. And on account of this, the apostle goes on to

say, "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the

Father, full of grace and truth." [845] If we refer grace to knowledge,

and truth to wisdom, I think we shall not swerve from that distinction

between these two things which we have commended. For in those things

that have their origin in time, this is the highest grace, that man is

joined with God in unity of person; but in things eternal the highest

truth is rightly attributed to the Word of God. But that the same is

Himself the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,--this

took place, in order that He Himself in things done for us in time

should be the same for whom we are cleansed by the same faith, that we

may contemplate Him steadfastly in things eternal. And those

distinguished philosophers of the heathen who have been able to

understand and discern the invisible things of God by those things

which are made, have yet, as is said of them, "held down the truth in

iniquity;" [846] because they philosophized without a Mediator, that

is, without the man Christ, whom they neither believed to be about to

come at the word of the prophets, nor to have come at that of the

apostles. For, placed as they were in these lowest things, they could

not but seek some media through which they might attain to those lofty

things which they had understood; and so they fell upon deceitful

spirits, through whom it came to pass, that "they changed the glory of

the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and

to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." [847] For in

such forms also they set up or worshipped idols. Therefore Christ is

our knowledge, and the same Christ is also our wisdom. He Himself

implants in us faith concerning temporal things, He Himself shows forth

the truth concerning eternal things. Through Him we reach on to

Himself: we stretch through knowledge to wisdom; yet we do not withdraw

from one and the same Christ, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of

wisdom and of knowledge." But now we speak of knowledge, and will

hereafter speak of wisdom as much as He Himself shall grant. And let us

not so take these two things, as if it were not allowable to speak

either of the wisdom which is in human things, or of the knowledge

which is in divine. For after a laxer custom of speech, both can be

called wisdom, and both knowledge. Yet the apostle could not in any way

have written, "To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word

of knowledge," except also these several things had been properly

called by the several names, of the distinction between which we are

now treating.

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[843] Col. ii. 1-3

[844] 1 Cor. xii. 7, 8

[845] John i. 14

[846] Rom. i. 23; detinuerum.

[847] Rom. i. 18, 20

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Chapter 20.--What Has Been Treated of in This Book. How We Have Reached

by Steps to a Certain Trinity, Which is Found in Practical Knowledge

and True Faith.

25. Now, therefore, let us see what this prolix discourse has effected,

what it has gathered, whereto it has reached. It belongs to all men to

will to be blessed; yet all men have not faith, whereby the heart is

cleansed, and so blessedness is reached. And thus it comes to pass,

that by means of the faith which not all men will, we have to reach on

to the blessedness which every one wills. All see in their own heart

that they will to be blessed; and so great is the agreement of human

nature on this subject, that the man is not deceived who conjectures

this concerning another's mind, out of his own: in short, we know

ourselves that all will this. But many despair of being immortal,

although no otherwise can any one be that which all will, that is,

blessed. Yet they will also to be immortal if they could; but through

not believing that they can, they do not so live that they can.

Therefore faith is necessary, that we may attain blessedness in all the

good things of human nature, that is, of both soul and body. But that

same faith requires that this faith be limited in Christ, who rose in

the flesh from the dead, not to die any more; and that no one is freed

from the dominion of the devil, through the forgiveness of sins, save

by Him; and that in the abiding place of the devil, life must needs be

at once miserable and never-ending, which ought rather to be called

death than life. All which I have also argued, so far as space

permitted, in this book, while I have already said much on the subject

in the fourth book of this work as well; [848] but in that place for

one purpose, here for another,--namely, there, that I might show why

and how Christ was sent in the fullness of time by the Father, [849] on

account of those who say that He who sent and He who was sent cannot be

equal in nature; but here, in order to distinguish practical knowlege

from contemplative wisdom.

26. For we wished to ascend, as it were, by steps, and to seek in the

inner man, both in knowledge and in wisdom, a sort of trinity of its

own special kind, such as we sought before in the outer man; in order

that we may come, with a mind more practised in these lower things, to

the contemplation of that Trinity which is God, according to our little

measure, if indeed, we can even do this, at least in a riddle and as

through a glass. [850] If, then, any one have committed to memory the

words of this faith in their sounds alone, not knowing what they mean,

as they commonly who do not know Greek hold in memory Greek words, or

similarly Latin ones, or those of any other language of which they are

ignorant, has not he a sort of trinity in his mind? because, first,

those sounds of words are in his memory, even when he does not think

thereupon; and next, the mental vision (acies) of his act of

recollection is formed thence when he conceives of them; and next, the

will of him who remembers and thinks unites both. Yet we should by no

means say that the man in so doing busies himself with a trinity of the

interior man, but rather of the exterior; because he remembers, and

when he wills, contemplates as much as he wills, that alone which

belongs to the sense of the body, which is called hearing. Nor in such

an act of thought does he do anything else than deal with images of

corporeal things, that is, of sounds. But if he holds and recollects

what those words signify, now indeed something of the inner man is

brought into action; not yet, however, ought he to be said or thought

to live according to a trinity of the inner man, if he does not love

those things which are there declared, enjoined, promised. For it is

possible for him also to hold and conceive these things, supposing them

to be false, in order that he may endeavor to disprove them. Therefore

that will, which in this case unites those things which are held in the

memory with those things which are thence impressed on the mind's eye

in conception, completes, indeed, some kind of trinity, since itself is

a third added to two others; but the man does not live according to

this, when those things which are conceived are taken to be false, and

are not accepted. But when those things are believed to be true, and

those things which therein ought to be loved, are loved, then at last

the man does live according to a trinity of the inner man; for every

one lives according to that which he loves. But how can things be loved

which are not known, but only believed? This question has been already

treated of in former books; [851] and we found, that no one loves what

he is wholly ignorant of, but that when things not known are said to be

loved, they are loved from those things which are known. And now we so

conclude this book, that we admonish the just to live by faith, [852]

which faith worketh by love, [853] so that the virtues also themselves,

by which one lives prudently, boldly, temperately, and justly, be all

referred to the same faith; for not otherwise can they be true virtues.

And yet these in this life are not of so great worth, as that the

remission of sins, of some kind or other, is not sometimes necessary

here; and this remission comes not to pass, except through Him, who by

His own blood conquered the prince of sinners. Whatsoever ideas are in

the mind of the faithful man from this faith, and from such a life,

when they are contained in the memory, and are looked at by

recollection, and please the will, set forth a kind of trinity of its

own sort. [854] But the image of God, of which by His help we shall

afterwards speak, is not yet in that trinity; a thing which will then

be more apparent, when it shall have been shown where it is, which the

reader may expect in a succeeding book.

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[848] Cc. 19-21.

[849] Gal. iv. 4

[850] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[851] Bk. viii. cc. 8 seqq., and Bk. x. c. 1, etc.

[852] Rom. i. 17

[853] Gal. v. 6

[854] [The ternary is this: 1. The idea of a truth or fact held in the

memory. 2. The contemplation of it as thus recollected. 3. The love of

it. This last is the "will" that "unites" the first two.--W.G.T.S.]

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Book XIV.

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The true wisdom of man is treated of; and it is shown that the image of

God, which man is in respect to his mind, is not placed properly in

transitory things, as in memory, understanding, and love, whether of

faith itself as existing in time, or even of the mind as busied with

itself, but in things that are permanent; and that this wisdom is then

perfected, when the mind is renewed in the knowledge of God, according

to the image of Him who created man after His own Image, and thus

attains to wisdom, wherein that which is contemplated is eternal.

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Chapter 1.--What the Wisdom is of Which We are Here to Treat. Whence

the Name of Philosopher Arose. What Has Been Already Said Concerning

the Distinction of Knowledge and Wisdom.

1. We must now discourse concerning wisdom; not the wisdom of God,

which without doubt is God, for His only-begotten Son is called the

wisdom of God; [855] but we will speak of the wisdom of man, yet of

true wisdom, which is according to God, and is His true and chief

worship, which is called in Greek by one term, theosebeia. And this

term, as we have already observed, when our own countrymen themselves

also wished to interpret it by a single term, was by them rendered

piety, whereas piety means more commonly what the Greeks call eusebeia.

But because theosebeia cannot be translated perfectly by any one word,

it is better translated by two, so as to render it rather by "the

worship of God." That this is the wisdom of man, as we have already

laid down in the twelfth book [856] of this work, is shown by the

authority of Holy Scripture, in the book of God's servant Job, where we

read that the Wisdom of God said to man, "Behold piety, that is wisdom;

and to depart from evil is knowledge;" [857] or, as some have

translated the Greek word epistemen, "learning," [858] which certainly

takes its name from learning, [859] whence also it may be called

knowledge. For everything is learned in order that it may be known.

Although the same word, indeed, [860] is employed in a different sense,

where any one suffers evils for his sins, that he may be corrected.

Whence is that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "For what son is he to

whom the father giveth not discipline?" And this is still more apparent

in the same epistle: "Now no chastening [861] for the present seemeth

to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the

peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised

thereby." [862] Therefore God Himself is the chiefest wisdom; but the

worship of God is the wisdom of man, of which we now speak. For "the

wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." [863] It is in respect

to this wisdom, therefore, which is the worship of God, that Holy

Scripture says, "The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the

world." [864]

2. But if to dispute of wisdom belongs to wise men, what shall we do?

Shall we dare indeed to profess wisdom, lest it should be mere

impudence for ourselves to dispute about it? Shall we not be alarmed by

the example of Pythagoras?--who dared not profess to be a wise man, but

answered that he was a philosopher, i.e., a lover of wisdom; whence

arose the name, that became thenceforth so much the popular name, that

no matter how great the learning wherein any one excelled, either in

his own opinion or that of others, in things pertaining to wisdom, he

was still called nothing more than philosopher. Or was it for this

reason that no one, even of such as these, dared to profess himself a

wise man,--because they imagined that a wise man was one without sin?

But our Scriptures do not say this, which say, "Rebuke a wise man, and

he will love thee." [865] For doubtless he who thinks a man ought to be

rebuked, judges him to have sin. However, for my part, I dare not

profess myself a wise man even in this sense; it is enough for me to

assume, what they themselves cannot deny, that to dispute of wisdom

belongs also to the philosopher, i.e., the lover of wisdom. For they

have not given over so disputing who have professed to be lovers of

wisdom rather than wise men.

3. In disputing, then, about wisdom, they have defined it thus: Wisdom

is the knowledge of things human and divine. And hence, in the last

book, I have not withheld the admission, that the cognizance of both

subjects, whether divine or human, may be called both knowledge and

wisdom. [866] But according to the distinction made in the apostle's

words, "To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of

knowledge," [867] this definition is to be divided, so that the

knowledge of things divine shall be called wisdom, and that of things

human appropriate to itself the name of knowledge; and of the latter I

have treated in the thirteenth book, not indeed so as to attribute to

this knowledge everything whatever that can be known by man about

things human, wherein there is exceeding much of empty vanity and

mischievous curiosity, but only those things by which that most

wholesome faith, which leads to true blessedness, is begotten,

nourished, defended, strengthened; and in this knowledge most of the

faithful are not strong, however exceeding strong in the faith itself.

For it is one thing to know only what man ought to believe in order to

attain to a blessed life, which must needs be an eternal one; but

another to know in what way this belief itself may both help the pious,

and be defended against the impious, which last the apostle seems to

call by the special name of knowledge. And when I was speaking of this

knowledge before, my especial business was to commend faith, first

briefly distinguishing things eternal from things temporal, and there

discoursing of things temporal; but while deferring things eternal to

the present book, I showed also that faith respecting things eternal is

itself a thing temporal, and dwells in time in the hearts of believers,

and yet is necessary in order to attain the things eternal themselves.

[868] I argued also, that faith respecting the things temporal which He

that is eternal did and suffered for us as man, which manhood He bare

in time and carried on to things eternal, is profitable also for the

obtaining of things eternal; and that the virtues themselves, whereby

in this temporal and mortal life men live prudently, bravely,

temperately, and justly, are not true virtues, unless they are referred

to that same faith, temporal though it is, which leads on nevertheless

to things eternal.

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[855] Ecclus. xxiv. 5. and 1 Cor. i. 24

[856] C. 14.

[857] Job xxviii. 28

[858] Disciplina, disco

[859] Disciplina, disco

[860] Disciplina

[861] Disciplina

[862] Heb. xii. 7, 11

[863] 1 Cor. iii. 19

[864] Wisd. vi. 26

[865] Prov. ix. 8

[866] Bk. xiii. cc. 1, 19.

[867] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[868] Bk. xiii. c. 7.

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Chapter 2.--There is a Kind of Trinity in the Holding, Contemplating,

and Loving of Faith Temporal, But One that Does Not Yet Attain to Being

Properly an Image of God.

4. Wherefore since, as it is written, "While we are in the body, we are

absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight;" [869]

undoubtedly, so long as the just man lives by faith, [870] howsoever he

lives according to the inner man, although he aims at truth and reaches

on to things eternal by this same temporal faith, nevertheless in the

holding, contemplating, and loving this temporal faith, we have not yet

reached such a trinity as is to be called an image of God; lest that

should seem to be constituted in things temporal which ought to be so

in things eternal. For when the human mind sees its own faith, whereby

it believes what it does not see, it does not see a thing eternal. For

that will not always exist, which certainly will not then exist, when

this pilgrimage, whereby we are absent from God, in such way that we

must needs walk by faith, shall be ended, and that sight shall have

succeeded it whereby we shall see face to face; [871] just as now,

because we believe although we do not see, we shall deserve to see, and

shall rejoice at having been brought through faith to sight. For then

it will be no longer faith, by which that is believed which is not

seen; but sight, by which that is seen which is believed. And then,

therefore, although we remember this past mortal life, and call to mind

by recollection that we once believed what we did not see, yet that

faith will be reckoned among things past and done with, not among

things present and always continuing. And hence also that trinity which

now consists in the remembering, contemplating, and loving this same

faith while present and continuing, will then be found to be done with

and past, and not still enduring. And hence it is to be gathered, that

if that trinity is indeed an image of God, then this image itself would

have to be reckoned, not among things that exist always, but among

things transient.

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[869] 2 Cor. v. 6, 7

[870] Rom. i. 17

[871] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

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Chapter 3.--A Difficulty Removed, Which Lies in the Way of What Has

Just Been Said.

But far be it from us to think, that while the nature of the soul is

immortal, and from the first beginning of its creation thenceforth

never ceases to be, yet that that which is the best thing it has should

not endure for ever with its own immortality. Yet what is there in its

nature as created, better than that it is made after the image of its

Creator? [872] We must find then what may be fittingly called the image

of God, not in the holding, contemplating, and loving that faith which

will not exist always, but in that which will exist always.

5. Shall we then scrutinize somewhat more carefully and deeply whether

the case is really thus? For it may be said that this trinity does not

perish even when faith itself shall have passed away; because, as now

we both hold it by memory, and discern it by thought, and love it by

will; so then also, when we shall both hold in memory, and shall

recollect, that we once had it, and shall unite these two by the third,

namely will, the same trinity will still continue. Since, if it have

left in its passage as it were no trace in us, doubtless we shall not

have ought of it even in our memory, whereto to recur when recollecting

it as past, and by the third, viz. purpose, coupling both these, to

wit, what was in our memory though we were not thinking about it, and

what is formed thence by conception. But he who speaks thus, does not

perceive, that when we hold, see, and love in ourselves our present

faith, we are concerned with a different trinity as now existing, from

that trinity which will exist, when we shall contemplate by

recollection, not the faith itself, but as it were the imagined trace

of it laid up in the memory, and shall unite by the will, as by a

third, these two things, viz. that which was in the memory of him who

retains, and that which is impressed thence upon the vision of the mind

of him who recollects. And that we may understand this, let us take an

example from things corporeal, of which we have sufficiently spoken in

the eleventh book. [873] For as we ascend from lower to higher things,

or pass inward from outer to inner things, we first find a trinity in

the bodily object which is seen, and in the vision of the seer, which,

when he sees it, is informed thereby, and in the purpose of the will

which combines both. Let us assume a trinity like this, when the faith

which is now in ourselves is so established in our memory as the bodily

object we spoke of was in place, from which faith is formed the

conception in recollection, as from that bodily object was formed the

vision of the beholder; and to these two, to complete the trinity, will

is to be reckoned as a third, which connects and combines the faith

established in the memory, and a sort of effigy of that faith impressed

upon the vision of recollection; just as in that trinity of corporeal

vision, the form of the bodily object that is seen, and the

corresponding form wrought in the vision of the beholder, are combined

by the purpose of the will. Suppose, then, that this bodily object

which was beheld was dissolved and had perished, and that nothing at

all of it remained anywhere, to the vision of which the gaze might have

recourse; are we then to say, that because the image of the bodily

object thus now past and done with remains in the memory, whence to

form the conception in recollecting, and to have the two united by will

as a third, therefore it is the same trinity as that former one, when

the appearance of the bodily object posited in place was seen?

Certainly not, but altogether a different one: for, not to say that

that was from without, while this is from within; the former certainly

was produced by the appearance of a present bodily object, the latter

by the image of that object now past. So, too, in the case of which we

are now treating, to illustrate which we have thought good to adduce

this example, the faith which is even now in our mind, as that bodily

object was in place, while held, looked at, loved, produces a sort of

trinity; but that trinity will exist no more, when this faith in the

mind, like that bodily object in place, shall no longer exist. But that

which will then exist, when we shall remember it to have been, but not

now to be, in us, will doubtless be a different one. For that which now

is, is wrought by the thing itself, actually present and attached to

the mind of one who believes; but that which shall then be, will be

wrought by the imagination of a past thing left in the memory of one

who recollects.

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[872] Gen. i. 27

[873] Cc. 2 sq.

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Chapter 4.--The Image of God is to Be Sought in the Immortality of the

Rational Soul. How a Trinity is Demonstrated in the Mind.

6. Therefore neither is that trinity an image of God, which is not now,

nor is that other an image of God, which then will not be; but we must

find in the soul of man, i.e., the rational or intellectual soul, that

image of the Creator which is immortally implanted in its immortality.

For as the immortality itself of the soul is spoken with a

qualification; since the soul too has its proper death, when it lacks a

blessed life, which is to be called the true life of the soul; but it

is therefore called immortal, because it never ceases to live with some

life or other, even when it is most miserable;--so, although reason or

intellect is at one time torpid in it, at another appears small, and at

another great, yet the human soul is never anything save rational or

intellectual; and hence, if it is made after the image of God in

respect to this, that it is able to use reason and intellect in order

to understand and behold God, then from the moment when that nature so

marvellous and so great began to be, whether this image be so worn out

as to be almost none at all, or whether it be obscure and defaced, or

bright and beautiful, certainly it always is. Further, too, pitying the

defaced condition of its dignity, divine Scripture tells us, that

"although man walks in an image, yet he disquieteth himself in vain; he

heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them." [874] It

would not therefore attribute vanity to the image of God, unless it

perceived it to have been defaced. Yet it sufficiently shows that such

defacing does not extend to the taking away its being an image, by

saying, "Although man walks in an image." Wherefore in both ways that

sentence can be truly enunciated; in that, as it is said, "Although man

walketh in an image, yet he disquieteth himself in vain," so it may be

said, "Although man disquieteth himself in vain, yet he walketh in an

image." For although the nature of the soul is great, yet it can be

corrupted, because it is not the highest; and although it can be

corrupted, because it is not the highest, yet because it is capable and

can be partaker of the highest nature, it is a great nature. Let us

seek, then, in this image of God a certain trinity of a special kind,

with the aid of Him who Himself made us after His own image. For no

otherwise can we healthfully investigate this subject, or arrive at any

result according to the wisdom which is from Him. But if the reader

will either hold in remembrance and recollect what we have said of the

human soul or mind in former books, and especially in the tenth, or

will carefully re-peruse it in the passages wherein it is contained, he

will not require here any more lengthy discourse respecting the inquiry

into so great a thing.

7. We said, then, among other things in the tenth book, that the mind

of man knows itself. For the mind knows nothing so much as that which

is close to itself; and nothing is more close to the mind than itself.

We adduced also other evidences, as much as seemed sufficient, whereby

this might be most certainly proved.

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[874] Ps. xxxix. 7

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Chapter 5.--Whether the Mind of Infants Knows Itself.

What, then, is to be said of the mind of an infant, which is still so

small, and buried in such profound ignorance of things, that the mind

of a man which knows anything shrinks from the darkness of it? Is that

too to be believed to know itself; but that, as being too intent upon

those things which it has begun to perceive through the bodily senses,

with the greater delight in proportion to their novelty, it is not able

indeed to be ignorant of itself, but is also not able to think of

itself? Moreover, how intently it is bent upon sensible things that are

without it, may be conjectured from this one fact, that it is so greedy

of sensible light, that if any one through carelessness, or ignorance

of the possible consequences, place a light at nighttime where an

infant is lying down, on that side to which the eyes of the child so

lying down can be bent, but its neck cannot be turned, the gaze of that

child will be so fixed in that direction, that we have known some to

have come to squint by this means, in that the eyes retained that form

which habit in some way impressed upon them while tender and soft.

[875] In the case, too, of the other bodily senses, the souls of

infants, as far as their age permits, so narrow themselves as it were,

and are bent upon them, that they either vehemently detest or

vehemently desire that only which offends or allures through the flesh,

but do not think of their own inward self, nor can be made to do so by

admonition; because they do not yet know the signs that express

admonition, whereof words are the chief, of which as of other things

they are wholly ignorant. And that it is one thing not to know oneself,

another not to think of oneself, we have shown already in the same

book. [876]

8. But let us pass by the infantine age, since we cannot question it as

to what goes on within itself, while we have ourselves pretty well

forgotten it. Let it suffice only for us hence to be certain, that when

man has come to be able to think of the nature of his own mind, and to

find out what is the truth, he will find it nowhere else but in

himself. And he will find, not what he did not know, but that of which

he did not think. For what do we know, if we do not know what is in our

own mind; when we can know nothing at all of what we do know, unless by

the mind?

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[875] [This occurred in the the case of Edward Irving. Oliphant's Life

of Irving.--W.G.T.S.]

[876] Bk. x. c. 5.

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Chapter 6.--How a Kind of Trinity Exists in the Mind Thinking of

Itself. What is the Part of Thought in This Trinity.

The function of thought, however, is so great, that not even the mind

itself can, so to say, place itself in its own sight, except when it

thinks of itself; and hence it is so far the case, that nothing is in

the sight of the mind, except that which is being thought of, that not

even the mind itself, whereby we think whatever we do think, can be in

its own sight otherwise than by thinking of itself. But in what way it

is not in its own sight when it is not thinking of itself, while it can

never be without itself, as though itself were one thing, and the sight

of itself another, it is not in my power to discover. For this is not

unreasonably said of the eye of the body; for the eye itself of the

body is fixed in its own proper place in the body, but its sight

extends to things external to itself, and reaches even to the stars.

And the eye is not in its own sight, since it does not look at itself,

unless by means of a mirror, as is said above; [877] a thing that

certainly does not happen when the mind places itself in its own sight

by thinking of itself. Does it then see one part of itself by means of

another part of itself, when it looks at itself in thought, as we look

at some of our members, which can be in our sight, with other also of

our members, viz. with our eyes? What can be said or thought more

absurd? For by what is the mind removed, except by itself? or where is

it placed so as to be in its own sight, except before itself? Therefore

it will not be there, where it was, when it was not in its own sight;

because it has been put down in one place, after being taken away from

another. But if it migrated in order to be beheld, where will it remain

in order to behold? Is it as it were doubled, so as to be in this and

in that place at the same time, viz. both where it can behold, and

where it can be beheld; that in itself it may be beholding, and before

itself beheld? If we ask the truth, it will tell us nothing of the sort

since it is but feigned images of bodily objects of which we conceive

when we conceive thus; and that the mind is not such, is very certain

to the few minds by which the truth on such a subject can be inquired.

It appears, therefore, that the beholding of the mind is something

pertaining to its nature, and is recalled to that nature when it

conceives of itself, not as if by moving through space, but by an

incorporeal conversion; but when it is not conceiving of itself, it

appears that it is not indeed in its own sight, nor is its own

perception formed from it, but yet that it knows itself as though it

were to itself a remembrance of itself. Like one who is skilled in many

branches of learning: the things which he knows are contained in his

memory, but nothing thereof is in the sight of his mind except that of

which he is conceiving; while all the rest are stored up in a kind of

secret knowledge, which is called memory. The trinity, then, which we

were setting forth, was constituted in this way: first, we placed in

the memory the object by which the perception of the percipient was

formed; next, the conformation, or as it were the image which is

impressed thereby; lastly, love or will as that which combines the two.

When the mind, then, beholds itself in conception, it understands and

cognizes itself; it begets, therefore, this its own understanding and

cognition. For an incorporeal thing is understood when it is beheld,

and is cognized when understood. Yet certainly the mind does not so

beget this knowledge of itself, when it beholds itself as understood by

conception, as though it had before been unknown to itself; but it was

known to itself, in the way in which things are known which are

contained in the memory, but of which one is not thinking; since we say

that a man knows letters even when he is thinking of something else,

and not of letters. And these two, the begetter and the begotten, are

coupled together by love, as by a third, which is nothing else than

will, seeking or holding fast the enjoyment of something. We held,

therefore, that a trinity of the mind is to be intimated also by these

three terms, memory, intelligence, will.

9. But since the mind, as we said near the end of the same tenth book,

always remembers itself, and always understands and loves itself,

although it does not always think of itself as distinguished from those

things which are not itself; we must inquire in what way understanding

(intellectus) belongs to conception, while the notion (notitia) of each

thing that is in the mind, even when one is not thinking of it, is said

to belong only to the memory. For if this is so, then the mind had not

these three things: viz. the remembrance, the understanding, and the

love of itself; but it only remembered itself, and afterwards, when it

began to think of itself, then it understood and loved itself.

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[877] Bk. x. c. 3.

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Chapter 7.--The Thing is Made Plain by an Example. In What Way the

Matter is Handled in Order to Help the Reader.

Wherefore let us consider more carefully that example which we have

adduced, wherein it was shown that not knowing a thing is different

from not thinking [conceiving] of it; and that it may so happen that a

man knows something of which he is not thinking, when he is thinking of

something else, not of that. When any one, then, who is skilled in two

or more branches of knowledge is thinking of one of them, though he is

not thinking of the other or others, yet he knows them. But can we

rightly say, This musician certainly knows music, but he does not now

understand it, because he is not thinking of it; but he does now

understand geometry, for of that he is now thinking? Such an assertion,

as far as appears, is absurd. What, again, if we were to say, This

musician certainly knows music, but he does not now love it, while he

is not now thinking of it; but he does now love geometry, because of

that he is now thinking,--is not this similarly absurd? But we say

quite correctly, This person whom you perceive disputing about geometry

is also a perfect musician, for he both remembers music, and

understands, and loves it; but although he both knows and loves it, he

is not now thinking of it, since he is thinking of geometry, of which

he is disputing. And hence we are warned that we have a kind of

knowledge of certain things stored up in the recesses of the mind, and

that this, when it is thought of, as it were, steps forth in public,

and is placed as if openly in the sight of the mind; for then the mind

itself finds that it both remembers, and understands, and loves itself,

even although it was not thinking of itself, when it was thinking of

something else. But in the case of that of which we have not thought

for a long time, and cannot think of it unless reminded; that, if the

phrase is allowable, in some wonderful way I know not how, we do not

know that we know. In short, it is rightly said by him who reminds, to

him whom he reminds, You know this, but you do not know that you know

it; I will remind you, and you will find that you know what you had

thought you did not know. Books, too, lead to the same results, viz.

those that are written upon subjects which the reader under the

guidance of reason finds to be true; not those subjects which he

believes to be true on the faith of the narrator, as in the case of

history; but those which he himself also finds to be true, either of

himself, or in that truth itself which is the light of the mind. But he

who cannot contemplate these things, even when reminded, is too deeply

buried in the darkness of ignorance, through great blindness of heart

and too wonderfully needs divine help, to be able to attain to true

wisdom.

10. For this reason I have wished to adduce some kind of proof, be it

what it might, respecting the act of conceiving, such as might serve to

show in what way, out of the things contained in the memory, the mind's

eye is informed in recollecting, and some such thing is begotten, when

a man conceives, as was already in him when, before he conceived, he

remembered; because it is easier to distinguish things that take place

at successive times, and where the parent precedes the offspring by an

interval of time. For if we refer ourselves to the inner memory of the

mind by which it remembers itself, and to the inner understanding by

which it understands itself, and to the inner will by which it loves

itself, where these three always are together, and always have been

together since they began to be at all, whether they were being thought

of or not; the image of this trinity will indeed appear to pertain even

to the memory alone; but because in this case a word cannot be without

a thought (for we think all that we say, even if it be said by that

inner word which belongs to no separate language), this image is rather

to be discerned in these three things, viz. memory, intelligence, will.

And I mean now by intelligence that by which we understand in thought,

that is, when our thought is formed by the finding of those things,

which had been at hand to the memory but were not being thought of; and

I mean that will, or love, or preference which combines this offspring

and parent, and is in some way common to both. Hence it was that I

tried also, viz. in the eleventh book, to lead on the slowness of

readers by means of outward sensible things which are seen by the eyes

of the flesh; and that I then proceeded to enter with them upon that

power of the inner man whereby he reasons of things temporal, deferring

the consideration of that which dominates as the higher power, by which

he contemplates things eternal. And I discussed this in two books,

distinguishing the two in the twelfth, the one of them being higher and

the other lower, and that the lower ought to be subject to the higher;

and in the thirteenth I discussed, with what truth and brevity I could,

the office of the lower, in which the wholesome knowledge of things

human is contained, in order that we may so act in this temporal life

as to attain that which is eternal; since, indeed, I have cursorily

included in a single book a subject so manifold and copious, and one so

well known by the many and great arguments of many and great men, while

manifesting that a trinity exists also in it, but not yet one that can

be called an image of God.

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Chapter 8.--The Trinity Which is the Image of God is Now to Be Sought

in the Noblest Part of the Mind.

11. But we have come now to that argument in which we have undertaken

to consider the noblest part of the human mind, by which it knows or

can know God, in order that we may find in it the image of God. For

although the human mind is not of the same nature with God, yet the

image of that nature than which none is better, is to be sought and

found in us, in that than which our nature also has nothing better. But

the mind must first be considered as it is in itself, before it becomes

partaker of God; and His image must be found in it. For, as we have

said, although worn out and defaced by losing the participation of God,

yet the image of God still remains. [878] For it is His image in this

very point, that it is capable of Him, and can be partaker of Him;

which so great good is only made possible by its being His image. Well,

then, the mind remembers, understands, loves itself; if we discern

this, we discern a trinity, not yet indeed God, but now at last an

image of God. The memory does not receive from without that which it is

to hold; nor does the understanding find without that which it is to

regard, as the eye of the body does; nor has will joined these two from

without, as it joins the form of the bodily object and that which is

thence wrought in the vision of the beholder; nor has conception, in

being turned to it, found an image of a thing seen without, which has

been somehow seized and laid up in the memory, whence the intuition of

him that recollects has been formed, will as a third joining the two:

as we showed to take place in those trinities which were discovered in

things corporeal, or which were somehow drawn within from bodily

objects by the bodily sense; of all which we have discoursed in the

eleventh book. [879] Nor, again, as it took place, or appeared to do

so, when we went on further to discuss that knowledge, which had its

place now in the workings of the inner man, and which was to be

distinguished from wisdom; of which knowledge the subject-matter was,

as it were, adventitious to the mind, and either was brought thither by

historical information,--as deeds and words, which are performed in

time and pass away, or which again are established in the nature of

things in their own times and places,--or arises in the man himself not

being there before, whether on the information of others, or by his own

thinking,--as faith, which we commended at length in the thirteenth

book, or as the virtues, by which, if they are true, one so lives well

in this mortality as to live blessedly in that immortality which God

promises. These and other things of the kind have their proper order in

time, and in that order we discerned more easily a trinity of memory,

sight, and love. For some of such things anticipate the knowledge of

learners. For they are knowable also before they are known, and beget

in the learner a knowledge of themselves. And they either exist in

their own proper places, or have happened in time past; although things

that are past do not themselves exist, but only certain signs of them

as past, the sight or hearing of which makes it known that they have

been and have passed away. And these signs are either situate in the

places themselves, as e.g. monuments of the dead or the like; or exist

in written books worthy of credit, as is all history that is of weight

and approved authority; or are in the minds of those who already know

them; since what is already known to them is knowable certainly to

others also, whose knowledge it has anticipated, and who are able to

know it on the information of those who do know it. And all these

things, when they are learned, produce a certain kind of trinity, viz.

by their own proper species, which was knowable also before it was

known, and by the application to this of the knowledge of the learner,

which then begins to exist when he learns them, and by will as a third

which combines both; and when they are known, yet another trinity is

produced in the recollecting of them, and this now inwardly in the mind

itself, from those images which, when they were learned, were impressed

upon the memory, and from the informing of the thought when the look

has been turned upon these by recollection, and from the will which as

a third combines these two. But those things which arise in the mind,

not having been there before, as faith and other things of that kind,

although they appear to be adventitious, since they are implanted by

teaching, yet are not situate without or transacted without, as are

those things which are believed; but began to be altogether within in

the mind itself. For faith is not that which is believed, but that by

which it is believed; and the former is believed, the latter seen.

Nevertheless, because it began to be in the mind, which was a mind also

before these things began to be in it, it seems to be somewhat

adventitious, and will be reckoned among things past, when sight shall

have succeeded, and itself shall have ceased to be. And it makes now by

its presence, retained as it is, and beheld, and loved, a different

trinity from that which it will then make by means of some trace of

itself, which in passing it will have left in the memory: as has been

already said above.

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[878] Supra, c. iv.

[879] Cc. 2 sq.

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Chapter 9.--Whether Justice and the Other Virtues Cease to Exist in the

Future Life.

12. There is, however, some question raised, whether the virtues

likewise by which one lives well in this present mortality, seeing that

they themselves begin also to be in the mind, which was a mind none the

less when it existed before without them, cease also to exist at that

time when they have brought us to things eternal. For some have thought

that they will cease, and in the case of three--prudence, fortitude,

temperance--such an assertion seems to have something in it; but

justice is immortal, and will rather then be made perfect in us than

cease to be. Yet Tullius, the great author of eloquence, when arguing

in the dialogue Hortensius, says of all four: "If we were allowed, when

we migrated from this life, to live forever in the islands of the

blessed, as fables tell, what need were there of eloquence when there

would be no trials, or what need, indeed, of the very virtues

themselves? For we should not need fortitude when nothing of either

toil or danger was proposed to us; nor justice, when there was nothing

of anybody else's to be coveted; nor temperance, to govern lusts that

would not exist; nor, indeed, should we need prudence, when there was

no choice offered between good and evil. We should be blessed,

therefore, solely by learning and knowing nature, by which alone also

the life of the gods is praiseworthy. And hence we may perceive that

everything else is a matter of necessity, but this is one of free

choice." This great orator, then, when proclaiming the excellence of

philosophy, going over again all that he had learned from philosophers,

and excellently and pleasantly explaining it, has affirmed all four

virtues to be necessary in this life only, which we see to be full of

troubles and mistakes; but not one of them when we shall have migrated

from this life, if we are permitted to live there where is a blessed

life; but that blessed souls are blessed only in learning and knowing,

i.e. in the contemplation of nature, than which nothing is better and

more lovable. It is that nature which created and appointed all other

natures. And if it belongs to justice to be subject to the government

of this nature then justice is certainly immortal; nor will it cease to

be in that blessedness, but will be such and so great that it cannot be

more perfect or greater. Perhaps, too, the other three

virtues--prudence although no longer with any risk of error, and

fortitude without the vexation of bearing evils, and temperance without

the thwarting of lust--will exist in that blessedness: so that it may

be the part of prudence to prefer or equal no good thing to God; and of

fortitude, to cleave to Him most steadfastly; and of temperance, to be

pleased by no harmful defect. But that which justice is now concerned

with in helping the wretched, and prudence in guarding against

treachery, and fortitude in bearing troubles patiently, and temperance

in controlling evil pleasures, will not exist there, where there will

be no evil at all. And hence those acts of the virtues which are

necessary to this mortal life, like the faith to which they are to be

referred, will be reckoned among things past; and they make now a

different trinity, whilst we hold, look at, and love them as present,

from that which they will then make, when we shall discover them not to

be, but to have been, by certain traces of them which they will have

left in passing in the memory; since then, too, there will be a

trinity, when that trace, be it of what sort it may, shall be retained

in the memory, and truly recognized, and then these two be joined by

will as a third.

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Chapter 10.--How a Trinity is Produced by the Mind Remembering,

Understanding, and Loving Itself.

13. In the knowledge of all these temporal things which we have

mentioned, there are some knowable things which precede the acquisition

of the knowledge of them by an interval of time, as in the case of

those sensible objects which were already real before they were known,

or of all those things that are learned through history; but some

things begin to be at the same time with the knowing of them,--just as,

if any visible object, which did not exist before at all, were to rise

up before our eyes, certainly it does not precede our knowing it; or if

there be any sound made where there is some one to hear, no doubt the

sound and the hearing that sound begin and end simultaneously. Yet none

the less, whether preceding in time or beginning to exist

simultaneously, knowable things generate knowledge, and are not

generated by knowledge. But when knowledge has come to pass, whenever

the things known and laid up in memory are reviewed by recollection,

who does not see that the retaining them in the memory is prior in time

to the sight of them in recollection, and to the uniting of the two

things by will as a third? In the mind, howver, it is not so. For the

mind is not adventitious to itself, as though there came to itself

already existing, that same self not already existing, from somewhere

else, or did not indeed come from somewhere else, but that in the mind

itself already existing, there was born that same mind not already

existing; just as faith, which before was not, arises in the mind which

already was. Nor does the mind see itself, as it were, set up in its

own memory by recollection subsequently to the knowing of itself, as

though it was not there before it knew itself; whereas,doubtless, from

the time when it began to be, it has never ceased to remember, to

understand, and to love itself, as we have already shown. And hence,

when it is turned to itself by thought, there arises a trinity, in

which now at length we can discern also a word; since it is formed from

thought itself, will uniting both. Here, then, we may recognize, more

than we have hitherto done, the image of which we are in search.

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Chapter 11.--Whether Memory is Also of Things Present.

14. But some one will say, That is not memory by which the mind, which

is ever present to itself, is affirmed to remember itself; for memory

is of things past, not of things present. For there are some, and among

them Cicero, who, in treating of the virtues, have divided prudence

into these three--memory, understanding, forethought: to wit, assigning

memory to things past, understanding to things present, forethought to

things future; which last is certain only in the case of those who are

prescient of the future; and this is no gift of men, unless it be

granted from above, as to the prophets. And hence the book of Wisdom,

speaking of men, "The thoughts of mortals," it says, "are fearful, and

our forethought uncertain." [880] But memory of things past, and

understanding of things present, are certain: certain, I mean,

respecting things incorporeal, which are present; for things corporeal

are present to the sight of the corporeal eyes. But let any one who

denies that there is any memory of things present, attend to the

language used even in profane literature, where exactness of words was

more looked for than truth of things. "Nor did Ulysses suffer such

things, nor did the Ithacan forget himself in so great a peril." [881]

For when Virgil said that Ulysses did not forget himself, what else did

he mean, except that he remembered himself? And since he was present to

himself, he could not possibly remember himself, unless memory

pertained to things present. And, therefore, as that is called memory

in things past which makes it possible to recall and remember them; so

in a thing present, as the mind is to itself, that is not unreasonably

to be called memory, which makes the mind at hand to itself, so that it

can be understood by its own thought, and then both be joined together

by love of itself.

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[880] Wisd. ix. 14

[881] �neid, iii. 628, 629.

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Chapter 12.--The Trinity in the Mind is the Image of God, in that It

Remembers, Understands, and Loves God, Which to Do is Wisdom.

15. This trinity, then, of the mind is not therefore the image of God,

because the mind remembers itself, and understands and loves itself;

but because it can also remember, understand, and love Him by whom it

was made. And in so doing it is made wise itself. But if it does not do

so, even when it remembers, understands, and loves itself, then it is

foolish. Let it then remember its God, after whose image it is made,

and let it understand and love Him. Or to say the same thing more

briefly, let it worship God, who is not made, by whom because itself

was made, it is capable and can be partaker of Him; wherefore it is

written, "Behold, the worship of God, that is wisdom." [882] And then

it will be wise, not by its own light, but by participation of that

supreme Light; and wherein it is eternal, therein shall reign in

blessedness. For this wisdom of man is so called, in that it is also of

God. For then it is true wisdom; for if it is human, it is vain. Yet

not so of God, as is that wherewith God is wise. For He is not wise by

partaking of Himself, as the mind is by partaking of God. But as we

call it the righteousness of God, not only when we speak of that by

which He Himself is righteous, but also of that which He gives to man

when He justifies the ungodly, which latter righteousness the apostle

commending, says of some, that "not knowing the righteousness of God

and going about to establish their own righteousness,they are not

subject to the righteousness of God;" [883] so also it may be said of

some, that not knowing the wisdom of God and going about to establish

their own wisdom, they are not subject to the wisdom of God.

16. There is, then, a nature not made, which made all other natures,

great and small, and is without doubt more excellent than those which

it has made, and therefore also than that of which we are speaking;

viz. than the rational and intellectual nature, which is the mind of

man, made after the image of Him who made it. And that nature, more

excellent than the rest, is God. And indeed "He is not far from every

one of us," as the apostle says, who adds, "For in Him we live, and are

moved, and have our being." [884] And if this were said in respect to

the body, it might be understood even of this corporeal world; for in

it too in respect to the body, we live, and are moved, and have our

being. And therefore it ought to be taken in a more excellent way, and

one that is spiritual, not visible, in respect to the mind, which is

made after His image. For what is there that is not in Him, of whom it

is divinely written, "For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all

things"? [885] If, then, all things are in Him, in whom can any

possibly live that do live, or be moved that are moved, except in Him

in whom they are? Yet all are not with Him in that way in which it is

said to Him, "I am continually with Thee." [886] Nor is He with all in

that way in which we say, The Lord be with you. And so it is the

especial wretchedness of man not to be with Him, without whom he cannot

be. For, beyond a doubt, he is not without Him in whom he is; and yet

if he does not remember, and understand, and love Him, he is not with

Him. And when any one absolutely forgets a thing, certainly it is

impossible even to remind him of it.

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[882] Job xxviii. 28

[883] Rom. x. 3

[884] Acts xvii. 27, 28

[885] Rom. xi. 36

[886] Ps. lxxiii. 23

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Chapter 13.--How Any One Can Forget and Remember God.

17. Let us take an instance for the purpose from visible things.

Somebody whom you do not recognize, says to you, You know me; and in

order to remind you, tells you where, when, and how he became known to

you; and if, after the mention of every sign by which you might be

recalled to remembrance, you still do not recognize him, then you have

so come to forget, as that the whole of that knowledge is altogether

blotted out of your mind; and nothing else remains, but that you take

his word for it who tells you that you once knew him; or do not even do

that, if you do not think the person who speaks to you to be worthy of

credit. But if you do remember him, then no doubt you return to your

own memory, and find in it that which had not been altogether blotted

out by forgetfulness. Let us return to that which led us to adduce this

instance from the intercourse of men. Among other things, the 9th Psalm

says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations. that

forget God;" [887] and again the 22d Psalm, "All the ends of the world

shall be reminded, and turned unto the Lord." [888] These nations,

then, will not so have forgotten God as to be unable to remember Him

when reminded of Him; yet, by forgetting God, as though forgetting

their own life, they had been turned into death, i.e. into hell. [889]

But when reminded they are turned to the Lord, as though coming to life

again by remembering their proper life which they had forgotten. It is

read also in the 94th Psalm, "Perceive now, ye who are unwise among the

people; and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear,

shall He not hear?" etc. [890] For this is spoken to those, who said

vain things concerning God through not understanding Him.

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[887] Ps. ix. 17

[888] Ps. xxii. 27

[889] [Augustin here understands "Sheol," to denote the place of

retribution for the wicked.--W.G.T.S.]

[890] Ps. xciv. 8, 9

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Chapter 14.--The Mind Loves God in Rightly Loving Itself; And If It

Love Not God, It Must Be Said to Hate Itself. Even a Weak and Erring

Mind is Always Strong in Remembering, Understanding, and Loving Itself.

Let It Be Turned to God, that It May Be Blessed by Remembering,

Understanding, and Loving Him.

18. But there are yet more testimonies in the divine Scriptures

concerning the love of God. For in it, those other two [namely, memory

and understanding] are understood by consequence, inasmuch as no one

loves that which he does not remember, or of which he is wholly

ignorant. And hence is that well known and primary commandment, "Thou

shalt love the Lord thy God." [891] The human mind, then, is so

constituted, that at no time does it not remember, and understand, and

love itself. But since he who hates any one is anxious to injure him,

not undeservedly is the mind of man also said to hate itself when it

injures itself. For it wills ill to itself through ignorance, in that

it does not think that what it wills is prejudicial to it; but it none

the less does will ill to itself, when it wills what would be

prejudicial to it. And hence it is written, "He that loveth iniquity,

hateth his own soul." [892] He, therefore, who knows how to love

himself, loves God; but he who does not love God, even if he does love

himself,--a thing implanted in him by nature,--yet is not unsuitably

said to hate himself, inasmuch as he does that which is adverse to

himself, and assails himself as though he were his own enemy. And this

is no doubt a terrible delusion, that whereas all will to profit

themselves, many do nothing but that which is most pernicious to

themselves. When the poet was describing a like disease of dumb

animals, "May the gods," says he, "grant better things to the pious,

and assign that delusion to enemies. They were rending with bare teeth

their own torn limbs." [893] Since it was a disease of the body he was

speaking of, why has he called it a delusion, unless because, while

nature inclines every animal to take all the care it can of itself,

that disease was such that those animals rent those very limbs of

theirs which they desired should be safe and sound? But when the mind

loves God, and by consequence, as has been said remembers and

understands Him, then it is rightly enjoined also to love its neighbor

as itself; for it has now come to love itself rightly and not

perversely when it loves God, by partaking of whom that image not only

exists, but is also renewed so as to be no longer old, and restored so

as to be no longer defaced, and beatified so as to be no longer

unhappy. For although it so love itself, that, supposing the

alternative to be proposed to it, it would lose all things which it

loves less than itself rather than perish; still, by abandoning Him who

is above it, in dependence upon whom alone it could guard its own

strength, and enjoy Him as its light, to whom it is sung in the Psalm,

"I will guard my strength in dependence upon Thee," [894] and again,

"Draw near to Him, and be enlightened," [895] --it has been made so

weak and so dark, that it has fallen away unhappily from itself too, to

those things that are not what itself is, and which are beneath itself,

by affections that it cannot conquer, and delusions from which it sees

no way to return. And hence, when by God's mercy now penitent, it cries

out in the Psalms, "My strength faileth me; as for the light of mine

eyes, it also is gone from me." [896]

19. Yet, in the midst of these evils of weakness and delusion, great as

they are, it could not lose its natural memory, understanding and love

of itself. And therefore what I quoted above [897] can be rightly said,

"Although man walketh in an image, surely he is disquieted in vain: he

heapeth up treasures, and knoweth not who shall gather them." [898] For

why does he heap up treasures, unless because his strength has deserted

him, through which he would have God, and so lack nothing? And why

cannot he tell for whom he shall gather them, unless because the light

of his eyes is taken from him? And so he does not see what the Truth

saith, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then

whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" [899] Yet

because even such a man walketh in an image, and the man's mind has

remembrance, understanding, and love of itself; if it were made plain

to it that it could not have both, while it was permitted to choose one

and lose the other, viz. either the treasures it has heaped up, or the

mind; who is so utterly without mind, as to prefer to have the

treasures rather than the mind? For treasures commonly are able to

subvert the mind, but the mind that is not subverted by treasures can

live more easily and unencumberedly without any treasures. But who will

be able to possess treasures unless it be by means of the mind? For if

an infant, born as rich as you please, although lord of everything that

is rightfully his, yet possesses nothing if his mind be unconscious,

how can any one possibly possess anything whose mind is wholly lost?

But why say of treasures, that anybody, if the choice be given him,

prefers going without them to going without a mind; when there is no

one that prefers, nay, no one that compares them, to those lights of

the body, by which not one man only here and there, as in the case of

gold, but every man, possesses the very heaven? For every one possesses

by the eyes of the body whatever he gladly sees. Who then is there,

who, if he could not keep both, but must lose one, would not rather

lose his treasures than his eyes? And yet if it were put to him on the

same condition, whether he would rather lose eyes than mind, who is

there with a mind that does not see that he would rather lose the

former than the latter? For a mind without the eyes of the flesh is

still human, but the eyes of the flesh without a mind are bestial. And

who would not rather be a man, even though blind in fleshly sight, than

a beast that can see?

20. I have said thus much, that even those who are slower of

understanding, to whose eyes or ears this book may come, might be

admonished, however briefly, how greatly even a weak and erring mind

loves itself, in wrongly loving and pursuing things beneath itself. Now

it could not love itself if it were altogether ignorant of itself, i.e.

if it did not remember itself, nor understand itself by which image of

God within itself it has such power as to be able to cleave to Him

whose image it is. For it is so reckoned in the order, not of place,

but of natures, as that there is none above it save Him. When, finally,

it shall altogether cleave to Him, then it will be one spirit, as the

apostle testifies, saying, "But he who cleaves to the Lord is one

spirit." [900] And this by its drawing near to partake of His nature,

truth, and blessedness, yet not by His increasing in His own nature,

truth and blessedness. In that nature, then, when it happily has

cleaved to it, it will live unchangeably, and will see as unchangeable

all that it does see. Then, as divine Scripture promises, "His desire

will be satisfied with good things," [901] good things

unchangeable,--the very Trinity itself, its own God, whose image it is.

And that it may not ever thenceforward suffer wrong, it will be in the

hidden place of His presence, [902] filled with so great fullness of

Him, that sin thenceforth will never delight it. But now, when it sees

itself, it sees something not unchangeable.

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[891] Deut. vi. 5

[892] Ps. xi. 5

[893] Virg. Georg. iii. 513-514.

[894] Ps. lix. 9

[895] Ps. xxxiv. 5

[896] Ps. xxxviii. 10

[897] C. 4.

[898] Ps. xxxix. 6

[899] Luke xii. 20

[900] 1 Cor. vi. 17

[901] Ps. ciii. 5

[902] Ps. xxxi. 20

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Chapter 15.--Although the Soul Hopes for Blessedness, Yet It Does Not

Remember Lost Blessedness, But Remembers God and the Rules of

Righteousness. The Unchangeable Rules of Right Living are Known Even to

the Ungodly.

21. And of this certainly it feels no doubt, that it is wretched, and

longs to be blessed nor can it hope for the possibility of this on any

other ground than its own changeableness for if it were not changeable,

then, as it could not become wretched after being blessed, so neither

could it become blessed after being wretched. And what could have made

it wretched under an omnipotent and good God, except its own sin and

the righteousness of its Lord? And what will make it blessed, unless

its own merit, and its Lord's reward? But its merit, too, is His grace,

whose reward will be its blessedness; for it cannot give itself the

righteousness it has lost, and so has not. For this it received when

man was created, and assuredly lost it by sinning. Therefore it

receives righteousness, that on account of this it may deserve to

receive blessedness; and hence the apostle truly says to it, when

beginning to be proud as it were of its own good, "For 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?" [903] But when it rightly

remembers its own Lord, having received His Spirit, then, because it is

so taught by an inward teaching, it feels wholly that it cannot rise

save by His affection freely given, nor has been able to fall save by

its own defection freely chosen. Certainly it does not remember its own

blessedness; since that has been, but is not, and it has utterly

forgotten it, and therefore cannot even be reminded of it. [904] But it

believes what the trustworthy Scriptures of its God tell of that

blessedness, which were written by His prophet, and tell of the

blessedness of Paradise, and hand down to us historical information of

that first both good and ill of man. And it remembers the Lord its God;

for He always is, nor has been and is not, nor is but has not been; but

as He never will not be, so He never was not. And He is whole

everywhere. And hence it both lives, and is moved, and is in Him; [905]

and so it can remember Him. Not because it recollects the having known

Him in Adam or anywhere else before the life of this present body, or

when it was first made in order to be implanted in this body; for it

remembers nothing at all of all this. Whatever there is of this, it has

been blotted out by forgetfulness. But it is reminded, that it may be

turned to God, as though to that light by which it was in some way

touched, even when turned away from Him. For hence it is that even the

ungodly think of eternity, and rightly blame and rightly praise many

things in the morals of men. And by what rules do they thus judge,

except by those wherein they see how men ought to live, even though

they themselves do not so live? And where do they see these rules? For

they do not see them in their own [moral] nature; since no doubt these

things are to be seen by the mind, and their minds are confessedly

changeable, but these rules are seen as unchangeable by him who can see

them at all; nor yet in the character of their own mind, since these

rules are rules of righteousness, and their minds are confessedly

unrighteous. Where indeed are these rules written, wherein even the

unrighteous recognizes what is righteous, wherein he discerns that he

ought to have what he himself has not? Where, then, are they written,

unless in the book of that Light which is called Truth? whence every

righteous law is copied and transferred (not by migrating to it, but by

being as it were impressed upon it) to the heart of the man that

worketh righteousness; as the impression from a ring passes into the

wax, yet does not leave the ring. But he who worketh not, and yet sees

how he ought to work, he is the man that is turned away from that

light, which yet touches him. But he who does not even see how he ought

to live, sins indeed with more excuse, because he is not a transgressor

of a law that he knows; but even he too is just touched sometimes by

the splendor of the everywhere present truth, when upon admonition he

confesses.

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[903] 1 Cor. iv. 7

[904] [In the case of knowledge that is remembered, there is something

latent and potential--as when past acquisitions are recalled by a

voluntary act of recollection. The same is true of innate ideas--these

also are latent, and brought into consciousness by reflection. But no

man can either remember, or elicit, his original holiness and

blessedness, because this is not latent and potential, but wholly lost

by the fall.--W.G.T.S.]

[905] Acts xvii. 28

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Chapter 16.--How the Image of God is Formed Anew in Man.

22. But those who, by being reminded, are turned to the Lord from that

deformity whereby they were through worldly lusts conformed to this

world, are formed anew from the world, when they hearken to the

apostle, saying, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye formed

again in the renewing of your mind;" [906] that that image may begin to

be formed again by Him by whom it had been formed at first. For that

image cannot form itself again, as it could deform itself. He says

again elsewhere: "Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put ye

on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true

holiness." [907] That which is meant by "created after God," is

expressed in another place by "after the image of God." [908] But it

lost righteousness and true holiness by sinning, through which that

image became defaced and tarnished; and this it recovers when it is

formed again and renewed. But when he says, "In the spirit of your

mind," he does not intend to be understood of two things, as though

mind were one, and the spirit of the mind another; but he speaks thus,

because all mind is spirit, but all spirit is not mind. For there is a

Spirit also that is God, [909] which cannot be renewed, because it

cannot grow old. And we speak also of a spirit in man distinct from the

mind, to which spirit belong the images that are formed after the

likeness of bodies; and of this the apostle speaks to the Corinthians,

where he says, "But if I shall have prayed with a tongue, my spirit

prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." [910] For he speaks thus,

when that which is said is not understood; since it cannot even be

said, unless the images of the corporeal articulate sounds anticipate

the oral sound by the thought of the spirit. The soul of man is also

called spirit, whence are the words in the Gospel, "And He bowed His

head, and gave up His spirit;" [911] by which the death of the body,

through the spirit's leaving it, is signified. We speak also of the

spirit of a beast, as it is expressly written in the book of Solomon

called Ecclesiastes; "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward,

and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" [912] It

is written too in Genesis, where it is said that by the deluge all

flesh died which "had in it the spirit of life." [913] We speak also of

the spirit, meaning the wind, a thing most manifestly corporeal; whence

is that in the Psalms, "Fire and hail, snow and ice, the spirit of the

storm." [914] Since spirit, then, is a word of so many meanings, the

apostle intended to express by "the spirit of the mind" that spirit

which is called the mind. As the same apostle also, when he says, "In

putting off the body of the flesh," [915] certainly did not intend two

things, as though flesh were one, and the body of the flesh another;

but because body is the name of many things that have no flesh (for

besides the flesh, there are many bodies celestial and bodies

terrestrial), he expressed by the body of the flesh that body which is

flesh. In like manner, therefore, by the spirit of the mind, that

spirit which is mind. Elsewhere, too, he has even more plainly called

it an image, while enforcing the same thing in other words. "Do you,"

he says, "putting off the old man with his deeds, put on the new man,

which is renewed in the knowledge of God after the image of Him that

created him." [916] Where the one passage reads, "Put ye on the new

man, which is created after God," the other has, "Put ye on the new

man, which is renewed after the image of Him that created him."

In the one place he says, "After God;" in the other, "After the image

of Him that created him." But instead of saying, as in the former

passages "In righteousness and true holiness," he has put in the

latter, "In the knowledge of God." This renewal, then, and forming

again of the mind, is wrought either after God, or after the image of

God. But it is said to be after God, in order that it may not be

supposed to be after another creature; and to be after the image of

God, in order that this renewing may be understood to take place in

that wherein is the image of God, i.e. in the mind. Just as we say,

that he who has departed from the body a faithful and righteous man, is

dead after the body, not after the spirit. For what do we mean by dead

after the body, unless as to the body or in the body, and not dead as

to the soul or in the soul? Or if we want to say he is handsome after

the body, or strong after the body, not after the mind; what else is

this, than that he is handsome or strong in body, not in mind? And the

same is the case with numberless other instances. Let us not therefore

so understand the words, "After the image of Him that created him," as

though it were a different image after which he is renewed, and not the

very same which is itself renewed.

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[906] Rom. xii. 2

[907] Eph. iv. 23, 24

[908] Gen. i. 27

[909] John iv. 24

[910] 1 Cor. xiv. 14

[911] John xix. 30

[912] Eccles. iii. 21

[913] Gen. vii. 22

[914] Ps. cxlviii. 8

[915] Col. ii. 11

[916] Col. iii. 9, 10

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Chapter 17.--How the Image of God in the Mind is Renewed Until the

Likeness of God is Perfected in It in Blessedness.

23. Certainly this renewal does not take place in the single moment of

conversion itself, as that renewal in baptism takes place in a single

moment by the remission of all sins; for not one, be it ever so small,

remains unremitted. But as it is one thing to be free from fever, and

another to grow strong again from the infirmity which the fever

produced; and one thing again to pluck out of the body a weapon thrust

into it, and another to heal the wound thereby made by a prosperous

cure; so the first cure is to remove the cause of infirmity, and this

is wrought by the forgiving of all sins; but the second cure is to heal

the infirmity itself, and this takes place gradually by making progress

in the renewal of that image: which two things are plainly shown in the

Psalm, where we read, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities," which takes

place in baptism; and then follows, "and healeth all thine

infirmities;" [917] and this takes place by daily additions, while this

image is being renewed. [918] And the apostle has spoken of this most

expressly, saying, "And though our outward man perish, yet the inner

man is renewed day by day." [919] And "it is renewed in the knowledge

of God, i.e. in righteousness and true holiness," according to the

testimonies of the apostle cited a little before. He, then, who is day

by day renewed by making progress in the knowledge of God, and in

righteousness and true holiness, transfers his love from things

temporal to things eternal, from things visible to things intelligible,

from things carnal to things spiritual; and diligently perseveres in

bridling and lessening his desire for the former, and in binding

himself by love to the latter. And he does this in proportion as he is

helped by God. For it is the sentence of God Himself, "Without me ye

can do nothing." [920] And when the last day of life shall have found

any one holding fast faith in the Mediator in such progress and growth

as this, he will be welcomed by the holy angels, to be led to God, whom

he has worshipped, and to be made perfect by Him; and so will receive

in the end of the world an incorruptible body, in order not to

punishment, but to glory. For the likeness of God will then be

perfected in this image, when the sight of God shall be perfected. And

of this the Apostle Paul speaks: "Now we see through a glass, in an

enigma, but then face to face." [921] And again: "But we with open

face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into

the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the

Lord." [922] And this is what happens from day to day in those that

make good progress.

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[917] Ps. ciii. 3

[918] [Justification is instantaneous: sanctification is gradual.

Baptism is the sign, not the cause, of the former. "As many of us as

were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized with reference to (eis)

his death;" and "are intombed with him by the baptism that has

reference to (eis) his death." Rom. vi. 3, 4. According to St. Paul,

baptism supposes a trust in the atonement of Christ, and is a seal of

it. In saying that "the forgiveness of all thine iniquity takes place

in baptism," Augustin is liable to be understood as teaching the

efficiency of baptism in producing forgiveness. This is the weak side

of the Post Nicene soteriology.--W.G.T.S.]

[919] 2 Cor. iv. 16

[920] John xv. 5

[921] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[922] 2 Cor. iii. 18

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Chapter 18.--Whether the Sentence of John is to Be Understood of Our

Future Likeness with the Son of God in the Immortality Itself Also of

the Body.

24. But the Apostle John says, "Beloved, now are we 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."

[923] Hence it appears, that the full likeness of God is to take place

in that image of God at that time when it shall receive the full sight

of God. And yet this may also possibly seem to be said by the Apostle

John of the immortality of the body. For we shall be like to God in

this too, but only to the Son, because He only in the Trinity took a

body, in which He died and rose again, and which He carried with Him to

heaven above. For this, too, is called an image of the Son of God, in

which we shall have, as He has, an immortal body, being conformed in

this respect not to the image of the Father or of the Holy Spirit, but

only of the Son, because of Him alone is it read and received by a

sound faith, that "the Word was made flesh." [924] And for this reason

the apostle says, "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be

conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born

among many brethren." [925] "The first-born" certainly "from the dead,"

[926] according to the same apostle; by which death His flesh was sown

in dishonor, and rose again in glory. According to this image of the

Son, to which we are conformed in the body by immortality, we also do

that of which the same apostle speaks, "As we have borne the image of

the earthy, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly;" [927] to

wit, that we who are mortal after Adam, may hold by a true faith, and a

sure and certain hope, that we shall be immortal after Christ. For so

can we now bear the same image, not yet in sight, but in faith; not yet

in fact, but in hope. For the apostle, when he said this, was speaking

of the resurrection of the body.

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[923] 1 John iii. 2

[924] John i. 14

[925] Rom. viii. 29

[926] Col. i. 18

[927] 1 Cor. xv. 43, 49

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Chapter 19.--John is Rather to Be Understood of Our Perfect Likeness

with the Trinity in Life Eternal. Wisdom is Perfected in Happiness.

25. But in respect to that image indeed, of which it is said, "Let us

make man after our image and likeness," [928] we believe,--and, after

the utmost search we have been able to make, understand,--that man was

made after the image of the Trinity, because it is not said, After my,

or After thy image. And therefore that place too of the Apostle John

must be understood rather according to this image, when he says, "We

shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is;" because he spoke too

of Him of whom he had said, "We are the sons of God." [929] And the

immortality of the flesh will be perfected in that moment of the

resurrection, of which the Apostle Paul says, "In the twinkling of an

eye, at the last trump; and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and

we shall be changed." [930] For in that very twinkling of an eye,

before the judgment, the spiritual body shall rise again in power, in

incorruption, in glory, which is now sown a natural body in weakness,

in corruption, in dishonor. But the image which is renewed in the

spirit of the mind in the knowledge of God, not outwardly, but

inwardly, from day to day, shall be perfected by that sight itself;

which then after the judgment shall be face to face, but now makes

progress as through a glass in an enigma. [931] And we must understand

it to be said on account of this perfection, that "we shall be like

Him, for we shall see Him as He is." For this gift will be given to us

at that time, when it shall have been said, "Come, ye blessed of my

Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." [932] For then will the

ungodly be taken away, so that he shall not see the glory of the Lord,

[933] when those on the left hand shall go into eternal punishment,

while those on the right go into life eternal. [934] But "this is

eternal life," as the Truth tells us; "to know Thee," He says, "the one

true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." [935]

26. This contemplative wisdom, which I believe is properly called

wisdom as distinct from knowledge in the sacred writings; but wisdom

only of man, which yet man has not except from Him, by partaking of

whom a rational and intellectual mind can be made truly wise;--this

contemplative wisdom, I say, it is that Cicero commends, in the end of

the dialogue Hortensius, when he says: "While, then, we consider these

things night and day, and sharpen our understanding, which is the eye

of the mind, taking care that it be not ever dulled, that is, while we

live in philosophy; we, I say, in so doing, have great hope that, if,

on the one hand, this sentiment and wisdom of ours is mortal and

perishable, we shall still, when we have discharged our human offices,

have a pleasant setting, and a not painful extinction, and as it were a

rest from life: or if, on the other, as ancient philosophers

thought,--and those, too, the greatest and far the most celebrated,--we

have souls eternal and divine, then must we needs think, that the more

these shall have always kept in their own proper course, i.e. in reason

and in the desire of inquiry, and the less they shall have mixed and

entangled themselves in the vices and errors of men, the more easy

ascent and return they will have to heaven." And then he says, adding

this short sentence, and finishing his discourse by repeating it:

"Wherefore, to end my discourse at last, if we wish either for a

tranquil extinction, after living in the pursuit of these subjects, or

if to migrate without delay from this present home to another in no

little measure better, we must bestow all our labor and care upon these

pursuits." And here I marvel, that a man of such great ability should

promise to men living in philosophy, which makes man blessed by

contemplation of truth, "a pleasant setting after the discharge of

human offices, if this our sentiment and wisdom is mortal and

perishable;" as if that which we did not love, or rather which we

fiercely hated, were then to die and come to nothing, so that its

setting would be pleasant to us! But indeed he had not learned this

from the philosophers, whom he extols with great praise; but this

sentiment is redolent of that New Academy, wherein it pleased him to

doubt of even the plainest things. But from the philosophers that were

greatest and far most celebrated, as he himself confesses, he had

learned that souls are eternal. For souls that are eternal are not

unsuitably stirred up by the exhortation to be found in "their own

proper course," when the end of this life shall have come, i.e. "in

reason and in the desire of inquiry," and to mix and entangle

themselves the less in the vices and errors of men, in order that they

may have an easier return to God. But that course which consists in the

love and investigation of truth does not suffice for the wretched, i.e.

for all mortals who have only this kind of reason, and are without

faith in the Mediator; as I have taken pains to prove, as much as I

could, in former books of this work, especially in the fourth and

thirteenth.

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[928] Gen. i. 26

[929] John iii. 2

[930] 1 Cor. xv. 52

[931] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[932] Matt. xxv. 34

[933] Isa. xxvi. 10

[934] Matt. xxv. 46

[935] John xvii. 3

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Book XV.

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Begins by setting forth briefly and in sum the contents of the previous

fourteen books. The argument is then shown to have reached so far as to

allow of our now inquiring concerning the Trinity, which is God, in

those eternal, incorporeal, and unchangeable things themselves, in the

perfect contemplation of which a blessed life is promised to us. But

this Trinity, as he shows, is here seen by us as by a mirror and in an

enigma, in that it is seen by means of the image of God, which we are,

as in a likeness that is obscure and hard of discernment. In like

manner, it is shown, that some kind of conjecture and explanation may

be gathered respecting the generation of the divine Word, from the word

of our own mind, but only with difficulty, on account of the exceeding

disparity which is discernible between the two words; and, again,

respecting the procession of the Holy Spirit, from the love that is

joined thereto by the will.

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Chapter 1.--God is Above the Mind.

1. Desiring to exercise the reader in the things that are made, in

order that he may know Him by whom they are made, we have now advanced

so far as to His image, which is man, in that wherein he excels the

other animals, i.e. in reason or intelligence, and whatever else can be

said of the rational or intellectual soul that pertains to what is

called the mind. [936] For by this name some Latin writers, after their

own peculiar mode of speech, distinguish that which excels in man, and

is not in the beast, from the soul, [937] which is in the beast as

well. If, then, we seek anything that is above this nature, and seek

truly, it is God,--namely, a nature not created, but creating. And

whether this is the Trinity, it is now our business to demonstrate not

only to believers, by authority of divine Scripture, but also to such

as understand, by some kind of reason, if we can. And why I say, if we

can, the thing itself will show better when we have begun to argue

about it in our inquiry.

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[936] Mens or animus.

[937] Anima

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Chapter 2.--God, Although Incomprehensible, is Ever to Be Sought. The

Traces of the Trinity are Not Vainly Sought in the Creature.

2. For God Himself, whom we seek, will, as I hope, help our labors,

that they may not be unfruitful, and that we may understand how it is

said in the holy Psalm, "Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the

Lord. Seek the Lord, and be strengthened: seek His face evermore."

[938] For that which is always being sought seems as though it were

never found; and how then will the heart of them that seek rejoice, and

not rather be made sad, if they cannot find what they seek? For it is

not said, The heart shall rejoice of them that find, but of them that

seek, the Lord. And yet the prophet Isaiah testifies, that the Lord God

can be found when He is sought, when he says: "Seek ye the Lord; and as

soon as ye have found Him, call upon Him: and when He has drawn near to

you, let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his

thoughts." [939] If, then, when sought, He can be found, why is it

said, "Seek ye His face evermore?" Is He perhaps to be sought even when

found? For things incomprehensible must so be investigated, as that no

one may think he has found nothing, when he has been able to find how

incomprehensible that is which he was seeking. Why then does he so

seek, if he comprehends that which he seeks to be incomprehensible,

unless because he may not give over seeking so long as he makes

progress in the inquiry itself into things incomprehensible, and

becomes ever better and better while seeking so great a good, which is

both sought in order to be found, and found in order to be sought? For

it is both sought in order that it may be found more sweetly, and found

in order that it may be sought more eagerly. The words of Wisdom in the

book of Ecclesiasticus may be taken in this meaning: "They who eat me

shall still be hungry, and they who drink me shall still be thirsty."

[940] For they eat and drink because they find; and they still continue

seeking because they are hungry and thirst. Faith seeks, understanding

finds; whence the prophet says, "Unless ye believe, ye shall not

understand." [941] And yet, again, understanding still seeks Him, whom

it finds; for "God looked down upon the sons of men," as it is sung in

the holy Psalm, "to see if there were any that would understand, and

seek after God." [942] And man, therefore, ought for this purpose to

have understanding, that he may seek after God.

3. We shall have tarried then long enough among those things that God

has made, in order that by them He Himself may be known that made them.

"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are

clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." [943] And

hence they are rebuked in the book of Wisdom, "who could not out of the

good things that are seen know Him that is: neither by considering the

works did they acknowledge the workmaster; but deemed either fire, or

wind, or the swift air or the circle of the stars, or the violent

water, or the lights of heaven, to be the gods which govern the world:

with whose beauty if they, being delighted, took them to be gods, let

them know how much better the Lord of them is; for the first Author of

beauty hath created them. But if they were astonished at their power

and virtue, let them understand by them how much mightier He is that

made them. For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures

proportionably the Maker of them is seen." [944] I have quoted these

words from the book of Wisdom for this reason, that no one of the

faithful may think me vainly and emptily to have sought first in the

creature, step by step through certain trinities, each of their own

appropriate kind, until I came at last to the mind of man, traces of

that highest Trinity which we seek when we seek God.

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[938] Ps. cv. 3, 4

[939] Isa. lv. 6, 7

[940] Ecclus. xxiv. 22

[941] Isa. vii. 9

[942] Ps. xiv. 2

[943] Rom. i. 20

[944] Wisd. xiii. 1-5

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Chapter 3.--A Brief Recapitulation of All the Previous Books.

4. But since the necessities of our discussion and argument have

compelled us to say a great many things in the course of fourteen

books, which we cannot view at once in one glance, so as to be able to

refer them quickly in thought to that which we desire to grasp, I will

attempt, by the help of God, to the best of my power, to put briefly

together, without arguing, whatever I have established in the several

books by argument as known, and to place, as it were, under one mental

view, not the way in which we have been convinced of each point, but

the points themselves of which we have been convinced; in order that

what follows may not be so far separated from that which precedes, as

that the perusal of the former shall produce forgetfulness of the

latter; or at any rate, if it have produced such forgetfulness, that

what has escaped the memory may be speedily recalled by re-perusal.

5. In the first book, the unity and equality of that highest Trinity is

shown from Holy Scripture. In the second, and third, and fourth, the

same: but a careful handling of the question respecting the sending of

the Son and of the Holy Spirit has resulted in three books; and we have

demonstrated, that He who is sent is not therefore less than He who

sends because the one sent, the other was sent; since the Trinity,

which is in all things equal, being also equally in its own nature

unchangeable, and invisible, and everywhere present, works indivisibly.

In the fifth,--with a view to those who think that the substance of the

Father and of the Son is therefore not the same, because they suppose

everything that is predicated of God to be predicated according to

substance, and therefore contend that to beget and to be begotten, or

to be begotten and unbegotten, as being diverse, are diverse

substances,--it is demonstrated that not everything that is predicated

of God is predicated according to substance, as He is called good and

great according to substance, or anything else that is predicated of

Him in respect to Himself, but that some things also are predicated

relatively, i.e. not in respect to Himself, but in respect to something

which is not Himself; as He is called the Father in respect to the Son,

or the Lord in respect to the creature that serves Him; and that here,

if anything thus relatively predicated, i.e. predicated in respect to

something that is not Himself, is predicated also as in time, as, e.g.,

"Lord, Thou hast become our refuge," [945] then nothing happens to Him

so as to work a change in Him, but He Himself continues altogether

unchangeable in His own nature or essence. In the sixth, the question

how Christ is called by the mouth of the apostle "the power of God and

the wisdom of God," [946] is so far argued that the more careful

handling of that question is deferred, viz. whether He from whom Christ

is begotten is not wisdom Himself, but only the father of His own

wisdom, or whether wisdom begat wisdom. But be it which it may, the

equality of the Trinity became apparent in this book also, and that God

was not triple, but a Trinity; and that the Father and the Son are not,

as it were, a double as opposed to the single Holy Spirit: for therein

three are not anything more than one. We considered, too, how to

understand the words of Bishop Hilary, "Eternity in the Father, form in

the Image, use in the Gift." In the seventh, the question is explained

which had been deferred: in what way that God who begat the Son is not

only Father of His own power and wisdom, but is Himself also power and

wisdom; so, too, the Holy Spirit; and yet that they are not three

powers or three wisdoms, but one power and one wisdom, as one God and

one essence. It was next inquired, in what way they are called one

essence, three persons, or by some Greeks one essence, three

substances; and we found that the words were so used through the needs

of speech, that there might be one term by which to answer, when it is

asked what the three are, whom we truly confess to be three, viz.

Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. In the eighth, it is made plain by

reason also to those who understand, that not only the Father is not

greater than the Son in the substance of truth, but that both together

are not anything greater than the Holy Spirit alone, nor that any two

at all in the same Trinity are anything greater than one, nor all three

together anything greater than each severally. Next, I have pointed

out, that by means of the truth, which is beheld by the understanding,

and by means of the highest good, from which is all good, and by means

of the righteousness for which a righteous mind is loved even by a mind

not yet righteous, we might understand, so far as it is possible to

understand, that not only incorporeal but also unchangeable nature

which is God; and by means, too, of love, which in the Holy Scriptures

is called God, [947] by which, first of all, those who have

understanding begin also, however feebly, to discern the Trinity, to

wit, one that loves, and that which is loved, and love. In the ninth,

the argument advances as far as to the image of God, viz. man in

respect to his mind; and in this we found a kind of trinity, i.e. the

mind, and the knowledge whereby the mind knows itself, and the love

whereby it loves both itself and its knowledge of itself; and these

three are shown to be mutually equal, and of one essence. In the tenth,

the same subject is more carefully and subtly handled, and is brought

to this point, that we found in the mind a still more manifest trinity

of the mind, viz. in memory, and understanding, and will. But since it

turned out also, that the mind could never be in such a case as not to

remember, understand, and love itself, although it did not always think

of itself; but that when it did think of itself, it did not in the same

act of thought distinguish itself from things corporeal; the argument

respecting the Trinity, of which this is an image, was deferred, in

order to find a trinity also in the things themselves that are seen

with the body, and to exercise the reader's attention more distinctly

in that. Accordingly, in the eleventh, we chose the sense of sight,

wherein that which should have been there found to hold good might be

recognized also in the other four bodily senses, although not expressly

mentioned; and so a trinity of the outer man first showed itself in

those things which are discerned from without, to wit, from the bodily

object which is seen, and from the form which is thence impressed upon

the eye of the beholder, and from the purpose of the will combining the

two. But these three things, as was patent, were not mutually equal and

of one substance. Next, we found yet another trinity in the mind

itself, introduced into it, as it were, by the things perceived from

without; wherein the same three things, as it appeared, were of one

substance: the image of the bodily object which is in the memory, and

the form thence impressed when the mind's eye of the thinker is turned

to it, and the purpose of the will combining the two. But we found this

trinity to pertain to the outer man, on this account, that it was

introduced into the mind from bodily objects which are perceived from

without. In the twelfth, we thought good to distinguish wisdom from

knowledge, and to seek first, as being the lower of the two, a kind of

appropriate and special trinity in that which is specially called

knowledge; but that although we have got now in this to something

pertaining to the inner man, yet it is not yet to be either called or

thought an image of God. And this is discussed in the thirteenth book

by the commendation of Christian faith. In the fourteenth we discuss

the true wisdom of man, viz. that which is granted him by God's gift in

the partaking of that very God Himself, which is distinct from

knowledge; and the discussion reached this point, that a trinity is

discovered in the image of God, which is man in respect to his mind,

which mind is "renewed in the knowledge" of God, "after the image of

Him that created" man; [948] "after His own image;" [949] and so

obtains wisdom, wherein is the contemplation of things eternal.

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[945] Ps. xc. 1

[946] 1 Cor. i. 24

[947] 1 John iv. 16

[948] Col. iii. 10

[949] Gen. i. 27

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Chapter 4.--What Universal Nature Teaches Us Concerning God.

6. Let us, then, now seek the Trinity which is God, in the things

themselves that are eternal, incorporeal, and unchangeable; in the

perfect contemplation of which a blessed life is promised us, which

cannot be other than eternal. For not only does the authority of the

divine books declare that God is; but the whole nature of the universe

itself which surrounds us, and to which we also belong, proclaims that

it has a most excellent Creator, who has given to us a mind and natural

reason, whereby to see that things living are to be preferred to things

that are not living; things that have sense to things that have not;

things that have understanding to things that have not; things immortal

to things mortal; things powerful to things impotent; things righteous

to things unrighteous; things beautiful to things deformed; things good

to things evil; things incorruptible to things corruptible; things

unchangeable to things changeable; things invisible to things visible;

things incorporeal to things corporeal; things blessed to things

miserable. And hence, since without doubt we place the Creator above

things created, we must needs confess that the Creator both lives in

the highest sense, and perceives and understands all things, and that

He cannot die, or suffer decay, or be changed; and that He is not a

body, but a spirit, of all the most powerful, most righteous, most

beautiful, most good, most blessed.

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Chapter 5.--How Difficult It is to Demonstrate the Trinity by Natural

Reason.

7. But all that I have said, and whatever else seems to be worthily

said of God after the like fashion of human speech, applies to the

whole Trinity, which is one God, and to the several Persons in that

Trinity. For who would dare to say either of the one God, which is the

Trinity itself, or of the Father, or Son, or Holy Spirit, either that

He is not living, or is without sense or intelligence; or that, in that

nature in which they are affirmed to be mutually equal, any one of them

is mortal, or corruptible, or changeable, or corporeal? Or is there any

one who would deny that any one in the Trinity is most powerful, most

righteous, most beautiful, most good, most blessed? If, then, these

things, and all others of the kind, can be predicated both of the

Trinity itself, and of each several one in that Trinity, where or how

shall the Trinity manifest itself? Let us therefore first reduce these

numerous predicates to some limited number. For that which is called

life in God, is itself His essence and nature. God, therefore, does not

live, unless by the life which He is to Himself. And this life is not

such as that which is in a tree, wherein is neither understanding nor

sense; nor such as is in a beast, for the life of a beast possesses the

fivefold sense, but has no understanding. But the life which is God

perceives and understands all things, and perceives by mind, not by

body, because "God is a spirit." [950] And God does not perceive

through a body, as animals do, which have bodies, for He does not

consist of soul and body. And hence that single nature perceives as it

understands, and understands as it perceives, and its sense and

understanding are one and the same. Nor yet so, that at any time He

should either cease or begin to be; for He is immortal. And it is not

said of Him in vain, that "He only hath immortality." [951] For

immortality is true immortality in His case whose nature admits no

change. That is also true eternity by which God is unchangeable,

without beginning, without end; consequently also incorruptible. It is

one and the same thing, therefore, to call God eternal, or immortal, or

incorruptible, or unchangeable; and it is likewise one and the same

thing to say that He is living, and that He is intelligent, that is, in

truth, wise. For He did not receive wisdom whereby to be wise, but He

is Himself wisdom. And this is life, and again is power or might, and

yet again beauty, whereby He is called powerful and beautiful. For what

is more powerful and more beautiful than wisdom, "which reaches from

end to end mightily, and sweetly disposes all things"? [952] Or do

goodness, again, and righteousness, differ from each other in the

nature of God, as they differ in His works, as though they were two

diverse qualities of God--goodness one, and righteousness another?

Certainly not; but that which is righteousness is also itself goodness;

and that which is goodness is also itself blessedness. And God is

therefore called incorporeal, that He may be believed and understood to

be a spirit, not a body.

8. Further, if we say, Eternal, immortal, incorruptible, unchangeable,

living, wise, powerful, beautiful, righteous, good, blessed spirit;

only the last of this list as it were seems to signify substance, but

the rest to signify qualities of that substance; but it is not so in

that ineffable and simple nature. For whatever seems to be predicated

therein according to quality, is to be understood according to

substance or essence. For far be it from us to predicate spirit of God

according to substance, and good according to quality; but both

according to substance. [953] And so in like manner of all those we

have mentioned, of which we have already spoken at length in the former

books. Let us choose, then, one of the first four of those in our

enumeration and arrangement, i.e. eternal, immortal, incorruptible,

unchangeable; since these four, as I have argued already, have one

meaning; in order that our aim may not be distracted by a multiplicity

of objects. And let it be rather that which was placed first, viz.

eternal. Let us follow the same course with the four that come next,

viz. living, wise, powerful, beautiful. And since life of some sort

belongs also to the beast, which has not wisdom; while the next two,

viz. wisdom and might, are so compared to one another in the case of

man, as that Scripture says, "Better is he that is wise than he that is

strong;" [954] and beauty, again, is commonly attributed to bodily

objects also: out of these four that we have chosen, let Wise be the

one we take. Although these four are not to be called unequal in

speaking of God; for they are four names, but one thing. But of the

third and last four,--although it is the same thing in God to be

righteous that it is to be good or to be blessed; and the same thing to

be a spirit that it is to be righteous, and good, and blessed; yet,

because in men there can be a spirit that is not blessed, and there can

be one both righteous and good, but not yet blessed; but that which is

blessed is doubtless both just, and good, and a spirit,--let us rather

choose that one which cannot exist even in men without the three

others, viz. blessed.

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[950] John iv. 24

[951] 1 Tim. vi. 16

[952] Wisd. viii. 1

[953] [In the Infinite Being, qualities are inseparable from essence;

in the finite being, they are separable. If man or angel ceases to be

good, or wise, or righteous, he does not thereby cease to be man or

angel. But if God should lose goodness, wisdom or righteousness, he

would no longer be God. This is the meaning of Augustin, when he says

that "goodness" as well as "spirit" must be predicated of God,

"according to substance"--that is, that qualities in God are essential

qualities. They are so one with the essence, that they are

inseparable.--W.G.T.S.]

[954] Wisd. vi. 1

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Chapter 6.--How There is a Trinity in the Very Simplicity of God.

Whether and How the Trinity that is God is Manifested from the

Trinities Which Have Been Shown to Be in Men.

9. When, then, we say, Eternal, wise, blessed, are these three the

Trinity that is called God? We reduce, indeed, those twelve to this

small number of three; but perhaps we can go further, and reduce these

three also to one of them. For if wisdom and might, or life and wisdom,

can be one and the same thing in the nature of God, why cannot eternity

and wisdom, or blessedness and wisdom, be one and the same thing in the

nature of God? And hence, as it made no difference whether we spoke of

these twelve or of those three when we reduced the many to the small

number; so does it make no difference whether we speak of those three,

or of that one, to the singularity of which we have shown that the

other two of the three may be reduced. What fashion, then, of argument,

what possible force and might of understanding, what liveliness of

reason, what sharp-sightedness of thought, will set forth how (to pass

over now the others) this one thing, that God is called wisdom, is a

trinity? For God does not receive wisdom from any one as we receive it

from Him, but He is Himself His own wisdom; because His wisdom is not

one thing, and His essence another, seeing that to Him to be wise is to

be. Christ, indeed, is called in the Holy Scriptures, "the power of

God, and the wisdom of God." [955] But we have discussed in the seventh

book how this is to be understood, so that the Son may not seem to make

the Father wise; and our explanation came to this, that the Son is

wisdom of wisdom, in the same way as He is light of light, God of God.

Nor could we find the Holy Spirit to be in any other way than that He

Himself also is wisdom, and altogether one wisdom, as one God, one

essence. How, then, do we understand this wisdom, which is God, to be a

trinity? I do not say, How do we believe this? For among the faithful

this ought to admit no question. But supposing there is any way by

which we can see with the understanding what we believe, what is that

way?

10. For if we recall where it was in these books that a trinity first

began to show itself to our understanding, the eighth book is that

which occurs to us; since it was there that to the best of our power we

tried to raise the aim of the mind to understand that most excellent

and unchangeable nature, which our mind is not. And we so contemplated

this nature as to think of it as not far from us, and as above us, not

in place, but by its own awful and wonderful excellence, and in such

wise that it appeared to be with us by its own present light. Yet in

this no trinity was yet manifest to us, because in that blaze of light

we did not keep the eye of the mind steadfastly bent upon seeking it;

only we discerned it in a sense, because there was no bulk wherein we

must needs think the magnitude of two or three to be more than that of

one. But when we came to treat of love, which in the Holy Scriptures is

called God, [956] then a trinity began to dawn upon us a little, i.e.

one that loves, and that which is loved, and love. But because that

ineffable light beat back our gaze, and it became in some degree plain

that the weakness of our mind could not as yet be tempered to it, we

turned back in the midst of the course we had begun, and planned

according to the (as it were) more familiar consideration of our own

mind, according to which man is made after the image of God, [957] in

order to relieve our overstrained attention; and thereupon we dwelt

from the ninth to the fourteenth book upon the consideration of the

creature, which we are, that we might be able to understand and behold

the invisible things of God by those things which are made. And now

that we have exercised the understanding, as far as was needful, or

perhaps more than was needful, in lower things, lo! we wish, but have

not strength, to raise ourselves to behold that highest Trinity which

is God. For in such manner as we see most undoubted trinities, whether

those which are wrought from without by corporeal things, or when these

same things are thought of which were perceived from without; or when

those things which take their rise in the mind, and do not pertain to

the senses of the body, as faith, or as the virtues which comprise the

art of living, are discerned by manifest reason, and, held fast by

knowledge; or when the mind itself, by which we know whatever we truly

say that we know, is known to itself, or thinks of itself; or when that

mind beholds anything eternal and unchangeable, which itself is

not;--in such way, then, I say, as we see in all these instances most

undoubted trinities, because they are wrought in ourselves, or are in

ourselves, when we remember, look at, or desire these things;--do we, I

say, in such manner also see the Trinity that is God; because there

also, by the understanding, we behold both Him as it were speaking, and

His Word, i.e. the Father and the Son; and then, proceeding thence, the

love common to both, namely, the Holy Spirit? These trinities that

pertain to our senses or to our mind, do we rather see than believe

them, but rather believe than see that God is a trinity? But if this is

so, then doubtless we either do not at all understand and behold the

invisible things of God by those things that are made, or if we behold

them at all, we do not behold the Trinity in them; and there is therein

somewhat to behold, and somewhat also which we ought to believe, even

though not beheld. And as the eighth book showed that we behold the

unchangeable good which we are not, so the fourteenth reminded us

thereof, when we spoke of the wisdom that man has from God. Why, then,

do we not recognize the Trinity therein? Does that wisdom which God is

said to be, not perceive itself, and not love itself? Who would say

this? Or who is there that does not see, that where there is no

knowledge, there in no way is there wisdom? Or are we, in truth, to

think that the Wisdom which is God knows other things, and does not

know itself; or loves other things, and does not love itself? But if

this is a foolish and impious thing to say or believe, then behold we

have a trinity,--to wit, wisdom, and the knowledge wisdom has of

itself, and its love of itself. For so, too, we find a trinity in man

also, i.e. mind, and the knowledge wherewith mind knows itself, and the

love wherewith it loves itself.

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[955] 1 Cor. i. 24

[956] 1 John iv. 16

[957] Gen. i. 27

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Chapter 7.--That It is Not Easy to Discover the Trinity that is God

from the Trinities We Have Spoken of.

11. But these three are in such way in man, that they are not

themselves man. For man, as the ancients defined him, is a rational

mortal animal. These things, therefore, are the chief things in man,

but are not man themselves. And any one person, i.e. each individual

man, has these three things in his mind. But if, again, we were so to

define man as to say, Man is a rational substance consisting of mind

and body, then without doubt man has a soul that is not body, and a

body that is not soul. And hence these three things are not man, but

belong to man, or are in man. If, again, we put aside the body, and

think of the soul by itself, the mind is somewhat belonging to the

soul, as though its head, or eye, or countenance; but these things are

not to be regarded as bodies. It is not then the soul, but that which

is chief in the soul, that is called the mind. But can we say that the

Trinity is in such way in God, as to be somewhat belonging to God, and

not itself God? And hence each individual man, who is called the image

of God, not according to all things that pertain to his nature, but

according to his mind alone, is one person, and is an image of the

Trinity in his mind. But that Trinity of which he is the image is

nothing else in its totality than God, is nothing else in its totality

than the Trinity. Nor does anything pertain to the nature of God so as

not to pertain to that Trinity; and the Three Persons are of one

essence, not as each individual man is one person.

12. There is, again, a wide difference in this point likewise, that

whether we speak of the mind in a man, and of its knowledge and love;

or of memory, understanding, will,--we remember nothing of the mind

except by memory, nor understand anything except by understanding, nor

love anything except by will. But in that Trinity, who would dare to

say that the Father understands neither Himself, nor the Son, nor the

Holy Spirit, except by the Son, or loves them except by the Holy

Spirit; and that He remembers only by Himself either Himself, or the

Son, or the Holy Spirit; and in the same way that the Son remembers

neither Himself nor the Father, except by the Father, nor loves them

except by the Holy Spirit; but that by Himself He only understands both

the Father and Son and Holy Spirit: and in like manner, that the Holy

Spirit by the Father remembers both the Father and the Son and Himself,

and by the Son understands both the Father and the Son and Himself; but

by Himself only loves both Himself and the Father and the Son;--as

though the Father were both His own memory, and that of the Son and of

the Holy Spirit; and the Son were the understanding of both Himself,

and the Father and the Holy Spirit; but the Holy Spirit were the love

both of Himself, and of the Father and of the Son? Who would presume to

think or affirm this of that Trinity? For if therein the Son alone

understands both for Himself and for the Father and for the Holy

Spirit, we have returned to the old absurdity, that the Father is not

wise from Himself, but from the Son, and that wisdom has not begotten

wisdom, but that the Father is said to be wise by that wisdom which He

begat. For where there is no understanding there can be no wisdom; and

hence, if the Father does not understand Himself for Himself, but the

Son understands for the Father, assuredly the Son makes the Father

wise. But if to God to be is to be wise, and essence is to Him the same

as wisdom, then it is not the Son that has His essence from the Father,

which is the truth, but rather the Father from the Son, which is a most

absurd falsehood. And this absurdity, beyond all doubt, we have

discussed, disproved, and rejected, in the seventh book. Therefore God

the Father is wise by that wisdom by which He is His own wisdom, and

the Son is the wisdom of the Father from the wisdom which is the

Father, from whom the Son is begotten; whence it follows that the

Father understands also by that understanding by which He is His own

understanding (for he could not be Wise that did not understand); and

that the Son is the understanding of the Father, begotten of the

understanding which is the Father. And this same may not be unfitly

said of memory also. For how is he wise, that remembers nothing, or

does not remember himself? Accordingly, since the Father is wisdom, and

the Son is wisdom, therefore, as the Father remembers Himself, so does

the Son also remember Himself; and as the Father remembers both Himself

and the Son, not by the memory of the Son, but by His own, so does the

Son remember both Himself and the Father, not by the memory of the

Father, but by His own. Where, again, there is no love, who would say

there was any wisdom? And hence we must infer that the Father is in

such way His own love, as He is His own understanding and memory. And

therefore these three, i.e. memory, understanding, love or will in that

highest and unchangeable essence which is God, are, we see, not the

Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, but the Father alone. And

because the Son too is wisdom begotten of wisdom, as neither the Father

nor the Holy Spirit understands for Him, but He understands for

Himself; so neither does the Father remember for Him, nor the Holy

Spirit love for Him, but He remembers and loves for Himself: for He is

Himself also His own memory, His own understanding, and His own love.

But that He is so comes to Him from the Father, of whom He is born. And

because the Holy Spirit also is wisdom proceeding from wisdom, He too

has not the Father for a memory, and the Son for an understanding, and

Himself for love: for He would not be wisdom if another remembered for

Him, and yet another understood for Him, and He only loved for Himself;

but Himself has all three things, and has them in such way that they

are Himself. But that He is so comes to Him thence, whence He proceeds.

13. What man, then, is there who can comprehend that wisdom by which

God knows all things, in such wise that neither what we call things

past are past therein, nor what we call things future are therein

waited for as coming, as though they were absent, but both past and

future with things present are all present; nor yet are things thought

severally, so that thought passes from one to another, but all things

simultaneously are at hand in one glance;--what man, I say, is there

that comprehends that wisdom, and the like prudence, and the like

knowledge, since in truth even our own wisdom is beyond our

comprehension? For somehow we are able to behold the things that are

present to our senses or to our understanding; but the things that are

absent, and yet have once been present, we know by memory, if we have

not forgotten them. And we conjecture, too, not the past from the

future, but the future from the past, yet by all unstable knowledge.

For there are some of our thoughts to which, although future, we, as it

were, look onward with greater plainness and certainty as being very

near; and we do this by the means of memory when we are able to do it,

as much as we ever are able, although memory seems to belong not to the

future, but to the past. And this may be tried in the case of any words

or songs, the due order of which we are rendering by memory; for we

certainly should not utter each in succession, unless we foresaw in

thought what came next. And yet it is not foresight, but memory, that

enables us to foresee it; for up to the very end of the words or the

song, nothing is uttered except as foreseen and looked forward to. And

yet in doing this, we are not said to speak or sing by foresight, but

by memory; and if any one is more than commonly capable of uttering

many pieces in this way, he is usually praised, not for his foresight,

but for his memory. We know, and are absolutely certain, that all this

takes place in our mind or by our mind; but how it takes place, the

more attentively we desire to scrutinize, the more do both our very

words break down, and our purpose itself fails, when by our

understanding, if not our tongue, we would reach to something of

clearness. And do such as we are, think, that in so great infirmity of

mind we can comprehend whether the foresight of God is the same as His

memory and His understanding, who does not regard in thought each

several thing, but embraces all that He knows in one eternal and

unchangeable and ineffable vision? In this difficulty, then, and

strait, we may well cry out to the living God, "Such knowledge is too

wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it." [958] For I

understand by myself how wonderful and incomprehensible is Thy

knowledge, by which Thou madest me, when I cannot even comprehend

myself whom Thou hast made! And yet, "while I was musing, the fire

burned," [959] so that "I seek Thy face evermore." [960]

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[958] Ps. cxxxix. 6

[959] Ps. xxxix. 3

[960] Ps. cv. 4

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Chapter 8.--How the Apostle Says that God is Now Seen by Us Through a

Glass.

14. I know that wisdom is an incorporeal substance, and that it is the

light by which those things are seen that are not seen by carnal eyes;

and yet a man so great and so spiritual [as Paul] says, "We see now

through a glass, in an enigma, but then face to face." [961] If we ask

what and of what sort is this "glass," this assuredly occurs to our

minds, that in a glass nothing is discerned but an image. We have

endeavored, then, so to do; in order that we might see in some way or

other by this image which we are, Him by whom we are made, as by a

glass. And this is intimated also in the words of the same apostle:

"But we with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,

are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by

the Spirit of the Lord." [962] "Beholding as in a glass," [963] he has

said, i.e. seeing by means of a glass, not looking from a watch-tower:

an ambiguity that does not exist in the Greek language, whence the

apostolic epistles have been rendered into Latin. For in Greek, a

glass, [964] in which the images of things are visible, is wholly

distinct in the sound of the word also from a watch-tower, [965] from

the height of which we command a more distant view. And it is quite

plain that the apostle, in using the word "speculantes" in respect to

the glory of the Lord, meant it to come from "speculum," not from

"specula." But where he says, "We are transformed into the same image,"

he assuredly means to speak of the image of God; and by calling it "the

same," he means that very image which we see in the glass, because that

same image is also the glory of the Lord; as he says elsewhere, "For a

man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image

and glory of God," [966] --a text already discussed in the twelfth

book. He means, then, by "We are transformed," that we are changed from

one form to another, and that we pass from a form that is obscure to a

form that is bright: since the obscure form, too, is the image of God;

and if an image, then assuredly also "glory," in which we are created

as men, being better than the other animals. For it is said of human

nature in itself, "The man ought not to cover his head, because he is

the image and glory of God." And this nature, being the most excellent

among things created, is transformed from a form that is defaced into a

form that is beautiful, when it is justified by its own Creator from

ungodliness. Since even in ungodliness itself, the more the faultiness

is to be condemned, the more certainly is the nature to be praised. And

therefore he has added, "from glory to glory:" from the glory of

creation to the glory of justification. Although these words, "from

glory to glory," may be understood also in other ways;--from the glory

of faith to the glory of sight, from the glory whereby we are sons of

God to the glory whereby we shall be like Him, because "we shall see

Him as He is." [967] But in that he has added "as from the Spirit of

the Lord," he declares that the blessing of so desirable a

transformation is conferred upon us by the grace of God.

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[961] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[962] 2 Cor. iii. 18

[963] Speculantes

[964] Speculum

[965] Specula

[966] 1 Cor. xi. 7

[967] 1 John iii. 2

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Chapter 9.--Of the Term "Enigma," And of Tropical Modes of Speech.

15. What has been said relates to the words of the apostle, that "we

see now through a glass;" but whereas he has added, "in an enigma," the

meaning of this addition is unknown to any who are unacquainted with

the books that contain the doctrine of those modes of speech, which the

Greeks call Tropes, which Greek word we also use in Latin. For as we

more commonly speak of schemata than of figures, so we more commonly

speak of tropes than of modes. And it is a very difficult and uncommon

thing to express the names of the several modes or tropes in Latin, so

as to refer its appropriate name to each. And hence some Latin

translators, through unwillingness to employ a Greek word, where the

apostle says, "Which things are an allegory," [968] have rendered it by

a circumlocution--Which things signify one thing by another. But there

are several species of this kind of trope that is called allegory, and

one of them is that which is called enigma. Now the definition of the

generic term must necessarily embrace also all its species; and hence,

as every horse is an animal, but not every animal is a horse, so every

enigma is an allegory, but every allegory is not an enigma. What then

is an allegory, but a trope wherein one thing is understood from

another? as in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, "Let us not therefore

sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober: for they who sleep,

sleep in the night; and they who are drunken, are drunken in the night:

but let us who are of the day, be sober." [969] But this allegory is

not an enigma. for here the meaning is patent to all but the very dull;

but an enigma is, to explain it briefly, an obscure allegory, as, e.g.,

"The horseleech had three daughters," [970] and other like instances.

But when the apostle spoke of an allegory, he does not find it in the

words, but in the fact; since he has shown that the two Testaments are

to be understood by the two sons of Abraham, one by a bondmaid, and the

other by a free woman, which was a thing not said, but also done. And

before this was explained, it was obscure; and accordingly such an

allegory, which is the generic name, could be specifically called an

enigma.

16. But because it is not only those that are ignorant of the books

that contain the doctrine of tropes, who inquire the apostle's meaning,

when he said that we "see now in an enigma," but those, too, who are

acquainted with the doctrine, but yet desire to know what that enigma

is in which "we now see;" we must find a single meaning for the two

phrases, viz. for that which says, "we see now through a glass," and

for that which adds, "in an enigma." For it makes but one sentence,

when the whole is so uttered, "We see now through a glass in an

enigma." Accordingly, as far as my judgment goes, as by the word glass

he meant to signify an image, so by that of enigma any likeness you

will, but yet one obscure, and difficult to see through. While,

therefore, any likenesses whatever may be understood as signified by

the apostle when he speaks of a glass and an enigma, so that they are

adapted to the understanding of God, in such way as He can be

understood; yet nothing is better adapted to this purpose than that

which is not vainly called His image. Let no one, then, wonder, that we

labor to see in any way at all, even in that fashion of seeing which is

granted to us in this life, viz. through a glass, in an enigma. For we

should not hear of an enigma in this place if sight were easy. And this

is a yet greater enigma, that we do not see what we cannot but see. For

who does not see his own thought? And yet who does see his own thought,

I do not say with the eye of the flesh, but with the inner sight

itself? Who does not see it, and who does see it? Since thought is a

kind of sight of the mind; whether those things are present which are

seen also by the bodily eyes, or perceived by the other senses; or

whether they are not present, but their likenesses are discerned by

thought; or whether neither of these is the case, but things are

thought of that are neither bodily things nor likenesses of bodily

things, as the virtues and vices; or as, indeed, thought itself is

thought of; or whether it be those things which are the subjects of

instruction and of liberal sciences; or whether the higher causes and

reasons themselves of all these things in the unchangeable nature are

thought of; or whether it be even evil, and vain, and false things that

we are thinking of, with either the sense not consenting, or erring in

its consent.

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[968] Gal. iv. 24

[969] 1 Thess. v. 6-8

[970] Prov. xxx. 15

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Chapter 10.--Concerning the Word of the Mind, in Which We See the Word

of God, as in a Glass and an Enigma.

17. But let us now speak of those things of which we think as known,

and have in our knowledge even if we do not think of them; whether they

belong to the contemplative knowledge, which, as I have argued, is

properly to be called wisdom, or to the active which is properly to be

called knowledge. For both together belong to one mind, and are one

image of God. But when we treat of the lower of the two distinctly and

separately, then it is not to be called an image of God, although even

then, too, some likeness of that Trinity may be found in it; as we

showed in the thirteenth book. We speak now, therefore, of the entire

knowledge of man altogether, in which whatever is known to us is known;

that, at any rate, which is true; otherwise it would not be known. For

no one knows what is false, except when he knows it to be false; and if

he knows this, then he knows what is true: for it is true that that is

false. We treat, therefore, now of those things which we think as

known, and which are known to us even if they are not being thought of.

But certainly, if we would utter them in words, we can only do so by

thinking them. For although there were no words spoken, at any rate, he

who thinks speaks in his heart. And hence that passage in the book of

Wisdom: "They said within themselves, thinking not aright." [971] For

the words, "They said within themselves," are explained by the addition

of "thinking." A like passage to this is that in the Gospel,--that

certain scribes, when they heard the Lord's words to the paralytic man,

"Be of good cheer, my son, thy sins are forgiven thee," said within

themselves, "This man blasphemeth." For how did they "say within

themselves," except by thinking? Then follows, "And when Jesus saw

their thoughts, He said, Why think ye evil in your thoughts?" [972] So

far Matthew. But Luke narrates the same thing thus: "The scribes and

Pharisees began to think, saying, Who is this that speaketh

blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone? But when Jesus

perceived their thoughts, He, answering, said unto them, What think ye

in your hearts?" [973] That which in the book of Wisdom is, "They said,

thinking," is the same here with, "They thought, saying." For both

there and here it is declared, that they spake within themselves, and

in their own heart, i.e. spake by thinking. For they "spake within

themselves," and it was said to them, "What think ye?" And the Lord

Himself says of that rich man whose ground brought forth plentifully,

"And he thought within himself, saying." [974]

18. Some thoughts, then, are speeches of the heart, wherein the Lord

also shows that there is a mouth, when He says, "Not that which

entereth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which proceedeth out

of the mouth, that defileth a man." In one sentence He has comprised

two diverse mouths of the man, one of the body, one of the heart. For

assuredly, that from which they thought the man to be defiled, enters

into the mouth of the body; but that from which the Lord said the man

was defiled, proceedeth out of the mouth of the heart. So certainly He

Himself explained what He had said. For a little after, He says also to

His disciples concerning the same thing: "Are ye also yet without

understanding? Do ye not understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the

mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?" Here He

most certainly pointed to the mouth of the body. But in that which

follows He plainly speaks of the mouth of the heart, where He says,

"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the

heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil

thoughts," [975] etc. What is clearer than this explanation? And yet,

when we call thoughts speeches of the heart, it does not follow that

they are not also acts of sight, arising from the sight of knowledge,

when they are true. For when these things are done outwardly by means

of the body, then speech and sight are different things; but when we

think inwardly, the two are one,--just as sight and hearing are two

things mutually distinct in the bodily senses, but to see and hear are

the same thing in the mind; and hence, while speech is not seen but

rather heard outwardly, yet the inward speeches, i.e. thoughts, are

said by the holy Gospel to have been seen, not heard, by the Lord.

"They said within themselves, This man blasphemeth," says the Gospel;

and then subjoined, "And when Jesus saw their thoughts." Therefore He

saw, what they said. For by His own thought He saw their thoughts,

which they supposed no one saw but themselves.

19. Whoever, then, is able to understand a word, not only before it is

uttered in sound, but also before the images of its sounds are

considered in thought,--for this it is which belongs to no tongue, to

wit, of those which are called the tongues of nations, of which our

Latin tongue is one;--whoever, I say, is able to understand this, is

able now to see through this glass and in this enigma some likeness of

that Word of whom it is said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the

Word was with God, and the Word was God." [976] For of necessity, when

we speak what is true, i.e. speak what we know, there is born from the

knowledge itself which the memory retains, a word that is altogether of

the same kind with that knowledge from which it is born. For the

thought that is formed by the thing which we know, is the word which we

speak in the heart: which word is neither Greek nor Latin, nor of any

other tongue. But when it is needful to convey this to the knowledge of

those to whom we speak, then some sign is assumed whereby to signify

it. And generally a sound, sometimes a nod, is exhibited, the former to

the ears, the latter to the eyes, that the word which we bear in our

mind may become known also by bodily signs to the bodily senses. For

what is to nod or beckon, except to speak in some way to the sight? And

Holy Scripture gives its testimony to this; for we read in the Gospel

according to John: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you

shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one upon another, doubting

of whom He spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' breast one of His

disciples whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckons to him, and

says to him, Who is it of whom He speaks?" [977] Here he spoke by

beckoning what he did not venture to speak by sounds. But whereas we

exhibit these and the like bodily signs either to ears or eyes of

persons present to whom we speak, letters have been invented that we

might be able to converse also with the absent; but these are signs of

words, as words themselves are signs in our conversation of those

things which we think.

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[971] Wisd. ii. 1

[972] Matt. ix. 2-4

[973] Luke v. 21, 22

[974] Luke xii. 17

[975] Matt. xv. 10-20

[976] John i. 1

[977] John xiii. 21-24

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Chapter 11.--The Likeness of the Divine Word, Such as It Is, is to Be

Sought, Not in Our Own Outer and Sensible Word, But in the Inner and

Mental One. There is the Greatest Possible Unlikeness Between Our Word

and Knowledge and the Divine Word and Knowledge.

20. Accordingly, the word that sounds outwardly is the sign of the word

that gives light inwardly; which latter has the greater claim to be

called a word. For that which is uttered with the mouth of the flesh,

is the articulate sound of a word; and is itself also called a word, on

account of that to make which outwardly apparent it is itself assumed.

For our word is so made in some way into an articulate sound of the

body, by assuming that articulate sound by which it may be manifested

to men's senses, as the Word of God was made flesh, by assuming that

flesh in which itself also might be manifested to men's senses. And as

our word becomes an articulate sound, yet is not changed into one; so

the Word of God became flesh, but far be it from us to say He was

changed into flesh. For both that word of ours became an articulate

sound, and that other Word became flesh, by assuming it, not by

consuming itself so as to be changed into it. And therefore whoever

desires to arrive at any likeness, be it of what sort it may, of the

Word of God, however in many respects unlike, must not regard the word

of ours that sounds in the ears, either when it is uttered in an

articulate sound or when it is silently thought. For the words of all

tongues that are uttered in sound are also silently thought, and the

mind runs over verses while the bodily mouth is silent. And not only

the numbers of syllables, but the tunes also of songs, since they are

corporeal, and pertain to that sense of the body which is called

hearing, are at hand by certain incorporeal images appropriate to them,

to those who think of them, and who silently revolve all these things.

But we must pass by this, in order to arrive at that word of man, by

the likeness of which, be it of what sort it may, the Word of God may

be somehow seen as in an enigma. Not that word which was spoken to this

or that prophet, and of which it is said, "Now the word of God grew and

multiplied;" [978] and again, "Faith then cometh by hearing, and

hearing by the word of Christ;" [979] and again, "When ye received the

word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men

but, as it is in truth, the word of God" [980] (and there are countless

other like sayings in the Scriptures respecting the word of God, which

is disseminated in the sounds of many and diverse languages through the

hearts and mouths of men; and which is therefore called the word of

God, because the doctrine that is delivered is not human, but

divine);--but we are now seeking to see, in whatsoever way we can, by

means of this likeness, that Word of God of which it is said, "The Word

was God;" of which it is said, "All things were made by Him;" of which

it is said, "The Word became flesh;" of which it is said "The Word of

God on high is the fountain of wisdom." [981] We must go on, then, to

that word of man, to the word of the rational animal, to the word of

that image of God, that is not born of God, but made by God; which is

neither utterable in sound nor capable of being thought under the

likeness of sound such as must needs be with the word of any tongue;

but which precedes all the signs by which it is signified, and is

begotten from the knowledge that continues in the mind, when that same

knowledge is spoken inwardly according as it really is. For the sight

of thinking is exceedingly like the sight of knowledge. For when it is

uttered by sound, or by any bodily sign, it is not uttered according as

it really is, but as it can be seen or heard by the body. When,

therefore, that is in the word which is in the knowledge, then there is

a true word, and truth, such as is looked for from man; such that what

is in the knowledge is also in the word, and what is not in the

knowledge is also not in the word. Here may be recognized, "Yea, yea;

nay, nay." [982] And so this likeness of the image that is made,

approaches as nearly as is possible to that likeness of the image that

is born, by which God the Son is declared to be in all things like in

substance to the Father. We must notice in this enigma also another

likeness of the word of God; viz. that, as it is said of that Word,

"All things were made by Him," where God is declared to have made the

universe by His only-begotten Son, so there are no works of man that

are not first spoken in his heart: whence it is written, "A word is the

beginning of every work." [983] But here also, it is when the word is

true, that then it is the beginning of a good work. And a word is true

when it is begotten from the knowledge of working good works, so that

there too may be preserved the "yea yea, nay nay;" in order that

whatever is in that knowledge by which we are to live, may be also in

the word by which we are to work, and whatever is not in the one may

not be in the other. Otherwise such a word will be a lie, not truth;

and what comes thence will be a sin, and not a good work. There is yet

this other likeness of the Word of God in this likeness of our word,

that there can be a word of ours with no work following it, but there

cannot be any work unless a word precedes; just as the Word of God

could have existed though no creature existed, but no creature could

exist unless by that Word by which all things are made. And therefore

not God the Father, not the Holy Spirit, not the Trinity itself, but

the Son only, which is the Word of God, was made flesh; although the

Trinity was the maker: in order that we might live rightly through our

word following and imitating His example, i.e. by having no lie in

either the thought or the work of our word. But this perfection of this

image is one to be at some time hereafter. In order to attain this it

is that the good master teaches us by Christian faith, and by pious

doctrine, that "with face unveiled" from the veil of the law, which is

the shadow of things to come, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the

Lord," i.e. gazing at it through a glass, "we may be transformed into

the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord;"

[984] as we explained above.

21. When, therefore, this image shall have been renewed to perfection

by this transformation, then we shall be like God, because we shall see

Him, not through a glass, but "as He is;" [985] which the Apostle Paul

expresses by "face to face." [986] But now, who can explain how great

is the unlikeness also, in this glass, in this enigma, in this likeness

such as it is? Yet I will touch upon some points, as I can, by which to

indicate it.

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[978] Acts vi. 7

[979] Rom. x. 17

[980] 1 Thess. ii. 13

[981] Ecclus. i. 5

[982] Matt. v. 37

[983] Ecclus. xxxvii. 20

[984] 2 Cor. iii. 17

[985] 1 John iii. 4

[986] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

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Chapter 12.--The Academic Philosophy.

First, of what sort and how great is the very knowledge itself that a

man can attain, be he ever so skillful and learned, by which our

thought is formed with truth, when we speak what we know? For to pass

by those things that come into the mind from the bodily senses, among

which so many are otherwise than they seem to be, that he who is

overmuch pressed down by their resemblance to truth, seems sane to

himself, but really is not sane;--whence it is that the Academic [987]

philosophy has so prevailed as to be still more wretchedly insane by

doubting all things;--passing by, then, those things that come into the

mind by the bodily senses, how large a proportion is left of things

which we know in such manner as we know that we live? In regard to

this, indeed, we are absolutely without any fear lest perchance we are

being deceived by some resemblance of the truth; since it is certain,

that he who is deceived, yet lives. And this again is not reckoned

among those objects of sight that are presented from without, so that

the eye may be deceived in it; in such way as it is when an oar in the

water looks bent, and towers seem to move as you sail past them, and a

thousand other things that are otherwise than they seem to be: for this

is not a thing that is discerned by the eye of the flesh. The knowledge

by which we know that we live is the most inward of all knowledge, of

which even the Academic cannot insinuate: Perhaps you are asleep, and

do not know it, and you see things in your sleep. For who does not know

that what people see in dreams is precisely like what they see when

awake? But he who is certain of the knowledge of his own life, does not

therein say, I know I am awake, but, I know I am alive; therefore,

whether he be asleep or awake, he is alive. Nor can he be deceived in

that knowledge by dreams; since it belongs to a living man both to

sleep and to see in sleep. Nor can the Academic again say, in

confutation of this knowledge: Perhaps you are mad, and do not know it:

for what madmen see is precisely like what they also see who are sane;

but he who is mad is alive. Nor does he answer the Academic by saying,

I know I am not mad, but, I know I am alive. Therefore he who says he

knows he is alive, can neither be deceived nor lie. Let a thousand

kinds, then, of deceitful objects of sight be presented to him who

says, I know I am alive; yet he will fear none of them, for he who is

deceived yet is alive. But if such things alone pertain to human

knowledge, they are very few indeed; unless that they can be so

multiplied in each kind, as not only not to be few, but to reach in the

result to infinity. For he who says, I know I am alive, says that he

knows one single thing. Further, if he says, I know that I know I am

alive, now there are two; but that he knows these two is a third thing

to know. And so he can add a fourth and a fifth, and innumerable

others, if he holds out. But since he cannot either comprehend an

innumerable number by additions of units, or say a thing innumerable

times, he comprehends this at least, and with perfect certainty, viz.

that this is both true and so innumerable that he cannot truly

comprehend and say its infinite number. This same thing may be noticed

also in the case of a will that is certain. For it would be an impudent

answer to make to any one who should say, I will to be happy, that

perhaps you are deceived. And if he should say, I know that I will

this, and I know that I know it, he can add yet a third to these two,

viz. that he knows these two; and a fourth, that he knows that he knows

these two; and so on ad infinitum. Likewise, if any one were to say, I

will not to be mistaken; will it not be true, whether he is mistaken or

whether he is not, that nevertheless he does will not to be mistaken?

Would it not be most impudent to say to him, Perhaps you are deceived?

when beyond doubt, whereinsoever he may be deceived, he is nevertheless

not deceived in thinking that he wills not to be deceived. And if he

says he knows this, he adds any number he chooses of things known, and

perceives that number to be infinite. For he who says, I will not to be

deceived, and I know that I will not to be so, and I know that I know

it, is able now to set forth an infinite number here also, however

awkward may be the expression of it. And other things too are to be

found capable of refuting the Academics, who contend that man can know

nothing. But we must restrict ourselves, especially as this is not the

subject we have undertaken in the present work. There are three books

of ours on that subject, [988] written in the early time of our

conversion, which he who can and will read, and who understands them,

will doubtless not be much moved by any of the many arguments which

they have found out against the discovery of truth. For whereas there

are two kinds of knowable things,--one, of those things which the mind

perceives by the bodily senses; the other, of those which it perceives

by itself,--these philosophers have babbled much against the bodily

senses, but have never been able to throw doubt upon those most certain

perceptions of things true, which the mind knows by itself, such as is

that which I have mentioned, I know that I am alive. But far be it from

us to doubt the truth of what we have learned by the bodily senses;

since by them we have learned to know the heaven and the earth, and

those things in them which are known to us, so far as He who created

both us and them has willed them to be within our knowledge. Far be it

from us too to deny, that we know what we have learned by the testimony

of others: otherwise we know not that there is an ocean; we know not

that the lands and cities exist which most copious report commends to

us; we know not that those men were, and their works, which we have

learned by reading history; we know not the news that is daily brought

us from this quarter or that, and confirmed by consistent and

conspiring evidence; lastly, we know not at what place or from whom we

have been born: since in all these things we have believed the

testimony of others. And if it is most absurd to say this, then we must

confess, that not only our own senses, but those of other persons also,

have added very much indeed to our knowledge.

22. All these things, then, both those which the human mind knows by

itself, and those which it knows by the bodily senses, and those which

it has received and knows by the testimony of others, are laid up and

retained in the storehouse of the memory; and from these is begotten a

word that is true when we speak what we know, but a word that is before

all sound, before all thought of a sound. For the word is then most

like to the thing known, from which also its image is begotten, since

the sight of thinking arises from the sight of knowledge; when it is a

word belonging to no tongue, but is a true word concerning a true

thing, having nothing of its own, but wholly derived from that

knowledge from which it is born. Nor does it signify when he learned

it, who speaks what he knows; for sometimes he says it immediately upon

learning it; provided only that the word is true, i.e. sprung from

things that are known.

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[987] [Not the Old Academy of Plato and his immediate disciples, who

were anti-skeptical; but the new Academy, to which Augustin has

previously referred (XIV. xix. 26). This was skeptical--W.G.T.S.]

[988] Libri Tres contra Academicos

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Chapter 13.--Still Further of the Difference Between the Knowledge and

Word of Our Mind, and the Knowledge and Word of God.

But is it so, that God the Father, from whom is born the Word that is

God of God,--is it so, then, that God the Father, in respect to that

wisdom which He is to Himself, has learned some things by His bodily

senses, and others by Himself? Who could say this, who thinks of God,

not as a rational animal, but as One above the rational soul? So far at

least as He can be thought of, by those who place Him above all animals

and all souls, although they see Him by conjecture through a glass and

in an enigma, not yet face to face as He is. Is it that God the Father

has learned those very things which He knows, not by the body, for He

has none, but by Himself, from elsewhere from some one? or has stood in

need of messengers or witnesses that He might know them? Certainly not;

since His own perfection enables Him to know all things that He knows.

No doubt He has messengers, viz. the angels; but not to announce to Him

things that He knows not, for there is nothing He does not know. But

their good lies in consulting the truth about their own works. And this

it is which is meant by saying that they bring Him word of some things,

not that He may learn of them, but they of Him by His word without

bodily sound. They bring Him word, too, of that which He wills, being

sent by Him to whomever He wills, and hearing all from Him by that word

of His, i.e. finding in His truth what themselves are to do: what, to

whom, and when, they are to bring word. For we too pray to Him, yet do

not inform Him what our necessities are. "For your Father knoweth,"

says His Word, "what things ye have need of, before you ask Him." [989]

Nor did He become acquainted with them, so as to know them, at any

definite time; but He knew beforehand, without any beginning, all

things to come in time, and among them also both what we should ask of

Him, and when; and to whom He would either listen or not listen, and on

what subjects. And with respect to all His creatures, both spiritual

and corporeal, He does not know them because they are, but they are

because He knows them. For He was not ignorant of what He was about to

create; therefore He created because He knew; He did not know because

He created. Nor did He know them when created in any other way than He

knew them when still to be created, for nothing accrued to His wisdom

from them; but that wisdom remained as it was, while they came into

existence as it was fitting and when it was fitting. So, too, it is

written in the book of Ecclesiasticus: "All things are known to Him ere

ever they were created: so also after they were perfected." [990] "So,"

he says, not otherwise; so were they known to Him, both ere ever they

were created, and after they were perfected. This knowledge, therefore,

is far unlike our knowledge. And the knowledge of God is itself also

His wisdom, and His wisdom is itself His essence or substance. Because

in the marvellous simplicity of that nature, it is not one thing to be

wise and another to be, but to be wise is to be; as we have often said

already also in the earlier books. But our knowledge is in most things

capable both of being lost and of being recovered, because to us to be

is not the same as to know or to be wise; since it is possible for us

to be, even although we know not, neither are wise in that which we

have learned from elsewhere. Therefore, as our knowledge is unlike that

knowledge of God, so is our word also, which is born from our

knowledge, unlike that Word of God which is born from the essence of

the Father. And this is as if I should say, born from the Father's

knowledge, from the Father's wisdom; or still more exactly, from the

Father who is knowledge, from the Father who is wisdom.

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[989] Matt. vi. 8

[990] Ecclus. xxiii. 20

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Chapter 14.--The Word of God is in All Things Equal to the Father, from

Whom It is.

23. The Word of God, then, the only-begotten Son of the Father, in all

things like and equal to the Father, God of God, Light of Light, Wisdom

of Wisdom, Essence of Essence, is altogether that which the Father is,

yet is not the Father, because the one is Son, the other is Father. And

hence He knows all that the Father knows; but to Him to know, as to be,

is from the Father, for to know and to be is there one. And therefore,

as to be is not to the Father from the Son, so neither is to know.

Accordingly, as though uttering Himself, the Father begat the Word

equal to Himself in all things; for He would not have uttered Himself

wholly and perfectly, if there were in His Word anything more or less

than in Himself. And here that is recognized in the highest sense,

"Yea, yea; nay, nay." [991] And therefore this Word is truly truth,

since whatever is in that knowledge from which it is born is also in

itself and whatever is not in that knowledge is not in the Word. And

this Word can never have anything false, because it is unchangeable, as

He is from whom it is. For "the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what

He seeth the Father do." [992] Through power He cannot do this; nor is

it infirmity, but strength, by which truth cannot be false. Therefore

God the Father knows all things in Himself, knows all things in the

Son; but in Himself as though Himself, in the Son as though His own

Word which Word is spoken concerning all those things that are in

Himself. Similarly the Son knows all things, viz. in Himself, as things

which are born of those which the Father knows in Himself, and in the

Father, as those of which they are born, which the Son Himself knows in

Himself. The Father then, and the Son know mutually; but the one by

begetting, the other by being born. And each of them sees

simultaneously all things that are in their knowledge, in their wisdom,

in their essence: not by parts or singly, as though by alternately

looking from this side to that, and from that side to this, and again

from this or that object to this or that object, so as not to be able

to see some things without at the same time not seeing others; but, as

I said, sees all things simultaneously, whereof there is not one that

He does not always see.

24. And that word, then, of ours which has neither sound nor thought of

sound, but is of that thing in seeing which we speak inwardly, and

which therefore belongs to no tongue; and hence is in some sort like,

in this enigma, to that Word of God which is also God; since this too

is born of our knowledge, in such manner as that also is born of the

knowledge of the Father: such a word, I say, of ours, which we find to

be in some way like that Word, let us not be slow to consider how

unlike also it is, as it may be in our power to utter it.

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[991] Matt. v. 37

[992] John v. 19

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Chapter 15.--How Great is the Unlikeness Between Our Word and the

Divine Word. Our Word Cannot Be or Be Called Eternal.

Is our word, then, born of our knowledge only? Do we not say many

things also that we do not know? And say them not with doubt, but

thinking them to be true; while if perchance they are true in respect

to the things themselves of which we speak, they are yet not true in

respect to our word, because a word is not true unless it is born of a

thing that is known. In this sense, then, our word is false, not when

we lie, but when we are deceived. And when we doubt, our word is not

yet of the thing of which we doubt, but it is a word concerning the

doubt itself. For although we do not know whether that is true of which

we doubt, yet we do know that we doubt; and hence, when we say we

doubt, we say a word that is true, for we say what we know. And what,

too, of its being possible for us to lie? And when we do, certainly we

both willingly and knowingly have a word that is false, wherein there

is a word that is true, viz. that we lie, for this we know. And when we

confess that we have lied, we speak that which is true; for we say what

we know, for we know that we lied. But that Word which is God, and can

do more than we, cannot do this. For it "can do nothing except what it

sees the Father do;" and it "speaks not of itself," but it has from the

Father all that it speaks, since the Father speaks it in a special way;

and the great might of that Word is that it cannot lie, because there

cannot be there "yea and nay," [993] but "yea yea, nay nay." Well, but

that is not even to be called a word, which is not true. I willingly

assent, if so it be. What, then, if our word is true and therefore is

rightly called a word? Is it the case that, as we can speak of sight of

sight, and knowledge of knowledge, so we can speak of essence of

essence, as that Word of God is especially spoken of, and is especially

to be spoken of? Why so? Because to us, to be is not the same as to

know; since we know many things which in some sense live by memory, and

so in some sense die by being forgotten: and so, when those things are

no longer in our knowledge, yet we still are: and while our knowledge

has slipped away and perished out of our mind, we are still alive.

25. In respect to those things also which are so known that they can

never escape the memory, because they are present, and belong to the

nature of the mind itself,--as, e.g., the knowing that we are alive

(for this continues so long as the mind continues; and because the mind

continues always, this also continues always);--I say, in respect to

this and to any other like instances, in which we are the rather to

contemplate the image of God, it is difficult to make out in what way,

although they are always known, yet because they are not always also

thought of, an eternal word can be spoken respecting them, when our

word is spoken in our thought. For it is eternal to the soul to live;

it is eternal to know that it lives. Yet it is not eternal to it to be

thinking of its own life, or to be thinking of its own knowledge of its

own life; since, in entering upon this or that occupation, it will

cease to think of this, although it does not cease from knowing it. And

hence it comes to pass, that if there can be in the mind any knowledge

that is eternal, while the thought of that knowledge cannot be eternal,

and any inner and true word of ours is only said by our thought, then

God alone can be understood to have a Word that is eternal, and

co-eternal with Himself. Unless, perhaps, we are to say that the very

possibility of thought--since that which is known is capable of being

truly thought, even at the time when it is not being

thought--constitutes a word as perpetual as the knowledge itself is

perpetual. But how is that a word which is not yet formed in the vision

of the thought? How will it be like the knowledge of which it is born,

if it has not the form of that knowledge, and is only now called a word

because it can have it? For it is much as if one were to say that a

word is to be so called because it can be a word. But what is this that

can be a word, and is therefore already held worthy of the name of a

word? What, I say, is this thing that is formable, but not yet formed,

except a something in our mind, which we toss to and fro by revolving

it this way or that, while we think of first one thing and then

another, according as they are found by or occur to us? And the true

word then comes into being, when, as I said, that which we toss to and

fro by revolving it arrives at that which we know, and is formed by

that, in taking its entire likeness; so that in what manner each thing

is known, in that manner also it is thought, i.e. is said in this

manner in the heart, without articulate sound, without thought of

articulate sound, such as no doubt belongs to some particular tongue.

And hence if we even admit, in order not to dispute laboriously about a

name, that this something of our mind, which can be formed from our

knowledge, is to be already called a word, even before it is so formed,

because it is, so to say, already formable, who would not see how great

would be the unlikeness between it and that Word of God, which is so in

the form of God, as not to have been formable before it was formed, or

to have been capable at any time of being formless, but is a simple

form, and simply equal to Him from whom it is, and with whom it is

wonderfully co-eternal?

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[993] 2 Cor. i. 19

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Chapter 16.--Our Word is Never to Be Equalled to the Divine Word, Not

Even When We Shall Be Like God.

Wherefore that Word of God is in such wise so called, as not to be

called a thought of God, lest we believe that there is anything in God

which can be revolved, so that it at one time receives and at another

recovers a form, so as to be a word, and again can lose that form and

be revolved in some sense formlessly. Certainly that excellent master

of speech knew well the force of words, and had looked into the nature

of thought, who said in his poem, "And revolves with himself the

varying issues of war," [994] i.e. thinks of them. That Son of God,

then, is not called the Thought of God, but the Word of God. For our

own thought, attaining to what we know, and formed thereby, is our true

word. And so the Word of God ought to be understood without any thought

on the part of God, so that it be understood as the simple form itself,

but containing nothing formable that can be also unformed. There are,

indeed, passages of Holy Scripture that speak of God's thoughts; but

this is after the same mode of speech by which the forgetfulness of God

is also there spoken of, whereas in strict propriety of language there

is in Him certainly no forgetfulness.

26. Wherefore, since we have found now in this enigma so great an

unlikeness to God and the Word of God, wherein yet there was found

before some likeness, this, too, must be admitted, that even when we

shall be like Him, when "we shall see Him as He is" [995] (and

certainly he who said this was aware beyond doubt of our present

unlikeness), not even then shall we be equal to Him in nature. For that

nature which is made is ever less than that which makes. And at that

time our word will not indeed be false, because we shall neither lie

nor be deceived. Perhaps, too, our thoughts will no longer revolve by

passing and repassing from one thing to another, but we shall see all

our knowledge at once, and at one glance. Still, when even this shall

have come to pass, if indeed it shall come to pass, the creature which

was formable will indeed have been formed, so that nothing will be

wanting of that form to which it ought to attain; yet nevertheless it

will not be to be equalled to that simplicity wherein there is not

anything formable, which has been formed or reformed, but only form;

and which being neither formless nor formed, itself is eternal and

unchangeable substance.

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[994] �n. x. 159, 160.

[995] 1 John iii. 2

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Chapter 17.--How the Holy Spirit is Called Love, and Whether He Alone

is So Called. That the Holy Spirit is in the Scriptures Properly Called

by the Name of Love.

27. We have sufficiently spoken of the Father and of the Son, so far as

was possible for us to see through this glass and in this enigma. We

must now treat of the Holy Spirit, so far as by God's gift it is

permitted to see Him. And the Holy Spirit, according to the Holy

Scriptures, is neither of the Father alone, nor of the Son alone, but

of both; and so intimates to us a mutual love, wherewith the Father and

the Son reciprocally love one another. But the language of the Word of

God, in order to exercise us, has caused those things to be sought into

with the greater zeal, which do not lie on the surface, but are to be

scrutinized in hidden depths, and to be drawn out from thence. The

Scriptures, accordingly, have not said, The Holy Spirit is Love. If

they had said so, they would have done away with no small part of this

inquiry. But they have said, "God is love;" [996] so that it is

uncertain and remains to be inquired whether God the Father is love, or

God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost, or the Trinity itself which is God.

For we are not going to say that God is called Love because love itself

is a substance worthy of the name of God, but because it is a gift of

God, as it is said to God, "Thou art my patience." [997] For this is

not said because our patience is God's substance, but in that He

Himself gives it to us; as it is elsewhere read, "Since from Him is my

patience." [998] For the usage of words itself in Scripture

sufficiently refutes this interpretation; for "Thou art my patience" is

of the same kind as "Thou, Lord, art my hope," [999] and "The Lord my

God is my mercy," [1000] and many like texts. And it is not said, O

Lord my love, or, Thou art my love, or, God my love; but it is said

thus, "God is love," as it is said, "God is a Spirit." [1001] And he

who does not discern this, must ask understanding from the Lord, not an

explanation from us; for we cannot say anything more clearly.

28. "God," then, "is love;" but the question is, whether the Father, or

the Son, or the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity itself: because the Trinity

is not three Gods, but one God. But I have already argued above in this

book, that the Trinity, which is God, is not so to be understood from

those three things which have been set forth in the trinity of our

mind, as that the Father should be the memory of all three, and the Son

the understanding of all three, and the Holy Spirit the love of all

three; as though the Father should neither understand nor love for

Himself, but the Son should understand for Him, and the Holy Spirit

love for Him, but He Himself should remember only both for Himself and

for them; nor the Son remember nor love for Himself, but the Father

should remember for Him, and the Holy Spirit love for Him, but He

Himself understand only both for Himself and them; nor likewise that

the Holy Spirit should neither remember nor understand for Himself, but

the Father should remember for Him, and the Son understand for Him,

while He Himself should love only both for Himself and for them; but

rather in this way, that both all and each have all three each in His

own nature. Nor that these things should differ in them, as in us

memory is one thing, understanding another, love or charity another,

but should be some one thing that is equivalent to all, as wisdom

itself; and should be so contained in the nature of each, as that He

who has it is that which He has, as being an unchangeable and simple

substance. If all this, then, has been understood, and so far as is

granted to us to see or conjecture in things so great, has been made

patently true, I know not why both the Father and the Son and the Holy

Spirit should not be called Love, and all together one love, just as

both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit is called Wisdom, and

all together not three, but one wisdom. For so also both the Father is

God, and the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, and all three together

one God.

29. And yet it is not to no purpose that in this Trinity the Son and

none other is called the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit and none

other the Gift of God, and God the Father alone is He from whom the

Word is born, and from whom the Holy Spirit principally proceeds. And

therefore I have added the word principally, because we find that the

Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son also. But the Father gave Him this

too, not as to one already existing, and not yet having it; but

whatever He gave to the only-begotten Word, He gave by begetting Him.

Therefore He so begat Him as that the common Gift should proceed from

Him also, and the Holy Spirit should be the Spirit of both. This

distinction, then, of the inseparable Trinity is not to be merely

accepted in passing, but to be carefully considered; for hence it was

that the Word of God was specially called also the Wisdom of God,

although both Father and Holy Spirit are wisdom. If, then, any one of

the three is to be specially called Love, what more fitting than that

it should be the Holy Spirit?--namely, that in that simple and highest

nature, substance should not be one thing and love another, but that

substance itself should be love, and love itself should be substance,

whether in the Father, or in the Son, or in the Holy Spirit; and yet

that the Holy Spirit should be specially called Love.

30. Just as sometimes all the utterances of the Old Testament together

in the Holy Scriptures are signified by the name of the Law. For the

apostle, in citing a text from the prophet Isaiah, where he says, "With

divers tongues and with divers lips will I speak to this people," yet

prefaced it by, "It is written in the Law." [1002] And the Lord Himself

says, "It is written in their Law, They hated me without a cause,"

[1003] whereas this is read in the Psalm. [1004] And sometimes that

which was given by Moses is specially called the Law: as it is said,

"The Law and the Prophets were until John;" [1005] and, "On these two

commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." [1006] Here,

certainly, that is specially called the Law which was from Mount Sinai.

And the Psalms, too, are signified under the name of the Prophets; and

yet in another place the Saviour Himself says, "All things must needs

be fulfilled, which are written in the Law, and the Prophets, and the

Psalms concerning me." [1007] Here, on the other side, He meant the

name of Prophets to be taken as not including the Psalms. Therefore the

Law with the Prophets and the Psalms taken together is called the Law

universally, and the Law is also specially so called which was given by

Moses. Likewise the Prophets are so called in common together with the

Psalms, and they are also specially so called exclusive of the Psalms.

And many other instances might be adduced to teach us, that many names

of things are both put universally, and also specially applied to

particular things, were it not that a long discourse is to be avoided

in a plain case. I have said so much, lest any one should think that it

was therefore unsuitable for us to call the Holy Spirit Love, because

both God the Father and God the Son can be called Love.

31. As, then, we call the only Word of God specially by the name of

Wisdom, although universally both the Holy Spirit and the Father

Himself is wisdom; so the Holy Spirit is specially called by the name

of Love, although universally both the Father and the Son are love. But

the Word of God, i.e. the only-begotten Son of God, is expressly called

the Wisdom of God by the mouth of the apostle, where he says, "Christ

the power of God, and the wisdom of God." [1008] But where the Holy

Spirit is called Love, is to be found by careful scrutiny of the

language of John the apostle, who, after saying, "Beloved, let us love

one another, for love is of God," has gone on to say, "And every one

that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not,

knoweth not God; for God is love." Here, manifestly, he has called that

love God, which he said was of God; therefore God of God is love. But

because both the Son is born of God the Father, and the Holy Spirit

proceeds from God the Father, it is rightly asked which of them we

ought here to think is the rather called the love that is God. For the

Father only is so God as not to be of God; and hence the love that is

so God as to be of God, is either the Son or the Holy Spirit. But when,

in what follows, the apostle had mentioned the love of God, not that by

which we love Him, but that by which He "loved us, and sent His Son to

be a propitiator for our sins," [1009] and thereupon had exhorted us

also to love one another, and that so God would abide in us,--because,

namely, he had called God Love; immediately, in his wish to speak yet

more expressly on the subject, "Hereby," he says, "know we that we

dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit."

Therefore the Holy Spirit, of whom He hath given us, makes us to abide

in God, and Him in us; and this it is that love does. Therefore He is

the God that is love. Lastly, a little after, when he had repeated the

same thing, and had said "God is love," he immediately subjoined, "And

he who abideth in love, abideth in God, and God abideth in him;" whence

he had said above, "Hereby we know that we abide in Him, and He in us,

because He hath given us of His Spirit." He therefore is signified,

where we read that God is love. Therefore God the Holy Spirit, who

proceedeth from the Father, when He has been given to man, inflames him

to the love of God and of his neighbor, and is Himself love. For man

has not whence to love God, unless from God; and therefore he says a

little after, "Let us love Him, because He first loved us." [1010] The

Apostle Paul, too, says, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts

by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." [1011]

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[996] 1 John iv. 16

[997] Ps. lxxi. 5

[998] Ps. lxii. 5

[999] Ps. xci. 9

[1000] Ps. lix. 17

[1001] John iv. 24

[1002] Isa. xxviii. 11 and 1 Cor. xiv. 21

[1003] John xv. 25

[1004] Ps. xxxv. 19

[1005] Matt. xi. 13

[1006] Matt. xxii. 40

[1007] Luke xxiv. 44

[1008] 1 Cor. i. 24

[1009] 1 John iv. 10

[1010] 1 John iv. 7-19

[1011] Rom. v. 5

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Chapter 18.--No Gift of God is More Excellent Than Love.

32. There is no gift of God more excellent than this. It alone

distinguishes the sons of the eternal kingdom and the sons of eternal

perdition. Other gifts, too, are given by the Holy Spirit; but without

love they profit nothing. Unless, therefore, the Holy Spirit is so far

imparted to each, as to make him one who loves God and his neighbor, he

is not removed from the left hand to the right. Nor is the Spirit

specially called the Gift, unless on account of love. And he who has

not this love, "though he speak with the tongues of men and angels, is

sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; and though he have the gift of

prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and though he have

all faith, so that he can remove mountains, he is nothing; and though

he bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and though he give his body

to be burned, it profiteth him nothing." [1012] How great a good, then,

is that without which goods so great bring no one to eternal life! But

love or charity itself,--for they are two names for one thing,--if he

have it that does not speak with tongues, nor has the gift of prophecy,

nor knows all mysteries and all knowledge, nor gives all his goods to

the poor, either because he has none to give or because some necessity

hinders, nor delivers his body to be burned, if no trial of such a

suffering overtakes him, brings that man to the kingdom, so that faith

itself is only rendered profitable by love, since faith without love

can indeed exist, but cannot profit. And therefore also the Apostle

Paul says, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor

uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love:" [1013] so

distinguishing it from that faith by which even "the devils believe and

tremble." [1014] Love, therefore, which is of God and is God, is

specially the Holy Spirit, by whom the love of God is shed abroad in

our hearts, by which love the whole Trinity dwells in us. And therefore

most rightly is the Holy Spirit, although He is God, called also the

gift of God. [1015] And by that gift what else can properly be

understood except love, which brings to God, and without which any

other gift of God whatsoever does not bring to God?

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[1012] 1 Cor. xiii. 1-3

[1013] Gal. v. 6

[1014] Jas. ii. 19

[1015] Acts viii. 20

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Chapter 19.--The Holy Spirit is Called the Gift of God in the

Scriptures. By the Gift of the Holy Spirit is Meant the Gift Which is

the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Specially Called Love, Although Not

Only the Holy Spirit in the Trinity is Love.

33. Is this too to be proved, that the Holy Spirit is called in the

sacred books the gift of God? If people look for this too, we have in

the Gospel according to John the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who

says, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink: he that

believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow

rivers of living water." And the evangelist has gone on further to add,

"And this He spake of the Spirit, which they should receive who believe

in Him." [1016] And hence Paul the apostle also says, "And we have all

been made to drink into one Spirit." [1017] The question then is,

whether that water is called the gift of God which is the Holy Spirit.

But as we find here that this water is the Holy Spirit, so we find

elsewhere in the Gospel itself that this water is called the gift of

God. For when the same Lord was talking with the woman of Samaria at

the well, to whom He had said, "Give me to drink," and she had answered

that the Jews "have no dealings" with the Samaritans, Jesus answered

and said unto her, "If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is

that says to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him,

and He would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto Him,

Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then

hast thou this living water, etc.? Jesus answered and said unto her,

Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whose

shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but

the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a fountain of water

springing up unto eternal life." [1018] Because this living water,

then, as the evangelist has explained to us, is the Holy Spirit,

without doubt the Spirit is the gift of God, of which the Lord says

here, "If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is that saith

unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He

would have given thee living water." For that which is in the one

passage, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," is in

the other, "shall be in him a fountain of water springing up unto

eternal life."

34. Paul the apostle also says, "To each of us is given grace according

to the measure of the gift of Christ;" and then, that he might show

that by the gift of Christ he meant the Holy Spirit, he has gone on to

add, "Wherefore He saith, He hath ascended up on high, He hath led

captivity captive, and hath given gifts to men." [1019] And every one

knows that the Lord Jesus, when He had ascended into heaven after the

resurrection from the dead, gave the Holy Spirit, with whom they who

believed were filled, and spake with the tongues of all nations. And

let no one object that he says gifts, not gift: for he quoted the text

from the Psalm. And in the Psalm it is read thus, "Thou hast ascended

up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts

in men." [1020] For so it stands in many mss., especially in the Greek

mss., and so we have it translated from the Hebrew. The apostle

therefore said gifts, as the prophet did, not gift. But whereas the

prophet said, "Thou hast received gifts in men," the apostle has

preferred saying, "He gave gifts to men:" and this in order that the

fullest sense may be gathered from both expressions, the one prophetic,

the other apostolic; because both possess the authority of a divine

utterance. For both are true, as well that He gave to men, as that He

received in men. He gave to men, as the head to His own members: He

Himself that gave, received in men, no doubt as in His own members; on

account of which, namely, His own members, He cried from heaven, "Saul,

Saul, why persecutest thou me?" [1021] And of which, namely, His own

members, He says, "Since ye have done it to one of the least of these

that are mine, ye have done it unto me." [1022] Christ Himself,

therefore, both gave from heaven and received on earth. And further,

both prophet and apostle have said gifts for this reason, because many

gifts, which are proper to each, are divided in common to all the

members of Christ, by the Gift, which is the Holy Spirit. For each

severally has not all, but some have these and some have those;

although all have the Gift itself by which that which is proper to each

is divided to Him, i.e. the Holy Spirit. For elsewhere also, when he

had mentioned many gifts, "All these," he says, "worketh that one and

the self-same Spirit, dividing to each severally as He will." [1023]

And this word is found also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where it is

written, "God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, and

with divers miracles, and gifts [1024] of the Holy Ghost." [1025] And

so here, when he had said, "He ascended up on high, He led captivity

captive, He gave gifts to men," he says further, "But that He ascended,

what is it but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the

earth? He who descended is the same also that ascended up far above all

heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some apostles, some

prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and doctors." (This we

see is the reason why gifts are spoken of; because, as he says

elsewhere, "Are all apostles? are all prophets?" [1026] etc.) And here

he has added, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the

ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ." [1027] This is

the house which, as the Psalm sings, is built up after the captivity;

[1028] since the house of Christ, which house is called His Church, is

built up of those who have been rescued from the devil, by whom they

were held captive. But He Himself led this captivity captive, who

conquered the devil. And that he might not draw with him into eternal

punishment those who were to become the members of the Holy Head, He

bound him first by the bonds of righteousness, and then by those of

might. The devil himself, therefore, is called captivity, which He led

captive who ascended up on high, and gave gifts to men, or received

gifts in men.

35. And Peter the apostle, as we read in that canonical book, wherein

the Acts of the Apostles are recorded,--when the hearts of the Jews

were troubled as he spake of Christ, and they said, "Brethren, what

shall we do? tell us,"--said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every

one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of

sins: and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." [1029] And we

read likewise in the same book, that Simon Magus desired to give money

to the apostles, that he might receive power from them, whereby the

Holy Spirit might be given by the laying on of his hands. And the same

Peter said to him, "Thy money perish with thee: because thou hast

thought to purchase for money the gift of God." [1030] And in another

place of the same book, when Peter was speaking to Cornelius, and to

those who were with him, and was announcing and preaching Christ, the

Scripture says, "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy

Spirit fell upon all them that heard the word; and they of the

circumcision that believed, as many as came with Peter, were

astonished, because that upon the Gentiles also the gift of the Holy

Spirit was poured out. For they heard them speak with tongues, and

magnify God." [1031] And when Peter afterwards was giving an account to

the brethren that were at Jerusalem of this act of his, that he had

baptized those who were not circumcised, because the Holy Spirit, to

cut the knot of the question, had come upon them before they were

baptized, and the brethren at Jerusalem were moved when they heard it,

he says, after the rest of his words, "And when I began to speak to

them, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us in the beginning. And

I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, that John indeed

baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If,

therefore, He gave a like gift to them, as also to us who believed in

the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could hinder God from giving

to them the Holy Spirit?" [1032] And there are many other testimonies

of the Scriptures, which unanimously attest that the Holy Spirit is the

gift of God, in so far as He is given to those who by Him love God. But

it is too long a task to collect them all. And what is enough to

satisfy those who are not satisfied with those we have alleged?

36. Certainly they must be warned, since they now see that the Holy

Spirit is called the gift of God, that when they hear of "the gift of

the Holy Spirit," they should recognize therein that mode of speech

which is found in the words, "In the spoiling of the body of the

flesh." [1033] For as the body of the flesh is nothing else but the

flesh, so the gift of the Holy Spirit is nothing else but the Holy

Spirit. He is then the gift of God, so far as He is given to those to

whom He is given. But in Himself He is God, although He were given to

no one, because He was God co-eternal with the Father and the Son

before He was given to any one. Nor is He less than they, because they

give, and He is given. For He is given as a gift of God in such way

that He Himself also gives Himself as being God. For He cannot be said

not to be in His own power, of whom it is said, "The Spirit bloweth

where it listeth;" [1034] and the apostle says, as I have already

mentioned above, "All these things worketh that selfsame Spirit,

dividing to every man severally as He will." We have not here the

creating of Him that is given, and the rule of them that give, but the

concord of the given and the givers.

37. Wherefore, if Holy Scripture proclaims that God is love, and that

love is of God, and works this in us that we abide in God and He in us,

and that hereby we know this, because He has given us of His Spirit,

then the Spirit Himself is God, who is love. Next, if there be among

the gifts of God none greater than love, and there is no greater gift

of God than the Holy Spirit, what follows more naturally than that He

is Himself love, who is called both God and of God? And if the love by

which the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father, ineffably

demonstrates the communion of both, what is more suitable than that He

should be specially called love, who is the Spirit common to both? For

this is the sounder thing both to believe and to understand, that the

Holy Spirit is not alone love in that Trinity, yet is not specially

called love to no purpose, for the reasons we have alleged; just as He

is not alone in that Trinity either a Spirit or holy, since both the

Father is a Spirit, and the Son is a Spirit; and both the Father is

holy, and the Son is holy,--as piety doubts not. And yet it is not to

no purpose that He is specially called the Holy Spirit; for because He

is common to both, He is specially called that which both are in

common. Otherwise, if in that Trinity the Holy Spirit alone is love,

then doubtless the Son too turns out to be the Son, not of the Father

only, but also of the Holy Spirit. For He is both said and read in

countless places to be so,--the only-begotten Son of God the Father; as

that what the apostle says of God the Father is true too: "Who hath

delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the

kingdom of the Son of His own love." [1035] He did not say, "of His own

Son." If He had so said, He would have said it most truly, just as He

did say it most truly, because He has often said it; but He says, "the

Son of His own love." Therefore He is the Son also of the Holy Spirit,

if there is in that Trinity no love in God except the Holy Spirit. And

if this is most absurd, it remains that the Holy Spirit is not alone

therein love, but is specially so called for the reasons I have

sufficiently set forth; and that the words, "Son of His own love," mean

nothing else than His own beloved Son,--the Son, in short, of His own

substance. For the love in the Father, which is in His ineffably simple

nature, is nothing else than His very nature and substance itself,--as

we have already often said, and are not ashamed of often repeating. And

hence the "Son of His love," is none other than He who is born of His

substance.

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[1016] John vii. 37-39

[1017] 1 Cor. xii. 13

[1018] John iv. 7-14

[1019] Eph. iv. 7, 8

[1020] Ps. lxviii. 18

[1021] Acts ix. 4

[1022] Matt. xxv. 40

[1023] 1 Cor. xii. 11

[1024] Distributionibus

[1025] Heb. ii. 4

[1026] 1 Cor. xii. 29

[1027] Eph. iv. 7-12

[1028] Ps. cxxvi. 1

[1029] Acts ii. 37, 38

[1030] Acts viii. 18-20

[1031] Acts x. 44, 46

[1032] Acts xi. 15-17

[1033] Col. ii. 11

[1034] John iii. 6

[1035] Col. i. 13

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Chapter 20.--Against Eunomius, Saying that the Son of God is the Son,

Not of His Nature, But of His Will. Epilogue to What Has Been Said

Already.

38. Wherefore the logic of Eunomius, from whom the Eunomian heretics

sprang, is ridiculous. For when he could not understand, and would not

believe, that the only-begotten Word of God, by which all things were

made is the Son of God by nature,--i.e. born of the substance of the

Father,--he alleged that He was not the Son of His own nature or

substance or essence, but the Son of the will of God; so as to mean to

assert that the will by which he begot the Son was something accidental

[and optional] to God,--to wit, in that way that we ourselves sometimes

will something which before we did not will, as though it was not for

these very things that our nature is perceived to be changeable,--a

thing which far be it from us to believe of God. For it is written,

"Many are the thoughts in the heart of man, but the counsel of the Lord

abideth for ever," [1036] for no other reason except that we may

understand or believe that as God is eternal, so is His counsel for

eternity, and therefore unchangeable, as He himself is. And what is

said of thoughts can most truly be said also of the will: there are

many wills in the heart of man, but the will of the Lord abideth for

ever. Some, again, to escape saying that the only-begotten Word is the

Son of the counsel or will of God, have affirmed the same Word to be

the counsel or will itself of the Father. But it is better in my

judgment to say counsel of counsel, and will of will, as substance of

substance, wisdom of wisdom, that we may not be led into that

absurdity, which we have refuted already, and say that the Son makes

the Father wise or willing, if the Father has not in His own substance

either counsel or will. It was certainly a sharp answer that somebody

gave to the heretic, who most subtly asked him whether God begat the

Son willingly or unwillingly, in order that if he said unwillingly, it

would follow most absurdly that God was miserable; but if willingly, he

would forthwith infer, as though by an invincible reason, that at which

he was aiming, viz. that He was the Son, not of His nature, but of His

will. But that other, with great wakefulness, demanded of him in turn,

whether God the Father was God willingly or unwillingly; in order that

if he answered unwillingly, that misery would follow, which to believe

of God is sheer madness; and if he said willingly, it would be replied

to him, Then He is God too by His own will, not by His nature. What

remained, then, except that he should hold his peace, and discern that

he was himself bound by his own question in an insoluble bond? But if

any person in the Trinity is also to be specially called the will of

God, this name, like love, is better suited to the Holy Spirit; for

what else is love, except will?

39. I see that my argument in this book respecting the Holy Spirit,

according to the Holy Scripture, is quite enough for faithful men who

know already that the Holy Spirit is God, and not of another substance,

nor less than the Father and the Son,--as we have shown to be true in

the former books, according to the same Scriptures. We have reasoned

also from the creature which God made, and, as far as we could, have

warned those who demand a reason on such subjects to behold and

understand His invisible things, so far as they could, by those things

which are made [1037] and especially by the rational or intellectual

creature which is made after the image of God; through which glass, so

to say, they might discern as far as they could, if they could, the

Trinity which is God, in our own memory, understanding, will. Which

three things, if any one intelligently regards as by nature divinely

appointed in his own mind, and remembers by memory, contemplates by

understanding, embraces by love, how great a thing that is in the mind,

whereby even the eternal and unchangeable nature can be recollected,

beheld, desired, doubtless that man finds an image of that highest

Trinity. And he ought to refer the whole of his life to the

remembering, seeing, loving that highest Trinity, in order that he may

recollect, contemplate, be delighted by it. But I have warned him, so

far as seemed sufficient, that he must not so compare this image thus

wrought by that Trinity, and by his own fault changed for the worse, to

that same Trinity as to think it in all points like to it, but rather

that he should discern in that likeness, of whatever sort it be, a

great unlikeness also.

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[1036] Prov. xix. 21

[1037] Rom. i. 20

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Chapter 21.--Of the Likeness of the Father and of the Son Alleged to Be

in Our Memory and Understanding. Of the Likeness of the Holy Spirit in

Our Will or Love.

40. I have undoubtedly taken pains so far as I could, not indeed so

that the thing might be seen face to face, but that it might be seen by

this likeness in an enigma, [1038] in how small a degree soever, by

conjecture, in our memory and understanding, to intimate God the Father

and God the Son: i.e. God the begetter, who has in some way spoken by

His own co-eternal Word all things that He has in His substance; and

God His Word Himself, who Himself has nothing either more or less in

substance than is in Him, who, not lyingly but truly, hath begotten the

Word; and I have assigned to memory everything that we know, even if we

were not thinking of it, but to understanding the formation after a

certain special mode of the thought. For we are usually said to

understand what, by thinking of it, we have found to be true; and this

it is again that we leave in the memory. But that is a still more

hidden depth of our memory, wherein we found this also first when we

thought of it, and wherein an inner word is begotten such as belongs to

no tongue,--as it were, knowledge of knowledge, vision of vision, and

understanding which appears in [reflective] thought; of understanding

which had indeed existed before in the memory, but was latent there,

although, unless the thought itself had also some sort of memory of its

own, it would not return to those things which it had left in the

memory while it turned to think of other things.

41. But I have shown nothing in this enigma respecting the Holy Spirit

such as might appear to be like Him, except our own will, or love, or

affection, which is a stronger will, since our will which we have

naturally is variously affected, according as various objects are

adjacent or occur to it, by which we are attracted or offended. What,

then, is this? Are we to say that our will, when it is right, knows not

what to desire, what to avoid? Further, if it knows, doubtless then it

has a kind of knowledge of its own, such as cannot be without memory

and understanding. Or are we to listen to any one who should say that

love knows not what it does, which does not do wrongly? As, then, there

are both understanding and love in that primary memory wherein we find

provided and stored up that to which we can come in thought, because we

find also those two things there, when we find by thinking that we both

understand and love anything; which things were there too when we were

not thinking of them: and as there are memory and love in that

understanding, which is formed by thought, which true word we say

inwardly without the tongue of any nation when we say what we know; for

the gaze of our thought does not return to anything except by

remembering it, and does not care to return unless by loving it: so

love, which combines the vision brought about in the memory, and the

vision of the thought formed thereby, as if parent and offspring, would

not know what to love rightly unless it had a knowledge of what it

desired, which it cannot have without memory and understanding.

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[1038] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

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Chapter 22.--How Great the Unlikeness is Between the Image of the

Trinity Which We Have Found in Ourselves, and the Trinity Itself.

42. But since these are in one person, as man is, some one may say to

us, These three things, memory, understanding, and love, are mine, not

their own; neither do they do that which they do for themselves, but

for me, or rather I do it by them. For it is I who remember by memory,

and understand by understanding, and love by love: and when I direct

the mind's eye to my memory, and so say in my heart the thing I know,

and a true word is begotten of my knowledge, both are mine, both the

knowledge certainly and the word. For it is I who know, and it is I who

say in my heart the thing I know. And when I come to find in my memory

by thinking that I understand and love anything, which understanding

and love were there also before I thought thereon, it is my own

understanding and my own love that I find in my own memory, whereby it

is I that understand, and I that love, not those things themselves.

Likewise, when my thought is mindful, and wills to return to those

things which it had left in the memory, and to understand and behold

them, and say them inwardly, it is my own memory that is mindful, and

it is my own, not its will, wherewith it wills. When my very love

itself, too, remembers and understands what it ought to desire and what

to avoid, it remembers by my, not by its own memory; and understands

that which it intelligently loves by my, not by its own, understanding.

In brief, by all these three things, it is I that remember, I that

understand, I that love, who am neither memory, nor understanding, nor

love, but who have them. These things, then, can be said by a single

person, which has these three, but is not these three. But in the

simplicity of that Highest Nature, which is God, although there is one

God, there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

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Chapter 23.--Augustin Dwells Still Further on the Disparity Between the

Trinity Which is in Man, and the Trinity Which is God. The Trinity is

Now Seen Through a Glass by the Help of Faith, that It May Hereafter Be

More Clearly Seen in the Promised Sight Face to Face.

43. A thing itself, then, which is a trinity is different from the

image of a trinity in some other thing; by reason of which image, at

the same time that also in which these three things are is called an

image; just as both the panel, and the picture painted on it, are at

the same time called an image; but by reason of the picture painted on

it, the panel also is called by the name of image. But in that Highest

Trinity, which is incomparably above all things, there is so great an

indivisibility, that whereas a trinity of men cannot be called one man,

in that, there both is said to be and is one God, nor is that Trinity

in one God, but it is one God. Nor, again, as that image in the case of

man has these three things but is one person, so is it with the

Trinity; but therein are three persons, the Father of the Son, and the

Son of the Father, and the Spirit of both Father and Son. For although

the memory in the case of man, and especially that memory which beasts

have not--viz. the memory by which things intelligible are so contained

as that they have not entered that memory through the bodily senses

[1039] --has in this image of the Trinity, in proportion to its own

small measure, a likeness of the Father, incomparably unequal, yet of

some sort, whatever it be: and likewise the understanding in the case

of man, which by the purpose of the thought is formed thereby, when

that which is known is said, and there is a word of the heart belonging

to no tongue, has in its own great disparity some likeness of the Son;

and love in the case of man proceeding from knowledge, and combining

memory and understanding, as though common to parent and offspring,

whereby it is understood to be neither parent nor offspring, has in

that image, some, however exceedingly unequal, likeness of the Holy

Spirit: it is nevertheless not the case, that, as in that image of the

Trinity, these three are not one man, but belong to one man, so in the

Highest Trinity itself, of which this is an image, these three belong

to one God, but they are one God, and these are three persons, not one.

A thing certainly wonderfully ineffable, or ineffably wonderful, that

while this image of the Trinity is one person, but the Highest Trinity

itself is three persons, yet that Trinity of three persons is more

indivisible than this of one. For that [Trinity], in the nature of the

Divinity, or perhaps better Deity, is that which it is, and is mutually

and always unchangeably equal: and there was no time when it was not,

or when it was otherwise; and there will be no time when it will not

be, or when it will be otherwise. But these three that are in the

inadequate image, although they are not separate in place, for they are

not bodies, yet are now in this life mutually separate in magnitude.

For that there are therein no several bulks, does not hinder our seeing

that memory is greater than understanding in one man, but the contrary

in another; and that in yet another these two are overpassed by the

greatness of love; and this whether the two themselves are or are not

equal to one another. And so each two by each one, and each one by each

two, and each one by each one: the less are surpassed by the greater.

And when they have been healed of all infirmity, and are mutually

equal, not even then will that thing which by grace will not be

changed, be made equal to that which by nature cannot change, because

the creature cannot be equalled to the Creator, and when it shall be

healed from all infirmity, will be changed.

44. But when the sight shall have come which is promised anew to us

face to face, we shall see this not only incorporeal but also

absolutely indivisible and truly unchangeable Trinity far more clearly

and certainly than we now see its image which we ourselves are: and yet

they who see through this glass and in this enigma, as it is permitted

in this life to see, are not those who behold in their own mind the

things which we have set in order and pressed upon them; but those who

see this as if an image, so as to be able to refer what they see, in

some way be it what it may, to Him whose image it is, and to see that

also by conjecturing, which they see through the image by beholding,

since they cannot yet see face to face. For the apostle does not say,

We see now a glass, but, We see now through a glass. [1040]

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[1039] [The reader will observe that Augustin has employed the term

"memory" in a wider sense than in the modern ordinary use. With him, it

is the mind as including all that is potential or latent in it. The

innate ideas, in this use, are laid up in the "memory," and called into

consciousness or "remembered" by reflection. The idea of God, for

example, is not in the "memory" when not elicited by reflection. The

same is true of the ideas of space and time, etc.--W.G.T.S.]

[1040] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

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Chapter 24.--The Infirmity of the Human Mind.

They, then, who see their own mind, in whatever way that is possible,

and in it that Trinity of which I have treated as I could in many ways,

and yet do not believe or understand it to be an image of God, see

indeed a glass, but do not so far see through the glass Him who is now

to be seen through the glass, that they do not even know the glass

itself which they see to be a glass, i.e. an image. And if they knew

this, perhaps they would feel that He too whose glass this is, should

by it be sought, and somehow provisionally be seen, an unfeigned faith

purging their hearts, [1041] that He who is now seen through a glass

may be able to be seen face to face. And if they despise this faith

that purifies the heart, what do they accomplish by understanding the

most subtle disputes concerning the nature of the human mind, unless

that they be condemned also by the witness of their own understanding?

And they would certainly not so fail in understanding, and hardly

arrive at anything certain, were they not involved in penal darkness,

and burdened with the corruptible body that presses down the soul.

[1042] And for what demerit save that of sin is this evil inflicted on

them? Wherefore, being warned by the magnitude of so great an evil,

they ought to follow the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world.

[1043]

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[1041] 1 Tim. i. 5

[1042] Wisd. ix. 15

[1043] John i. 29

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Chapter 25.--The Question Why the Holy Spirit is Not Begotten, and How

He Proceeds from the Father and the Son, Will Only Be Understood When

We are in Bliss.

For if any belong to Him, although far duller in intellect than those,

yet when they are freed from the body at the end of this life, the

envious powers have no right to hold them. For that Lamb that was slain

by them without any debt of sin has conquered them; but not by the

might of power before He had done so by the righteousness of blood. And

free accordingly from the power of the devil, they are borne up by holy

angels, being set free from all evils by the mediator of God and men,

the man Christ Jesus. [1044] Since by the harmonious testimony of the

Divine Scriptures, both Old and New, both those by which Christ was

foretold, and those by which He was announced, there is no other name

under heaven whereby men must be saved. [1045] And when purged from all

contagion of corruption, they are placed in peaceful abodes until they

take their bodies again, their own, but now incorruptible, to adorn,

not to burden them. For this is the will of the best and most wise

Creator, that the spirit of a man, when piously subject to God, should

have a body happily subject, and that this happiness should last for

ever.

45. There we shall see the truth without any difficulty, and shall

enjoy it to the full, most clear and most certain. Nor shall we be

inquiring into anything by a mind that reasons, but shall discern by a

mind that contemplates, why the Holy Spirit is not a Son, although He

proceeds from the Father. In that light there will be no place for

inquiry: but here, by experience itself it has appeared to me so

difficult,--as beyond doubt it will likewise appear to them also who

shall carefully and intelligently read what I have written,--that

although in the second book [1046] I promised that I would speak

thereof in another place, yet as often as I have desired to illustrate

it by the creaturely image of it which we ourselves are, so often, let

my meaning be of what sort it might, did adequate utterance entirely

fail me; nay, even in my very meaning I felt that I had attained to

endeavor rather than accomplishment. I had indeed found in one person,

such as is a man, an image of that Highest Trinity, and had desired,

especially in the ninth book, to illustrate and render more

intelligible the relation of the Three Persons by that which is subject

to time and change. But three things belonging to one person cannot

suit those Three Persons, as man's purpose demands; and this we have

demonstrated in this fifteenth book.

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[1044] 1 Tim. ii. 5

[1045] Acts iv. 12

[1046] C. 3.

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Chapter 26.--The Holy Spirit Twice Given by Christ. The Procession of

the Holy Spirit from the Father and from the Son is Apart from Time,

Nor Can He Be Called the Son of Both.

Further, in that Highest Trinity which is God, there are no intervals

of time, by which it could be shown, or at least inquired, whether the

Son was born of the Father first and then afterwards the Holy Spirit

proceeded from both; since Holy Scripture calls Him the Spirit of both.

For it is He of whom the apostle says, "But because ye are sons, God

hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts:" [1047] and it

is He of whom the same Son says, "For it is not ye who speak, but the

Spirit of your Father who speaketh in you." [1048] And it is proved by

many other testimonies of the Divine Word, that the Spirit, who is

specially called in the Trinity the Holy Spirit, is of the Father and

of the Son: of whom likewise the Son Himself says, "Whom I will send

unto you from the Father;" [1049] and in another place, "Whom the

Father will send in my name." [1050] And we are so taught that He

proceeds from both, because the Son Himself says, He proceeds from the

Father. And when He had risen from the dead, and had appeared to His

disciples, "He breathed upon them, and said, Receive the Holy Ghost,"

[1051] so as to show that He proceeded also from Himself. And Itself is

that very "power that went out from Him," as we read in the Gospel,

"and healed them all." [1052]

46. But the reason why, after His resurrection, He both gave the Holy

Spirit, first on earth, [1053] and afterwards sent Him from heaven,

[1054] is in my judgment this: that "love is shed abroad in our

hearts," [1055] by that Gift itself, whereby we love God and our

neighbors, according to those two commandments, "on which hang all the

law and the prophets." [1056] And Jesus Christ, in order to signify

this, gave to them the Holy Spirit, once upon earth, on account of the

love of our neighbor, and a second time from heaven, on account of the

love of God. And if some other reason may perhaps be given for this

double gift of the Holy Spirit, at any rate we ought not to doubt that

the same Holy Spirit was given when Jesus breathed upon them, of whom

He by and by says, "Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," where this Trinity is

especially commended to us. It is therefore He who was also given from

heaven on the day of Pentecost, i.e. ten days after the Lord ascended

into heaven. How, therefore, is He not God, who gives the Holy Spirit?

Nay, how great a God is He who gives God! For no one of His disciples

gave the Holy Spirit, since they prayed that He might come upon those

upon whom they laid their hands: they did not give Him themselves. And

the Church preserves this custom even now in the case of her rulers.

Lastly, Simon Magus also, when he offered the apostles money, does not

say, "Give me also this power, that I may give" the Holy Spirit; but,

"that on whomsoever I may lay my hands, he may receive the Holy

Spirit." Because neither had the Scriptures said before, And Simon,

seeing that the apostles gave the Holy Spirit; but it had said, "And

Simon, seeing that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the

apostles' hands." [1057] Therefore also the Lord Jesus Christ Himself

not only gave the Holy Spirit as God, but also received it as man, and

therefore He is said to be full of grace, [1058] and of the Holy

Spirit. [1059] And in the Acts of the Apostles it is more plainly

written of Him, "Because God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit." [1060]

Certainly not with visible oil but with the gift of grace which is

signified by the visible ointment wherewith the Church anoints the

baptized. And Christ was certainly not then anointed with the Holy

Spirit, when He, as a dove, descended upon Him at His baptism. [1061]

For at that time He deigned to prefigure His body, i.e. His Church, in

which especially the baptized receive the Holy Spirit. But He is to be

understood to have been then anointed with that mystical and invisible

unction, when the Word of God was made flesh, [1062] i.e. when human

nature, without any precedent merits of good works, was joined to God

the Word in the womb of the Virgin, so that with it it became one

person. Therefore it is that we confess Him to have been born of the

Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary. For it is most absurd to believe

Him to have received the Holy Spirit when He was near thirty years old:

for at that age He was baptized by John; [1063] but that He came to

baptism as without any sin at all, so not without the Holy Spirit. For

if it was written of His servant and forerunner John himself, "He shall

be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb," [1064]

because, although generated by his father, yet he received the Holy

Spirit when formed in the womb; what must be understood and believed of

the man Christ, of whose flesh the very conception was not carnal, but

spiritual? Both natures, too, as well the human as the divine, are

shown in that also that is written of Him, that He received of the

Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, and shed forth the Holy Spirit:

[1065] seeing that He received as man, and shed forth as God. And we

indeed can receive that gift according to our small measure, but

assuredly we cannot shed it forth upon others; but, that this may be

done, we invoke over them God, by whom this is accomplished.

47. Are we therefore able to ask whether the Holy Spirit had already

proceeded from the Father when the Son was born, or had not yet

proceeded; and when He was born, proceeded from both, wherein there is

no such thing as distinct times: just as we have been able to ask, in a

case where we do find times, that the will proceeds from the human mind

first, in order that that may be sought which, when found, may be

called offspring; which offspring being already brought forth or born,

that will is made perfect, resting in this end, so that what had been

its desire when seeking, is its love when enjoying; which love now

proceeds from both, i.e. from the mind that begets, and from the notion

that is begotten, as if from parent and offspring? These things it is

absolutely impossible to ask in this case, where nothing is begun in

time, so as to be perfected in a time following. Wherefore let him who

can understand the generation of the Son from the Father without time,

understand also the procession of the Holy Spirit from both without

time. And let him who can understand, in that which the Son says, "As

the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have

life in Himself," [1066] not that the Father gave life to the Son

already existing without life, but that He so begat Him apart from

time, that the life which the Father gave to the Son by begetting Him

is co-eternal with the life of the Father who gave it: [1067] let him,

I say, understand, that as the Father has in Himself that the Holy

Spirit should proceed from Him, so has He given to the Son that the

same Holy Spirit should proceed from Him, and be both apart from time:

and that the Holy Spirit is so said to proceed from the Father as that

it be understood that His proceeding also from the Son, is a property

derived by the Son from the Father. For if the Son has of the Father

whatever He has, then certainly He has of the Father, that the Holy

Spirit proceeds also from Him. But let no one think of any times

therein which imply a sooner and a later; because these things are not

there at all. How, then, would it not be most absurd to call Him the

Son of both: when, just as generation from the Father, without any

changeableness of nature, gives to the Son essence, without beginning

of time; so procession from both, without any changeableness of nature,

gives to the Holy Spirit essence without beginning of time? For while

we do not say that the Holy Spirit is begotten, yet we do not therefore

dare to say that He is unbegotten, lest any one suspect in this word

either two Fathers in that Trinity, or two who are not from another.

For the Father alone is not from another, and therefore He alone is

called unbegotten, not indeed in the Scriptures, [1068] but in the

usage of disputants, who employ such language as they can on so great a

subject. And the Son is born of the Father; and the Holy Spirit

proceeds from the Father principally, the Father giving the procession

without any interval of time, yet in common from both [Father and Son].

[1069] But He would be called the Son of the Father and of the Son,

if--a thing abhorrent to the feeling of all sound minds--both had

begotten Him. Therefore the Spirit of both is not begotten of both, but

proceeds from both.

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[1047] Gal. iv. 6

[1048] Matt. x. 20

[1049] John xv. 26

[1050] John xiv. 26

[1051] John xx. 23

[1052] Luke vi. 19

[1053] John xx. 22

[1054] Acts. ii. 4

[1055] Rom. v. 5

[1056] Matt. xxii. 37-40

[1057] Acts viii. 18, 19

[1058] John i. 14

[1059] Luke ii. 52 and iv. 1

[1060] Acts x. 38

[1061] Matt. iii. 16

[1062] John i.14

[1063] Luke iii. 21-23

[1064] Luke i. 15

[1065] Acts ii. 33

[1066] John v. 26

[1067] [Says Turrettin, III. xxix. 21. "The Father does not generate

the Son either as previously existing, for in this case there would be

no need of generation; nor yet as not yet existing, for in this case

the Son would not be eternal; but as co-existing, because he is from

eternity in the God-head."--W.G.T.S.]

[1068] [The term "unbegotten" is not found in Scripture, but it is

implied in the terms "begotten" and "only-begotten," which are found.

The term "unity" is not applied to God in Scripture, but it is implied

in the term "one" which is so applied.--W.G.T.S.]

[1069] [The spiration and procession of the Holy Spirit is not by two

separate acts, one of the Father, and one of the Son--as perhaps might

be inferred from Augustin's remark that "the Holy Spirit proceeds from

the Father principally." As Turrettin says: "The Father and Son spirate

the Spirit, not as two different essences in each of which resides a

spirative energy, but as two personal subsistences of one essence, who

concur in one act of spiration." Institutio III. xxxi. 6.--W.G.T.S.]

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Chapter 27.--What It is that Suffices Here to Solve the Question Why

the Spirit is Not Said to Be Begotten, and Why the Father Alone is

Unbegotten. What They Ought to Do Who Do Not Understand These Things.

48. But because it is most difficult to distinguish generation from

procession in that co-eternal, and equal, and incorporeal, and

ineffably unchangeable and indivisible Trinity, let it suffice

meanwhile to put before those who are not able to be drawn on further,

what we said upon this subject in a sermon to be delivered in the ears

of Christian people, and after saying wrote it down. For when, among

other things, I had taught them by testimonies of the Holy Scriptures

that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both, I continue: "If, then, the

Holy Spirit proceeds both from the Father and from the Son, why did the

Son say, He proceedeth from the Father?' [1070] Why, think you, except

as He is wont to refer to Him, that also which is His own, from whom

also He Himself is? Whence also is that which He saith, My doctrine is

not mine own, but His that sent me?' [1071] If, therefore, it is His

doctrine that is here understood, which yet He said was not His own,

but His that sent Him, how much more is it there to be understood that

the Holy Spirit proceeds also from Himself, where He so says, He

proceedeth from the Father, as not to say, He proceedeth not from me?

From Him, certainly, from whom the Son had his Divine nature, for He is

God of God, He has also, that from Him too proceeds the Holy Spirit;

and hence the Holy Spirit has from the Father Himself, that He should

proceed from the Son also, as He proceeds from the Father. Here, too,

in some way may this also be understood, so far as it can be understood

by such as we are, why the Holy Spirit is not said to be born, but

rather to proceed; [1072] since if He, too, was called a Son, He would

certainly be called the Son of both, which is most absurd, since no one

is son of two, save of father and mother. But far be it from us to

surmise any such thing as this between God the Father and God the Son.

Because not even the son of men proceeds at the same time from both

father and mother; but when he proceeds from the father into the

mother, he does not at that time proceed from the mother; and when he

proceeds from the mother into this present light, he does not at that

time proceed from the father. But the Holy Spirit does not proceed from

the Father into the Son, and from the Son proceed to sanctify the

creature, but proceeds at once from both; although the Father has given

this to the Son, that He should proceed, as from Himself, so also from

Him. For we cannot say that the Holy Spirit is not life, while the

Father is life, and the Son is life: and hence as the Father, while He

has life in Himself, has given also to the Son to have life in Himself;

so has He given also to Him that life should proceed from Him, as it

also proceeds from Himself." [1073] I have transferred this from that

sermon into this book, but I was speaking to believers, not to

unbelievers.

49. But if they are not competent to gaze upon this image, and to see

how true these things are which are in their mind, and yet which are

not so three as to be three persons, but all three belong to a man who

is one person; why do they not believe what they find in the sacred

books respecting that highest Trinity which is God, rather than insist

on the clearest reason being rendered them, which cannot be

comprehended by the human mind, dull and infirm as it is? And to be

sure, when they have steadfastly believed the Holy Scriptures as most

true witnesses, let them strive, by praying and seeking and living

well, that they may understand, i.e. that so far as it can be seen,

that may be seen by the mind which is held fast by faith. Who would

forbid this? Nay, who would not rather exhort them to it? But if they

think they ought to deny that these things are, because they, with

their blind minds, cannot discern them, they, too, who are blind from

their birth, ought to deny that there is a sun. The light then shineth

in darkness; but if the darkness comprehend it not, [1074] let them

first be illuminated by the gift of God, that they may be believers,

and let them begin to be light in comparison with the unbelievers; and

when this foundation is first laid, let them be built up to see what

they believe, that at some time they may be able to see. For some

things are so believed, that they cannot be seen at all. For Christ is

not to be seen a second time on the cross; but unless this be believed

which has been so done and seen, that it is not now to be hoped for as

about to be and to be seen, there is no coming to Christ, such as

without end He is to be seen. But as far as relates to the discerning

in some way by the understanding that highest, ineffable, incorporeal,

and unchangeable nature the sight of the human mind can nowhere better

exercise itself, so only that the rule of faith govern it, than in that

which man himself has in his own nature better than the other animals,

better also than the other parts of his own soul, which is the mind

itself, to which has been assigned a certain sight of things invisible,

and to which, as though honorably presiding in a higher and inner

place, the bodily senses also bring word of all things, that they may

be judged, and than which there is no higher, to which it is to be

subject, and by which it is to be governed, except God.

50. But among these many things which I have now said, and of which

there is nothing that I dare to profess myself to have said worthy of

the ineffableness of that highest Trinity, but rather to confess that

the wonderful knowledge of Him is too great for me, and that I cannot

attain [1075] to it: O thou, my soul, where dost thou feel thyself to

be? where dost thou lie? where dost thou stand? until all thy

infirmities be healed by Him who has forgiven all thy iniquities.

[1076] Thou perceivest thyself assuredly to be in that inn whither that

Samaritan brought him whom he found with many wounds inflicted by

thieves, half-dead. [1077] And yet thou hast seen many things that are

true, not by those eyes by which colored objects are seen, but by those

for which he prayed who said, "Let mine eyes behold the things that are

equal." [1078] Certainly, then, thou hast seen many things that are

true, and hast distinguished them from that light by the light of which

thou hast seen them. Lift up thine eyes to the light itself, and fix

them upon it if thou canst. For so thou wilt see how the birth of the

Word of God differs from the procession of the Gift of God, on account

of which the only-begotten Son did not say that the Holy Spirit is

begotten of the Father, otherwise He would be His brother, but that he

proceeds from Him. Whence, since the Spirit of both is a kind of

consubstantial communion of Father and Son, He is not called, far be it

from us to say so, the Son of both. But thou canst not fix thy sight

there, so as to discern this lucidly and clearly; I know thou canst

not. I say the truth, I say to myself, I know what I cannot do; yet

that light itself shows to thee these three things in thyself, wherein

thou mayest recognize an image of the highest Trinity itself, which

thou canst not yet contemplate with steady eye. Itself shows to thee

that there is in thee a true word, when it is born of thy knowledge,

i.e. when we say what we know: although we neither utter nor think of

any articulate word that is significant in any tongue of any nation,

but our thought is formed by that which we know; and there is in the

mind's eye of the thinker an image resembling that thought which the

memory contained, will or love as a third combining these two as parent

and offspring. And he who can, sees and discerns that this will

proceeds indeed from thought (for no one wills that of which he is

absolutely ignorant what or of what sort it is), yet is not an image of

the thought: and so that there is insinuated in this intelligible thing

a sort of difference between birth and procession, since to behold by

thought is not the same as to desire, or even to enjoy will. Thou, too,

hast been able [to discern this], although thou hast not been, neither

art, able to unfold with adequate speech what, amidst the clouds of

bodily likenesses, which cease not to flit up and down before human

thoughts, thou hast scarcely seen. But that light which is not thyself

shows thee this too, that these incorporeal likenesses of bodies are

different from the truth, which, by rejecting them, we contemplate with

the understanding. These, and other things similarly certain, that

light hath shown to thine inner eyes. What reason, then, is there why

thou canst not see that light itself with steady eye, except certainly

infirmity? And what has produced this in thee, except iniquity? Who,

then, is it that healeth all thine infirmities, unless it be He that

forgiveth all thine iniquities? And therefore I will now at length

finish this book by a prayer better than by an argument.

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[1070] John xv. 26

[1071] John vii. 16

[1072] [Generation and procession are each an emanation of the essence

by which it is modified. Neither of them is a creation ex nihilo. The

school-men attempted to explain the difference between the two

emanations, by saying that the generation of the Son is by the mode of

the intellect--hence the Son is called Wisdom, or Word (Logos); but the

procession of the Spirit is by the mode of the will--hence the Spirit

is called Love. Turrettin distinguishes the difference by the following

particulars: 1. In respect to the source. Generation is from the Father

alone; procession is from Father and Son. 2. In respect to effects.

Generation yields not only personality, but resemblance. The Son is the

"image" of the Father, but the Spirit is not the image of the Father

and Son. Generation is accompanied with the power to communicate the

essence; procession is not. 3. In respect to order of relationship.

Generation is second, procession is third. In the order of nature, not

of time (for both generation and procession are eternal, therefore

simultaneous), procession is after generation. Institutio III. xxxi.

3.--W.G.T.S.]

[1073] Serm. in Joh. Evang. tract.. 99, n. 8, 9.

[1074] John i. 5

[1075] Ps. cxxxix. 6

[1076] Ps. ciii. 3

[1077] Luke x. 30, 34

[1078] Ps. xvii. 2

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Chapter 28.--The Conclusion of the Book with a Prayer, and an Apology

for Multitude of Words.

51. O Lord our God, we believe in Thee, the Father and the Son and the

Holy Spirit. For the Truth would not say, Go, baptize all nations in

the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, unless

Thou wast a Trinity. Nor wouldest thou, O Lord God, bid us to be

baptized in the name of Him who is not the Lord God. Nor would the

divine voice have said, Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God,

unless Thou wert so a Trinity as to be one Lord God. And if Thou, O

God, wert Thyself the Father, and wert Thyself the Son, Thy Word Jesus

Christ, and the Holy Spirit your gift, we should not read in the book

of truth, "God sent His Son;" [1079] nor wouldest Thou, O

Only-begotten, say of the Holy Spirit, "Whom the Father will send in my

name;" [1080] and, "Whom I will send to you from the Father." [1081]

Directing my purpose by this rule of faith, so far as I have been able,

so far as Thou hast made me to be able, I have sought Thee, and have

desired to see with my understanding what I believed; and I have argued

and labored much. O Lord my God, my one hope, hearken to me, lest

through weariness I be unwilling to seek Thee, "but that I may always

ardently seek Thy face." [1082] Do Thou give strength to seek, who hast

made me find Thee, and hast given the hope of finding Thee more and

more. My strength and my infirmity are in Thy sight: preserve the one,

and heal the other. My knowledge and my ignorance are in Thy sight;

where Thou hast opened to me, receive me as I enter; where Thou hast

closed, open to me as I knock. May I remember Thee, understand Thee,

love Thee. Increase these things in me, until Thou renewest me wholly.

I know it is written, "In the multitude of speech, thou shalt not

escape sin." [1083] But O that I might speak only in preaching Thy

word, and in praising Thee! Not only should I so flee from sin, but I

should earn good desert, however much I so spake. For a man blessed of

Thee would not enjoin a sin upon his own true son in the faith, to whom

he wrote, "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season."

[1084] Are we to say that he has not spoken much, who was not silent

about Thy word, O Lord, not only in season, but out of season? But

therefore it was not much, because it was only what was necessary. Set

me free, O God, from that multitude of speech which I suffer inwardly

in my soul, wretched as it is in Thy sight, and flying for refuge to

Thy mercy; for I am not silent in thoughts, even when silent in words.

And if, indeed, I thought of nothing save what pleased Thee, certainly

I would not ask Thee to set me free from such multitude of speech. But

many are my thoughts, such as Thou knowest, "thoughts of man, since

they are vain." [1085] Grant to me not to consent to them; and if ever

they delight me, nevertheless to condemn them, and not to dwell in

them, as though I slumbered. Nor let them so prevail in me, as that

anything in my acts should proceed from them; but at least let my

opinions, let my conscience, be safe from them, under Thy protection.

When the wise man spake of Thee in his book, which is now called by the

special name of Ecclesiasticus, "We speak," he said, "much, and yet

come short; and in sum of words, He is all." [1086] When, therefore, we

shall have come to Thee, these very many things that we speak, and yet

come short, will cease; and Thou, as One, wilt remain "all in all."

[1087] And we shall say one thing without end, in praising Thee in One,

ourselves also made one in Thee. O Lord the one God, God the Trinity,

whatever I have said in these books that is of Thine, may they

acknowledge who are Thine; if anything of my own, may it be pardoned

both by Thee and by those who are Thine. Amen.

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[1079] Gal. iv. 5 and John iii. 17

[1080] John xiv. 26

[1081] John xv. 26

[1082] Ps. cv. 4

[1083] Prov. x. 19

[1084] 2 Tim. iv. 2

[1085] Ps. xciv. 11

[1086] Ecclus. xliii. 29

[1087] 1 Cor. xv. 28

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The Enchiridion,

Addressed to Laurentius;

Being a Treatise on Faith, Hope and Love.

Translated by Professor J. F. Shaw, Londonderry.

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Introductory Notice

By the Editor.

St. Augustin speaks of this book in his Retractations, l. ii. c. 63, as

follows:

"I also wrote a book on Faith, Hope, and Charity, at the request of the

person to whom I addressed it, that he might have a work of mine which

should never be out of his hands, such as the Greeks call an

Enchiridion (Hand-Book). There I think I have pretty carefully treated

of the manner in which God is to be worshipped, which knowledge divine

Scripture defines to be the true wisdom of man. The book begins: I

cannot express,'" etc. [1088]

The Enchiridion is among the latest books of Augustin. It was written

after the death of Jerome, which occurred Sept. 30, 420; for he alludes

in ch. 87 to Jerome "of blessed memory" (sanct� memori� Hieronymus

presbyter).

It is addressed to Laurentius, in answer to his questions. This person

is otherwise unknown. One ms. calls him a deacon, another a notary of

the city of Rome. He was probably a layman.

The author usually calls the book "On Faith, Hope and Love," because he

treats the subject under these three heads (comp. (I Cor. xiii. 13). He

follows under the first head the order of the Apostles' Creed, and

refutes, without naming them, the Manich�an, Apollinarian, Arian, and

Pelagian heresies. Under the second head he gives a brief exposition of

the Lord's Prayer. The third part is a discourse on Christian love.

The original is in the sixth volume of the Benedictine edition. A neat

edition of the Latin text, with three other small tracts of Augustin,

(De Catechizandis Rudibus; De Fide Rerum qu� non creduntur; De

Utilitate Credendi), is also published in C. Marriott's S. Aurelius

Augustinus, 4th ed. by H. de Romestin, Oxford and London (Parker and

Comp.), 1885 (pp. 150-251.) An English edition of the same tracts by H.

de Romestin, Oxford and London, 1885 (pp. 151-251). His English

translation is based on that of C. L. Cornish, M.A., which appeared in

the Oxford "Library of the Fathers," Oxford 1847 ("Seventeen Short

Treatises of St. Aug." pp. 85-158).

The present translation by Professor Shaw was first published in Dr.

Dods's series of Augustin's works, Edinburgh, (T. and T. Clark,) 3d ed.

1883. It is more free and idiomatic than that of Cornish. I have in a

few cases conformed it more closely to the original.

P.S.

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[1088] "Scripsi etiam librum de Fide, Spe et Charitate' cum a me ad

quem scriptus est postulasset ut aliquod opusculum haberet meum de suis

manibus nunquam recessurum, quod genus Gr�ci Enchiridion vocant. Ubi

satis diligenter mihi videor esse complexus quomodo sit colendus Deus

quam sapientiam esse hominis utique veram Divina Scriptura definit. Hic

liber sic incipit, Dici non potest, dilectissime fili Laurenti, quantum

tu� eruditione delecter.'"

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The Enchiridion.

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Argument.

Laurentius having asked Augustin to furnish him with a handbook of

Christian doctrine, containing in brief compass answers to several

questions which he had proposed, Augustin shows him that these

questions can be fully answered by any one who knows the proper objects

of faith, hope, and love. He then proceeds, in the first part of the

work (Chap. ix.--cxiii.), to expound the objects of faith, taking as

his text the Apostles' Creed; and in the course of this exposition,

besides refuting divers heresies, he throws out many observations on

the conduct of life. The second part of the work (Chap. cxiv.--cxvi.)

treats of the objects of hope, and consists of a very brief exposition

of the several petitions in the Lord's Prayer. The third and concluding

part (Chap. cxvii.-cxxii.) treats of the objects of love, showing the

pre-eminence of this grace in the gospel system, that it is the end of

the commandment and the fulfilling of the law, and that God himself is

love.

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Chapter 1.--The Author Desires the Gift of True Wisdom for Laurentius.

I Cannot express, my beloved son Laurentius, the delight with which I

witness your progress in knowledge, and the earnest desire I have that

you should be a wise man: not one of those of whom it is said, "Where

is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?

hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" [1089] but one of

those of whom it is said, "The multitude of the wise is the welfare of

the world," [1090] and such as the apostles wishes those to become,

whom he tells," I would have you wise unto that which is good, and

simple concerning evil." [1091] Now, just as no one can exist of

himself, so no one can be wise of himself, but only by the enlightening

influence of Him of whom it is written," All wisdom cometh from the

Lord." [1092]

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[1089] 1 Cor. i. 20

[1090] Wisd. vi. 24. [Greek text, ver. 25: plethos sophon soteria

kosmou.--P.S.]

[1091] Rom. xvi. 19

[1092] Ecclus. i. 1

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Chapter 2.--The Fear of God is Man's True Wisdom.

The true wisdom of man is piety. You find this in the book of holy Job.

For we read there what wisdom itself has said to man: "Behold, the fear

of the Lord [pietas], that is wisdom." [1093] If you ask further what

is meant in that place by pietas, the Greek calls it more definitely

theosebeia, that is, the worship of God. The Greeks sometimes call

piety eusebeia, which signifies right worship, though this, of course,

refers specially to the worship of God. But when we are defining in

what man's true wisdom consists, the most convenient word to use is

that which distinctly expresses the fear of God. And can you, who are

anxious that I should treat of great matters in few words, wish for a

briefer form of expression? Or perhaps you are anxious that this

expression should itself be briefly explained, and that I should unfold

in a short discourse the proper mode of worshipping God?

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[1093] Job xxviii. 28

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Chapter 3.--God is to Be Worshipped Through Faith, Hope, and Love.

Now if I should answer, that God is to be worshipped with faith, hope,

and love, you will at once say that this answer is too brief, and will

ask me briefly to unfold the objects of each of these three graces,

viz., what we are to believe, what we are to hope for, and what we are

to love. And when I have done this, you will have an answer to all the

questions you asked in your letter. If you have kept a copy of your

letter, you can easily turn it up and read it over again: if you have

not, you will have no difficulty in recalling it when I refresh your

memory.

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Chapter 4.--The Questions Propounded by Laurentius.

You are anxious, you say, that I should write a sort of handbook for

you, which you might always keep beside you, containing answers to the

questions you put, viz.: what ought to be man's chief end in life; what

he ought, in view of the various heresies, chiefly to avoid; to what

extent religion is supported by reason; what there is in reason that

lends no support to faith, when faith stands alone; what is the

starting-point, what the goal, of religion; what is the sum of the

whole body of doctrine; what is the sure and proper foundation of the

catholic faith. Now, undoubtedly, you will know the answers to all

these questions, if you know thoroughly the proper objects of faith,

hope, and love. For these must be the chief, nay, the exclusive objects

of pursuit in religion. He who speaks against these is either a total

stranger to the name of Christ, or is a heretic. These are to be

defended by reason, which must have its starting-point either in the

bodily senses or in the intuitions of the mind. And what we have

neither had experience of through our bodily senses, nor have been able

to reach through the intellect, must undoubtedly be believed on the

testimony of those witnesses by whom the Scriptures, justly called

divine, were written; and who by divine assistance were enabled, either

through bodily sense or intellectual perception, to see or to foresee

the things in question.

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Chapter 5.--Brief Answers to These Questions.

Moreover, when the mind has been imbued with the first elements of that

faith which worketh by love, [1094] it endeavors by purity of life to

attain unto sight, where the pure and perfect in heart know that

unspeakable beauty, the full vision of which is supreme happiness. Here

surely is an answer to your question as to what is the starting-point,

and what the goal: we begin in faith, and are made perfect by sight.

This also is the sum of the whole body of doctrine. But the sure and

proper foundation of the catholic faith is Christ. "For other

foundation," says the apostle, "can no man lay than that is laid, which

is Jesus Christ." [1095] Nor are we to deny that this is the proper

foundation of the catholic faith, because it may be supposed that some

heretics hold this in common with us. For if we carefully consider the

things that pertain to Christ, we shall find that, among those heretics

who call themselves Christians, Christ is present in name only: in deed

and in truth He is not among them. But to show this would occupy us too

long, for we should require to go over all the heresies which have

existed, which do exist, or which could exist, under the Christian

name, and to show that this is true in the case of each,--a discussion

which would occupy so many volumes as to be all but interminable.

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[1094] Gal. v. 6

[1095] 1 Cor. iii. 11

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Chapter 6.--Controversy Out of Place in a Handbook Like the Present.

Now you ask of me a handbook, that is, one that can be carried in the

hand, not one to load your shelves. To return, then, to the three

graces through which, as I have said, God should be worshipped--faith,

hope, and love: to state what are the true and proper objects of each

of these is easy. But to defend this true doctrine against the assaults

of those who hold an opposite opinion, requires much fuller and more

elaborate instruction. And the true way to obtain this instruction is

not to have a short treatise put into one's hands, but to have a great

zeal kindled in one's heart.

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Chapter 7.--The Creed and the Lord's Prayer Demand the Exercise of

Faith, Hope, and Love.

For you have the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. What can be briefer to

hear or to read? What easier to commit to memory? When, as the result

of sin, the human race was groaning under a heavy load of misery, and

was in urgent need of the divine compassion, one of the prophets,

anticipating the time of God's grace, declared: "And it shall come to

pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be

delivered." [1096] Hence the Lord's Prayer. But the apostle, when, for

the purpose of commending this very grace, he had quoted this prophetic

testimony, immediately added: "How then shall they call on Him in whom

they have not believed?" [1097] Hence the Creed. In these two you have

those three graces exemplified: faith believes, hope and love pray. But

without faith the two last cannot exist, and therefore we may say that

faith also prays. Whence it is written: "How shall they call on Him in

whom they have not believed?"

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[1096] Joel ii. 32

[1097] Rom. x. 14

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Chapter 8.--The Distinction Between Faith and Hope, and the Mutual

Dependence of Faith, Hope, and Love.

Again, can anything be hoped for which is not an object of faith? It is

true that a thing which is not an object of hope may be believed. What

true Christian, for example, does not believe in the punishment of the

wicked? And yet such an one does not hope for it. And the man who

believes that punishment to be hanging over himself, and who shrinks in

horror from the prospect, is more properly said to fear than to hope.

And these two states of mind the poet carefully distinguishes, when he

says: "Permit the fearful to have hope." [1098] Another poet, who is

usually much superior to this one, makes a wrong use of the word, when

he says: "If I have been able to hope for so great a grief as this."

[1099] And some grammarians take this case as an example of impropriety

of speech, saying, "He said sperare [to hope] instead of timere [to

fear]." Accordingly, faith may have for its object evil as well as

good; for both good and evil are believed, and the faith that believes

them is not evil, but good. Faith, moreover, is concerned with the

past, the present, and the future, all three. We believe, for example,

that Christ died,--an event in the past; we believe that He is sitting

at the right hand of God,--a state of things which is present; we

believe that He will come to judge the quick and the dead,--an event of

the future. Again, faith applies both to one's own circumstances and

those of others. Every one, for example, believes that his own

existence had a beginning, and was not eternal, and he believes the

same both of other men and other things. Many of our beliefs in regard

to religious matters, again, have reference not merely to other men,

but to angels also. But hope has for its object only what is good, only

what is future, and only what affects the man who entertains the hope.

For these reasons, then, faith must be distinguished from hope, not

merely as a matter of verbal propriety, but because they are

essentially different. The fact that we do not see either what we

believe or what we hope for, is all that is common to faith and hope.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, for example, faith is defined (and

eminent defenders of the catholic faith have used the definition as a

standard) "the evidence of things not seen." [1100] Although, should

any one say that he believes, that is, has grounded his faith, not on

words, nor on witnesses, nor on any reasoning whatever, but on the

direct evidence of his own senses, he would not be guilty of such an

impropriety of speech as to be justly liable to the criticism, "You

saw, therefore you did not believe." And hence it does not follow that

an object of faith is not an object of sight. But it is better that we

should use the word "faith" as the Scriptures have taught us, applying

it to those things which are not seen. Concerning hope, again, the

apostle says: "Hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why

doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we

with patience wait for it." [1101] When, then, we believe that good is

about to come, this is nothing else but to hope for it. Now what shall

I say of love? Without it, faith profits nothing; and in its absence,

hope cannot exist. The Apostle James says: "The devils also believe,

and tremble." [1102] --that is, they, having neither hope nor love, but

believing that what we love and hope for is about to come, are in

terror. And so the Apostle Paul approves and commends the "faith that

worketh by love;" [1103] and this certainly cannot exist without hope.

Wherefore there is no love without hope, no hope without love, and

neither love nor hope without faith.

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[1098] Lucan, Phars. ii. 15.

[1099] Virgil, �neid, iv. 419.

[1100] Heb. xi. 1

[1101] Rom. viii. 24, 25

[1102] Jas. ii. 19

[1103] Gal. v. 6

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Chapter 9.--What We are to Believe. In Regard to Nature It is Not

Necessary for the Christian to Know More Than that the Goodness of the

Creator is the Cause of All Things.

When, then, the question is asked what we are to believe in regard to

religion, it is not necessary to probe into the nature of things, as

was done by those whom the Greeks call physici; nor need we be in alarm

lest the Christian should be ignorant of the force and number of the

elements,--the motion, and order, and eclipses of the heavenly bodies;

the form of the heavens; the species and the natures of animals,

plants, stones, fountains, rivers, mountains; about chronology and

distances; the signs of coming storms; and a thousand other things

which those philosophers either have found out, or think they have

found out. For even these men themselves, endowed though they are with

so much genius, burning with zeal, abounding in leisure, tracking some

things by the aid of human conjecture, searching into others with the

aids of history and experience, have not found out all things; and even

their boasted discoveries are oftener mere guesses than certain

knowledge. It is enough for the Christian to believe that the only

cause of all created things, whether heavenly or earthly, whether

visible or invisible, is the goodness of the Creator the one true God;

and that nothing exists but Himself that does not derive its existence

from Him; and that He is the Trinity--to wit, the Father, and the Son

begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the same

Father, but one and the same Spirit of Father and Son.

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Chapter 10.--The Supremely Good Creator Made All Things Good.

By the Trinity, thus supremely and equally and unchangeably good, all

things were created; and these are not supremely and equally and

unchangeably good, but yet they are good, even taken separately. Taken

as a whole, however, they are very good, because their ensemble

constitutes the universe in all its wonderful order and beauty.

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Chapter 11.--What is Called Evil in the Universe is But the Absence of

Good.

And in the universe, even that which is called evil, when it is

regulated and put in its own place, only enhances our admiration of the

good; for we enjoy and value the good more when we compare it with the

evil. For the Almighty God, who, as even the heathen acknowledge, has

supreme power over all things, being Himself supremely good, would

never permit the existence of anything evil among His works, if He were

not so omnipotent and good that He can bring good even out of evil. For

what is that which we call evil but the absence of good? In the bodies

of animals, disease and wounds mean nothing but the absence of health;

for when a cure is effected, that does not mean that the evils which

were present--namely, the diseases and wounds--go away from the body

and dwell elsewhere: they altogether cease to exist; for the wound or

disease is not a substance, but a defect in the fleshly substance,--the

flesh itself being a substance, and therefore something good, of which

those evils--that is, privations of the good which we call health--are

accidents. Just in the same way, what are called vices in the soul are

nothing but privations of natural good. And when they are cured, they

are not transferred elsewhere: when they cease to exist in the healthy

soul, they cannot exist anywhere else.

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Chapter 12.--All Beings Were Made Good, But Not Being Made Perfectly

Good, are Liable to Corruption.

All things that exist, therefore, seeing that the Creator of them all

is supremely good, are themselves good. But because they are not, like

their Creator, supremely and unchangeably good, their good may be

diminished and increased. But for good to be diminished is an evil,

although, however much it may be diminished, it is necessary, if the

being is to continue, that some good should remain to constitute the

being. For however small or of whatever kind the being may be, the good

which makes it a being cannot be destroyed without destroying the being

itself. An uncorrupted nature is justly held in esteem. But if, still

further, it be incorruptible, it is undoubtedly considered of still

higher value. When it is corrupted, however, its corruption is an evil,

because it is deprived of some sort of good. For if it be deprived of

no good, it receives no injury; but it does receive injury, therefore

it is deprived of good. Therefore, so long as a being is in process of

corruption, there is in it some good of which it is being deprived; and

if a part of the being should remain which cannot be corrupted, this

will certainly be an incorruptible being, and accordingly the process

of corruption will result in the manifestation of this great good. But

if it do not cease to be corrupted, neither can it cease to possess

good of which corruption may deprive it. But if it should be thoroughly

and completely consumed by corruption, there will then be no good left,

because there will be no being. Wherefore corruption can consume the

good only by consuming the being. Every being, therefore, is a good; a

great good, if it can not be corrupted; a little good, if it can: but

in any case, only the foolish or ignorant will deny that it is a good.

And if it be wholly consumed by corruption, then the corruption itself

must cease to exist, as there is no being left in which it can dwell.

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Chapter 13.--There Can Be No Evil Where There is No Good; And an Evil

Man is an Evil Good.

Accordingly, there is nothing of what we call evil, if there be nothing

good. But a good which is wholly without evil is a perfect good. A

good, on the other hand, which contains evil is a faulty or imperfect

good; and there can be no evil where there is no good. From all this we

arrive at the curious result: that since every being, so far as it is a

being, is good, when we say that a faulty being is an evil being, we

just seem to say that what is good is evil, and that nothing but what

is good can be evil, seeing that every being is good, and that no evil

can exist except in a being. Nothing, then, can be evil except

something which is good. And although this, when stated, seems to be a

contradiction, yet the strictness of reasoning leaves us no escape from

the conclusion. We must, however, beware of incurring the prophetic

condemnation: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: that

put darkness for light, and light for darkness: that put bitter for

sweet, and sweet for bitter." [1104] And yet our Lord says: "An evil

man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is

evil." [1105] Now, what is evil man but an evil being? for a man is a

being. Now, if a man is a good thing because he is a being, what is an

evil man but an evil good? Yet, when we accurately distinguish these

two things, we find that it is not because he is a man that he is an

evil, or because he is wicked that he is a good; but that he is a good

because he is a man, and an evil because he is wicked. Whoever, then,

says, "To be a man is an evil," or, "To be wicked is a good," falls

under the prophetic denunciation: "Woe unto them that call evil good,

and good evil!" For he condemns the work of God, which is the man, and

praises the defect of man, which is the wickedness. Therefore every

being, even if it be a defective one, in so far as it is a being is

good, and in so far as it is defective is evil.

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[1104] Isa. v. 20

[1105] Luke vi. 45

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Chapter 14.--Good and Evil are an Exception to the Rule that Contrary

Attributes Cannot Be Predicated of the Same Subject. Evil Springs Up in

What is Good, and Cannot Exist Except in What is Good.

Accordingly, in the case of these contraries which we call good and

evil, the rule of the logicians, that two contraries cannot be

predicated at the same time of the same thing, does not hold. No

weather is at the same time dark and bright: no food or drink is at the

same time sweet and bitter: no body is at the same time and in the same

place black and white: none is at the same time and in the same place

deformed and beautiful. And this rule is found to hold in regard to

many, indeed nearly all, contraries, that they cannot exist at the same

time in any one thing. But although no one can doubt that good and evil

are contraries, not only can they exist at the same time, but evil

cannot exist without good, or in anything that is not good. Good,

however, can exist without evil. For a man or an angel can exist

without being wicked; but nothing can be wicked except a man or an

angel: and so far as he is a man or an angel, he is good; so far as he

is wicked, he is an evil. And these two contraries are so far

co-existent, that if good did not exist in what is evil, neither could

evil exist; because corruption could not have either a place to dwell

in, or a source to spring from, if there were nothing that could be

corrupted; and nothing can be corrupted except what is good, for

corruption is nothing else but the destruction of good. From what is

good, then, evils arose, and except in what is good they do not exist;

nor was there any other source from which any evil nature could arise.

For if there were, then, in so far as this was a being, it was

certainly a good: and a being which was incorruptible would be a great

good; and even one which was corruptible must be to some extent a good,

for only by corrupting what was good in it could corruption do it harm.

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Chapter 15.--The Preceding Argument is in No Wise Inconsistent with the

Saying of Our Lord: "A Good Tree Cannot Bring Forth Evil Fruit."

But when we say that evil springs out of good, let it not be thought

that this contradicts our Lord's saying: "A good tree cannot bring

forth evil fruit." [1106] For, as He who is the Truth says, you cannot

gather grapes of thorns, [1107] because grapes do not grow on thorns.

But we see that on good soil both vines and thorns may be grown. And in

the same way, just as an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, so an

evil will cannot produce good works. But from the nature of man, which

is good, may spring either a good or an evil will. And certainly there

was at first no source from which an evil will could spring, except the

nature of angel or of man, which was good. And our Lord Himself clearly

shows this in the very same place where He speaks about the tree and

its fruit. For He says: "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good;

or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt," [1108] --clearly

enough warning us that evil fruits do not grow on a good tree, nor good

fruits on an evil tree; but that nevertheless the ground itself, by

which He meant those whom He was then addressing, might grow either

kind of trees.

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[1106] Matt. vii. 18

[1107] Matt. vii. 16

[1108] Matt. xii. 33

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Chapter 16.--It is Not Essential to Man's Happiness that He Should Know

the Causes of Physical Convulsions; But It Is, that He Should Know the

Causes of Good and Evil.

Now, in view of these considerations, when we are pleased with that

line of Maro, "Happy the man who has attained to the knowledge of the

causes of things," [1109] we should not suppose that it is necessary to

happiness to know the causes of the great physical convulsions, causes

which lie hid in the most secret recesses of nature's kingdom, "whence

comes the earthquake whose force makes the deep seas to swell and burst

their barriers, and again to return upon themselves and settle down."

[1110] But we ought to know the causes of good and evil as far as man

may in this life know them, in order to avoid the mistakes and troubles

of which this life is so full. For our aim must always be to reach that

state of happiness in which no trouble shall distress us, and no error

mislead us. If we must know the causes of physical convulsions, there

are none which it concerns us more to know than those which affect our

own health. But seeing that, in our ignorance of these, we are fain to

resort to physicians, it would seem that we might bear with

considerable patience our ignorance of the secrets that lie hid in the

earth and heavens.

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[1109] Virgil, Georgics, ii. 490.

[1110] Ibid

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Chapter 17.--The Nature of Error. All Error is Not Hurtful, Though It

is Man's Duty as Far as Possible to Avoid It.

For although we ought with the greatest possible care to avoid error,

not only in great but even in little things, and although we cannot err

except through ignorance, it does not follow that, if a man is ignorant

of a thing, he must forthwith fall into error. That is rather the fate

of the man who thinks he knows what he does not know. For he accepts

what is false as if it were true, and that is the essence of error. But

it is a point of very great importance what the subject is in regard to

which a man makes a mistake. For on one and the same subject we rightly

prefer an instructed man to an ignorant one, and a man who is not in

error to one who is. In the case of different subjects, however,--that

is, when one man knows one thing, and another a different thing, and

when what the former knows is useful, and what the latter knows is not

so useful, or is actually hurtful,--who would not, in regard to the

things the latter knows, prefer the ignorance of the former to the

knowledge of the latter? For there are points on which ignorance is

better than knowledge. And in the same way, it has sometimes been an

advantage to depart from the right way,--in travelling, however, not in

morals. It has happened to myself to take the wrong road where two ways

met, so that I did not pass by the place where an armed band of

Donatists lay in wait for me. Yet I arrived at the place whither I was

bent, though by a roundabout route; and when I heard of the ambush, I

congratulated myself on my mistake, and gave thanks to God for it. Now,

who would not rather be the traveller who made a mistake like this,

than the highwayman who made no mistake? And hence, perhaps, it is that

the prince of poets puts these words into the mouth of a lover in

misery: [1111] "How I am undone, how I have been carried away by an

evil error!" for there is an error which is good, as it not merely does

no harm, but produces some actual advantage. But when we look more

closely into the nature of truth, and consider that to err is just to

take the false for the true, and the true for the false, or to hold

what is certain as uncertain, and what is uncertain as certain, and

that error in the soul is hideous and repulsive just in proportion as

it appears fair and plausible when we utter it, or assent to it,

saying, "Yea, yea; Nay, nay,"--surely this life that we live is

wretched indeed, if only on this account, that sometimes, in order to

preserve it, it is necessary to fall into error. God forbid that such

should be that other life, where truth itself is the life of the soul,

where no one deceives, and no one is deceived. But here men deceive and

are deceived, and they are more to be pitied when they lead others

astray than when they are themselves led astray by putting trust in

liars. Yet so much does a rational soul shrink from what is false, and

so earnestly does it struggle against error, that even those who love

to deceive are most unwilling to be deceived. For the liar does not

think that he errs, but that he leads another who trusts him into

error. And certainly he does not err in regard to the matter about

which he lies, if he himself knows the truth; but he is deceived in

this, that he thinks his lie does him no harm, whereas every sin is

more hurtful to the sinner than to the sinned against.

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[1111] Virgil, Eclog. viii. 41.

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Chapter 18.--It is Never Allowable to Tell a Lie; But Lies Differ Very

Much in Guilt, According to the Intention and the Subject.

But here arises a very difficult and very intricate question, about

which I once wrote a large book, finding it necessary to give it an

answer. The question is this: whether at any time it can become the

duty of a good man to tell a lie? For some go so far as to contend that

there are occasions on which it is a good and pious work to commit

perjury even, and to say what is false about matters that relate to the

worship of God, and about the very nature of God Himself. To me,

however, it seems certain that every lie is a sin, though it makes a

great difference with what intention and on what subject one lies. For

the sin of the man who tells a lie to help another is not so heinous as

that of the man who tells a lie to injure another; and the man who by

his lying puts a traveller on the wrong road, does not do so much harm

as the man who by false or misleading representations distorts the

whole course of a life. No one, of course, is to be condemned as a liar

who says what is false, believing it to be true, because such an one

does not consciously deceive, but rather is himself deceived. And, on

the same principle, a man is not to be accused of lying, though he may

sometimes be open to the charge of rashness, if through carelessness he

takes up what is false and holds it as true; but, on the other hand,

the man who says what is true, believing it to be false, is, so far as

his own consciousness is concerned, a liar. For in saying what he does

not believe, he says what to his own conscience is false, even though

it should in fact be true; nor is the man in any sense free from lying

who with his mouth speaks the truth without knowing it, but in his

heart wills to tell a lie. And, therefore, not looking at the matter

spoken of, but solely at the intention of the speaker, the man who

unwittingly says what is false, thinking all the time that it is true,

is a better man than the one who unwittingly says what is true, but in

his conscience intends to deceive. For the former does not think one

thing and say another; but the latter, though his statements may be

true in fact, has one thought in his heart and another on his lips: and

that is the very essence of lying. But when we come to consider truth

and falsehood in respect to the subjects spoken of, the point on which

one deceives or is deceived becomes a matter of the utmost importance.

For although, as far as a man's own conscience is concerned, it is a

greater evil to deceive than to be deceived, nevertheless it is a far

less evil to tell a lie in regard to matters that do not relate to

religion, than to be led into error in regard to matters the knowledge

and belief of which are essential to the right worship of God. To

illustrate this by example: suppose that one man should say of some one

who is dead that he is still alive, knowing this to be untrue; and that

another man should, being deceived, believe that Christ shall at the

end of some time (make the time as long as you please) die; would it

not be incomparably better to lie like the former, than to be deceived

like the latter? and would it not be a much less evil to lead some man

into the former error, than to be led by any man into the latter?

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Chapter 19.--Men's Errors Vary Very Much in the Magnitude of the Evils

They Produce; But Yet Every Error is in Itself an Evil.

In some things, then, it is a great evil to be deceived; in some it is

a small evil; in some no evil at all; and in some it is an actual

advantage. It is to his grievous injury that a man is deceived when he

does not believe what leads to eternal life, or believes what leads to

eternal death. It is a small evil for a man to be deceived, when, by

taking falsehood for truth, he brings upon himself temporal annoyances;

for the patience of the believer will turn even these to a good use, as

when, for example, taking a bad man for a good, he receives injury from

him. But one who believes a bad man to be good, and yet suffers no

injury, is nothing the worse for being deceived, nor does he fall under

the prophetic denunciation: "Woe to those who call evil good!" [1112]

For we are to understand that this is spoken not about evil men, but

about the things that make men evil. Hence the man who calls adultery

good, falls justly under that prophetic denunciation. But the man who

calls the adulterer good, thinking him to be chaste, and not knowing

him to be an adulterer, falls into no error in regard to the nature of

good and evil, but only makes a mistake as to the secrets of human

conduct. He calls the man good on the ground of believing him to be

what is undoubtedly good; he calls the adulterer evil, and the pure man

good; and he calls this man good, not knowing him to be an adulterer,

but believing him to be pure. Further, if by making a mistake one

escape death, as I have said above once happened to me, one even

derives some advantage from one's mistake. But when I assert that in

certain cases a man may be deceived without any injury to himself, or

even with some advantage to himself, I do not mean that the mistake in

itself is no evil, or is in any sense a good; I refer only to the evil

that is avoided, or the advantage that is gained, through making the

mistake. For the mistake, considered in itself, is an evil: a great

evil if it concern a great matter, a small evil if it concern a small

matter, but yet always an evil. For who that is of sound mind can deny

that it is an evil to receive what is false as if it were true, and to

reject what is true as if it were false, or to hold what is uncertain

as certain, and what is certain as uncertain? But it is one thing to

think a man good when he is really bad, which is a mistake; it is

another thing to suffer no ulterior injury in consequence of the

mistake, supposing that the bad man whom we think good inflicts no

damage upon us. In the same way, it is one thing to think that we are

on the right road when we are not; it is another thing when this

mistake of ours, which is an evil, leads to some good, such as saving

us from an ambush of wicked men.

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[1112] Isa. v. 20

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Chapter 20.--Every Error is Not a Sin. An Examination of the Opinion of

the Academic Philosophers, that to Avoid Error We Should in All Cases

Suspend Belief.

I am not sure whether mistakes such as the following,--when one forms a

good opinion of a bad man, not knowing what sort of man he is; or when,

instead of the ordinary perceptions through the bodily senses, other

appearances of a similar kind present themselves, which we perceive in

the spirit, but think we perceive in the body, or perceive in the body,

but think we perceive in the spirit (such a mistake as the Apostle

Peter made when the angel suddenly freed him from his chains and

imprisonment, and he thought he saw a vision [1113] ); or when, in the

case of sensible objects themselves, we mistake rough for smooth, or

bitter for sweet, or think that putrid matter has a good smell; or when

we mistake the passing of a carriage for thunder; or mistake one man

for another, the two being very much alike, as often happens in the

case of twins (hence our great poet calls it "a mistake pleasing to

parents" [1114] ),--whether these, and other mistakes of this kind,

ought to be called sins. Nor do I now undertake to solve a very knotty

question, which perplexed those very acute thinkers, the Academic

philosophers: whether a wise man ought to give his assent to anything,

seeing that he may fall into error by assenting to falsehood: for all

things, as they assert, are either unknown or uncertain. Now I wrote

three volumes shortly after my conversion, to remove out of my way the

objections which lie, as it were, on the very threshold of faith. And

assuredly it was necessary at the very outset to remove this utter

despair of reaching truth, which seems to be strengthened by the

arguments of these philosophers. Now in their eyes every error is

regarded as a sin, and they think that error can only be avoided by

entirely suspending belief. For they say that the man who assents to

what is uncertain falls into error; and they strive by the most acute,

but most audacious arguments, to show that, even though a man's opinion

should by chance be true, yet that there is no certainty of its truth,

owing to the impossibility of distinguishing truth from falsehood. But

with us, "the just shall live by faith." [1115] Now, if assent be taken

away, faith goes too; for without assent there can be no belief. And

there are truths, whether we know them or not, which must be believed

if we would attain to a happy life, that is, to eternal life. But I am

not sure whether one ought to argue with men who not only do not know

that there is an eternal life before them, but do not know whether they

are living at the present moment; nay, say that they do not know what

it is impossible they can be ignorant of. For it is impossible that any

one should be ignorant that he is alive, seeing that if he be not alive

it is impossible for him to be ignorant; for not knowledge merely, but

ignorance too, can be an attribute only of the living. But, forsooth,

they think that by not acknowledging that they are alive they avoid

error, when even their very error proves that they are alive, since one

who is not alive cannot err. As, then, it is not only true, but

certain, that we are alive, so there are many other things both true

and certain; and God forbid that it should ever be called wisdom, and

not the height of folly, to refuse assent to these.

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[1113] Acts xii. 9

[1114] Virgil, �n. x. 392.

[1115] Rom. i. 17

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Chapter 21.--Error, Though Not Always a Sin, is Always an Evil.

But as to those matters in regard to which our belief or disbelief, and

indeed their truth or supposed truth or falsity, are of no importance

whatever, so far as attaining the kingdom of God is concerned: to make

a mistake in such matters is not to be looked on as a sin, or at least

as a very small and trifling sin. In short, a mistake in matters of

this kind, whatever its nature and magnitude, does not relate to the

way of approach to God, which is the faith of Christ that "worketh by

love." [1116] For the "mistake pleasing to parents" in the case of the

twin children was no deviation from this way; nor did the Apostle Peter

deviate from this way, when, thinking that he saw a vision, he so

mistook one thing for another, that, till the angel who delivered him

had departed from him, he did not distinguish the real objects among

which he was moving from the visionary objects of a dream; [1117] nor

did the patriarch Jacob deviate from this way, when he believed that

his son, who was really alive, had been slain by a beast. [1118] In the

case of these and other false impressions of the same kind, we are

indeed deceived, but our faith in God remains secure. We go astray, but

we do not leave the way that leads us to Him. But yet these errors,

though they are not sinful, are to be reckoned among the evils of this

life which is so far made subject to vanity, that we receive what is

false as if it were true, reject what is true as if it were false, and

cling to what is uncertain as if it were certain. And although they do

not trench upon that true and certain faith through which we reach

eternal blessedness, yet they have much to do with that misery in which

we are now living. And assuredly, if we were now in the enjoyment of

the true and perfect happiness that lies before us, we should not be

subject to any deception through any sense, whether of body or of mind.

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[1116] Gal. v. 6

[1117] Acts xii. 9-11

[1118] Gen. xxxvii. 33

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Chapter 22.--A Lie is Not Allowable, Even to Save Another from Injury.

But every lie must be called a sin, because not only when a man knows

the truth, but even when, as a man may be, he is mistaken and deceived,

it is his duty to say what he thinks in his heart, whether it be true,

or whether he only think it to be true. But every liar says the

opposite of what he thinks in his heart, with purpose to deceive. Now

it is evident that speech was given to man, not that men might

therewith deceive one another, but that one man might make known his

thoughts to another. To use speech, then, for the purpose of deception,

and not for its appointed end, is a sin. Nor are we to suppose that

there is any lie that is not a sin, because it is sometimes possible,

by telling a lie, to do service to another. For it is possible to do

this by theft also, as when we steal from a rich man who never feels

the loss, to give to a poor man who is sensibly benefited by what he

gets. And the same can be said of adultery also, when, for instance,

some woman appears likely to die of love unless we consent to her

wishes, while if she lived she might purify herself by repentance; but

yet no one will assert that on this account such an adultery is not a

sin. And if we justly place so high a value upon chastity, what offense

have we taken at truth, that, while no prospect of advantage to another

will lead us to violate the former by adultery, we should be ready to

violate the latter by lying? It cannot be denied that they have

attained a very high standard of goodness who never lie except to save

a man from injury; but in the case of men who have reached this

standard, it is not the deceit, but their good intention, that is

justly praised, and sometimes even rewarded. It is quite enough that

the deception should be pardoned, without its being made an object of

laudation, especially among the heirs of the new covenant, to whom it

is said: "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever

is more than these cometh of evil." [1119] And it is on account of this

evil, which never ceases to creep in while we retain this mortal

vesture, that the co-heirs of Christ themselves say, "Forgive us our

debts." [1120]

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[1119] Matt. v. 37

[1120] Matt. vi. 12

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Chapter 23.--Summary of the Results of the Preceding Discussion.

As it is right that we should know the causes of good and evil, so much

of them at least as will suffice for the way that leads us to the

kingdom, where there will be life without the shadow of death, truth

without any alloy of error, and happiness unbroken by any sorrow, I

have discussed these subjects with the brevity which my limited space

demanded. And I think there cannot now be any doubt, that the only

cause of any good that we enjoy is the goodness of God, and that the

only cause of evil is the falling away from the unchangeable good of a

being made good but changeable, first in the case of an angel, and

afterwards in the case of man.

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Chapter 24.--The Secondary Causes of Evil are Ignorance and Lust.

This is the first evil that befell the intelligent creation--that is,

its first privation of good. Following upon this crept in, and now even

in opposition to man's will, ignorance of duty, and lust after what is

hurtful: and these brought in their train error and suffering, which,

when they are felt to be imminent, produce that shrinking of the mind

which is called fear. Further, when the mind attains the objects of its

desire, however hurtful or empty they may be, error prevents it from

perceiving their true nature, or its perceptions are overborne by a

diseased appetite, and so it is puffed up with a foolish joy. From

these fountains of evil, which spring out of defect rather than

superfluity, flows every form of misery that besets a rational nature.

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Chapter 25.--God's Judgments Upon Fallen Men and Angels. The Death of

the Body is Man's Peculiar Punishment.

And yet such a nature, in the midst of all its evils, could not lose

the craving after happiness. Now the evils I have mentioned are common

to all who for their wickedness have been justly condemned by God,

whether they be men or angels. But there is one form of punishment

peculiar to man--the death of the body. God had threatened him with

this punishment of death if he should sin, [1121] leaving him indeed to

the freedom of his own will, but yet commanding his obedience under

pain of death; and He placed him amid the happiness of Eden, as it were

in a protected nook of life, with the intention that, if he preserved

his righteousness, he should thence ascend to a better place.

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[1121] Gen. ii. 17

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Chapter 26.--Through Adam's Sin His Whole Posterity Were Corrupted, and

Were Born Under the Penalty of Death, Which He Had Incurred.

Thence, after his sin, he was driven into exile, and by his sin the

whole race of which he was the root was corrupted in him, and thereby

subjected to the penalty of death. And so it happens that all descended

from him, and from the woman who had led him into sin, and was

condemned at the same time with him,--being the offspring of carnal

lust on which the same punishment of disobedience was visited,--were

tainted with the original sin, and were by it drawn through divers

errors and sufferings into that last and endless punishment which they

suffer in common with the fallen angels, their corrupters and masters,

and the partakers of their doom. And thus "by one man sin entered into

the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that

all have sinned." [1122] By "the world" the apostle, of course, means

in this place the whole human race.

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[1122] Rom. v. 12

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Chapter 27.--The State of Misery to Which Adam's Sin Reduced Mankind,

and the Restoration Effected Through the Mercy of God.

Thus, then, matters stood. The whole mass of the human race was under

condemnation, was lying steeped and wallowing in misery, and was being

tossed from one form of evil to another, and, having joined the faction

of the fallen angels, was paying the well-merited penalty of that

impious rebellion. For whatever the wicked freely do through blind and

unbridled lust, and whatever they suffer against their will in the way

of open punishment, this all evidently pertains to the just wrath of

God. But the goodness of the Creator never fails either to supply life

and vital power to the wicked angels (without which their existence

would soon come to an end); or, in the case of mankind, who spring from

a condemned and corrupt stock, to impart form and life to their seed,

to fashion their members, and through the various seasons of their

life, and in the different parts of the earth, to quicken their senses,

and bestow upon them the nourishment they need. For He judged it better

to bring good out of evil, than not to permit any evil to exist. And if

He had determined that in the case of men, as in the case of the fallen

angels, there should be no restoration to happiness, would it not have

been quite just, that the being who rebelled against God, who in the

abuse of his freedom spurned and transgressed the command of his

Creator when he could so easily have kept it, who defaced in himself

the image of his Creator by stubbornly turning away from His light, who

by an evil use of his free-will broke away from his wholesome bondage

to the Creator's laws,--would it not have been just that such a being

should have been wholly and to all eternity deserted by God, and left

to suffer the everlasting punishment he had so richly earned? Certainly

so God would have done, had He been only just and not also merciful,

and had He not designed that His unmerited mercy should shine forth the

more brightly in contrast with the unworthiness of its objects.

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Chapter 28.--When the Rebellious Angels Were Cast Out, the Rest

Remained in the Enjoyment of Eternal Happiness with God.

Whilst some of the angels, then, in their pride and impiety rebelled

against God, and were cast down from their heavenly abode into the

lowest darkness, the remaining number dwelt with God in eternal and

unchanging purity and happiness. For all were not sprung from one angel

who had fallen and been condemned, so that they were not all, like men,

involved by one original sin in the bonds of an inherited guilt, and so

made subject to the penalty which one had incurred; but when he, who

afterwards became the devil, was with his associates in crime exalted

in pride, and by that very exaltation was with them cast down, the rest

remained steadfast in piety and obedience to their Lord, and obtained,

what before they had not enjoyed, a sure and certain knowledge of their

eternal safety, and freedom from the possibility of falling.

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Chapter 29.--The Restored Part of Humanity Shall, in Accordance with

the Promises of God, Succeed to the Place Which the Rebellious Angels

Lost.

And so it pleased God, the Creator and Governor of the universe, that,

since the whole body of the angels had not fallen into rebellion, the

part of them which had fallen should remain in perdition eternally, and

that the other part, which had in the rebellion remained steadfastly

loyal, should rejoice in the sure and certain knowledge of their

eternal happiness; but that, on the other hand, mankind, who

constituted the remainder of the intelligent creation, having perished

without exception under sin, both original and actual, and the

consequent punishments, should be in part restored, and should fill up

the gap which the rebellion and fall of the devils had left in the

company of the angels. For this is the promise to the saints, that at

the resurrection they shall be equal to the angels of God. [1123] And

thus the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all, the

city of God, shall not be spoiled of any of the number of her citizens,

shall perhaps reign over even a more abundant population. We do not

know the number either of the saints or of the devils; but we know that

the children of the holy mother who was called barren on earth shall

succeed to the place of the fallen angels, and shall dwell for ever in

that peaceful abode from which they fell. But the number of the

citizens, whether as it now is or as it shall be, is present to the

thoughts of the great Creator, who calls those things which are not as

though they were, [1124] and ordereth all things in measure, and

number, and weight. [1125]

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[1123] Luke xx. 36

[1124] Rom. iv. 17

[1125] Wisd. xi. 20

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Chapter 30.--Men are Not Saved by Good Works, Nor by the Free

Determination of Their Own Will, But by the Grace of God Through Faith.

But this part of the human race to which God has promised pardon and a

share in His eternal kingdom, can they be restored through the merit of

their own works? God forbid. For what good work can a lost man perform,

except so far as he has been delivered from perdition? Can they do

anything by the free determination of their own will? Again I say, God

forbid. For it was by the evil use of his free-will that man destroyed

both it and himself. For, as a man who kills himself must, of course,

be alive when he kills himself, but after he has killed himself ceases

to live, and cannot restore himself to life; so, when man by his own

free-will sinned, then sin being victorious over him, the freedom of

his will was lost. "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he

brought in bondage." [1126] This is the judgment of the Apostle Peter.

And as it is certainly true, what kind of liberty, I ask, can the

bond-slave possess, except when it pleases him to sin? For he is freely

in bondage who does with pleasure the will of his master. Accordingly,

he who is the servant of sin is free to sin. And hence he will not be

free to do right, until, being freed from sin, he shall begin to be the

servant of righteousness. And this is true liberty, for he has pleasure

in the righteous deed; and it is at the same time a holy bondage, for

he is obedient to the will of God. But whence comes this liberty to do

right to the man who is in bondage and sold under sin, except he be

redeemed by Him who has said, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall

be free indeed?" [1127] And before this redemption is wrought in a man,

when he is not yet free to do what is right, how can he talk of the

freedom of his will and his good works, except he be inflated by that

foolish pride of boasting which the apostle restrains when he says, "By

grace are ye saved, through faith." [1128]

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[1126] 2 Pet. ii. 19

[1127] John viii. 36

[1128] Eph. ii. 8

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Chapter 31.--Faith Itself is the Gift of God; And Good Works Will Not

Be Wanting in Those Who Believe.

And lest men should arrogate to themselves the merit of their own faith

at least, not understanding that this too is the gift of God, this same

apostle, who says in another place that he had "obtained mercy of the

Lord to be faithful," [1129] here also adds: "and that not of

yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should

boast." [1130] And lest it should be thought that good works will be

wanting in those who believe, he adds further: "For we are His

workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath

before ordained that we should walk in them." [1131] We shall be made

truly free, then, when God fashions us, that is, forms and creates us

anew, not as men--for He has done that already--but as good men, which

His grace is now doing, that we may be a new creation in Christ Jesus,

according as it is said: "Create in me a clean heart, O God." [1132]

For God had already created his heart, so far as the physical structure

of the human heart is concerned; but the psalmist prays for the renewal

of the life which was still lingering in his heart.

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[1129] 1 Cor. vii. 25

[1130] Eph. ii. 8, 9

[1131] Eph. ii. 10

[1132] Ps. li. 10

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Chapter 32.--The Freedom of the Will is Also the Gift of God, for God

Worketh in Us Both to Will and to Do.

And further, should any one be inclined to boast, not indeed of his

works, but of the freedom of his will, as if the first merit belonged

to him, this very liberty of good action being given to him as a reward

he had earned, let him listen to this same preacher of grace, when he

says: "For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of

His own good pleasure;" [1133] and in another place: "So, then, it is

not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that

showeth mercy." [1134] Now as, undoubtedly, if a man is of the age to

use his reason, he cannot believe, hope, love, unless he will to do so,

nor obtain the prize of the high calling of God unless he voluntarily

run for it; in what sense is it "not of him that willeth, nor of him

that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," except that, as it is

written, "the preparation of the heart is from the Lord?" [1135]

Otherwise, if it is said, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him

that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," because it is of both,

that is, both of the will of man and of the mercy of God, so that we

are to understand the saying, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of

him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," as if it meant the

will of man alone is not sufficient, if the mercy of God go not with

it,--then it will follow that the mercy of God alone is not sufficient,

if the will of man go not with it; and therefore, if we may rightly

say, "it is not of man that willeth, but of God that showeth mercy,"

because the will of man by itself is not enough, why may we not also

rightly put it in the converse way: "It is not of God that showeth

mercy, but of man that willeth," because the mercy of God by itself

does not suffice? Surely, if no Christian will dare to say this, "It is

not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth," lest he should

openly contradict the apostle, it follows that the true interpretation

of the saying, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth,

but of God that showeth mercy," is that the whole work belongs to God,

who both makes the will of man righteous, and thus prepares it for

assistance, and assists it when it is prepared. For the man's

righteousness of will precedes many of God's gifts, but not all; and it

must itself be included among those which it does not precede. We read

in Holy Scripture, both that God's mercy "shall meet me," [1136] and

that His mercy "shall follow me." [1137] It goes before the unwilling

to make him willing; it follows the willing to make his will effectual.

Why are we taught to pray for our enemies, [1138] who are plainly

unwilling to lead a holy life, unless that God may work willingness in

them? And why are we ourselves taught to ask that we may receive,

[1139] unless that He who has created in us the wish, may Himself

satisfy the wish? We pray, then, for our enemies, that the mercy of God

may prevent them, as it has prevented us: we pray for ourselves that

His mercy may follow us.

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[1133] Phil. ii. 13

[1134] Rom. ix. 16

[1135] Prov. xvi. 1

[1136] Ps. lix. 10

[1137] Ps. xxiii. 6

[1138] Matt. v. 44

[1139] Matt. vii. 7

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Chapter 33.--Men, Being by Nature the Children of Wrath, Needed a

Mediator. In What Sense God is Said to Be Angry.

And so the human race was lying under a just condemnation, and all men

were the children of wrath. Of which wrath it is written: "All our days

are passed away in Thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is

told." [1140] Of which wrath also Job says: "Man that is born of a

woman is of few days, and full of trouble." [1141] Of which wrath also

the Lord Jesus says: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting

life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the

wrath of God abideth on him." [1142] He does not say it will come, but

it "abideth on him." For every man is born with it; wherefore the

apostle says: "We were by nature the children of wrath, even as

others." [1143] Now, as men were lying under this wrath by reason of

their original sin, and as this original sin was the more heavy and

deadly in proportion to the number and magnitude of the actual sins

which were added to it, there was need for a Mediator, that is, for a

reconciler, who, by the offering of one sacrifice, of which all the

sacrifices of the law and the prophets were types, should take away

this wrath. Wherefore the apostle says: "For if, when we were enemies,

we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being

reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." [1144] Now when God is said

to be angry, we do not attribute to Him such a disturbed feeling as

exists in the mind of an angry man; but we call His just displeasure

against sin by the name "anger," a word transferred by analogy from

human emotions. But our being reconciled to God through a Mediator, and

receiving the Holy Spirit, so that we who were enemies are made sons

("For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of

God" [1145] ): this is the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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[1140] Ps. xc. 9

[1141] Job xiv.1

[1142] John iii. 36. These words, attributed by the author to Christ,

were really spoken by John the Baptist.

[1143] Eph. ii. 3

[1144] Rom. v. 10

[1145] Rom. viii. 14

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Chapter 34.--The Ineffable Mystery of the Birth of Christ the Mediator

Through the Virgin Mary.

Now of this Mediator it would occupy too much space to say anything at

all worthy of Him; and, indeed, to say what is worthy of Him is not in

the power of man. For who will explain in consistent words this single

statement, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," [1146]

so that we may believe on the only Son of God the Father Almighty, born

of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary. The meaning of the Word being

made flesh, is not that the divine nature was changed into flesh, but

that the divine nature assumed our flesh. And by "flesh" we are here to

understand "man," the part being put for the whole, as when it is said:

"By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified," [1147] that is,

no man. For we must believe that no part was wanting in that human

nature which He put on, save that it was a nature wholly free from

every taint of sin,--not such a nature as is conceived between the two

sexes through carnal lust, which is born in sin, and whose guilt is

washed away in regeneration; but such as it behoved a virgin to bring

forth, when the mother's faith, not her lust, was the condition of

conception. And if her virginity had been marred even in bringing Him

forth, He would not have been born of a virgin; and it would be false

(which God forbid) that He was born of the Virgin Mary, as is believed

and declared by the whole Church, which, in imitation of His mother,

daily brings forth members of His body, and yet remains a virgin. Read,

if you please, my letter on the virginity of the holy Mary which I sent

to that eminent man, whose name I mention with respect and affection,

Volusianus. [1148]

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[1146] John i. 14

[1147] 3[1147] Rom. iii. 20

[1148] Ep. 137.

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Chapter 35.--Jesus Christ, Being the Only Son of God, is at the Same

Time Man.

Wherefore Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is both God and man; God before

all worlds; man in our world: God, because the Word of God (for "the

Word was God" [1149] ); and man, because in His one person the Word was

joined with a body and a rational soul. Wherefore, so far as He is God,

He and the Father are one; so far as He is man, the Father is greater

than He. For when He was the only Son of God, not by grace, but by

nature, that He might be also full of grace, He became the Son of man;

and He Himself unites both natures in His own identity, and both

natures constitute one Christ; because, "being in the form of God, He

thought it not robbery to be," what He was by nature, "equal with God."

[1150] But He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the

form of a servant, not losing or lessening the form of God. And,

accordingly, He was both made less and remained equal, being both in

one, as has been said: but He was one of these as Word, and the other

as man. As Word, He is equal with the Father; as man, less than the

Father. One Son of God, and at the same time Son of man; one Son of

man, and at the same time Son of God; not two Sons of God, God and man,

but one Son of God: God without beginning; man with a beginning, our

Lord Jesus Christ.

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[1149] John i. 1

[1150] Phil. ii. 6

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Chapter 36.--The Grace of God is Clearly and Remarkably Displayed in

Raising the Man Christ Jesus to the Dignity of the Son of God.

Now here the grace of God is displayed with the greatest power and

clearness. For what merit had the human nature in the man Christ

earned, that it should in this unparalleled way be taken up into the

unity of the person of the only Son of God? What goodness of will, what

goodness of desire and intention, what good works, had gone before,

which made this man worthy to become one person with God? Had He been a

man previously to this, and had He earned this unprecedented reward,

that He should be thought worthy to become God? Assuredly nay; from the

very moment that He began to be man, He was nothing else than the Son

of God, the only Son of God, the Word who was made flesh, and therefore

He was God so that just as each individual man unites in one person a

body and a rational soul, so Christ in one person unites the Word and

man. Now wherefore was this unheard of glory conferred on human

nature,--a glory which, as there was no antecedent merit, was of course

wholly of grace,--except that here those who looked at the matter

soberly and honestly might behold a clear manifestation of the power of

God's free grace, and might understand that they are justified from

their sins by the same grace which made the man Christ Jesus free from

the possibility of sin? And so the angel, when he announced to Christ's

mother the coming birth, saluted her thus: "Hail, thou that art full of

grace;" [1151] and shortly afterwards, "Thou hast found grace with

God." [1152] Now she was said to be full of grace, and to have found

grace with God, because she was to be the mother of her Lord, nay, of

the Lord of all flesh. But, speaking of Christ Himself, the evangelist

John, after saying, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,"

adds, "and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of

the Father, full of grace and truth." [1153] When he says, "The Word

was made flesh," this is "full of grace;" when he says, "the glory of

the only-begotten of the Father," this is "full of truth." For the

Truth Himself, who was the only-begotten of the Father, not by grace,

but by nature, by grace took our humanity upon Him, and so united it

with His own person that He Himself became also the Son of man.

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[1151] Luke i. 28 ("thou that are highly favored," A.V.).

[1152] Luke i. 30 ("Thou hast found favor with God," A.V.).

[1153] John i. 14

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Chapter 37.--The Same Grace is Further Clearly Manifested in This, that

the Birth of Christ According to the Flesh is of the Holy Ghost.

For the same Jesus Christ who is the only-begotten, that is, the only

Son of God, our Lord, was born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin

Mary. And we know that the Holy Spirit is the gift of God, the gift

being Himself indeed equal to the Giver. And therefore the Holy Spirit

also is God, not inferior to the Father and the Son. The fact,

therefore, that the nativity of Christ in His human nature was by the

Holy Spirit, is another clear manifestation of grace. For when the

Virgin asked the angel how this which he had announced should be,

seeing she knew not a man, the angel answered, "The Holy Ghost shall

come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee:

therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be

called the Son of God." [1154] And when Joseph was minded to put her

away, suspecting her of adultery, as he knew she was not with child by

himself, he was told by the angel, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy

wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost:" [1155]

that is, what thou suspectest to be begotten of another man is of the

Holy Ghost.

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[1154] Luke i. 35

[1155] Matt. i. 20

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Chapter 38.--Jesus Christ, According to the Flesh, Was Not Born of the

Holy Spirit in Such a Sense that the Holy Spirit is His Father.

Nevertheless, are we on this account to say that the Holy Ghost is the

father of the man Christ, and that as God the Father begat the Word, so

God the Holy Spirit begat the man, and that these two natures

constitute the one Christ; and that as the Word He is the Son of God

the Father, and as man the Son of God the Holy Spirit, because the Holy

Spirit as His father begat Him of the Virgin Mary? Who will dare to say

so? Nor is it necessary to show by reasoning how many other absurdities

flow from this supposition, when it is itself so absurd that no

believer's ears can bear to hear it. Hence, as we confess, "Our Lord

Jesus Christ, who of God is God, and as man was born of the Holy Ghost

and of the Virgin Mary, having both natures, the divine and the human,

is the only Son of God the Father Almighty, from whom proceedeth the

Holy Spirit." [1156] Now in what sense do we say that Christ was born

of the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit did not beget Him? Is it that He

made Him, since our Lord Jesus Christ, though as God "all things were

made by Him," [1157] yet as man was Himself made; as the apostle says,

"who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh?" [1158] But

as that created thing which the Virgin conceived and brought forth

though it was united only to the person of the Son, was made by the

whole Trinity (for the works of the Trinity are not separable), why

should the Holy Spirit alone be mentioned as having made it? Or is it

that, when one of the Three is mentioned as the author of any work, the

whole Trinity is to be understood as working? That is true, and can be

proved by examples. But we need not dwell longer on this solution. For

the puzzle is, in what sense it is said, "born of the Holy Ghost," when

He is in no sense the Son of the Holy Ghost? For though God made this

world, it would not be right to say that it is the Son of God, or that

it was born of God; we would say that it was created, or made, or

framed, or ordered by Him, or whatever form of expression we can

properly use. Here, then, when we make confession that Christ was born

of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary, it is difficult to explain

how it is that He is not the Son of the Holy Ghost and is the Son of

the Virgin Mary, when He was born both of Him and of her. It is clear

beyond a doubt that He was not born of the Holy Spirit as His father,

in the same sense that He was born of the Virgin as His mother.

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[1156] A quotation from a form of the Apostles' Creed anciently in use

in the Latin Church.

[1157] John i. 3

[1158] Rom. i. 3

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Chapter 39.--Not Everything that is Born of Another is to Be Called a

Son of that Other.

We need not therefore take for granted, that whatever is born of a

thing is forthwith to be declared the son of that thing. For, to pass

over the fact that a son is born of a man in a different sense from

that in which a hair or a louse is born of him, neither of these being

a son; to pass over this, I say, as too mean an illustration for a

subject of so much importance: it is certain that those who are born of

water and of the Holy Spirit cannot with propriety be called sons of

the water though they are called sons of God the Father, and of the

Church their mother. In the same way, then, He who was born of the Holy

Spirit is the Son of God the Father, not of the Holy Spirit. For what I

have said of the hair and the other things is sufficient to show us

that not everything which is born of another can be called the son of

that of which it is born, just as it does not follow that all who are

called a man's sons were born of him, for some sons are adopted. And

some men are called sons of hell, not as being born of hell, but as

prepared for it, as the sons of the kingdom are prepared for the

kingdom.

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Chapter 40.--Christ's Birth Through the Holy Spirit Manifests to Us the

Grace of God.

And, therefore, as one thing may be born of another, and yet not in

such a way as to be its son, and as not every one who is called a son

was born of him whose son he is called, it is clear that this

arrangement by which Christ was born of the Holy Spirit, but not as His

son, and of the Virgin Mary as her son, is intended as a manifestation

of the grace of God. For it was by this grace that a man, without any

antecedent merit, was at the very commencement of His existence as man,

so united in one person with the Word of God, that the very person who

was Son of man was at the same time Son of God, and the very person who

was Son of God was at the same time Son of man; and in the adoption of

His human nature into the divine, the grace itself became in a way so

natural to the man, as to leave no room for the entrance of sin.

Wherefore this grace is signified by the Holy Spirit; for He, though in

His own nature God, may also be called the gift of God. And to explain

all this sufficiently, if indeed it could be done at all, would require

a very lengthened discussion.

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Chapter 41.--Christ, Who Was Himself Free from Sin, Was Made Sin for

Us, that We Might Be Reconciled to God.

Begotten and conceived, then, without any indulgence of carnal lust,

and therefore bringing with Him no original sin, and by the grace of

God joined and united in a wonderful and unspeakable way in one person

with the Word, the Only-begotten of the Father, a son by nature, not by

grace, and therefore having no sin of His own; nevertheless, on account

of the likeness of sinful flesh in which He came, He was called sin,

that He might be sacrificed to wash away sin. For, under the Old

Covenant, sacrifices for sin were called sins. [1159] And He, of whom

all these sacrifices were types and shadows, was Himself truly made

sin. Hence the apostle, after saying, "We pray you in Christ's stead,

be ye reconciled to God," forthwith adds: "for He hath made Him to be

sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of

God in Him." [1160] He does not say, as some incorrect copies read, "He

who knew no sin did sin for us," as if Christ had Himself sinned for

our sakes; but he says, "Him who knew no sin," that is, Christ, God, to

whom we are to be reconciled, "hath made to be sin for us," that is,

hath made Him a sacrifice for our sins, by which we might be reconciled

to God. He, then, being made sin, just as we are made righteousness

(our righteousness being not our own, but God's, not in ourselves, but

in Him); He being made sin, not His own, but ours, not in Himself, but

in us, showed, by the likeness of sinful flesh in which He was

crucified, that though sin was not in Him, yet that in a certain sense

He died to sin, by dying in the flesh which was the likeness of sin;

and that although He Himself had never lived the old life of sin, yet

by His resurrection He typified our new life springing up out of the

old death in sin.

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[1159] Hos. iv. 8

[1160] 2 Cor. v. 20, 21

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Chapter 42.--The Sacrament of Baptism Indicates Our Death with Christ

to Sin, and Our Resurrection with Him to Newness of Life.

And this is the meaning of the great sacrament of baptism which is

solemnized among us, that all who attain to this grace should die to

sin, as He is said to have died to sin, because He died in the flesh,

which is the likeness of sin; and rising from the font regenerate, as

He arose alive from the grave, should begin a new life in the Spirit,

whatever may be the age of the body?

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Chapter 43.--Baptism and the Grace Which It Typifies are Open to All,

Both Infants and Adults.

For from the infant newly born to the old man bent with age, as there

is none shut out from baptism, so there is none who in baptism does not

die to sin. But infants die only to original sin; those who are older

die also to all the sins which their evil lives have added to the sin

which they brought with them.

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Chapter 44.--In Speaking of Sin, the Singular Number is Often Put for

the Plural, and the Plural for the Singular.

But even these latter are frequently said to die to sin, though

undoubtedly they die not to one sin, but to all the numerous actual

sins they have committed in thought, word, or deed: for the singular

number is often put for the plural, as when the poet says, "They fill

its belly with the armed soldier," [1161] though in the case here

referred to there were many soldiers concerned. And we read in our own

Scriptures: "Pray to the Lord, that He take away the serpent from us."

[1162] He does not say serpents though the people were suffering from

many; and so in other cases. When, on the other hand, the original sin

is expressed in the plural number, as when we say that infants are

baptized for the remission of sins, instead of saying for the remission

of sin, this is the converse figure of speech, by which the plural

number is put in place of the singular; as in the Gospel it is said of

the death of Herod, "for they are dead which sought the young child's

life," [1163] instead of saying, "he is dead." And in Exodus: "They

have made them," Moses says, "gods of gold," [1164] though they had

made only one calf, of which they said: "These be thy gods, O Israel,

which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," [1165] --here, too,

putting the plural in place of the singular.

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[1161] "Uterumque armato milite complent.".--Virgil, �n. ii. 20.

[1162] Num. xxi. 7 ("serpents," A. and R.V.).

[1163] Matt. ii. 20

[1164] Ex. xxxii. 31

[1165] Ex. xxxii. 4

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Chapter 45.--In Adam's First Sin, Many Kinds of Sin Were Involved.

However, even in that one sin, which "by one man entered into the

world, and so passed upon all men," [1166] and on account of which

infants are baptized, a number of distinct sins may be observed, if it

be analyzed as it were into its separate elements. For there is in it

pride, because man chose to be under his own dominion, rather than

under the dominion of God; and blasphemy, because he did not believe

God; and murder, for he brought death upon himself; and spiritual

fornication, for the purity of the human soul was corrupted by the

seducing blandishments of the serpent; and theft, for man turned to his

own use the food he had been forbidden to touch; and avarice, for he

had a craving for more than should have been sufficient for him; and

whatever other sin can be discovered on careful reflection to be

involved in this one admitted sin.

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[1166] Rom. v. 12

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Chapter 46.--It is Probable that Children are Involved in the Guilt Not

Only of the First Pair, But of Their Own Immediate Parents.

And it is said, with much appearance of probability, that infants are

involved in the guilt of the sins not only of the first pair, but of

their own immediate parents. For that divine judgment, "I shall visit

the iniquities of the fathers upon the children," [1167] certainly

applies to them before they come under the new covenant by

regeneration. And it was this new covenant that was prophesied of, when

it was said by Ezekiel, that the sons should not bear the iniquity of

the fathers, and that it should no longer be a proverb in Israel, "The

fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on

edge." [1168] Here lies the necessity that each man should be born

again, that he might be freed from the sin in which he was born. For

the sins committed afterwards can be cured by penitence, as we see is

the case after baptism. And therefore the new birth would not have been

appointed only that the first birth was sinful, so sinful that even one

who was legitimately born in wedlock says: "I was shapen in iniquities,

and in sins did my mother conceive me." [1169] He did not say in

iniquity, or in sin, though he might have said so correctly; but he

preferred to say "iniquities" and "sins," because in that one sin which

passed upon all men, and which was so great that human nature was by it

made subject to inevitable death, many sins, as I showed above, may be

discriminated; and further, because there are other sins of the

immediate parents, which though they have not the same effect in

producing a change of nature, yet subject the children to guilt unless

the divine grace and mercy interpose to rescue them.

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[1167] Ex. xx. 5; Deut. v. 9

[1168] Ezek. xviii. 2

[1169] Ps. li. 5 (The A.V. has the singular, "iniquity" and "sin").

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Chapter 47.--It is Difficult to Decide Whether the Sins of a Man's

Other Progenitors are Imputed to Him.

But about the sins of the other progenitors who intervene between Adam

and a man's own parents, a question may very well be raised. Whether

every one who is born is involved in all their accumulated evil acts,

in all their multiplied original guilt, so that the later he is born,

so much the worse is his condition; or whether God threatens to visit

the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth

generations, because in His mercy He does not extend His wrath against

the sins of the progenitors further than that, lest those who do not

obtain the grace of regeneration might be crushed down under too heavy

a burden if they were compelled to bear as original guilt all the sins

of all their progenitors from the very beginning of the human race, and

to pay the penalty due to them; or whether any other solution of this

great question may or may not be found in Scripture by a more diligent

search and a more careful interpretation, I dare not rashly affirm.

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Chapter 48.--The Guilt of the First Sin is So Great that It Can Be

Washed Away Only in the Blood of the Mediator, Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, that one sin, admitted into a place where such perfect

happiness reigned, was of so heinous a character, that in one man the

whole human race was originally, and as one may say, radically,

condemned; and it cannot be pardoned and blotted out except through the

one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who only has

had power to be so born as not to need a second birth.

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Chapter 49.--Christ Was Not Regenerated in the Baptism of John, But

Submitted to It to Give Us an Example of Humility, Just as He Submitted

to Death, Not as the Punishment of Sin, But to Take Away the Sin of the

World.

Now, those who were baptized in the baptism of John, by whom Christ was

Himself baptized, [1170] were not regenerated; but they were prepared

through the ministry of His forerunner, who cried, "Prepare ye the way

of the Lord," [1171] for Him in whom only they could be regenerated.

For His baptism is not with water only, as was that of John, but with

the Holy Ghost also; [1172] so that whoever believes in Christ is

regenerated by that Spirit, of whom Christ being generated, He did not

need regeneration. Whence that announcement of the Father which was

heard after His baptism, "This day have I begotten Thee," [1173]

referred not to that one day of time on which He was baptized, but to

the one day of an unchangeable eternity, so as to show that this man

was one in person with the Only-begotten. For when a day neither begins

with the close of yesterday, nor ends with the beginning of to-morrow,

it is an eternal to-day. Therefore He asked to be baptized in water by

John, not that any iniquity of His might be washed away, but that He

might manifest the depth of His humility. For baptism found in Him

nothing to wash away, as death found in Him nothing to punish; so that

it was in the strictest justice, and not by the mere violence of power,

that the devil was crushed and conquered: for, as he had most unjustly

put Christ to death, though there was no sin in Him to deserve death,

it was most just that through Christ he should lose his hold of those

who by sin were justly subject to the bondage in which he held them.

Both of these, then, that is, both baptism and death, were submitted to

by Him, not through a pitiable necessity, but of His own free pity for

us, and as part of an arrangement by which, as one man brought sin into

the world, that is, upon the whole human race, so one man was to take

away the sin of the world.

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[1170] Matt. iii. 13-15

[1171] Matt. iii. 3

[1172] Matt. iii. 11

[1173] Ps. ii. 7; Heb. i. 5, v. 5. It is by a mistake that Augustin

quotes these words as pronounced at our Lord's baptism.

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Chapter 50.--Christ Took Away Not Only the One Original Sin, But All

the Other Sins that Have Been Added to It.

With this difference: the first man brought one sin into the world, but

this man took away not only that one sin, but all that He found added

to it. Hence the apostle says: "And not as it was by one that sinned,

so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the

free gift is of many offenses unto justification." [1174] For it is

evident that the one sin which we bring with us by nature would, even

if it stood alone, bring us under condemnation; but the free gift

justifies man from many offenses: for each man, in addition to the one

sin which, in common with all his kind, he brings with him by nature,

has committed many sins that are strictly his own.

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[1174] Rom. v. 16

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Chapter 51.--All Men Born of Adam are Under Condemnation, and Only If

New Born in Christ are Freed from Condemnation.

But what he says a little after, "Therefore, as by the offense of one

judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the

righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification

of life," [1175] shows clearly enough that there is no one born of Adam

but is subject to condemnation, and that no one, unless he be new born

in Christ, is freed from condemnation.

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[1175] Rom. v. 18

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Chapter 52.--In Baptism, Which is the Similitude of the Death and

Resurrection of Christ, All, Both Infants and Adults, Die to Sin that

They May Walk in Newness of Life.

And after he has said as much about the condemnation through one man,

and the free gift through one man, as he deemed sufficient for that

part of his epistle, the apostle goes on to speak of the great mystery

of holy baptism in the cross of Christ, and to clearly explain to us

that baptism in Christ is nothing else than a similitude of the death

of Christ, and that the death of Christ on the cross is nothing but a

similitude of the pardon of sin: so that just as real as is His death,

so real is the remission of our sins; and just as real as is His

resurrection, so real is our justification. He says: "What shall we

say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" [1176] For

he had said previously, "But where sin, abounded, grace did much more

abound." [1177] And therefore he proposes to himself the question,

whether it would be right to continue in sin for the sake of the

consequent abounding grace. But he answers, "God forbid;" and adds,

"How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Then, to

show that we are dead to sin, "Know ye not," he says, "that so many of

us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death?"

If, then, the fact that we were baptized into the death of Christ

proves that we are dead to sin, it follows that even infants who are

baptized into Christ die to sin, being baptized into His death. For

there is no exception made: "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus

Christ, were baptized into His death." And this is said to prove that

we are dead to sin. Now, to what sin do infants die in their

regeneration but that sin which they bring with them at birth? And

therefore to these also applies what follows: "Therefore we are buried

with Him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from

the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in

newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness

of His death, we shall be also 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 be dead with Christ, we

believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ, being

raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over

Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth,

He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead

indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now

he had commenced with proving that we must not continue in sin that

grace may abound, and had said: "How shall we that are dead to sin live

any longer therein?" And to show that we are dead to sin, he added:

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ,

were baptized into His death?" And so he concludes this whole passage

just as he began it. For he has brought in the death of Christ in such

a way as to imply that Christ Himself also died to sin. To what sin did

He die if not to the flesh, in which there was not sin, but the

likeness of sin, and which was therefore called by the name of sin? To

those who are baptized into the death of Christ, then,--and this class

includes not adults only, but infants as well,--he says: "Likewise

reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto

God through Jesus Christ our Lord." [1178]

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[1176] Rom. vi. 1

[1177] Rom. v. 20

[1178] Rom. vi. 1-11

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Chapter 53.--Christ's Cross and Burial, Resurrection, Ascension, and

Sitting Down at the Right Hand of God, are Images of the Christian

Life.

All the events, then, of Christ's crucifixion, of His burial, of His

resurrection the third day, of His ascension into heaven, of His

sitting down at the right hand of the Father, were so ordered, that the

life which the Christian leads here might be modelled upon them, not

merely in a mystical sense, but in reality. For in reference to His

crucifixion it is said: "They that are Christ's have crucified the

flesh, with the affections and lusts." [1179] And in reference to His

burial: "We are buried with Him by baptism into death." [1180] In

reference to His resurrection: "That, like as Christ was raised up from

the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in

newness of life." [1181] And in reference to His ascension into heaven

and sitting down at the right hand of the Father: "If ye then be risen

with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on

the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on

things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ

in God." [1182]

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[1179] Gal. v. 24

[1180] Rom. vi. 4

[1181] Rom. vi. 5

[1182] Col. iii. 1-3

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Chapter 54.--Christ's Second Coming Does Not Belong to the Past, But

Will Take Place at the End of the World.

But what we believe as to Christ's action in the future, when He shall

come from heaven to judge the quick and the dead, has no bearing upon

the life which we now lead here; for it forms no part of what He did

upon earth, but is part of what He shall do at the end of the world.

And it is to this that the apostle refers in what immediately follows

the passage quoted above: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear,

then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." [1183]

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[1183] Col. iii. 4

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Chapter 55.--The Expression, "Christ Shall Judge the Quick and the

Dead," May Be Understood in Either of Two Senses.

Now the expression, "to judge the quick and the dead," may be

interpreted in two ways: either we may understand by the "quick" those

who at His advent shall not yet have died, but whom He shall find alive

in the flesh, and by the "dead" those who have departed from the body,

or who shall have departed before His coming; or we may understand the

"quick" to mean the righteous, and the "dead" the unrighteous; for the

righteous shall be judged as well as others. Now the judgment of God is

sometimes taken in a bad sense, as, for example, "They that have done

evil unto the resurrection of judgment;" [1184] sometimes in a good

sense, as, "Save me, O God, by Thy name, and judge me by Thy strength."

[1185] This is easily understood when we consider that it is the

judgment of God which separates the good from the evil, and sets the

good at His right hand, that they may be delivered from evil, and not

destroyed with the wicked; and it is for this reason that the Psalmist

cried, "Judge me, O God," and then added, as if in explanation, "and

distinguish my cause from that of an ungodly nation." [1186]

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[1184] John v. 29 (damnation, A.V.)

[1185] Ps. liv. 1

[1186] Ps. xliii. 1 ("Plead my cause against an ungodly nation," A.V.).

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Chapter 56.--The Holy Spirit and the Church. The Church is the Temple

of God.

And now, having spoken of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord,

with the brevity suitable to a confession of our faith, we go on to say

that we believe also in the Holy Ghost,--thus completing the Trinity

which constitutes the Godhead. Then we mention the Holy Church. And

thus we are made to understand that the intelligent creation, which

constitutes the free Jerusalem, [1187] ought to be subordinate in the

order of speech to the Creator, the Supreme Trinity: for all that is

said of the man Christ Jesus has reference, of course, to the unity of

the person of the Only-begotten. Therefore the true order of the Creed

demanded that the Church should be made subordinate to the Trinity, as

the house to Him who dwells in it, the temple to God who occupies it,

and the city to its builder. And we are here to understand the whole

Church, not that part of it only which wanders as a stranger on the

earth, praising the name of God from the rising of the sun to the going

down of the same, and singing a new song of deliverance from its old

captivity; but that part also which has always from its creation

remained steadfast to God in heaven, and has never experienced the

misery consequent upon a fall. This part is made up of the holy angels,

who enjoy uninterrupted happiness; and (as it is bound to do) it

renders assistance to the part which is still wandering among

strangers: for these two parts shall be one in the fellowship of

eternity, and now they are one in the bonds of love, the whole having

been ordained for the worship of the one God. Wherefore, neither the

whole Church, nor any part of it, has any desire to be worshipped

instead of God, nor to be God to any one who belongs to the temple of

God--that temple which is built up of the saints who were created by

the uncreated God. And therefore the Holy Spirit, if a creature, could

not be the Creator, but would be a part of the intelligent creation. He

would simply be the highest creature, and therefore would not be

mentioned in the Creed before the Church; for He Himself would belong

to the Church, to that part of it which is in the heavens. And He would

not have a temple, for He Himself would be part of a temple. Now He has

a temple, of which the apostle says: "Know ye not that your body is the

temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?"

[1188] Of which body he says in another place: "Know ye not that your

bodies are the members of Christ?" [1189] How, then, is He not God,

seeing that He has a temple? and how can He be less than Christ, whose

members are His temple? Nor has He one temple, and God another, seeing

that the same apostle says: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of

God?" [1190] and adds, as proof of this, "and that the Spirit of God

dwelleth in you." [1191] God, then, dwells in His temple: not the Holy

Spirit only, but the Father also, and the Son, who says of His own

body, through which He was made Head of the Church upon earth ("that in

all things He might have the pre-eminence):" [1192] "Destroy this

temple, and in three days I will raise it up." [1193] The temple of

God, then, that is, of the Supreme Trinity as a whole, is the Holy

Church, embracing in its full extent both heaven and earth.

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[1187] Gal. iv. 26

[1188] 1 Cor. vi. 19

[1189] 1 Cor. vi. 15

[1190] 1 Cor. iii. 16

[1191] 1 Cor. iii. 16

[1192] Col. i. 18

[1193] John ii. 19

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Chapter 57.--The Condition of the Church in Heaven.

But of that part of the Church which is in heaven what can we say,

except that no wicked one is found in it, and that no one has fallen

from it, or shall ever fall from it, since the time that "God spared

not the angels that sinned," as the Apostle Peter writes, "but cast

them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be

reserved unto judgment?" [1194]

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[1194] 2 Pet. ii. 4

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Chapter 58.--We Have No Certain Knowledge of the Organization of the

Angelic Society.

Now, what the organization is of that supremely happy society in

heaven: what the differences of rank are, which explain the fact that

while all are called by the general name angels, as we read in the

Epistle to the Hebrews, "but to which of the angels said God at any

time, Sit on my right hand?" [1195] (this form of expression being

evidently designed to embrace all the angels without exception), we yet

find that there are some called archangels; and whether the archangels

are the same as those called hosts, so that the expression, "Praise ye

Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts," [1196] is the same

as if it had been said, "Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him,

all His archangels;" and what are the various significations of those

four names under which the apostle seems to embrace the whole heavenly

company without exception, "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or

principalities, or powers:" [1197] --let those who are able answer

these questions, if they can also prove their answers to be true; but

as for me, I confess my ignorance. I am not even certain upon this

point: whether the sun, and the moon, and all the stars, do not form

part of this same society, though many consider them merely luminous

bodies, without either sensation or intelligence.

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[1195] Heb. i. 13

[1196] Ps. cxlviii. 2, ["host," R.V.].

[1197] Col. i. 16

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Chapter 59.--The Bodies Assumed by Angels Raise a Very Difficult, and

Not Very Useful, Subject of Discussion.

Further, who will tell with what sort of bodies it was that the angels

appeared to men, making themselves not only visible, but tangible; and

again, how it is that, not through material bodies, but by spiritual

power, they present visions not to the bodily eyes, but to the

spiritual eyes of the mind, or speak something not into the ear from

without, but from within the soul of the man, they themselves being

stationed there too, as it is written in the prophet, "And the angel

that spake in me said unto me" [1198] (he does not say, "that spake to

me," but "that spake in me"); or appear to men in sleep, and make

communications through dreams, as we read in the Gospel, "Behold, the

angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying"? [1199] For

these methods of communication seem to imply that the angels have not

tangible bodies, and make it a very difficult question to solve how the

patriarchs washed their feet, [1200] and how it was that Jacob wrestled

with the angel in a way so unmistakeably material. [1201] To ask

questions like these, and to make such guesses as we can at the

answers, is a useful exercise for the intellect, if the discussion be

kept within proper bounds, and if we avoid the error of supposing

ourselves to know what we do not know. For what is the necessity for

affirming, or denying, or defining with accuracy on these subjects, and

others like them, when we may without blame be entirely ignorant of

them?

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[1198] Zech. i. 9 ("The angel that talked with me," A.V.).

[1199] Matt. i. 20

[1200] Gen. xviii. 4, xix. 2

[1201] Gen. xxxii. 24, 25

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Chapter 60.--It is More Necessary to Be Able to Detect the Wiles of

Satan When He Transforms Himself into an Angel of Light.

It is more necessary to use all our powers of discrimination and

judgment when Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, [1202]

lest by his wiles he should lead us astray into hurtful courses. For,

while he only deceives the bodily senses, and does not pervert the mind

from that true and sound judgment which enables a man to lead a life of

faith, there is no danger to religion; or if, feigning himself to be

good, he does or says the things that befit good angels, and we believe

him to be good, the error is not one that is hurtful or dangerous to

Christian faith. But when, through these means, which are alien to his

nature, he goes on to lead us into courses of his own, then great

watchfulness is necessary to detect, and refuse to follow, him. But how

many men are fit to evade all his deadly wiles, unless God restrains

and watches over them? The very difficulty of the matter, however, is

useful in this respect, that it prevents men from trusting in

themselves or in one another, and leads all to place their confidence

in God alone. And certainly no pious man can doubt that this is most

expedient for us.

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[1202] 2 Cor. xi. 14

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Chapter 61.--The Church on Earth Has Been Redeemed from Sin by the

Blood of a Mediator.

This part of the Church, then, which is made up of the holy angels and

the hosts of God, shall become known to us in its true nature, when, at

the end of the world, we shall be united with it in the common

possession of everlasting happiness. But the other part, which,

separated from it, wanders as a stranger on the earth, is better known

to us, both because we belong to it, and because it is composed of men,

and we too are men. This section of the Church has been redeemed from

all sin by the blood of a Mediator who had no sin, and its song is: "If

God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son,

but delivered Him up for us all." [1203] Now it was not for the angels

that Christ died. Yet what was done for the redemption of man through

His death was in a sense done for the angels, because the enmity which

sin had put between men and the holy angels is removed, and friendship

is restored between them, and by the redemption of man the gaps which

the great apostasy left in the angelic host are filled up.

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[1203] Rom. viii. 31

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Chapter 62.--By the Sacrifice of Christ All Things are Restored, and

Peace is Made Between Earth and Heaven.

And, of course, the holy angels, taught by God, in the eternal

contemplation of whose truth their happiness consists, know how great a

number of the human race are to supplement their ranks, and fill up the

full tale of their citizenship. Wherefore the apostle says, that "all

things are gathered together in one in Christ, both which are in heaven

and which are on earth." [1204] The things which are in heaven are

gathered together when what was lost therefrom in the fall of the

angels is restored from among men; and the things which are on earth

are gathered together, when those who are predestined to eternal life

are redeemed from their old corruption. And thus, through that single

sacrifice in which the Mediator was offered up, the one sacrifice of

which the many victims under the law were types, heavenly things are

brought into peace with earthly things, and earthly things with

heavenly. Wherefore, as the same apostle says: "For it pleased the

Father that in Him should all fullness dwell: and, having made peace

through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to

Himself: by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in

heaven." [1205]

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[1204] Eph. i. 10

[1205] Col. i. 19, 20. [ R.V. "summed up."].

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Chapter 63.--The Peace of God, Which Reigneth in Heaven, Passeth All

Understanding.

This peace, as Scripture saith, "passeth all understanding," [1206] and

cannot be known by us until we have come into the full possession of

it. For in what sense are heavenly things reconciled, except they be

reconciled to us, viz. by coming into harmony with us? For in heaven

there is unbroken peace, both between all the intelligent creatures

that exist there, and between these and their Creator. And this peace,

as is said, passeth all understanding; but this, of course, means our

understanding, not that of those who always behold the face of their

Father. We now, however great may be our human understanding, know but

in part, and see through a glass darkly. [1207] But when we shall be

equal unto the angels of God [1208] then we shall see face to face, as

they do; and we shall have as great peace towards them as they have

towards us, because we shall love them as much as we are loved by them.

And so their peace shall be known to us: for our own peace shall be

like to theirs, and as great as theirs, nor shall it then pass our

understanding. But the peace of God, the peace which He cherisheth

towards us, shall undoubtedly pass not our understanding only, but

theirs as well. And this must be so: for every rational creature which

is happy derives its happiness from Him; He does not derive His from

it. And in this view it is better to interpret "all" in the passage,

"The peace of God passeth all understanding," as admitting of no

exception even in favor of the understanding of the holy angels: the

only exception that can be made is that of God Himself. For, of course,

His peace does not pass His own understanding.

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[1206] Phil. iv. 7

[1207] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[1208] Luke xx. 36

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Chapter 64.--Pardon of Sin Extends Over the Whole Mortal Life of the

Saints, Which, Though Free from Crime, is Not Free from Sin.

But the angels even now are at peace with us when our sins are

pardoned. Hence, in the order of the Creed, after the mention of the

Holy Church is placed the remission of sins. For it is by this that the

Church on earth stands: it is through this that what had been lost, and

was found, is saved from being lost again. For, setting aside the grace

of baptism, which is given as an antidote to original sin, so that what

our birth imposes upon us, our new birth relieves us from (this grace,

however, takes away all the actual sins also that have been committed

in thought, word, and deed): setting aside, then, this great act of

favor, whence commences man's restoration, and in which all our guilt,

both original and actual, is washed away, the rest of our life from the

time that we have the use of reason provides constant occasion for the

remission of sins, however great may be our advance in righteousness.

For the sons of God, as long as they live in this body of death, are in

conflict with death. And although it is truly said of them, "As many as

are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," [1209] yet

they are led by the Spirit of God, and as the sons of God advance

towards God under this drawback, that they are led also by their own

spirit, weighted as it is by the corruptible body; [1210] and that, as

the sons of men, under the influence of human affections, they fall

back to their old level, and so sin. There is a difference, however.

For although every crime is a sin, every sin is not a crime. And so we

say that the life of holy men, as long as they remain in this mortal

body, may be found without crime; but, as the Apostle John says, "If we

say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in

us." [1211]

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[1209] Rom. viii. 14

[1210] Wisd. ix. 15

[1211] 1 John i. 8

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Chapter 65.--God Pardons Sins, But on Condition of Penitence, Certain

Times for Which Have Been Fixed by the Law of the Church.

But even crimes themselves, however great, may be remitted in the Holy

Church; and the mercy of God is never to be despaired of by men who

truly repent, each according to the measure of his sin. And in the act

of repentance, where a crime has been committed of such a nature as to

cut off the sinner from the body of Christ, we are not to take account

so much of the measure of time as of the measure of sorrow; for a

broken and a contrite heart God doth not despise. [1212] But as the

grief of one heart is frequently hid from another, and is not made

known to others by words or other signs, when it is manifest to Him of

whom it is said, "My groaning is not hid from Thee," [1213] those who

govern the Church have rightly appointed times of penitence, that the

Church in which the sins are remitted may be satisfied; and outside the

Church sins are not remitted. For the Church alone has received the

pledge of the Holy Spirit, without which there is no remission of

sins--such, at least, as brings the pardoned to eternal life.

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[1212] Ps. li. 17

[1213] Ps. xxxviii. 9

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Chapter 66.--The Pardon of Sin Has Reference Chiefly to the Future

Judgment.

Now the pardon of sin has reference chiefly to the future judgment.

For, as far as this life is concerned, the saying of Scripture holds

good: "A heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go

out of their mother's womb, till the day that they return to the mother

of all things." [1214] So that we see even infants, after baptism and

regeneration, suffering from the infliction of divers evils: and thus

we are given to understand, that all that is set forth in the

sacraments of salvation refers rather to the hope of future good, than

to the retaining or attaining of present blessings. For many sins seem

in this world to be overlooked and visited with no punishment, whose

punishment is reserved for the future (for it is not in vain that the

day when Christ shall come as Judge of quick and dead is peculiarly

named the day of judgment); just as, on the other hand, many sins are

punished in this life, which nevertheless are pardoned, and shall bring

down no punishment in the future life. Accordingly, in reference to

certain temporal punishments, which in this life are visited upon

sinners, the apostle, addressing those whose sins are blotted out, and

not reserved for the final judgment, says: "For if we would judge

ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are

chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

[1215]

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[1214] Ecclus. xl. 1

[1215] 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32

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Chapter 67.--Faith Without Works is Dead, and Cannot Save a Man.

It is believed, moreover, by some, that men who do not abandon the name

of Christ, and who have been baptized in the Church by His baptism, and

who have never been cut off from the Church by any schism or heresy,

though they should live in the grossest sin and never either wash it

away in penitence nor redeem it by almsgiving, but persevere in it

persistently to the last day of their lives, shall be saved by fire;

that is, that although they shall suffer a punishment by fire, lasting

for a time proportionate to the magnitude of their crimes and misdeeds,

they shall not be punished with everlasting fire. But those who believe

this, and yet are Catholics, seem to me to be led astray by a kind of

benevolent feeling natural to humanity. For Holy Scripture, when

consulted, gives a very different answer. I have written a book on this

subject, entitled Of Faith and Works, in which, to the best of my

ability, God assisting me, I have shown from Scripture, that the faith

which saves us is that which the Apostle Paul clearly enough describes

when he says: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth

anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." [1216]

But if it worketh evil, and not good, then without doubt, as the

Apostle James says, "it is dead, being alone." [1217] The same apostle

says again, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath

faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?" [1218] And further, if

a wicked man shall be saved by fire on account of his faith alone, and

if this is what the blessed Apostle Paul means when he says, "But he

himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire;" [1219] then faith without

works can save a man, and what his fellow-apostle James says must be

false. And that must be false which Paul himself says in another place:

"Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers,

nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves,

nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners; shall

inherit the kingdom of God." [1220] For if those who persevere in these

wicked courses shall nevertheless be saved on account of their faith in

Christ, how can it be true that they shall not inherit the kingdom of

God?

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[1216] Gal. v. 6

[1217] Jas. ii. 17. [See R.V.]

[1218] Jas. ii. 14

[1219] 1 Cor. iii. 15

[1220] 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10

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Chapter 68.--The True Sense of the Passage (I Cor. III. 11-15) About

Those Who are Saved, Yet So as by Fire.

But as these most plain and unmistakeable declarations of the apostles

cannot be false, that obscure saying about those who build upon the

foundation, Christ, not gold, silver, and precious stones, but wood,

hay, and stubble (for it is these who, it is said, shall be saved, yet

so as by fire, the merit of the foundation saving them [1221] ), must

be so interpreted as not to conflict with the plain statements quoted

above. Now wood, hay, and stubble may, without incongruity, be

understood to signify such an attachment to worldly things, however

lawful these may be in themselves, that they cannot be lost without

grief of mind. And though this grief burns, yet if Christ hold the

place of foundation in the heart,--that is, if nothing be preferred to

Him, and if the man, though burning with grief, is yet more willing to

lose the things he loves so much than to lose Christ,--he is saved by

fire. If, however, in time of temptation, he prefer to hold by temporal

and earthly things rather than by Christ, he has not Christ as his

foundation; for he puts earthly things in the first place, and in a

building nothing comes before the foundation. Again, the fire of which

the apostle speaks in this place must be such a fire as both men are

made to pass through, that is, both the man who builds upon the

foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, and the man who builds wood,

hay, stubble. For he immediately adds: "The fire shall try every man's

work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built

thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be

burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as

by fire." [1222] The fire then shall prove, not the work of one of them

only, but of both. Now the trial of adversity is a kind of fire which

is plainly spoken of in another place: "The furnace proveth the

potter's vessels: and the furnace of adversity just men." [1223] And

this fire does in the course of this life act exactly in the way the

apostle says. If it come into contact with two believers, one "caring

for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord,"

[1224] that is, building upon Christ the foundation, gold, silver,

precious stones; the other "caring for the things that are of the

world, how he may please his wife," [1225] that is, building upon the

same foundation wood, hay, stubble,--the work of the former is not

burned, because he has not given his love to things whose loss can

cause him grief; but the work of the latter is burned, because things

that are enjoyed with desire cannot be lost without pain. But since, by

our supposition, even the latter prefers to lose these things rather

than to lose Christ, and since he does not desert Christ out of fear of

losing them, though he is grieved when he does lose them, he is saved,

but it is so as by fire; because the grief for what he loved and has

lost burns him. But it does not subvert nor consume him; for he is

protected by his immoveable and incorruptible foundation.

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[1221] 1 Cor. iii. 11-15. [The "fire" in ver. 15 is not the purgatorial

fire in the state between death and resurrection, but, as in ver. 14,

the fire of the day of judgment.--P.S.]

[1222] 1 Cor. iii. 13-15

[1223] Ecclus. xxvii. 5, ii. 5

[1224] 1 Cor. vii. 32

[1225] 1 Cor. vii. 33. [See R.V.]

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Chapter 69.--It is Not Impossible that Some Believers May Pass Through

a Purgatorial Fire in the Future Life.

And it is not impossible that something of the same kind may take place

even after this life. It is a matter that may be inquired into, and

either ascertained or left doubtful, whether some believers shall pass

through a kind of purgatorial fire, and in proportion as they have

loved with more or less devotion the goods that perish, be less or more

quickly delivered from it. This cannot, however, be the case of any of

those of whom it is said, that they "shall not inherit the kingdom of

God," [1226] unless after suitable repentance their sins be forgiven

them. When I say "suitable," I mean that they are not to be unfruitful

in almsgiving; for Holy Scripture lays so much stress on this virtue,

that our Lord tells us beforehand, that He will ascribe no merit to

those on His right hand but that they abound in it, and no defect to

those on His left hand but their want of it, when He shall say to the

former, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom," and to

the latter, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." [1227]

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[1226] 1 Cor. vi. 10

[1227] Matt. xxv. 31-46

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Chapter 70.--Almsgiving Will Not Atone for Sin Unless the Life Be

Changed.

We must beware, however, lest any one should suppose that gross sins,

such as are committed by those who shall not inherit the kingdom of

God, may be daily perpetrated, and daily atoned for by almsgiving. The

life must be changed for the better; and almsgiving must be used to

propitiate God for past sins, not to purchase impunity for the

commission of such sins in the future. For He has given no man license

to sin, [1228] although in His mercy He may blot out sins that are

already committed, if we do not neglect to make proper satisfaction.

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[1228] Ecclus. xv. 20

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Chapter 71.--The Daily Prayer of the Believer Makes Satisfaction for

the Trivial Sins that Daily Stain His Life.

Now the daily prayer of the believer makes satisfaction for those daily

sins of a momentary and trivial kind which are necessary incidents of

this life. For he can say, "Our Father which art in heaven," [1229]

seeing that to such a Father he is now born again of water and of the

Spirit. [1230] And this prayer certainly takes away the very small sins

of daily life. It takes away also those which at one time made the life

of the believer very wicked, but which, now that he is changed for the

better by repentance, he has given up, provided that as truly as he

says, "Forgive us our debts" (for there is no want of debts to be

forgiven), so truly does he say, "as we forgive our debtors;" [1231]

that is, provided he does what he says he does: for to forgive a man

who asks for pardon, is really to give alms.

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[1229] Matt. vi. 9

[1230] John iii. 5

[1231] Matt. vi. 12

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Chapter 72.--There are Many Kinds of Alms, the Giving of Which Assists

to Procure Pardon for Our Sins.

And on this principle of interpretation, our Lord's saying, "Give alms

of such things as ye have, and, behold, all things are clean unto you,"

[1232] applies to every useful act that a man does in mercy. Not only,

then, the man who gives food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty,

clothing to the naked, hospitality to the stranger, shelter to the

fugitive, who visits the sick and the imprisoned, ransoms the captive,

assists the weak, leads the blind, comforts the sorrowful, heals the

sick, puts the wanderer on the right path, gives advice to the

perplexed, and supplies the wants of the needy,--not this man only, but

the man who pardons the sinner also gives alms; and the man who

corrects with blows, or restrains by any kind of discipline one over

whom he has power, and who at the same time forgives from the heart the

sin by which he was injured, or prays that it may be forgiven, is also

a giver of alms, not only in that he forgives, or prays for forgiveness

for the sin, but also in that he rebukes and corrects the sinner: for

in this, too, he shows mercy. Now much good is bestowed upon unwilling

recipients, when their advantage and not their pleasure is consulted;

and they themselves frequently prove to be their own enemies, while

their true friends are those whom they take for their enemies, and to

whom in their blindness they return evil for good. (A Christian,

indeed, is not permitted to return evil even for evil. [1233] ) And

thus there are many kinds of alms, by giving of which we assist to

procure the pardon of our sins.

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[1232] Luke xi. 41

[1233] Rom. xii. 17; Matt. v. 44

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Chapter 73.--The Greatest of All Alms is to Forgive Our Debtors and to

Love Our Enemies.

But none of those is greater than to forgive from the heart a sin that

has been committed against us. For it is a comparatively small thing to

wish well to, or even to do good to, a man who has done no evil to you.

It is a much higher thing, and is the result of the most exalted

goodness, to love your enemy, and always to wish well to, and when you

have the opportunity, to do good to, the man who wishes you ill, and,

when he can, does you harm. This is to obey the command of God: "Love

your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which

persecute you." [1234] But seeing that this is a frame of mind only

reached by the perfect sons of God, and that though every believer

ought to strive after it, and by prayer to God and earnest struggling

with himself endeavor to bring his soul up to this standard, yet a

degree of goodness so high can hardly belong to so great a multitude as

we believe are heard when they use this petition, "Forgive us our

debts, as we forgive our debtors;" in view of all this, it cannot be

doubted that the implied undertaking is fulfilled if a man, though he

has not yet attained to loving his enemy, yet, when asked by one who

has sinned against him to forgive him his sin, does forgive him from

his heart. For he certainly desires to be himself forgiven when he

prays, "as we forgive our debtors," that is, Forgive us our debts when

we beg forgiveness, as we forgive our debtors when they beg forgiveness

from us.

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[1234] Matt. v. 44

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Chapter 74.--God Does Not Pardon the Sins of Those Who Do Not from the

Heart Forgive Others.

Now, he who asks forgiveness of the man against whom he has sinned,

being moved by his sin to ask forgiveness, cannot be counted an enemy

in such a sense that it should be as difficult to love him now as it

was when he was engaged in active hostility. And the man who does not

from his heart forgive him who repents of his sin, and asks

forgiveness, need not suppose that his own sins are forgiven of God.

For the Truth cannot lie. And what reader or hearer of the Gospel can

have failed to notice, that the same person who said, "I am the Truth,"

[1235] taught us also this form of prayer; and in order to impress this

particular petition deeply upon our minds, said, "For if ye forgive men

their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye

forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your

trespasses"? [1236] The man whom the thunder of this warning does not

awaken is not asleep, but dead; and yet so powerful is that voice, that

it can awaken even the dead.

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[1235] John xiv. 6

[1236] Matt. vi. 14, 15

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Chapter 75.--The Wicked and the Unbelieving are Not Made Clean by the

Giving of Alms, Except They Be Born Again.

Assuredly, then, those who live in gross wickedness, and take no care

to reform their lives and manners, and yet amid all their crimes and

vices do not cease to give frequent alms, in vain take comfort to

themselves from the saying of our Lord: "Give alms of such things as ye

have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you." [1237] For they do

not understand how far this saying reaches. But that they may

understand this, let them hear what He says. For we read in the Gospel

as follows: "And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine

with him; and He went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee

saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner. And

the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of

the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and

wickedness. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make

that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as ye

have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you." [1238] Are we to

understand this as meaning that to the Pharisees who have not the faith

of Christ all things are clean, if only they give alms in the way these

men count almsgiving, even though they have never believed in Christ,

nor been born again of water and of the Spirit? But the fact is, that

all are unclean who are not made clean by the faith of Christ,

according to the expression, "purifying their hearts by faith;" [1239]

and that the apostle says, "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving

is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." [1240]

How, then, could all things be clean to the Pharisees, even though they

gave alms, if they were not believers? And how could they be believers

if they were not willing to have faith in Christ, and to be born again

of His grace? And yet what they heard is true: "Give alms of such

things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you."

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[1237] Luke xi. 41

[1238] Luke xi. 37-41. [See R.V.]

[1239] Acts xv. 9

[1240] Tit. i. 15

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Chapter 76.--To Give Alms Aright, We Should Begin with Ourselves, and

Have Pity Upon Our Own Souls.

For the man who wishes to give aims as he ought, should begin with

himself, and give to himself first. For almsgiving is a work of mercy;

and most truly is it said, "To have mercy on thy soul is pleasing to

God." [1241] And for this end are we born again, that we should be

pleasing to God, who is justly displeased with that which we brought

with us when we were born. This is our first alms, which we give to

ourselves when, through the mercy of a pitying God, we find that we are

ourselves wretched, and confess the justice of His judgment by which we

are made wretched, of which the apostle says, "The judgment was by one

to condemnation;" [1242] and praise the greatness of His love, of which

the same preacher of grace says, "God commendeth His love toward us, in

that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us:" [1243] and thus

judging truly of our own misery, and loving God with the love which He

has Himself bestowed, we lead a holy and virtuous life. But the

Pharisees, while they gave as alms the tithe of all their fruits, even

the most insignificant, passed over judgment and the love of God, and

so did not commence their alms-giving at home, and extend their pity to

themselves in the first instance. And it is in reference to this order

of love that it is said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." [1244] When,

then, our Lord had rebuked them because they made themselves clean on

the outside, but within were full of ravening and wickedness, He

advised them, in the exercise of that charity which each man owes to

himself in the first instance, to make clean the inward parts. "But

rather," He says, "give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold,

all things are clean unto you." [1245] Then, to show what it was that

He advised, and what they took no pains to do, and to show that He did

not overlook or forget their almsgiving, "But woe unto you, Pharisees!"

[1246] He says; as if He meant to say: I indeed advise you to give alms

which shall make all things clean unto you; "but woe unto you! for ye

tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs;" as if He meant to say: I

know these alms of yours, and ye need not think that I am now

admonishing you in respect of such things; "and pass over judgment and

the love of God," an alms by which ye might have been made clean from

all inward impurity, so that even the bodies which ye are now washing

would have been clean to you. For this is the import of "all things,"

both inward and outward things, as we read in another place: "Cleanse

first that which is within, that the outside may be clean also." [1247]

But lest He might appear to despise the alms which they were giving out

of the fruits of the earth, He says: "These ought ye to have done,"

referring to judgment and the love of God, "and not to leave the other

undone," referring to the giving of the tithes.

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[1241] Ecclus. xxx. 24

[1242] Rom. v. 16

[1243] Rom. v. 8

[1244] Luke x. 27

[1245] Luke xi. 42

[1246] Luke xi. 42

[1247] Matt. xxiii. 26

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Chapter 77.--If We Would Give Alms to Ourselves, We Must Flee Iniquity;

For He Who Loveth Iniquity Hateth His Soul.

Those, then, who think that they can by giving alms, however profuse,

whether in money or in kind, purchase for themselves the privilege of

persisting with impunity in their monstrous crimes and hideous vices,

need not thus deceive themselves. For not only do they commit these

sins, but they love them so much that they would like to go on forever

committing them, if only they could do so with impunity. Now, he who

loveth iniquity hateth his own soul; [1248] and he who hateth his own

soul is not merciful but cruel towards it. For in loving it according

to the world, he hateth it according to God. But if he desired to give

alms to it which should make all things clean unto him, he would hate

it according to the world, and love it according to God. Now no one

gives alms unless he receive what he gives from one who is not in want

of it. Therefore it is said, "His mercy shall meet me." [1249]

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[1248] Ps. xi. 5. ("Him that loveth violence, His (God's) soul hateth."

A.V.)

[1249] Ps. lix. 10

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Chapter 78.--What Sins are Trivial and What Heinous is a Matter for

God's Judgment.

Now, what sins are trivial and what heinous is not a matter to be

decided by man's judgment, but by the judgment of God. For it is plain

that the apostles themselves have given an indulgence in the case of

certain sins: take, for example, what the Apostle Paul says to those

who are married: "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with

consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer:

and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your

incontinency." [1250] Now it is possible that it might not have been

considered a sin to have intercourse with a spouse, not with a view to

the procreation of children, which is the great blessing of marriage,

but for the sake of carnal pleasure, and to save the incontinent from

being led by their weakness into the deadly sin of fornication, or

adultery, or another form of uncleanness which it is shameful even to

name, and into which it is possible that they might be drawn by lust

under the temptation of Satan. It is possible, I say, that this might

not have been considered a sin, had the apostle not added: "But I speak

this by permission, and not of commandment." [1251] Who, then, can deny

that it is a sin, when confessedly it is only by apostolic authority

that permission is granted to those who do it? Another case of the same

kind is where he says: "Dare any of you, having a matter against

another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?"

[1252] And shortly afterwards: "If then ye have judgments of things

pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in

the Church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise

man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his

brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the

unbelievers." [1253] Now it might have been supposed in this case that

it is not a sin to have a quarrel with another, that the only sin is in

wishing to have it adjudicated upon outside the Church, had not the

apostle immediately added: "Now therefore there is utterly a fault

among you, because ye go to law with one another." [1254] And lest any

one should excuse himself by saying that he had a just cause, and was

suffering wrong, and that he only wished the sentence of the judges to

remove his wrong, the apostle immediately anticipates such thoughts and

excuses, and says: "Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not

rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" Thus bringing us back to our

Lord's saying, "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy

coat, let him have thy cloak also;" [1255] and again, "Of him that

taketh away thy goods, ask them not again." [1256] Therefore our Lord

has forbidden His followers to go to law with other men about worldly

affairs. And carrying out this principle, the apostle here declares

that to do so is "altogether a fault." But when, notwithstanding, he

grants his permission to have such cases between brethren decided in

the Church, other brethren adjudicating, and only sternly forbids them

to be carried outside the Church, it is manifest that here again an

indulgence is extended to the infirmities of the weak. It is in view,

then, of these sins, and others of the same sort, and of others again

more trifling still, which consist of offenses in words and thought (as

the Apostle James confesses, "In many things we offend all" [1257] ),

that we need to pray every day and often to the Lord, saying, "Forgive

us our debts," and to add in truth and sincerity, "as we forgive our

debtors."

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[1250] 1 Cor. vii. 5

[1251] 1 Cor. vii. 6. ["Concession," R.V.]

[1252] 1 Cor. vi. 1

[1253] 1 Cor. vi. 4-6

[1254] 1 Cor. vi. 7

[1255] Matt. v. 40

[1256] Luke vi. 30

[1257] Jas. iii. 2. [See R.V.]

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Chapter 79.--Sins Which Appear Very Trifling, are Sometimes in Reality

Very Serious.

Again, there are some sins which would be considered very trifling, if

the Scriptures did not show that they are really very serious. For who

would suppose that the man who says to his brother, "Thou fool," is in

danger of hell-fire, did not He who is the Truth say so? To the wound,

however, He immediately applies the cure, giving a rule for

reconciliation with one's offended brother: "Therefore, if thou bring

thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath

ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy

way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy

gift." [1258] Again, who would suppose that it was so great a sin to

observe days, and months, and times, and years, as those do who are

anxious or unwilling to begin anything on certain days, or in certain

months or years, because the vain doctrines of men lead them to think

such times lucky or unlucky, had we not the means of estimating the

greatness of the evil from the fear expressed by the apostle, who says

to such men, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor

in vain"? [1259]

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[1258] Matt. v. 22, 23

[1259] Gal. iv. 10, 11

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Chapter 80.--Sins, However Great and Detestable, Seem Trivial When We

are Accustomed to Them.

Add to this, that sins, however great and detestable they may be, are

looked upon as trivial, or as not sins at all, when men get accustomed

to them; and so far does this go, that such sins are not only not

concealed, but are boasted of, and published far and wide; and thus, as

it is written, "The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth

the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth." [1260] Iniquity of this kind is

in Scripture called a cry. You have an instance in the prophet Isaiah,

in the case of the evil vineyard: "He looked for judgment, but behold

oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." [1261] Whence also

the expression in Genesis: "The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great,"

[1262] because in these cities crimes were not only not punished, but

were openly committed, as if under the protection of the law. And so in

our own times: many forms of sin, though not just the sameas those of

Sodom and Gomorrah, are now so openly and habitually practised, that

not only dare we not excommunicate a layman, we dare not even degrade a

clergyman, for the commission of them. So that when, a few years ago, I

was expounding the Epistle to the Galatians, in commenting on that very

place where the apostle says, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed

labor upon you in vain," I was compelled to exclaim, "Woe to the sins

of men! for it is only when we are not accustomed to them that we

shrink from them: when once we are accustomed to them, though the blood

of the Son of God was poured out to wash them away, though they are so

great that the kingdom of God is wholly shut against them, constant

familiarity leads to the toleration of them all, and habitual

toleration leads to the practice of many of them. And grant, O Lord,

that we may not come to practise all that we have not the power to

hinder." But I shall see whether the extravagance of grief did not

betray me into rashness of speech.

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[1260] Ps. x. 3

[1261] Isa. v. 7

[1262] Gen. xviii. 20

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Chapter 81.--There are Two Causes of Sin, Ignorance and Weakness; And

We Need Divine Help to Overcome Both.

I shall now say this, which I have often said before in other places of

my works. There are two causes that lead to sin: either we do not yet

know our duty, or we do not perform the duty that we know. The former

is the sin of ignorance, the latter of weakness. Now against these it

is our duty to struggle; but we shall certainly be beaten in the fight,

unless we are helped by God, not only to see our duty, but also, when

we clearly see it, to make the love of righteousness stronger in us

than the love of earthly things, the eager longing after which, or the

fear of losing which, leads us with our eyes open into known sin. In

the latter case we are not only sinners, for we are so even when we err

through ignorance, but we are also transgressors of the law; for we

leave undone what we know we ought to do, and we do what we know we

ought not to do. Wherefore not only ought we to pray for pardon when we

have sinned, saying, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;"

but we ought to pray for guidance, that we may be kept from sinning,

saying, "and lead us not into temptation." And we are to pray to Him of

whom the Psalmist says, "The Lord is my light and my salvation:" [1263]

my light, for He removes my ignorance; my salvation, for He takes away

my infirmity.

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[1263] Ps. xxvii. 1

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Chapter 82.--The Mercy of God is Necessary to True Repentance.

Now even penance itself, when by the law of the Church there is

sufficient reason for its being gone through, is frequently evaded

through infirmity; for shame is the fear of losing pleasure when the

good opinion of men gives more pleasure than the righteousness which

leads a man to humble himself in penitence. Wherefore the mercy of God

is necessary not only when a man repents, but even to lead him to

repent. How else explain what the apostle says of certain persons: "if

God peradventure will give them repentance"? [1264] And before Peter

wept bitterly, we are told by the evangelist, "The Lord turned, and

looked upon him." [1265]

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[1264] 2 Tim. ii. 25

[1265] Luke xxii. 61

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Chapter 83.--The Man Who Despises the Mercy of God is Guilty of the Sin

Against the Holy Ghost.

Now the man who, not believing that sins are remitted in the Church,

despises this great gift of God's mercy, and persists to the last day

of his life in his obstinacy of heart, is guilty of the unpardonable

sin against the Holy Ghost, in whom Christ forgives sins. [1266] But

this difficult question I have discussed as clearly as I could in a

book devoted exclusively to this one point.

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[1266] Matt. xii. 32

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Chapter 84.--The Resurrection of the Body Gives Rise to Numerous

Questions.

Now, as to the resurrection of the body, --not a resurrection such as

some have had, who came back to life for a time and died again, but a

resurrection to eternal life, as the body of Christ Himself rose

again,--I do not see how I can discuss the matter briefly, and at the

same time give a satisfactory answer to all the questions that are

ordinarily raised about it. Yet that the bodies of all men--both those

who have been born and those who shall be born, both those who have

died and those who shall die--shall be raised again, no Christian ought

to have the shadow of a doubt.

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Chapter 85.--The Case of Abortive Conceptions.

Hence in the first place arises a question about abortive conceptions,

which have indeed been born in the mother's womb, but not so born that

they could be born again. For if we shall decide that these are to rise

again, we cannot object to any conclusion that may be drawn in regard

to those which are fully formed. Now who is there that is not rather

disposed to think that unformed abortions perish, like seeds that have

never fructified? But who will dare to deny, though he may not dare to

affirm, that at the resurrection every defect in the form shall be

supplied, and that thus the perfection which time would have brought

shall not be wanting, any more than the blemishes which time did bring

shall be present: so that the nature shall neither want anything

suitable and in harmony with it that length of days would have added,

nor be debased by the presence of anything of an opposite kind that

length of days has added; but that what is not yet complete shall be

completed, just as what has been injured shall be renewed.

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Chapter 86.--If They Have Ever Lived, They Must of Course Have Died,

and Therefore Shall Have a Share in the Resurrection of the Dead.

And therefore the following question may be very carefully inquired

into and discussed by learned men, though I do not know whether it is

in man's power to resolve it: At what time the infant begins to live in

the womb: whether life exists in a latent form before it manifests

itself in the motions of the living being. To deny that the young who

are cut out limb by limb from the womb, lest if they were left there

dead the mother should die too, have never been alive, seems too

audacious. Now, from the time that a man begins to live, from that time

it is possible for him to die. And if he die, wheresoever death may

overtake him, I cannot discover on what principle he can be denied an

interest in the resurrection of the dead.

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Chapter 87.--The Case of Monstrous Births.

We are not justified in affirming even of monstrosities, which are born

and live, however quickly they may die, that they shall not rise again,

nor that they shall rise again in their deformity, and not rather with

an amended and perfected body. God forbid that the double limbed man

who was lately born in the East, of whom an account was brought by most

trustworthy brethren who had seen him,--an account which the presbyter

Jerome, of blessed memory, left in writing; [1267] --God forbid, I say,

that we should think that at the resurrection there shall be one man

with double limbs, and not two distinct men, as would have been the

case had twins been born. And so other births, which, because they have

either a superfluity or a defect, or because they are very much

deformed, are called monstrosities, shall at the resurrection be

restored to the normal shape of man; and so each single soul shall

possess its own body; and no bodies shall cohere together even though

they were born in cohesion, but each separately shall possess all the

members which constitute a complete human body.

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[1267] Jerome, in his Epistle to Vitalis: "Or because in our times a

man was born at Lydda with two heads, four hands, one belly, and two

feet, does it necessarily follow that all men are so born?"

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Chapter 88.--The Material of the Body Never Perishes.

Nor does the earthly material out of which men's mortal bodies are

created ever perish; but though it may crumble into dust and ashes, or

be dissolved into vapors and exhalations, though it may be transformed

into the substance of other bodies, or dispersed into the elements,

though it should become food for beasts or men, and be changed into

their flesh, it returns in a moment of time to that human soul which

animated it at the first, and which caused it to become man, and to

live and grow.

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Chapter 89.--But This Material May Be Differently Arranged in the

Resurrection Body.

And this earthly material, which when the soul leaves it becomes a

corpse, shall not at the resurrection be so restored as that the parts

into which it is separated, and which under various forms and

appearances become parts of other things (though they shall all return

to the same body from which they were separated), must necessarily

return to the same parts of the body in which they were originally

situated. For otherwise, to suppose that the hair recovers all that our

frequent clippings and shavings have taken away from it, and the nails

all that we have so often pared off, presents to the imagination such a

picture of ugliness and deformity, as to make the resurrection of the

body all but incredible. But just as if a statue of some soluble metal

were either melted by fire, or broken into dust, or reduced to a

shapeless mass, and a sculptor wished to restore it from the same

quantity of metal, it would make no difference to the completeness of

the work what part of the statue any given particle of the material was

put into, as long as the restored statue contained all the material of

the original one; so God, the Artificer of marvellous and unspeakable

power, shall with marvellous and unspeakable rapidity restore our body,

using up the whole material of which it originally consisted. Nor will

it affect the completeness of its restoration whether hairs return to

hairs, and nails to nails, or whether the part of these that had

perished be changed into flesh, and called to take its place in another

part of the body, the great Artist taking careful heed that nothing

shall be unbecoming or out of place.

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Chapter 90.--If There Be Differences and Inequalities Among the Bodies

of Those Who Rise Again, There Shall Be Nothing Offensive or

Disproportionate in Any.

Nor does it necessarily follow that there shall be differences of

stature among those who rise again, because they were of different

statures during life; nor is it certain that the lean shall rise again

in their former leanness, and the fat in their former fatness. But if

it is part of the Creator's design that each should preserve his own

peculiarities of feature, and retain a recognizable likeness to his

former self, while in regard to other bodily advantages all should be

equal, then the material of which each is composed may be so modified

that none of it shall be lost, and that any defect may be supplied by

Him who can create at His will out of nothing. But if in the bodies of

those who rise again there shall be a well-ordered inequality, such as

there is in the voices that make up a full harmony, then the material

of each man's body shall be so dealt with that it shall form a man fit

for the assemblies of the angels, and one who shall bring nothing among

them to jar upon their sensibilities. And assuredly nothing that is

unseemly shall be there; but whatever shall be there shall be graceful

and becoming: for if anything is not seemly, neither shall it be.

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Chapter 91.--The Bodies of the Saints Shall at The Resurrection Be

Spiritual Bodies.

The bodies of the saints, then, shall rise again free from every

defect, from every blemish, as from all corruption, weight, and

impediment. For their ease of movement shall be as complete as their

happiness. Whence their bodies have been called spiritual, though

undoubtedly they shall be bodies and not spirits. For just as now the

body is called animate, though it is a body, and not a soul [anima], so

then the body shall be called spiritual, though it shall be a body, not

a spirit. [1268] Hence, as far as regards the corruption which now

weighs down the soul, and the vices which urge the flesh to lust

against the spirit, [1269] it shall not then be flesh, but body; for

there are bodies which are called celestial. Wherefore it is said,

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" and, as if in

explanation of this, "neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

[1270] What the apostle first called "flesh and blood," he afterwards

calls "corruption;" and what he first called "the kingdom of God," he

afterwards calls "incorruption." But as far as regards the substance,

even then it shall be flesh. For even after the resurrection the body

of Christ was called flesh. [1271] The apostle, however, says: "It is

sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body;" [1272] because so

perfect shah then be the harmony between flesh and spirit, the spirit

keeping alive the subjugated flesh without the need of any nourishment,

that no part of our nature shall be in discord with another; but as we

shall be free from enemies without, so we shall not have ourselves for

enemies within.

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[1268] 1 Cor. xv. 44. [See R.V.]

[1269] Wisd. ix. 15; Gal. v. 17

[1270] 1 Cor. xv. 50

[1271] Luke xxiv. 39

[1272] 1 Cor. xv. 44

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Chapter 92.--The Resurrection of the Lost.

But as for those who, out of the mass of perdition caused by the first

man's sin, are not redeemed through the one Mediator between God and

man, they too shall rise again, each with his own body, but only to be

punished with the devil and his angels. Now, whether they shall rise

again with all their diseases and deformities of body, bringing with

them the diseased and deformed limbs which they possessed here, it

would be labor lost to inquire. For we need not weary ourselves

speculating about their health or their beauty, which are matters

uncertain, when their eternal damnation is a matter of certainty. Nor

need we inquire in what sense their body shall be incorruptible, if it

be susceptible of pain; or in what sense corruptible, if it be free

from the possibility of death. For there is no true life except where

there is happiness in life, and no true incorruption except where

health is unbroken by any pain. When, however, the unhappy are not

permitted to die, then, if I may so speak, death itself dies not; and

where pain without intermission afflicts the soul, and never comes to

an end, corruption itself is not completed. This is called in Holy

Scripture "the second death." [1273]

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[1273] Rev. ii. 2

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Chapter 93.--Both the First and the Second Deaths are the Consequence

of Sin. Punishment is Proportioned to Guilt.

And neither the first death, which takes place when the soul is

compelled to leave the body, nor the second death, which takes place

when the soul is not permitted to leave the suffering body, would have

been inflicted on man had no one sinned. And, of course, the mildest

punishment of all will fall upon those who have added no actual sin, to

the original sin they brought with them; and as for the rest who have

added such actual sins, the punishment of each will be the more

tolerable in the next world, according as his iniquity has been less in

this world.

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Chapter 94.--The Saints Shall Know More Fully in the Next World the

Benefits They Have Received by Grace.

Thus, when reprobate angels and men are left to endure everlasting

punishment, the saints shall know more fully the benefits they have

received by grace. Then, in contemplation of the actual facts, they

shall see more clearly the meaning of the expression in the psalms, "I

will sing of mercy and judgment;" [1274] for it is only of unmerited

mercy that any is redeemed, and only in well-merited judgment that any

is condemned.

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[1274] Ps. ci. 1

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Chapter 95.--God's Judgments Shall Then Be Explained.

Then shall be made clear much that is now dark. For example, when of

two infants, whose cases seem in all respects alike, one by the mercy

of God chosen to Himself, and the other is by His justice abandoned

(wherein the one who is chosen may recognize what was of justice due to

himself, had not mercy intervened); why, of these two, the one should

have been chosen rather than the other, is to us an insoluble problem.

And again, why miracles were not wrought in the presence of men who

would have repented at the working of the miracles, while they were

wrought in the presence of others who, it was known, would not repent.

For our Lord says most distinctly: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto

thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had

been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in

sackcloth and ashes." [1275] And assuredly there was no injustice in

God's not willing that they should be saved, though they could have

been saved had He so willed it. Then shall be seen in the clearest

light of wisdom what with the pious is now a faith, though it is not

yet a matter of certain knowledge, how sure, how unchangeable, and how

effectual is the will of God; how many things He can do which He does

not will to do, though willing nothing which He cannot perform; and how

true is the song of the psalmist, "But our God is in the heavens; He

hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." [1276] And this certainly is not

true, if God has ever willed anything that He has not performed; and,

still worse, if it was the will of man that hindered the Omnipotent

from doing what He pleased. Nothing, therefore, happens but by the will

of the Omnipotent, He either permitting it to be done, or Himself doing

it.

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[1275] Matt. xi. 21

[1276] Ps. cxv. 3

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Chapter 96.--The Omnipotent God Does Well Even in the Permission of

Evil.

Nor can we doubt that God does well even in the permission of what is

evil. For He permits it only in the justice of His judgment. And surely

all that is just is good. Although, therefore, evil, in so far as it is

evil, is not a good; yet the fact that evil as well as good exists, is

a good. For if it were not a good that evil should exist, its existence

would not be permitted by the omnipotent Good, who without doubt can as

easily refuse to permit what He does not wish, as bring about what He

does wish. And if we do not believe this, the very first sentence of

our creed is endangered, wherein we profess to believe in God the

Father Almighty. For He is not truly called Almighty if He cannot do

whatsoever He pleases, or if the power of His almighty will is hindered

by the will of any creature whatsoever.

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Chapter 97.--In What Sense Does the Apostle Say that "God Will Have All

Men to Be Saved," When, as a Matter of Fact, All are Not Saved?

Hence we must inquire in what sense is said of God what the apostle has

mostly truly said: "Who will have all men to be saved." [1277] For, as

a matter of fact, not all, nor even a majority, are saved: so that it

would seem that what God wills is not done, man's will interfering

with, and hindering the will of God. When we ask the reason why all men

are not saved, the ordinary answer is: "Because men themselves are not

willing." This, indeed cannot be said of infants, for it is not in

their power either to will or not to will. But if we could attribute to

their will the childish movements they make at baptism, when they make

all the resistance they can, we should say that even they are not

willing to be saved. Our Lord says plainly, however, in the Gospel,

when upbraiding the impious city: "How often would I have gathered thy

children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her

wings, and ye would not!" [1278] as if the will of God had been

overcome by the will of men, and when the weakest stood in the way with

their want of will, the will of the strongest could not be carried out.

And where is that omnipotence which hath done all that it pleased on

earth and in heaven, if God willed to gather together the children of

Jerusalem, and did not accomplish it? or rather, Jerusalem was not

willing that her children should be gathered together? But even though

she was unwilling, He gathered together as many of her children as He

wished: for He does not will some things and do them, and will others

and do them not; but "He hath done all that He pleased in heaven and in

earth."

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[1277] 1 Tim. ii. 4. [See R.V.]

[1278] Matt. xxiii. 37

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Chapter 98.--Predestination to Eternal Life is Wholly of God's Free

Grace.

And, moreover, who will be so foolish and blasphemous as to say that

God cannot change the evil wills of men, whichever, whenever, and

wheresoever He chooses, and direct them to what is good? But when He

does this He does it of mercy; when He does it not, it is of justice

that He does it not for "He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and

whom He will He hardeneth." [1279] And when the apostle said this, he

was illustrating the grace of God, in connection with which he had just

spoken of the twins in the womb of Rebecca, "who being not yet born,

neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according

to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was

said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." [1280] And in

reference to this matter he quotes another prophetic testimony: "Jacob

have I loved, but Esau have I hated." [1281] But perceiving how what he

had said might affect those who could not penetrate by their

understanding the depth of this grace: "What shall we say then?" he

says: "Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." [1282] For it

seems unjust that, in the absence of any merit or demerit, from good or

evil works, God should love the one and hate the other. Now, if the

apostle had wished us to understand that there were future good works

of the one, and evil works of the other, which of course God foreknew,

he would never have said, "not of works," but, "of future works," and

in that way would have solved the difficulty, or rather there would

then have been no difficulty to solve. As it is, however, after

answering, "God forbid;" that is, God forbid that there should be

unrighteousness with God; he goes on to prove that there is no

unrighteousness in God's doing this, and says: "For He saith to Moses,

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion

on whom I will have compassion." [1283] Now, who but a fool would think

that God was unrighteous, either in inflicting penal justice on those

who had earned it, or in extending mercy to the unworthy? Then he draws

his conclusion: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that

runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." [1284] Thus both the twins

were born children of wrath, not on account of any works of their own,

but because they were bound in the fetters of that original

condemnation which came through Adam. But He who said, "I will have

mercy on whom I will have mercy," loved Jacob of His undeserved grace,

and hated Esau of His deserved judgment. And as this judgment was due

to both, the former learnt from the case of the latter that the fact of

the same punishment not falling upon himself gave him no room to glory

in any merit of his own, but only in the riches of the divine grace;

because "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of

God that showeth mercy." And indeed the whole face, and, if I may use

the expression, every lineament of the countenance of Scripture conveys

by a very profound analogy this wholesome warning to every one who

looks carefully into it, that he who glories should glory in the Lord.

[1285]

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[1279] Rom. ix. 18

[1280] Rom. ix. 12

[1281] Rom. ix. 13; Mal. i. 2, 3

[1282] Rom. ix. 14

[1283] Rom. ix. 15; Ex. xxxiii. 19

[1284] Rom. ix. 16. [See R V.]

[1285] Comp. 1 Cor. i. 31

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Chapter 99.--As God's Mercy is Free, So His Judgments are Just, and

Cannot Be Gainsaid.

Now after commending the mercy of God, saying, "So it is not of him

that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,"

that he might commend His justice also (for the man who does not obtain

mercy finds, not iniquity, but justice, there being no iniquity with

God), he immediately adds: "For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even

for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power

in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

[1286] And then he draws a conclusion that applies to both, that is,

both to His mercy and His justice: "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He

will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." [1287] "He hath mercy"

of His great goodness, "He hardeneth" without any injustice; so that

neither can he that is pardoned glory in any merit of his own, nor he

that is condemned complain of anything but his own demerit. For it is

grace alone that separates the redeemed from the lost, all having been

involved in one common perdition through their common origin. Now if

any one, on hearing this, should say, "Why doth He yet find fault? for

who hath resisted His will?" [1288] as if a man ought not to be blamed

for being bad, because God hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and

whom He will He hardeneth, God forbid that we should be ashamed to

answer as we see the apostle answered: "Nay, but, O man, who art thou

that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that

formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over

the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another

unto dishonor?" [1289] Now some foolish people, think that in this

place the apostle had no answer to give; and for want of a reason to

render, rebuked the presumption of his interrogator. But there is great

weight in this saying: "Nay, but, O man, who art thou?" and in such a

matter as this it suggests to a man in a single word the limits of his

capacity, and at the same time does in reality convey an important

reason. For if a man does not understand these matters, who is he that

he should reply against God? And if he does understand them, he finds

no further room for reply. For then he perceives that the whole human

race was condemned in its rebellious head by a divine judgment so just,

that if not a single member of the race had been redeemed, no one could

justly have questioned the justice of God; and that it was right that

those who are redeemed should be redeemed in such a way as to show, by

the greater number who are unredeemed and left in their just

condemnation, what the whole race deserved, and whither the deserved

judgment of God would lead even the redeemed, did not His undeserved

mercy interpose, so that every mouth might be stopped of those who wish

to glory in their own merits, and that he that glorieth might glory in

the Lord. [1290]

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[1286] Rom. ix. 17; Ex. ix. 16

[1287] Rom. ix. 18

[1288] Rom. ix. 19

[1289] Rom. ix. 20, 21

[1290] Rom. iii. 19; 1 Cor. i. 31

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Chapter 100.--The Will of God is Never Defeated, Though Much is Done

that is Contrary to His Will.

These are the great works of the Lord, sought out according to all His

pleasure, [1291] and so wisely sought out, that when the intelligent

creation, both angelic and human, sinned, doing not His will but their

own, He used the very will of the creature which was working in

opposition to the Creator's will as an instrument for carrying out His

will, the supremely Good thus turning to good account even what is

evil, to the condemnation of those whom in His justice He has

predestined to punishment, and to the salvation of those whom in His

mercy He has predestined to grace. For, as far as relates to their own

consciousness, these creatures did what God wished not to be done: but

in view of God's omnipotence, they could in no wise effect their

purpose. For in the very fact that they acted in opposition to His

will, His will concerning them was fulfilled. And hence it is that "the

works of the Lord are great, sought out according to all His pleasure,"

because in a way unspeakably strange and wonderful, even what is done

in opposition to His will does not defeat His will. For it would not be

done did He not permit it (and of course His permission is not

unwilling, but willing); nor would a Good Being permit evil to be done

only that in His omnipotence He can turn evil into good.

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[1291] Ps. cxi. 2 (LXX.): "The works of the Lord are great, sought out

of all them that have pleasure therein." (A.V.)

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Chapter 101.--The Will of God, Which is Always Good, is Sometimes

Fulfilled Through the Evil Will of Man.

Sometimes, however, a man in the goodness of his will desires something

that God does not desire, even though God's will is also good, nay,

much more fully and more surely good (for His will never can be evil):

for example, if a good son is anxious that his father should live, when

it is God's good will that he should die. Again, it is possible for a

man with evil will to desire what God wills in His goodness: for

example, if a bad son wishes his father to die, when this is also the

will of God. It is plain that the former wishes what God does not wish,

and that the latter wishes what God does wish; and yet the filial love

of the former is more in harmony with the good will of God, though its

desire is different from God's, than the want of filial affection of

the latter, though its desire is the same as God's. So necessary is it,

in determining whether a man's desire is one to be approved or

disapproved, to consider what it is proper for man, and what it is

proper for God, to desire, and what is in each case the real motive of

the will. For God accomplishes some of His purposes, which of course

are all good, through the evil desires of wicked men: for example, it

was through the wicked designs of the Jews, working out the good

purpose of the Father, that Christ was slain and this event was so

truly good, that when the Apostle Peter expressed his unwillingness

that it should take place, he was designated Satan by Him who had come

to be slain. [1292] How good seemed the intentions of the pious

believers who were unwilling that Paul should go up to Jerusalem lest

the evils which Agabus had foretold should there befall him! [1293] And

yet it was God's purpose that he should suffer these evils for

preaching the faith of Christ, and thereby become a witness for Christ.

And this purpose of His, which was good, God did not fulfill through

the good counsels of the Christians, but through the evil counsels of

the Jews; so that those who opposed His purpose were more truly His

servants than those who were the willing instruments of its

accomplishment.

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[1292] Matt. xvi. 21-23

[1293] Acts xxi. 10-12

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Chapter 102.--The Will of the Omnipotent God is Never Defeated, and is

Never Evil.

But however strong may be the purposes either of angels or of men,

whether of good or bad, whether these purposes fall in with the will of

God or run counter to it, the will of the Omnipotent is never defeated;

and His will never can be evil; because even when it inflicts evil it

is just, and what is just is certainly not evil. The omnipotent God,

then, whether in mercy He pitieth whom He will, or in judgment

hardeneth whom He will, is never unjust in what He does, never does

anything except of His own free-will, and never wills anything that He

does not perform.

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Chapter 103.--Interpretation of the Expression in I Tim. II. 4: "Who

Will Have All Men to Be Saved."

Accordingly, when we hear and read in Scripture that He "will have all

men to be saved," [1294] although we know well that all men are not

saved, we are not on that account to restrict the omnipotence of God,

but are rather to understand the Scripture, "Who will have all men to

be saved," as meaning that no man is saved unless God wills his

salvation: not that there is no man whose salvation He does not will,

but that no man is saved apart from His will; and that, therefore, we

should pray Him to will our salvation, because if He will it, it must

necessarily be accomplished. And it was of prayer to God that the

apostle was speaking when he used this expression. And on the same

principle we interpret the expression in the Gospel: "The true light

which lighteth every man that cometh into the world:" [1295] not that

there is no man who is not enlightened, but that no man is enlightened

except by Him. Or, it is said, "Who will have all men to be saved;" not

that there is no man whose salvation He does not will (for how, then,

explain the fact that He was unwilling to work miracles in the presence

of some who, He said, would have repented if He had worked them?), but

that we are to understand by "all men," the human race in all its

varieties of rank and circumstances,--kings, subjects; noble, plebeian,

high, low, learned, and unlearned; the sound in body, the feeble, the

clever, the dull, the foolish, the rich, the poor, and those of

middling circumstances; males, females, infants, boys, youths; young,

middle-aged, and old men; of every tongue, of every fashion, of all

arts, of all professions, with all the innumerable differences of will

and conscience, and whatever else there is that makes a distinction

among men. For which of all these classes is there out of which God

does not will that men should be saved in all nations through His

only-begotten Son, our Lord, and therefore does save them; for the

Omnipotent cannot will in vain, whatsoever He may will? Now the apostle

had enjoined that prayers should be made for all men, and had

especially added, "For kings, and for all that are in authority," who

might be supposed, in the pride and pomp of worldly station, to shrink

from the humility of the Christian faith. Then saying, "For this is

good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour," that is, that

prayers should be made for such as these, he immediately adds, as if to

remove any ground of despair, "Who will have all men to be saved, and

to come unto the knowledge of the truth." [1296] God, then, in His

great condescension has judged it good to grant to the prayers of the

humble the salvation of the exalted; and assuredly we have many

examples of this. Our Lord, too, makes use of the same mode of speech

in the Gospel, when He says to the Pharisees: "Ye tithe mint, and rue,

and every herb." [1297] For the Pharisees did not tithe what belonged

to others, nor all the herbs of all the inhabitants of other lands. As,

then, in this place we must understand by "every herb," every kind of

herbs, so in the former passage we may understand by "all men," every

sort of men. And we may interpret it in any other way we please, so

long as we are not compelled to believe that the omnipotent God has

willed anything to be done which was not done: for setting aside all

ambiguities, if "He hath done all that He pleased in heaven and in

earth," [1298] as the psalmist sings of Him, He certainly did not will

to do anything that He hath not done.

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[1294] 1 Tim. ii. 4

[1295] John i. 9

[1296] 1 Tim. ii. 1-4

[1297] Luke xi. 42. ["All manner of herbs." A.V.]

[1298] Ps cxv. 3. ["Our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever

He hath pleased." A.V.]

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Chapter 104.--God, Foreknowing the Sin of the First Man, Ordered His

Own Purposes Accordingly.

Wherefore, God would have been willing to preserve even the first man

in that state of salvation in which he was created, and after he had

begotten sons to remove him at a fit time, without the intervention of

death, to a better place, where he should have been not only free from

sin, but free even from the desire of sinning, if He had foreseen that

man would have the steadfast will to persist in the state of innocence

in which he was created. But as He foresaw that man would make a bad

use of his free-will, that is, would sin, God arranged His own designs

rather with a view to do good to man even in his sinfulness, that thus

the good will of the Omnipotent might not be made void by the evil will

of man, but might be fulfilled in spite of it.

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Chapter 105.--Man Was So Created as to Be Able to Choose Either Good or

Evil: in the Future Life, the Choice of Evil Will Be Impossible.

Now it was expedient that man should be at first so created, as to have

it in his power both to will what was right and to will what was wrong;

not without reward if he willed the former, and not without punishment

if he willed the latter. But in the future life it shall not be in his

power to will evil; and yet this will constitute no restriction on the

freedom of his will. On the contrary, his will shall be much freer when

it shall be wholly impossible for him to be the slave of sin. We should

never think of blaming the will, or saying that it was no will, or that

it was not to be called free, when we so desire happiness, that not

only do we shrink from misery, but find it utterly impossible to do

otherwise. As, then, the soul even now finds it impossible to desire

unhappiness, so in future it shall be wholly impossible for it to

desire sin. But God's arrangement was not to be broken, according to

which He willed to show how good is a rational being who is able even

to refrain from sin, and yet how much better is one who cannot sin at

all; just as that was an inferior sort of immortality, and yet it was

immortality, when it was possible for man to avoid death, although

there is reserved for the future a more perfect immortality, when it

shall be impossible for man to die.

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Chapter 106.--The Grace of God Was Necessary to Man's Salvation Before

the Fall as Well as After It.

The former immortality man lost through the exercise of his free-will;

the latter he shall obtain through grace, whereas, if he had not

sinned, he should have obtained it by desert. Even in that case,

however, there could have been no merit without grace; because,

although the mere exercise of man's free-will was sufficient to bring

in sin, his free-will would not have sufficed for his maintenance in

righteousness, unless God had assisted it by imparting a portion of His

unchangeable goodness. Just as it is in man's power to die whenever he

will (for, not to speak of other means, any one can put an end to

himself by simple abstinence from food), but the mere will cannot

preserve life in the absence of food and the other means of life; so

man in paradise was able of his mere will, simply by abandoning

righteousness, to destroy himself; but to have maintained a life of

righteousness would have been too much for his will, unless it had been

sustained by the Creator's power. After the fall, however, a more

abundant exercise of God's mercy was required, because the will itself

had to be freed from the bondage in which it was held by sin and death.

And the will owes its freedom in no degree to itself, but solely to the

grace of God which comes by faith in Jesus Christ; so that the very

will, through which we accept all the other gifts of God which lead us

on to His eternal gift, is itself prepared of the Lord, as the

Scripture says. [1299]

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[1299] Prov xvi. 1. ["The preparation of the heart in man... is from

the Lord." A.V.]

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Chapter 107.--Eternal Life, Though the Reward of Good Works, is Itself

the Gift of God.

Wherefore, even eternal life itself, which is surely the reward of good

works, the apostle calls the gift of God. "For the wages of sin," he

says, "is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus

Christ our Lord." [1300] Wages (stipendium) is paid as a recompense for

military service; it is not a gift: wherefore he says, "the wages of

sin is death," to show that death was not inflicted undeservedly, but

as the due recompense of sin. But a gift, unless it is wholly unearned,

is not a gift at all. [1301] We are to understand, then, that man's

good deserts are themselves the gift of God, so that when these obtain

the recompense of eternal life, it is simply grace given for grace.

Man, therefore, was thus made upright that, though unable to remain in

his uprightness without divine help, he could of his own mere will

depart from it. And whichever of these courses he had chosen, God's

will would have been done, either by him, or concerning him. Therefore,

as he chose to do his own will rather than God's, the will of God is

fulfilled concerning him; for God, out of one and the same heap of

perdition which constitutes the race of man, makes one vessel to honor,

another to dishonor; to honor in mercy, to dishonor in judgment; [1302]

that no one may glory in man, and consequently not in himself.

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[1300] Rom. vi. 23

[1301] Comp. Rom. xi. 6

[1302] Rom. ix. 21

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Chapter 108.--A Mediator Was Necessary to Reconcile Us to God; And

Unless This Mediator Had Been God, He Could Not Have Been Our Redeemer.

For we could not be redeemed, even through the one Mediator between God

and men, the man Christ Jesus, if He were not also God. Now when Adam

was created, he, being a righteous man, had no need of a mediator. But

when sin had placed a wide gulf between God and the human race, it was

expedient that a Mediator, who alone of the human race was born, lived,

and died without sin, should reconcile us to God, and procure even for

our bodies a resurrection to eternal life, in order that the pride of

man might be exposed and cured through the humility of God; that man

might be shown how far he had departed from God, when God became

incarnate to bring him back; that an example might be set to

disobedient man in the life of obedience of the God-Man; that the

fountain of grace might be opened by the Only-begotten taking upon

Himself the form of a servant, a form which had no antecedent merit;

that an earnest of that resurrection of the body which is promised to

the redeemed might be given in the resurrection of the Redeemer; that

the devil might be subdued by the same nature which it was his boast to

have deceived, and yet man not glorified, lest pride should again

spring up; and, in fine, with a view to all the advantages which the

thoughtful can perceive and describe, or perceive without being able to

describe, as flowing from the transcendent mystery of the person of the

Mediator.

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Chapter 109.--The State of the Soul During the Interval Between Death

and the Resurrection.

During the time, moreover, which intervenes between a man's death and

the final resurrection, the soul dwells in a hidden retreat, where it

enjoys rest or suffers affliction just in proportion to the merit it

has earned by the life which it led on earth.

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Chapter 110.--The Benefit to the Souls of the Dead from the Sacraments

and Alms of Their Living Friends.

Nor can it be denied that the souls of the dead are benefited by the

piety of their living friends, who offer the sacrifice of the Mediator,

or give alms in the church on their behalf. But these services are of

advantage only to those who during their lives have earned such merit,

that services of this kind can help them. For there is a manner of life

which is neither so good as not to require these services after death,

nor so bad that such services are of no avail after death; there is, on

the other hand, a kind of life so good as not to require them; and

again, one so bad that when life is over they render no help.

Therefore, it is in this life that all the merit or demerit is

acquired, which can either relieve or aggravate a man's sufferings

after this life. No one, then, need hope that after he is dead he shall

obtain merit with God which he has neglected to secure here. And

accordingly it is plain that the services which the church celebrates

for the dead are in no way opposed to the apostle's words: "For we must

all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may

receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done,

whether it be good or bad;" [1303] for the merit which renders such

services as I speak of profitable to a man, is earned while he lives in

the body. It is not to every one that these services are profitable.

And why are they not profitable to all, except because of the different

kinds of lives that men lead in the body? When, then, sacrifices either

of the altar or of alms are offered on behalf of all the baptized dead,

they are thank-offerings for the very good, they are propitiatory

offerings for the not very bad, and in the case of the very bad, even

though they do not assist the dead, they are a species of consolation

to the living. And where they are profitable, their benefit consists

either in obtaining a full remission of sins, or at least in making the

condemnation more tolerable.

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[1303] 2 Cor. v. 10; comp. Rom. xiv. 10

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Chapter 111.--After the Resurrection There Shall Be Two Distinct

Kingdoms, One of Eternal Happiness, the Other of Eternal Misery.

After the resurrection, however, when the final, universal judgment has

been completed, there shall be two kingdoms, each with its own distinct

boundaries, the one Christ's, the other the devil's; the one consisting

of the good, the other of the bad,--both, however, consisting of angels

and men. The former shall have no will, the latter no power, to sin,

and neither shall have any power to choose death; but the former shall

live truly and happily in eternal life, the latter shall drag a

miserable existence in eternal death without the power of dying; for

the life and the death shall both be without end. But among the former

there shall be degrees of happiness, one being more pre-eminently happy

than another; and among the latter there shall be degrees of misery,

one being more endurably miserable than another.

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Chapter 112.--There is No Ground in Scripture for the Opinion of Those

Who Deny the Eternity of Future Punishments.

It is in vain, then, that some, indeed very many, make moan over the

eternal punishment, and perpetual, unintermitted torments of the lost,

and say they do not believe it shall be so; not, indeed, that they

directly oppose themselves to Holy Scripture, but, at the suggestion of

their own feelings, they soften down everything that seems hard, and

give a milder turn to statements which they think are rather designed

to terrify than to be received as literally true. For "Hath God" they

say, forgotten to be gracious? hath He in anger shut up His tender

mercies?" [1304] Now, they read this in one of the holy psalms. But

without doubt we are to understand it as spoken of those who are

elsewhere called "vessels of mercy," [1305] because even they are freed

from misery not on account of any merit of their own, but solely

through the pity of God. Or, if the men we speak of insist that this

passage applies to all mankind, there is no reason why they should

therefore suppose that there will be an end to the punishment of those

of whom it is said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment;"

for this shall end in the same manner and at the same time as the

happiness of those of whom it is said, "but the righteous unto life

eternal." [1306] But let them suppose, if the thought gives them

pleasure, that the pains of the damned are, at certain intervals, in

some degree assuaged. For even in this case the wrath of God, that is,

their condemnation (for it is this, and not any disturbed feeling in

the mind of God that is called His wrath), abideth upon them; [1307]

that is, His wrath, though it still remains, does not shut up His

tender mercies; though His tender mercies are exhibited, not in putting

an end to their eternal punishment, but in mitigating, or in granting

them a respite from, their torments; for the psalm does not say, "to

put an end to His anger," or, "when His anger is passed by," but "in

His anger." [1308] Now, if this anger stood alone, or if it existed in

the smallest conceivable degree, yet to be lost out of the kingdom of

God, to be an exile from the city of God, to be alienated from the life

of God, to have no share in that great goodness which God hath laid up

for them that fear Him, and hath wrought out for them that trust in

Him, [1309] would be a punishment so great, that, supposing it to be

eternal, no torments that we know of, continued through as many ages as

man's imagination can conceive, could be compared with it.

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[1304] Ps. lxxvii. 9

[1305] Rom. ix. 23

[1306] Matt. xxv. 46

[1307] John iii. 36

[1308] Ps. lxxviii

[1309] Ps. xxxi. 19

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Chapter 113.--The Death of the Wicked Shall Be Eternal in the Same

Sense as the Life of the Saints.

This perpetual death of the wicked, then, that is, their alienation

from the life of God, shall abide for ever, and shall be common to them

all, whatever men, prompted by their human affections, may conjecture

as to a variety of punishments, or as to a mitigation or intermission

of their woes; just as the eternal life of the saints shall abide for

ever, and shall be common to them all, whatever grades of rank and

honor there may be among those who shine with an harmonious effulgence.

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Chapter 114.--Having Dealt with Faith, We Now Come to Speak of Hope.

Everything that Pertains to Hope is Embraced in the Lord's Prayer.

Out of this confession of faith, which is briefly comprehended in the

Creed, and which, carnally understood, is milk for babes, but,

spiritually apprehended and studied, is meat for strong men, springs

the good hope of believers; and this is accompanied by a holy love. But

of these matters, all of which are true objects of faith, those only

pertain to hope which are embraced in the Lord's Prayer. For, "Cursed

is the man that trusteth in man" [1310] is the testimony of holy writ;

and, consequently, this curse attaches also to the man who trusteth in

himself. Therefore, except from God the Lord we ought to ask for

nothing either that we hope to do well, or hope to obtain as a reward

of our good works.

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[1310] Jer. xvii. 5

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Chapter 115.--The Seven Petitions of the Lord's Prayer, According to

Matthew.

Accordingly, in the Gospel according to Matthew the Lord's Prayer seems

to embrace seven petitions, three of which ask for eternal blessings,

and the remaining four for temporal; these latter, however, being

necessary antecedents to the attainment of the eternal. For when we

say, "Hallowed be Thy name: Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done in

earth, as it is in heaven" [1311] (which some have interpreted, not

unfairly, in body as well as in spirit), we ask for blessings that are

to be enjoyed for ever; which are indeed begun in this world, and grow

in us as we grow in grace, but in their perfect state, which is to be

looked for in another life, shall be a possession for evermore. But

when we say, "Give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our

debts, as we forgive our debtors: and lead us not into temptation, but

deliver us from evil," [1312] who does not see that we ask for

blessings that have reference to the wants of this present life? In

that eternal life, where we hope to live for ever, the hallowing of

God's name, and His kingdom, and His will in our spirit and body, shall

be brought to perfection, and shall endure to everlasting. But our

daily bread is so called because there is here constant need for as

much nourishment as the spirit and the flesh demand, whether we

understand the expression spiritually, or carnally, or in both senses.

It is here too that we need the forgiveness that we ask, for it is here

that we commit the sins; here are the temptations which allure or drive

us into sin; here, in a word, is the evil from which we desire

deliverance: but in that other world there shall be none of these

things.

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[1311] Matt. vi. 9, 10

[1312] Matt. vi. 11-13

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Chapter 116.--Luke Expresses the Substance of These Seven Petitions

More Briefly in Five.

But the Evangelist Luke in his version of the Lord's prayer embraces

not seven, but five petitions: not, of course, that there is any

discrepancy between the two evangelists, but that Luke indicates by his

very brevity the mode in which the seven petitions of Matthew are to be

understood. For God's name is hallowed in the spirit; and God's kingdom

shall come in the resurrection of the body. Luke, therefore, intending

to show that the third petition is a sort of repetition of the first

two, has chosen to indicate that by omitting the third altogether.

[1313] Then he adds three others: one for daily bread, another for

pardon of sin, another for immunity from temptation. And what Matthew

puts as the last petition, "but deliver us from evil," Luke has

omitted, [1314] to show us that it is embraced in the previous petition

about temptation. Matthew, indeed, himself says, "but deliver," not

"and deliver," as if to show that the petitions are virtually one: do

not this, but this; so that every man is to understand that he is

delivered from evil in the very fact of his not being led into

temptation.

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[1313] [These petitions are retained in the A.V., but omitted in the

R.V., according to the oldest authorities.--P.S.]

[1314] [These petitions are retained in the A.V., but omitted in the

R.V., according to the oldest authorities.--P.S.]

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Chapter 117.--Love, Which is Greater Than Faith and Hope, is Shed

Abroad in Our Hearts by the Holy Ghost.

And now as to love, which the apostle declares to be greater than the

other two graces, that is, than faith and hope, [1315] the greater the

measure in which it dwells in a man, the better is the man in whom it

dwells. For when there is a question as to whether a man is good, one

does not ask what he believes, or what he hopes, but what he loves. For

the man who loves aright no doubt believes and hopes aright; whereas

the man who has not love believes in vain, even though his beliefs are

true; and hopes in vain, even though the objects of his hope are a real

part of true happiness; unless, indeed, he believes and hopes for this,

that he may obtain by prayer the blessing of love. For, although it is

not possible to hope without love, it may yet happen that a man does

not love that which is necessary to the attainment of his hope; as, for

example, if he hopes for eternal life (and who is there that does not

desire this?) and yet does not love righteousness, without which no one

can attain to eternal life. Now this is the true faith of Christ which

the apostle speaks of, "which worketh by love;" [1316] and if there is

anything that it does not yet embrace in its love, asks that it may

receive, seeks that it may find, and knocks that it may be opened unto

it. [1317] For faith obtains through prayer that which the law

commands. For without the gift of God, that is, without the Holy

Spirit, through whom love is shed abroad in our hearts, [1318] the law

can command, but it cannot assist; and, moreover, it makes a man a

transgressor, for he can no longer excuse himself on the plea of

ignorance. Now carnal lust reigns where there is not the love of God.

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[1315] 1 Cor. xiii. 13

[1316] Gal. v. 6

[1317] Matt. vii. 7

[1318] Rom. v. 5

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Chapter 118.--The Four Stages of the Christian's Life, and the Four

Corresponding Stages of the Church's History.

When, sunk in the darkest depths of ignorance, man lives according to

the flesh undisturbed by any struggle of reason or conscience, this is

his first state. Afterwards, when through the law has come the

knowledge of sin, and the Spirit of God has not yet interposed His aid,

man, striving to live according to the law, is thwarted in his efforts

and falls into conscious sin, and so, being overcome of sin, becomes

its slave ("for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in

bondage" [1319] ); and thus the effect produced by the knowledge of the

commandment is this, that sin worketh in man all manner of

concupiscence, and he is involved in the additional guilt of willful

transgression, and that is fulfilled which is written: "The, law

entered that the offense might abound." [1320] This is man's second

state. But if God has regard to him, and inspires him with faith in

God's help, and the Spirit of God begins to work in him, then the

mightier power of love strives against the power of the flesh; and

although there is still in the man's own nature a power that fights

against him (for his disease is not completely cured), yet he lives the

life of the just by faith, and lives in righteousness so far as he does

not yield to evil lust, but conquers it by the love of holiness. This

is the third state of a man of good hope; and he who by steadfast piety

advances in this course, shall attain at last to peace, that peace

which, after this life is over, shall be perfected in the repose of the

spirit, and finally in the resurrection of the body. Of these four

different stages the first is before the law, the second is under the

law, the third is under grace, and the fourth is in full and perfect

peace. Thus, too, has the history of God's people been ordered

according to His pleasure who disposeth all things in number, and

measure, and weight. [1321] For the church existed at first before the

law; then under the law, which was given by Moses; then under grace,

which was first made manifest in the coming of the Mediator. Not,

indeed, that this grace was absent previously, but, in harmony with the

arrangements of the time, it was veiled and hidden. For none, even of

the just men of old, could find salvation apart from the faith of

Christ; nor unless He had been known to them could their ministry have

been used to convey prophecies concerning Him to us, some more plain,

and some more obscure.

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[1319] 2 Pet. ii. 19

[1320] Rom. v. 20

[1321] Comp. Wisd. xi. 20

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Chapter 119.--The Grace of Regeneration Washes Away All Past Sin and

All Original Guilt.

Now in whichever of these four stages (as we may call them) the grace

of regeneration finds any particular man, all his past sins are there

and then pardoned, and the guilt which he contracted in his birth is

removed in his new birth; and so true is it that "the wind bloweth

where it listeth," [1322] that some have never known the second stage,

that of slavery under the law, but have received the divine assistance

as soon as they received the commandment.

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[1322] John iii. 8

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Chapter 120.--Death Cannot Injure Those Who Have Received the Grace of

Regeneration.

But before a man can receive the commandment, it is necessary that he

should live according to the flesh. But if once he has received the

grace of regeneration, death shall not injure him, even if he should

forthwith depart from this life; "for to this end Christ both died, and

rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the

living;" [1323] nor shall death retain dominion over him for whom

Christ freely died.

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[1323] Rom. xiv. 9

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Chapter 121.--Love is the End of All the Commandments, and God Himself

is Love.

All the commandments of God, then, are embraced in love, of which the

apostle says: "Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure

heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." [1324] Thus

the end of every commandment is charity, that is, every commandment has

love for its aim. But whatever is done either through fear of

punishment or from some other carnal motive, and has not for its

principle that love which the Spirit of God sheds abroad in the heart,

is not done as it ought to be done, however it may appear to men. For

this love embraces both the love of God and the love of our neighbor,

and "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets,"

[1325] we may add the Gospel and the apostles. For it is from these

that we hear this voice: The end of the commandment is charity, and God

is love. [1326] Wherefore, all God's commandments, one of which is,

"Thou shalt not commit adultery," [1327] and all those precepts which

are not commandments but special counsels, one of which is, "It is good

for a man not to touch a woman," [1328] are rightly carried out only

when the motive principle of action is the love of God, and the love of

our neighbor in God. And this applies both to the present and the

future life. We love God now by faith, then we shall love Him through

sight. Now we love even our neighbor by faith; for we who are ourselves

mortal know not the hearts of mortal men. But in the future life, the

Lord "both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will

make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have

praise of God;" [1329] for every man shall love and praise in his

neighbor the virtue which, that it may not be hid, the Lord Himself

shall bring to light. Moreover, lust diminishes as love grows, till the

latter grows to such a height that it can grow no higher here. For

"greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for

his friends." [1330] Who then can tell how great love shall be in the

future world, when there shall be no lust for it to restrain and

conquer? for that will be the perfection of health when there shall be

no struggle with death.

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[1324] 1 Tim. i. 5

[1325] Matt. xxii. 40; comp. Rom. v. 5

[1326] 1 Tim. i. 5; 1 John iv. 16

[1327] Comp. Matt. v. 27 and Rom. xiii. 9

[1328] 1 Cor. vii. 1

[1329] 1 Cor. iv. 5

[1330] John xv. 13

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Chapter 122.--Conclusion.

But now there must be an end at last to this volume. And it is for

yourself to judge whether you should call it a hand-book, or should use

it as such. I, however, thinking that your zeal in Christ ought not to

be despised, and believing and hoping all good of you in dependence on

our Redeemer's help, and loving you very much as one of the members of

His body, have, to the best of my ability, written this book for you on

Faith, Hope, and Love. May its value be equal to its length.

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On the Catechising of the Uninstructed [1331]

In One Book.

Translated by

Rev. S. D. F. Salmond, D.D.,

Professor of Systematic Theology, Free Church College, Aberdeen.

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Introductory Notice.

In the fourteenth chapter of the second book of his Retractations,

Augustin makes the following statement: "There is also a book of ours

on the subject of the Catechising of the Uninstructed, [or, for

Instructing the Unlearned, De Catechizandis Rudibus], that being,

indeed, the express title by which it is designated. In this book,

where I have said, Neither did the angel, who, in company with other

spirits who were his satellites, forsook in pride the obedience of God,

and became the devil, do any hurt to God, but to himself; for God

knoweth how to dispose of souls that leave Him:' it would be more

appropriate to say, spirits that leave Him,' inasmuch as the question

dealt with angels. This book commences in these terms: You have

requested me, brother Deogratias.' "

The composition so described in the passage cited is reviewed by

Augustin in connection with other works which he had in hand about the

year 400 A.D., and may therefore be taken to belong to that date. It

has been conjectured that the person to whom it is addressed may

perhaps be the same with the presbyter Deogratias, to whom, as we read

in the epistle which now ranks as the hundred and second, Augustin

wrote about the year 406, in reply to some questions of the pagans

which were forwarded to him from Carthage.

The Benedictine editors introduce the treatise in the following terms:

"At the request of a deacon of Carthage, Augustin undertakes the task

of teaching the art of catechising; and in the first place, he gives

certain injunctions, to the effect that this kind of duty may be

discharged not only in a settled method and an apt order, but also

without tediousness, and in a spirit of cheerfulness. Thereafter

reducing his injunctions to practical use, he gives an example of what

he means by delivering two set discourses, presenting parallels to each

other, the one being somewhat lengthened and the other very brief, but

both suitable for the instruction of any individual whose desire is to

be a Christian."

[This treatise shows what was thought in the age of Saint Augustin to

be the most needful instruction in religion. The Latin text: De

Cactechizandis Rudibus, is in the sixth vol. of the Benedictine

edition, and in the handy ed. of C. Marriott: S. Augustini Opuscula

qu�dam, Oxford and London (Parker & Co.) 4th ed. 1885. An earlier and

closer English Version by Rev. C. L. Cornish, M. A., of Exeter College,

Oxford, appeared in the Oxford "Library of the Fathers" (1847, pp. 187

sqq.,) under the title On Instructing the Unlearned. H. De Romestin

reproduces the Oxford translation in the English version of Marriott's

ed. of five treatises of St. Augustin, Oxford and London, 1885, pp.

1-71.--P.S.]

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Chapter 1.--How Augustin Writes in Answer to a Favor Asked by a Deacon

of Carthage.

1. You have requested me, brother Deogratias, to send you in writing

something which might be of service to you in the matter of catechising

the uninstructed. For you have informed me that in Carthage, where you

hold the position of a deacon, persons, who have to be taught the

Christian faith from its very rudiments, are frequently brought to you

by reason of your enjoying the reputation of possessing a rich gift in

catechising, due at once to an intimate acquaintance with the faith,

and to an attractive method of discourse; [1332] but that you almost

always find yourself in a difficulty as to the manner in which a

suitable declaration is to be made of the precise doctrine, the belief

of which constitutes us Christians: regarding the point at which our

statement of the same ought to commence, and the limit to which it

should be allowed to proceed: and with respect to the question whether,

when our narration is concluded, we ought to make use of any kind of

exhortation, or simply specify those precepts in the observance of

which the person to whom we are discoursing may know the Christian life

and profession to be maintained. [1333] At the same time, you have made

the confession and complaint that it has often befallen you that in the

course of a lengthened and languid address you have become profitless

and distasteful even to yourself, not to speak of the learner whom you

have been endeavoring to instruct by your utterance, and the other

parties who have been present as hearers; and that you have been

constrained by these straits to put upon me the constraint of that love

which I owe to you, so that I may not feel it a burdensome thing among

all my engagements to write you something on this subject.

2. As for myself then, if, in the exercise of those capacities which

through the bounty of our Lord I am enabled to present, the same Lord

requires me to offer any manner of aid to those whom He has made

brethren to me, I feel constrained not only by that love and service

which is due from me to you on the terms of familiar friendship, but

also by that which I owe universally to my mother the Church, by no

means to refuse the task, but rather to take it up with a prompt and

devoted willingness. For the more extensively I desire to see the

treasure of the Lord [1334] distributed, the more does it become my

duty, if I ascertain that the stewards, who are my fellow-servants,

find any difficulty in laying it out, to do all that lies in my power

to the end that they may be able to accomplish easily and expeditiously

what they sedulously and earnestly aim at.

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[1332] Reading et doctrina fidei et suavitate sermonis, instead of

which, however, et doctrinam...suavitatem, etc. also occurs, =

possessing at once a rich gift in catechising, and an intimate

acquaintance with the faith, and an attractive method of discourse,

[or, sweetness of language].

[1333] Reading retineri as in the mss. Some editions give retinere =

know how to maintain the Christian life and profession.

[1334] Pecuniam Dominicam

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Chapter 2.--How It Often Happens that a Discourse Which Gives Pleasure

to the Hearer is Distasteful to the Speaker; And What Explanation is to

Be Offered of that Fact.

3. But as regards the idea thus privately entertained by yourself in

such efforts, I would not have you to be disturbed by the consideration

that you have often appeared to yourself to be delivering a poor and

wearisome discourse. For it may very well be the case that the matter

has not so presented itself to the person whom you were trying to

instruct, but that what you were uttering seemed to you to be unworthy

of the ears of others, simply because it was your own earnest desire

that there should be something better to listen to. Indeed with me,

too, it is almost always the fact that my speech displeases myself. For

I am covetous of something better, the possession of which I frequently

enjoy within me before I commence to body it forth in intelligible

words: [1335] and then when my capacities of expression prove inferior

to my inner apprehensions, I grieve over the inability which my tongue

has betrayed in answering to my heart. For it is my wish that he who

hears me should have the same complete understanding of the subject

which I have myself; and I perceive that I fail to speak in a manner

calculated to effect that, and that this arises mainly from the

circumstance that the intellectual apprehension diffuses itself through

the mind with something like a rapid flash, whereas the utterance is

slow, and occupies time, and is of a vastly different nature, so that,

while this latter is moving on, the intellectual apprehension has

already withdrawn itself within its secret abodes. Yet, in consequence

of its having stamped certain impressions of itself in a marvellous

manner upon the memory, these prints endure with the brief pauses of

the syllables; [1336] and as the outcome of these same impressions we

form intelligible signs, [1337] which get the name of a certain

language, either the Latin, or the Greek, or the Hebrew, or some other.

And these signs may be objects of thought, or they may also be actually

uttered by the voice. On the other hand however, the impressions

themselves are neither Latin, nor Greek, nor Hebrew, nor peculiar to

any other race whatsoever, but are made good in the mind just as looks

are in the body. For anger is designated by one word in Latin, by

another in Greek, and by different terms in other languages, according

to their several diversities. But the look of the angry man is neither

(peculiarly) Latin nor (peculiarly) Greek. Thus it is that when a

person says Iratus sum, [1338] he is not understood by every nation,

but only by the Latins; whereas, if the mood of his mind when it is

kindling to wrath comes forth upon the face and affects the look, all

who have the individual within their view understand that he is angry.

But, again, it is not in our power to bring out those impressions which

the intellectual apprehension stamps upon the memory, and to hold them

forth, as it were, to the perception of the hearers by means of the

sound of the voice, in any manner parallel to the clear and evident

form in which the look appears. For those former are within in the

mind, while this latter is without in the body. Wherefore we have to

surmise how far the sound of our mouth must be from representing that

stroke of the intelligence, seeing that it does not correspond even

with the impression produced upon the memory. Now, it is a common

occurrence with us that, in the ardent desire to effect what is of

profit to our hearer, our aim is to express ourselves to him exactly as

our intellectual apprehension is at the time, when, in the very effort,

we are failing in the ability to speak; and then, because this does not

succeed with us, we are vexed, and we pine in weariness as if we were

applying ourselves to vain labors; and, as the result of this very

weariness, our discourse becomes itself more languid and pointless even

than it was when it first induced such a sense of tediousness.

4. But ofttimes the earnestness of those who are desirous of hearing me

shows me that my utterance is not so frigid as it seems to myself to

be. From the delight, too, which they exhibit, I gather that they

derive some profit from it. And I occupy myself sedulously with the

endeavor not to fail in putting before them a service in which I

perceive them to take in such good part what is put before them. Even,

so, on your side also, the very fact that persons who require to be

instructed in the faith are brought so frequently to you, ought to help

you to understand that your discourse is not displeasing to others as

it is displeasing to yourself; and you ought not to consider yourself

unfruitful, simply because you do not succeed in setting forth in such

a manner as you desire the things which you discern; for, perchance,

you may be just as little able to discern them in the way you wish. For

in this life who sees except as "in an enigma and through a glass"?

[1339] Neither is love itself of might sufficient to rend the darkness

of the flesh, and penetrate into that eternal calm from which even

things which pass away derive the light in which they shine. But

inasmuch as day by day the good are making advances towards the vision

of that day, independent of the rolling sky, [1340] and without the

invasion of the night, "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither

hath it entered into the heart of man," [1341] there is no greater

reason why our discourse should become valueless in our own estimate,

when we are engaged in teaching the uninstructed, than this,--namely,

that it is a delight to us to discern in an extraordinary fashion, and

a weariness to speak in an ordinary. And in reality we are listened to

with much greater satisfaction, indeed, when we ourselves also have

pleasure in the same work; for the thread of our address is affected by

the very joy of which we ourselves are sensible, and it proceeds from

us with greater ease and with more acceptance. Consequently, as regards

those matters which are recommended as articles of belief, the task is

not a difficult one to lay down injunctions, with respect to the points

at which the narration should be commenced and ended, or with respect

to the method in which the narration is to be varied, so that at one

time it may be briefer, at another more lengthened, and yet at all

times full and perfect; and, again, with respect to the particular

occasions on which it may be right to use the shorter form, and those

on which it will be proper to employ the longer. But as to the means by

which all is to be done, so that every one may have pleasure in his

work when he catechises (for the better he succeeds in this the more

attractive will he be),--that is what requires the greatest

consideration. And yet we have not far to seek for the precept which

will rule in this sphere. For if, in the matter of carnal means, God

loves a cheerful giver, [1342] how much more so in that of the

spiritual? But our security that this cheerfulness may be with us at

the seasonable hour, is something dependent upon the mercy of Him who

has given us such precepts. Therefore, in accordance with my

understanding of what your own wish is, we shall discuss in the first

place the subject of the method of narration, then that of the duty of

delivering injunction and exhortation, and afterwards that of the

attainment of the said cheerfulness, so far as God may furnish us with

the ideas.

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[1335] Verbis sonantibus,--sounding words.

[1336] Perdurant illa cum syllabarum morulis

[1337] Sonantia signa,--vocal signs.

[1338] I am angry.

[1339] 1 Cor. xiii. 12

[1340] Sine volumine c�li

[1341] 1 Cor. ii. 9

[1342] 2 Cor. ix. 7

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Chapter 3.--Of the Full Narration to Be Employed in Catechising.

5. The narration is full when each person is catechised in the first

instance from what is written in the text, "In the beginning God

created the heaven and the earth," [1343] on to the present times of

the Church. This does not imply, however, either that we ought to

repeat by memory the entire Pentateuch, and the entire Books of Judges,

and Kings, and Esdras, [1344] and the entire Gospel and Acts of the

Apostles, if we have learned all these word for word; or that we should

put all the matters which are contained in these volumes into our own

words, and in that manner unfold and expound them as a whole. For

neither does the time admit of that, nor does any necessity demand it.

But what we ought to do is, to give a comprehensive statement of all

things, summarily and generally, so that certain of the more wonderful

facts may be selected which are listened to with superior

gratification, and which have been ranked so remarkably among the exact

turning-points (of the history); [1345] that, instead of exhibiting

them to view only in their wrappings, if we may so speak, and then

instantly snatching them from our sight, we ought to dwell on them for

a certain space, and thus, as it were, unfold them and open them out to

vision, and present them to the minds of the hearers as things to be

examined and admired. But as for all other details, these should be

passed over rapidly, and thus far introduced and woven into the

narrative. The effect of pursuing this plan is, that the particular

facts which we wish to see specially commended to attention obtain

greater prominence in consequence of the others being made to yield to

them; while, at the same time, neither does the learner, whose interest

we are anxious to stimulate by our statement, come to these subjects

with a mind already exhausted, nor is confusion induced upon the memory

of the person whom we ought to be instructing by our teaching.

6. In all things, indeed, not only ought our own eye to be kept fixed

upon the end of the commandment, which is "charity, out of a pure

heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned," [1346] to which we

should make all that we utter refer; but in like manner ought the gaze

of the person whom we are instructing by our utterance to be moved

[1347] toward the same, and guided in that direction. And, in truth,

for no other reason were all those things which we read in the Holy

Scriptures written, previous to the Lord's advent, but for

this,--namely, that His advent might be pressed upon the attention, and

that the Church which was to be, should be intimated beforehand, that

is to say, the people of God throughout all nations; which Church is

His body, wherewith also are united and numbered all the saints who

lived in this world, even before His advent, and who believed then in

His future coming, just as we believe in His past coming. For (to use

an illustration) Jacob, at the time when he was being born, first put

forth from the womb a hand, with which also he held the foot of the

brother who was taking priority of him in the act of birth; and next

indeed the head followed, and thereafter, at last, and as matter of

course, the rest of the members: [1348] while, nevertheless the head in

point of dignity and power has precedence, not only of those members

which followed it then, but also of the very hand which anticipated it

in the process of the birth, and is really the first, although not in

the matter of the time of appearing, at least in the order of nature.

And in an analogous manner, the Lord Jesus Christ, previous to His

appearing in the flesh, and coming forth in a certain manner out of the

womb of His secrecy, before the eyes of men as Man, the Mediator

between God and men, [1349] "who is over all, God blessed for ever,"

[1350] sent before Him, in the person of the holy patriarchs and

prophets, a certain portion of His body, wherewith, as by a hand, He

gave token beforetime of His own approaching birth, and also supplanted

[1351] the people who were prior to Him in their pride, using for that

purpose the bonds of the law, as if they were His five fingers. For

through five epochs of times [1352] there was no cessation in the

foretelling and prophesying of His own destined coming; and in a manner

consonant with this, he through whom the law was given wrote five

books; and proud men, who were carnally minded, and sought to

"establish their own righteousness," [1353] were not filled with

blessing by the open hand of Christ, but were debarred from such good

by the hand compressed and closed; and therefore their feet were tied,

and "they fell, while we are risen, and stand upright." [1354] But

although, as I have said, the Lord Christ did thus send before Him a

certain portion of His body, in the person of those holy men who came

before Him as regards the time of birth, nevertheless He is Himself the

Head of the body, the Church, [1355] and all these have been attached

to that same body of which He is the head, in virtue of their believing

in Him whom they announced prophetically. For they were not sundered

(from that body) in consequence of fulfilling their course before Him,

but rather were they made one with the same by reason of their

obedience. For although the hand may be put forward away before the

head, still it has its connection beneath the head. Wherefore all

things which were written aforetime were written in order that we might

be taught thereby, [1356] and were our figures, and happened in a

figure in the case of these men. Moreover they were written for our

sakes, upon whom the end of the ages has come. [1357]

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[1343] Gen. i. 1

[1344] In the mss. we also find the reading Ezr� = Ezra.

[1345] In ipsis articulis = "among the very articles," or "connecting

links." Reference is made to certain great epochs or articles of time

in sections 6 and 39.

[1346] 1 Tim. i. 5

[1347] Reading movendus, for which monendus = to be admonished, also

occurs in the editions.

[1348] Gen. xxv. 26

[1349] 1 Tim. ii. 5

[1350] Rom. ix. 5

[1351] Reading supplantavit. Some mss. give supplantaret = wherewith

also He might supplant, etc.

[1352] Temporum articulos

[1353] Rom. x. 3

[1354] Ps. xx. 8

[1355] Col. i. 18

[1356] Rom. xv. 4

[1357] 1 Cor. x. 11

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Chapter 4.--That the Great Reason for the Advent of Christ Was the

Commendation of Love.

7. Moreover, what greater reason is apparent for the advent of the Lord

than that God might show His love in us, commending it powerfully,

inasmuch as "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"? [1358] And

furthermore, this is with the intent that, inasmuch as charity is "the

end of the commandment," [1359] and "the fulfilling of the law," [1360]

we also may love one another and lay down our life for the brethren,

even as He laid down His life for us. [1361] And with regard to God

Himself, its object is that, even if it were an irksome task to love

Him, it may now at least cease to be irksome for us to return His love,

seeing that "He first loved us," [1362] and "spared not His own only

Son, but delivered Him up for us all." [1363] For there is no mightier

invitation to love than to anticipate in loving; and that soul is over

hard which, supposing it unwilling indeed to give love, is unwilling

also to give the return of love. But if, even in the case of criminal

and sordid loves, we see how those who desire to be loved in return

make it their special and absorbing business, by such proofs as are

within their power, to render the strength of the love which they

themselves bear plain and patent; if we also perceive how they affect

to put forward an appearance of justice in what they thus offer, such

as may qualify them in some sort to demand that a response be made in

all fairness to them on the part of those souls which they are laboring

to beguile; if, further, their own passion burns more vehemently when

they observe that the minds which they are eager to possess are also

moved now by the same fire: if thus, I say, it happens at once that the

soul which before was torpid is excited so soon as it feels itself to

be loved, and that the soul which was enkindled already becomes the

more inflamed so soon as it is made cognizant of the return of its own

love, it is evident that no greater reason is to be found why love

should be either originated or enlarged, than what appears in the

occasion when one who as yet loves not at all comes to know himself to

be the object of love, or when one who is already a lover either hopes

that he may yet be loved in turn, or has by this time the evidence of a

response to his affection. And if this holds good even in the case of

base loves, how much more [1364] in (true) friendship? For what else

have we carefully to attend to in this question touching the injuring

of friendship than to this, namely, not to give our friend cause to

suppose either that we do not love him at all, or that we love him less

than he loves us? If, indeed, he is led to entertain this belief, he

will be cooler in that love in which men enjoy the interchange of

intimacies one with another; and if he is not of that weak type of

character to which such an offense to affection will serve as a cause

of freezing off from love altogether, he yet confines himself to that

kind of affection in which he loves, not with the view of enjoyment to

himself, but with the idea of studying the good of others. But again it

is worth our while to notice how,--although superiors also have the

wish to be loved by their inferiors, and are gratified with the zealous

attention [1365] paid to them by such, and themselves cherish greater

affection towards these inferiors the more they become cognizant of

that,--with what might of love, nevertheless, the inferior kindles so

soon as he learns that he is beloved by his superior. For there have we

love in its more grateful aspect, where it does not consume itself

[1366] in the drought of want, but flows forth in the plenteousness of

beneficence. For the former type of love is of misery, the latter of

mercy. [1367] And furthermore, if the inferior was despairing even of

the possibility of his being loved by his superior, he will now be

inexpressibly moved to love if the superior has of his own will

condescended to show how much he loves this person who could by no

means be bold enough to promise himself so great a good. But what is

there superior to God in the character of Judge? and what more

desperate than man in the character of sinner?--than man, I ask, who

had given himself all the more unreservedly up to the wardship and

domination of proud powers which are unable to make him blessed, as he

had come more absolutely to despair of the possibility of his being an

object of interest to that power which wills not to be exalted in

wickedness, but is exalted in goodness.

8. If, therefore, it was mainly for this purpose that Christ came, to

wit, that man might learn how much God loves him; and that he might

learn this, to the intent that he might be kindled to the love of Him

by whom he was first loved, and might also love his neighbor at the

command and showing of Him who became our neighbor, in that He loved

man when, instead of being a neighbor to Him, he was sojourning far

apart: if, again, all divine Scripture, which was written aforetime,

was written with the view of presignifying the Lord's advent; and if

whatever has been committed to writing in times subsequent to these,

and established by divine authority, is a record of Christ, and

admonishes us of love, it is manifest that on those two commandments of

love to God and love to our neighbor [1368] hang not only all the law

and the prophets, which at the time when the Lord spoke to that effect

were as yet the only Holy Scripture, but also all those books of the

divine literature which have been written [1369] at a later period for

our health, and consigned to remembrance. Wherefore, in the Old

Testament there is a veiling of the New, and in the New Testament there

is a revealing of the Old. According to that veiling, carnal men,

understanding things in a carnal fashion, have been under the dominion,

both then and now, of a penal fear. According to this revealing, on the

other hand, spiritual men,--among whom we reckon at once those then who

knocked in piety and found even hidden things opened to them, and

others now who seek in no spirit of pride, lest even things uncovered

should be closed to them,--understanding in a spiritual fashion, have

been made free through the love wherewith they have been gifted.

Consequently, inasmuch as there is nothing more adverse to love than

envy, and as pride is the mother of envy, the same Lord Jesus Christ,

God-man, is both a manifestation of divine love towards us, and an

example of human humility with us, to the end that our great swelling

might be cured by a greater counteracting remedy. For here is great

misery, proud man! But there is greater mercy, a humble God! Take this

love, therefore, as the end that is set before you, to which you are to

refer all that you say, and, whatever you narrate, narrate it in such a

manner that he to whom you are discoursing on hearing may believe, on

believing may hope, on hoping may love.

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[1358] Rom. v. 8, 10

[1359] 1 Tim. i. 5

[1360] Rom. xiii. 10

[1361] 1 John iii. 16

[1362] 1 John iv. 10, 19

[1363] Rom. viii. 32

[1364] Reading quanto plus, for which some mss. give plurius, while in

a large number we find purius = with how much greater purity should it

hold good, etc.

[1365] Reading studioso...obsequio, for which studiose, etc., also

occurs in the editions = are earnestly gratified with the attention,

etc.

[1366] �stuat= burn, heave.

[1367] Ex miseria...ex misericordia

[1368] Matt. xxii. 40

[1369] Reading conscripta, for which some mss. have consecuta = have

followed, and many give consecrata, dedicated.

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Chapter 5.--That the Person Who Comes for Catechetical Instruction is

to Be Examined with Respect to His Views, on Desiring to Become a

Christian.

9. Moreover, it is on the gound of that very severity of God, [1370] by

which the hearts of mortals are agitated with a most wholesome terror,

that love is to be built up; so that, rejoicing that he is loved by Him

whom he fears, man may have boldness to love Him in return, and yet at

the same time be afraid to displease His love toward himself, even

should he be able to do so with impunity. For certainly it very rarely

happens, nay, I should rather say, never, that any one approaches us

with the wish to become a Christian who has not been smitten with some

sort of fear of God. For if it is in the expectation of some advantage

from men whom he deems himself unlikely to please in any other way, or

with the idea of escaping any disadvantage at the hands of men of whose

displeasure or hostility he is seriously afraid, that a man wishes to

become a Christian, then his wish to become one is not so earnest as

his desire to feign one. [1371] For faith is not a matter of the body

which does obeisance, [1372] but of the mind which believes. But

unmistakeably it is often the case that the mercy of God comes to be

present through the ministry of the catechiser, so that, affected by

the discourse, the man now wishes to become in reality that which he

had made up his mind only to feign. And so soon as he begins to have

this manner of desire, we may judge him then to have made a genuine

approach to us. It is true, indeed, that the precise time when a man,

whom we perceive to be present with us already in the body, comes to us

in reality with his mind, [1373] is a thing hidden from us. But,

notwithstanding that, we ought to deal with him in such a manner that

this wish may be made to arise within him, even should it not be there

at present. For no such labor is lost, inasmuch as, if there is any

wish at all, it is assuredly strengthened by such action on our part,

although we may be ignorant of the time or the hour at which it began.

It is useful certainly, if it can be done, to get from those who know

the man some idea beforehand of the state of mind in which he is, or of

the causes which have induced him to come with the view of embracing

religion. But if there is no other person available from whom we may

gather such information, then, indeed, the man himself is to be

interrogated, so that from what he says in reply we may draw the

beginning of our discourse. Now if he has come with a false heart,

desirous only of human advantages or thinking to escape disadvantages,

he will certainly speak what is untrue. Nevertheless, the very untruth

which he utters should be made the point from which we start. This

should not be done, however, with the (open) intention of confuting his

falsehood, as if that were a settled matter with you; but, taking it

for granted that he has professed to have come with a purpose which is

really worthy of approbation (whether that profession be true or

false), it should rather be our aim to commend and praise such a

purpose as that with which, in his reply, he has declared himself to

have come; so that we may make him feel it a pleasure to be the kind of

man actually that he wishes to seem to be. On the other hand, supposing

him to have given a declaration of his views other than what ought to

be before the mind of one who is to be instructed in the Christian

faith, then by reproving him with more than usual kindness and

gentleness, as a person uninstructed and ignorant, by pointing out and

commending, concisely and in a grave spirit the end of Christian

doctrine in its genuine reality, and by doing all this in such a manner

as neither to anticipate the times of a narration, which should be

given subsequently, nor to venture to impose that kind of statement

upon a mind not previously set for it, you may bring him to desire that

which, either in mistake or in dissimulation, he has not been desiring

up to this stage.

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[1370] De ipsa etiam severitate Dei...caritas �dificanda est

[1371] Non fieri vult potius quam fingere

[1372] Or = "signifying assent by its motions," adopting the reading of

the best mss., viz. salutantis corporis. Some editions give salvandi,

while certain mss. have salutis, and others saltantis.

[1373] Reading quando veniat animo, for which quo veniat animo also

occurs = the mind in which a man comes...is a matter hidden from us.

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Chapter 6.--Of the Way to Commence the Catechetical Instruction, and of

the Narration of Facts from the History of the World's Creation on to

the Present Times of the Church.

10. But if it happens that his answer is to the effect that he has met

with some divine warning, or with some divine terror, prompting him to

become a Christian, this opens up the way most satisfactorily for a

commencement to our discourse, by suggesting the greatness of God's

interest in us. His thoughts, however, ought certainly to be turned

away from this line of things, whether miracles or dreams, and directed

to the more solid path and the surer oracles of the Scriptures; so that

he may also come to understand how mercifully that warning was

administered to him in advance, [1374] previous to his giving himself

to the Holy Scriptures. And assuredly it ought to be pointed out to

him, that the Lord Himself would neither thus have admonished him and

urged him on to become a Christian, and to be incorporated into the

Church, nor have taught him by such signs or revelations, had it not

been His will that, for his greater safety and security, he should

enter upon a pathway already prepared in the Holy Scriptures, in which

he should not seek after visible miracles, but learn the habit of

hoping for things invisible, and in which also he should receive

monitions not in sleep but in wakefulness. At this point the narration

ought now to be commenced, which should start with the fact that God

made all things very good, [1375] and which should be continued, as we

have said, on to the present times of the Church. This should be done

in such a manner as to give, for each of the affairs and events which

we relate, causes and reasons by which we may refer them severally to

that end of love from which neither the eye of the man who is occupied

in doing anything, nor that of the man who is engaged in speaking,

ought to be turned away. For if, even in handling the fables of the

poets, which are but fictitious creations and things devised for the

pleasure [1376] of minds whose food is found in trifles, those

grammarians who have the reputation and the name of being good do

nevertheless endeavor to bring them to bear upon some kind of (assumed)

use, although that use itself may be only something vain and grossly

bent upon the coarse nutriment of this world: [1377] how much more

careful does it become us to be, not to let those genuine verities

which we narrate, in consequence of any want of a well-considered

account of their causes, be accepted either with a gratification which

issues in no practical good, or, still less, with a cupidity which may

prove hurtful! At the same time, we are not to set forth these causes

in such a manner as to leave the proper course of our narration, and

let our heart and our tongue indulge in digressions into the knotty

questions of more intricate discussion. But the simple truth of the

explanation which we adduce [1378] ought to be like the gold which

binds together a row of gems, and yet does not interfere with the

choice symmetry of the ornament by any undue intrusion of itself.

[1379]

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[1374] Pr�rogata sit

[1375] Gen. i. 31

[1376] Reading ad voluptatem. But many mss. give ad voluntatem =

according to the inclination, etc.

[1377] Avidam sagin� soecularis

[1378] Reading veritas adhibitoe rationis, for which we also find

adhibita rationis = the applied truth, etc.; and adhibita rationi = the

truth applied to our explanation.

[1379] Non tamen ornamenti seriem ulla immoderatione perturbans

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Chapter 7.--Of the Exposition of the Resurrection, the Judgment, and

Other Subjects, Which Should Follow This Narration.

11. On the completion of this narration, the hope of the resurrection

should be set forth, and, so far as the capacity and strength of the

hearer will bear it, and so far also as the measure of time at our

disposal will allow, we ought to handle our arguments against the vain

scoffings of unbelievers on the subject of the resurrection of the

body, as well as on that of the future judgment, with its goodness in

relation to the good, its severity in relation to the evil, its truth

in relation to all. And after the penalties of the impious have thus

been declared with detestation and horror, then the kingdom of the

righteous and faithful, and that supernal city and its joy, should form

the next themes for our discourse. At this point, moreover, we ought to

equip and animate the weakness of man in withstanding temptations and

offenses, whether these emerge without or rise within the church

itself; without, as in opposition to Gentiles, or Jews, or heretics;

within, on the other hand, as in opposition to the chaff of the Lord's

threshing-floor. It is not meant, however, that we are to dispute

against each several type of perverse men, and that all their wrong

opinions are to be refuted by set arrays of argumentations: but, in a

manner suitable to a limited allowance of time, we ought to show how

all this was foretold, and to point out of what service temptations are

in the training of the faithful, and what relief [1380] there is in the

example of the patience of God, who has resolved to permit them even to

the end. But, again, while he is being furnished against these

(adversaries), whose perverse multitudes fill the churches so far as

bodily presence is concerned, the precepts of a Christian and honorable

manner of life should also be briefly and befittingly detailed at the

same time, to the intent that he may neither allow himself to be easily

led astray in this way, by any who are drunkards, covetous, fraudulent,

gamesters, adulterers, fornicators, lovers of public spectacles,

wearers of unholy charms, sorcerers, astrologers, or diviners

practising any sort of vain and wicked arts, and all other parties of a

similar character; nor to let himself fancy that any such course may be

followed with impunity on his part, simply because he sees many who are

called Christians loving these things, and engaging themselves with

them, and defending them, and recommending them, and actually

persuading others to their use. For as to the end which is appointed

for those who persist in such a mode of life, and as to the method in

which they are to be borne with in the church itself, out of which they

are destined to be separated in the end,--these are subjects in which

the learner ought to be instructed by means of the testimonies of the

divine books. He should also, however, be informed beforehand that he

will find in the church many good Christians, most genuine citizens of

the heavenly Jerusalem, if he sets about being such himself. And,

finally, he must be sedulously warned against letting his hope rest on

man. For it is not a matter that can be easily judged by man, what man

is righteous. And even were this a matter which could be easily done,

still the object with which the examples of righteous men are set

before us is not that we may be justified by them, but that, as we

imitate them, we may understand how we ourselves also are justified by

their Justifier. For the issue of this will be something which must

merit the highest approval,--namely this, that when the person who is

hearing us, or rather, who is hearing God by us, has begun to make some

progress in moral qualities and in knowledge, and to enter upon the way

of Christ with ardor, he will not be so bold as to ascribe the change

either to us or to himself; but he will love both himself and us, and

whatever other persons he loves as friends, in Him, and for His sake

who loved him when he was an enemy, in order that He might justify him

and make him a friend. And now that we have advanced thus far, I do not

think that you need any preceptor to tell you how you should discuss

matters briefly, when either your own time or that of those who are

hearing you is occupied; and how, on the other hand, you should

discourse at greater length when there is more time at your command.

For the very necessity of the case recommends this, apart from the

counsel of any adviser.

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[1380] Medicina

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Chapter 8.--Of the Method to Be Pursued in Catechising Those Who Have

Had a Liberal Education.

12. But there is another case which evidently must not be overlooked. I

mean the case of one coming to you to receive catchetical instruction

who has cultivated the field of liberal studies, who has already made

up his mind to be a Christian, and who has betaken himself to you for

the express purpose of becoming one. It can scarcely fail to be the

fact that a person of this character has already acquired a

considerable knowledge of our Scriptures and literature; and, furnished

with this, he may have come now simply with the view of being made a

partaker in the sacraments. For it is customary with men of this class

to inquire carefully into all things, not at the very time when they

are made Christians, but previous to that, and thus early also to

communicate and reason, with any whom they can reach, on the subject of

the feelings of their own minds. Consequently a brief method of

procedure should be adopted with these, so as not to inculcate on them,

in an odious fashion [1381] things which they know already, but to pass

over these with a light and modest touch. Thus we should say how we

believe that they are already familiar with this and the other subject,

and that we therefore simply reckon up in a cursory manner all those

facts which require to be formally urged upon the attention of the

uninstructed and unlearned. And we should endeavor so to proceed, that,

supposing this man of culture to have been previously acquainted with

any one of our themes, he may not hear it now as from a teacher; and

that, in the event of his being still ignorant of any of them, he may

yet learn the same while we are going over the things with which we

understand him to be already familiar. Moreover, it is certainly not

without advantage to interrogate the man himself as to the means by

which he was induced to desire to be a Christian; so that, if you

discover him to have been moved to that decision by books, whether they

be the canonical writings or the compositions of literary men worth the

studying, [1382] you may say something about these at the outset,

expressing your approbation of them in a manner which may suit the

distinct merits which they severally possess, in respect of canonical

authority and of skillfully applied diligence on the part of these

expounders; [1383] and, in the case of the canonical Scriptures,

commending above all the most salutary modesty (of language) displayed

alongside their wonderful loftiness (of subject); while, in those other

productions you notice, in accordance with the characteristic faculty

of each several writer, a style of a more sonorous and, as it were more

rounded eloquence adapted to minds that are prouder, and, by reason

thereof weaker. We should certainly also elicit from him some account

of himself, so that he may give us to understand what writer he chiefly

perused, and with what books he was more familiarly conversant, as

these were the means of moving him to wish to be associated with the

church. And when he has given us this information, then if the said

books are known to us, or if we have at least ecclesiastical report as

our warrant for taking them to have been written by some catholic man

of note, we should joyfully express our approbation. But if, on the

other hand, he has fallen upon the productions of some heretic and in

ignorance, it may be, has retained in his mind anything which [1384]

the true faith condemns, and yet supposes it to be catholic doctrine,

then we must set ourselves sedulously to teach him, bringing before him

(in its rightful superiority) the authority of the Church universal,

and of other most learned men reputed both for their disputations and

for their writings in (the cause of) its truth. [1385] At the same

time, it is to be admitted that even those who have departed this life

as genuine catholics, and have left to posterity some Christian

writings, in certain passages of their small works, either in

consequence of their failing to be understood, or (as the way is with

human infirmity) because they lack ability to pierce into the deeper

mysteries with the eye of the mind, and in (pursuing) the semblance of

what is true, wander from the truth itself, have proved an occasion to

the presumptuous and audacious for constructing and generating some

heresy. This, however, is not to be wondered at, when, even in the

instance of the canonical writings themselves, where all things have

been expressed in the soundest manner, we see how it has happened,--not

indeed through merely taking certain passages in a sense different from

that which the writer had in view or which is consistent with the truth

itself, (for if this were all, who would not gladly pardon human

infirmity, when it exhibits a readiness to accept correction?), but by

persistently defending, with the bitterest vehemence and in impudent

arrogance, opinions which they have taken up in perversity and

error,--many have given birth to many pernicious dogmas at the cost of

rending the unity of the (Christian) communion. All these subjects we

should discuss in modest conference with the individual who makes his

approach to the society of the Christian people, not in the character

of an uneducated man, [1386] as they say, but in that of one who has

passed through a finished culture and training in the books of the

learned. And in enjoining him to guard against the errors of

presumption, we should assume only so much authority as that humility

of his, which induced him to come to us, is now felt to admit of. As to

other things, moreover, in accordance with the rules of saving

doctrine, which require to be narrated or discussed, whether they be

matters relating to the faith, or questions bearing on the moral life,

or others dealing with temptations, all these should be gone through in

the manner which I have indicated, and ought therein to be referred to

the more excellent way (already noticed). [1387]

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[1381] Reading odiose, for which several mss. give otiose = idly.

[1382] Utilium tractatorum

[1383] Reading exponentium. Various codices give ad exponendum = in

expounding.

[1384] Reading quod, with Marriott. But if we accept quod with the

Benedictine editors, the sense will = and in ignorance it may be that

the true faith condemns them, has retained them in his mind.

[1385] Aliorumque doctissimorum hominum et disputationibus et

scriptionibus in ejus veritate florentium. It may also be = bringing

before him the authority of the Church universal, as well as both the

disputations and the writings of other most learned men well reputed in

(the cause of) its truth.

[1386] Idiota

[1387] 1 Cor. xii. 31. See also above, � 9.

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Chapter 9.--Of the Method in Which Grammarians and Professional

Speakers are to Be Dealt with.

13. There are also some who come from the commonest schools of the

grammarians and professional speakers, whom you may not venture to

reckon either among the uneducated or among those very learned classes

whose minds have been exercised in questions of real magnitude. When

such persons, therefore, who appear to be superior to the rest of

mankind, so far as the art of speaking is concerned, approach you with

the view of becoming Christians, it will be your duty in your

communications with them, in a higher degree than in your dealings with

those other illiterate hearers, to make it plain that they are to be

diligently admonished to clothe themselves with Christian humility, and

learn not to despise individuals whom they may discover keeping

themselves free from vices of conduct more carefully than from faults

of language; and also that they ought not to presume so much as to

compare with a pure heart the practised tongue which they were

accustomed even to put in preference. But above all, such persons

should be taught to listen to the divine Scriptures, so that they may

neither deem solid eloquence to be mean, merely because it is not

inflated, nor suppose that the words or deeds of men, of which we read

the accounts in those books, involved and covered as they are in carnal

wrappings, [1388] are not to be drawn forth and unfolded with a view to

an (adequate) understanding of them, but are to be taken merely

according to the sound of the letter. And as to this same matter of the

utility of the hidden meaning, the existence of which is the reason why

they are called also mysteries, the power wielded by these intricacies

of enigmatical utterances in the way of sharpening our love for the

truth, and shaking off the torpor of weariness, is a thing which the

persons in question must have made good to them by actual experience,

when some subject which failed to move them when it was placed baldly

before them, has its significance elicited by the detailed working out

of an allegorical sense. For it is in the highest degree useful to such

men to come to know how ideas are to be preferred to words, just as the

soul is preferred to the body. And from this, too, it follows that they

ought to have the desire to listen to discourses remarkable for their

truth, rather than to those which are notable for their eloquence; just

as they ought to be anxious to have friends distinguished for their

wisdom, rather than those whose chief merit is their beauty. They

should also understand that there is no voice for the ears of God save

the affection of the soul. For thus they will not act the mocker if

they happen to observe any of the prelates and ministers of the Church

either calling upon God in language marked by barbarisms and solecisms,

or failing in understanding correctly the very words which they are

pronouncing, and making confused pauses. [1389] It is not meant, of

course, that such faults are not to be corrected, so that the people

may say "Amen" to something which they plainly understand; but what is

intended is, that such things should be piously borne with by those who

have come to understand how, as in the forum it is in the sound, so in

the church it is in the desire that the grace of speech resides. [1390]

Therefore that of the forum may sometimes be called good speech, but

never gracious speech. [1391] Moreover, with respect to the sacrament

which they are about to receive, it is enough for the more intelligent

simply to hear what the thing signifies. But with those of slower

intellect, it will be necessary to adopt a somewhat more detailed

explanation, together with the use of similitudes, to prevent them from

despising what they see.

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[1388] Carnalibus integumentis involuta atque operta

[1389] Or = confusing the sense by false pauses: perturbateque

distinguere.

[1390] Ut sono in foro, sic voto in ecclesia benedici

[1391] Bona dictio, nunquam tamen benedictio

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Chapter 10.--Of the Attainment of Cheerfulness in the Duty of

Catechising, and of Various Causes Producing Weariness in the

Catechumen.

14. At this point you perhaps desiderate some example of the kind of

discourse intended, so that I may show you by an actual instance how

the things which I have recommended are to be done. This indeed I shall

do, so far as by God's help I shall be able. But before proceeding to

that, it is my duty, in consistency with what I have promised, to speak

of the acquisition of the cheerfulness (to which I have alluded). For

as regards the matter of the rules in accordance with which your

discourse should be set forth, in the case of the catechetical

instruction of a person who comes with the express view of being made a

Christian, I have already made good, as far as has appeared sufficient,

the promise which I made. And surely I am under no obligation at the

same time to do myself in this volume that which I enjoin as the right

thing to be done. Consequently, if I do that, it will have the value of

an overplus. But how can the overplus be super-added by me before I

have filled up the measure of what is due? Besides, one thing which I

have heard you make the subject of your complaint above all others, is

the fact that your discourse seemed to yourself to be poor and

spiritless when you were instructing any one in the Christian name. Now

this, I know, results not so much from want of matter to say, with

which I am well aware you are sufficiently provided and furnished, or

from poverty of speech itself, as rather from weariness of mind. And

that may spring either from the cause of which I have already spoken,

namely, the fact that our intelligence is better pleased and more

thoroughly arrested by that which we perceive in silence in the mind,

and that we have no inclination to have our attention called off from

it to a noise of words coming far short of representing it; or from the

circumstance that even when discourse is pleasant, we have more delight

in hearing or reading things which have been expressed in a superior

manner, and which are set forth without any care or anxiety on our

part, than in putting together, with a view to the comprehension of

others, words suddenly conceived, and leaving it an uncertain issue, on

the one hand, whether such terms occur to us as adequately represent

the sense, and on the other, whether they be accepted in such a manner

as to profit; or yet again, from the consideration that, in consequence

of their being now thoroughly familiar to ourselves, and no longer

necessary to our own advancement, it becomes irksome to us to be

recurring very frequently to those matters which are urged upon the

uninstructed, and our mind, as being by this time pretty well matured,

moves with no manner of pleasure in the circle of subjects so

well-worn, and, as it were, so childish. A sense of weariness is also

induced upon the speaker when he has a hearer who remains unmoved,

either in that he is actually not stirred by any feeling, or in that he

does not indicate by any motion of the body that he understands or that

he is pleased with what is said. [1392] Not that it is a becoming

disposition in us to be greedy of the praises of men, but that the

things which we minister are of God; and the more we love those to whom

we discourse, the more desirous are we that they should be pleased with

the matters which are held forth for their salvation: so that if we do

not succeed in this, we are pained, and we are weakened, and become

broken-spirited in the midst of our course, as if we were wasting our

efforts to no purpose. Sometimes, too, when we are drawn off from some

matter which we are desirous to go on with, and the transaction of

which was a pleasure to us, or appeared to be more than usually

needful, and when we are compelled, either by the command of a person

whom we are unwilling to offend, or by the importunity of some parties

that we find it impossible to get rid of, to instruct any one

catechetically, in such circumstances we approach a duty for which

great calmness is indispensable with minds already perturbed, and

grieving at once that we are not permitted to keep that order which we

desire to observe in our actions, and that we cannot possibly be

competent for all things; and thus out of very heaviness our discourse

as it advances is less of an attraction, because, starting from the

arid soil of dejection, it goes on less flowingly. Sometimes, too,

sadness has taken possession of our heart in consequence of some

offense or other, and at that very time we are addressed thus: "Come,

speak with this person; he desires to become a Christian." For they who

thus address us do it in ignorance of the hidden trouble which is

consuming us within. So it happens that, if they are not the persons to

whom it befits us to open up our feelings, we undertake with no sense

of pleasure what they desire; and then, certainly, the discourse will

be languid and unenjoyable which is transmitted through the agitated

and fuming channel of a heart in that condition. Consequently, seeing

there are so many causes serving to cloud the calm serenity of our

minds, in accordance with God's will we must seek remedies for them,

such as may bring us relief from these feelings of heaviness, and help

us to rejoice in fervor of spirit, and to be jocund in the tranquility

of a good work. "For God loveth a cheerful giver." [1393]

15. Now if the cause of our sadness lies in the circumstance that our

hearer does not apprehend what we mean, so that we have to come down in

a certain fashion from the elevation of our own conceptions, and are

under the necessity of dwelling long in the tedious processes of

syllables which come far beneath the standard of our ideas, and have

anxiously to consider how that which we ourselves take in with a most

rapid draught of mental apprehension is to be given forth by the mouth

of flesh in the long and perplexed intricacies of its method of

enunciation; and if the great dissimilarity thus felt (between our

utterance and our thought) makes it distasteful to us to speak, and a

pleasure to us to keep silence, then let us ponder what has been set

before us by Him who has "showed us an example that we should follow

His steps." [1394] For however much our articulate speech may differ

from the vivacity of our intelligence, much greater is the difference

of the flesh of mortality from the equality of God. And, neverless,

"although He was in the same form, He emptied Himself, taking the form

of a servant,"--and so on down to the words "the death of the cross."

[1395] What is the explanation of this but that He made Himself "weak

to the weak, in order that He might gain the weak?" [1396] Listen to

His follower as he expresses himself also in another place to this

effect: "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether

we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth

us, because we thus judge that He died for all." [1397] And how,

indeed, should one be ready to be spent for their souls, [1398] if he

should find it irksome to him to bend himself to their ears? For this

reason, therefore, He became a little child in the midst of us, (and)

like a nurse cherishing her children. [1399] For is it a pleasure to

lisp shortened and broken words, unless love invites us? And yet men

desire to have infants to whom they have to do that kind of service;

and it is a sweeter thing to a mother to put small morsels of

masticated food into her little son's mouth, than to eat up and devour

larger pieces herself. In like manner, accordingly, let not the thought

of the hen [1400] recede from your heart, who covers her tender brood

with her drooping feathers, and with broken voice calls her chirping

young ones to her, while they that turn away from her fostering wings

in their pride become a prey to birds. For if intelligence brings

delights in its purest recesses, it should also be a delight to us to

have an intelligent understanding of the manner in which charity, the

more complaisantly it descends to the lowest objects, finds its way

back, with all the greater vigor to those that are most secret, along

the course of a good conscience which witnesses that it has sought

nothing from those to whom it has descended except their everlasting

salvation.

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[1392] The sentence, "either in that he is actually not stirred...by

what is said," is omitted in many mss.

[1393] 2 Cor. ix. 7

[1394] 1 Pet. ii. 21

[1395] Phil. ii. 17. The form in which the quotation is given above,

with the omission of the intermediate clauses, is due probably to the

copyist, and not to Augustin himself. The words left out are given thus

in the Serm. XLVII on Ezekiel xxxiv.: "Being made in the likeness of

men, and being found in the fashion of a man: He humbled Himself, being

made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." [See R.V.]

[1396] Cf. 1 Cor. ix. 22

[1397] 2 Cor. v. 13, 14

[1398] Cf. 2 Cor. xii. 15

[1399] Cf. 1 Thess. ii. 7

[1400] Illius gallinoe,--in reference to Matt. xxiii. 37

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Chapter 11.--Of the Remedy for the Second Source of Weariness.

16. If, however, it is rather our desire to read or hear such things as

are already prepared for our use and expressed in a superior style, and

if the consequence is that we feel it irksome to put together, at the

time and with an uncertain issue, the terms of discourse on our own

side, then, provided only that our mind does not wander off from the

truth of the facts themselves, it is an easy matter for the hearer, if

he is offended by anything in our language, to come to see in that very

circumstance how little value should be set, supposing the subject

itself to be rightly understood, upon the mere fact that there may have

been some imperfection or some inaccuracy in the literal expressions,

which were employed indeed simply with the view of securing a correct

apprehension of the subject-matter. But if the bent of human infirmity

has wandered off from the truth of the facts themselves,--although in

the catechetical instruction of the unlearned, where we have to keep by

the most beaten track, that cannot occur very readily,--still, lest

haply it should turn out that our hearer finds cause of offence even in

this direction, we ought not to deem this to have come upon us in any

other way than as the issue of God's own wish to put us to the test

with respect to our readiness to receive correction in calmness of

mind, so as not to rush headlong, in the course of a still greater

error, into the defense of our error. But if, again, no one has told us

of it, and if the thing has altogether escaped our own notice, as well

as the observation of our hearers, then there is nothing to grieve

over, provided only the same thing does not occur a second time. For

the most part, however, when we recall what we have said, we ourselves

discover something to find fault with, and are ignorant of the manner

in which it was received when it was uttered; and so when charity is

fervent within us, we are the more vexed if the thing, while really

false, has been received with unquestioning acceptance. This being the

case, then, whenever an opportunity occurs, as we have been finding

fault with ourselves in silence, we ought in like manner to see to it

that those persons be also set right on the subject in a considerate

method, who have fallen into some sort of error, not by the words of

God, but plainly by those used by us. If, on the other hand, there are

any who, blinded by insensate spite, rejoice that we have committed a

mistake, whisperers as they are, and slanderers, and "hateful to God,"

[1401] such characters should afford us matter for the exercise of

patience with pity, inasmuch as also the "patience of God leadeth them

to repentance." [1402] For what is more detestable, and what more

likely to "treasure up wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the

righteous judgment of God," [1403] than to rejoice, after the evil

likeness and pattern of the devil, in the evil of another? At times,

too, even when all is correctly and truly spoken, either something

which has not been understood, or something which, as being opposed to

the idea and wont of an old error, seems harsh in its very novelty,

offends and disturbs the hearer. But if this becomes apparent, and if

the person shows himself capable of being set right, he should be set

right without any delay by the use of abundance of authorities and

reasons. On the other hand, if the offense is tacit and hidden, the

medicine of God is the effective remedy for it. And if, again, the

person starts back and declines to be cured, we should comfort

ourselves with that example of our Lord, who, when men were offended at

His word, and shrank from it as a hard saying, addressed Himself at the

same time to those who had remained, in these terms, "Will ye also go

away?" [1404] For it ought to be retained as a thoroughly "fixed and

immovable" position in our heart, that Jerusalem which is in captivity

is set free from the Babylon of this world when the times have run

their course, and that none belonging to her shall perish: for whoever

may perish was not of her. "For 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." [1405] If we

ponder these things, and call upon the Lord to come into our heart, we

shall be less apprehensive of the uncertain issues of our discourse,

consequent on the uncertain feelings of our hearers; and the very

endurance of vexations in the cause of a work of mercy will also be

something pleasant to us, if we seek not our own glory in the same. For

then is a work truly good, when the aim of the doer gets its impetus

from charity, [1406] and, as if returning to its own place, rests again

in charity. Moreover, the reading which delights us, or any listening

to an eloquence superior to our own, the effect of which is to make us

inclined to set a greater value upon it than upon the discourse which

we ourselves have to deliver, and so to lead us to speak with a

reluctant or tedious utterance, will come upon us in a happier spirit,

and will be found to be more enjoyable after labor. Then, too, with a

stronger confidence shall we pray to God to speak to us as we wish, if

we cheerfully submit to let Him speak by us as we are able. Thus is it

brought about that all things come together for good to them that love

God. [1407]

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[1401] Cf. Rom. i. 30

[1402] Rom. ii. 4. [See R.V.]

[1403] Rom. ii. 5

[1404] John vi. 67

[1405] 2 Tim. ii. 19

[1406] A caritate jaculatur

[1407] Concurrant in bonum Rom. viii. 28

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Chapter 12.--Of the Remedy for the Third Source of Weariness.

17. Once more, however, we often feel it very wearisome to go over

repeatedly matters which are thoroughly familiar, and adapted (rather)

to children. If this is the case with us, then we should endeavor to

meet them with a brother's, a father's, and a mother's love; and, if we

are once united with them thus in heart, to us no less than to them

will these things seem new. For so great is the power of a sympathetic

disposition of mind, that, as they are affected while we are speaking,

and we are affected while they are learning, we have our dwelling in

each other; and thus, at one and the same time, they as it were in us

speak what they hear, and we in them learn after a certain fashion what

we teach. Is it not a common occurrence with us, that when we show to

persons, who have never seen them, certain spacious and beautiful

tracts, either in cities or in fields, which we have been in the habit

of passing by without any sense of pleasure, simply because we have

become so accustomed to the sight of them, we find our own enjoyment

renewed in their enjoyment of the novelty of the scene? And this is so

much the more our experience in proportion to the intimacy of our

friendship with them; because, just as we are in them in virtue of the

bond of love, in the same degree do things become new to us which

previously were old. But if we ourselves have made any considerable

progress in the contemplative study of things, it is not our wish that

those whom we love should simply be gratified and astonished as they

gaze upon the works of men's hands; but it becomes our wish to lift

them to (the contemplation of) the very skill [1408] or wisdom of their

author, and from this to (see them) rise to the admiration and praise

of the all-creating God, with whom [1409] is the most fruitful end of

love. How much more, then, ought we to be delighted when men come to us

with the purpose already formed of obtaining the knowledge of God

Himself, with a view to (the knowledge of) whom all things should be

learned which are to be learned! And how ought we to feel ourselves

renewed in their newness (of experience), so that if our ordinary

preaching is somewhat frigid, it may rise to fresh warmth under (the

stimulus of) their extraordinary hearing! There is also this additional

consideration to help us in the attainment of gladness, namely, that we

ponder and bear in mind out of what death of error the man is passing

over into the life of faith. And if we walk through streets which are

most familiar to us, with a beneficent cheerfulness, when we happen to

be pointing out the way to some individual who had been in distress in

consequence of missing his direction, how much more should be the

alacrity of spirit, and how much greater the joy with which, in the

matter of saving doctrine, we ought to traverse again and again even

those tracks which, so far as we are ourselves concerned, there is no

need to open up any more; seeing that we are leading a miserable soul,

and one worn out with the devious courses of this world, through the

paths of peace, at the command of Him who made that peace [1410] good

to us!

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[1408] Some editions read arcem = stronghold, instead of artem.

[1409] Or = wherein: ubi.

[1410] Instead of eam, the reading ea = those things, also occurs.

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Chapter 13.--Of the Remedy for the Fourth Source of Weariness.

18. But in good truth it is a serious demand to make upon us, to

continue discoursing on to the set limit when we fail to see our hearer

in any degree moved; whether it be that, under the restraints of the

awe of religion, he has not the boldness to signify his approval by

voice or by any movement of his body, or that he is kept back by the

modesty proper to man, [1411] or that he does not understand our

sayings, or that he counts them of no value. Since, then, this must be

a matter of uncertainty to us, as we cannot discern his mind, it

becomes our duty in our discourse to make trial of all things which may

be of any avail in stirring him up and drawing him forth as it were

from his place of concealment. For that sort of fear which is

excessive, and which obstructs the declaration of his judgment, ought

to be dispelled by the force of kindly exhortation; and by bringing

before him the consideration of our brotherly affinity, we should

temper his reverence for us; and by questioning him, we should

ascertain whether he understands what is addressed to him; and we

should impart to him a sense of confidence, so that he may give free

expression to any objection which suggests itself to him. We should at

the same time ask him whether he has already listened to such themes on

some previous occasion, and whether perchance they fail to move him now

in consequence of their being to him like things well known and

commonplace. And we ought to shape our course in accordance with his

answer, so as either to speak in a simpler style and with greater

detail of explanation, or to refute some antagonistic opinion, or,

instead of attempting any more diffuse exposition of the subjects which

are known to him, to give a brief summary of these, and to select some

of those matters which are handled in a mystical manner in the holy

books, and especially in the historical narrative, the unfolding and

setting forth of which may make our addresses more attractive. But if

the man is of a very sluggish disposition, and if he is senseless, and

without anything in common with all such sources of pleasure, then we

must simply bear with him in a compassionate spirit; and, after briefly

going over other points, we ought to impress upon him, in a manner

calculated to inspire him with awe, the truths which are most

indispensable on the subject of the unity of the Catholic Church,

[1412] on that of temptation, on that of a Christian conversation in

view of the future judgment; and we ought rather to address ourselves

to God for him than address much to him concerning God.

19. It is likewise a frequent occurrence that one who at first listened

to us with all readiness, becomes exhausted either by the effort of

hearing or by standing, and now no longer commends what is said, but

gapes and yawns, and even unwillingly exhibits a disposition to depart.

When we observe that, it becomes our duty to refresh his mind by saying

something seasoned with an honest cheerfulness and adapted to the

matter which is being discussed, or something of a very wonderful and

amazing order, or even, it may be, something of a painful and mournful

nature. Whatever we thus say may be all the better if it affects

himself more immediately, so that the quick sense of self-concern may

keep his attention on the alert. At the same time, however, it should

not be of the kind to offend his spirit of reverence by any harshness

attaching to it; but it should be of a nature fitted rather to

conciliate him by the friendliness which it breathes. Or else, we

should relieve him by accommodating him with a seat, although

unquestionably matters will be better ordered if from the outset,

whenever that can be done with propriety, he sits and listens. And

indeed in certain of the churches beyond the sea, with a far more

considerate regard to the fitness of things, not only do the prelates

sit when they address the people, but they also themselves put down

seats for the people, lest any person of enfeebled strength should

become exhausted by standing, and thus have his mind diverted from the

most wholesome purport (of the discourse), or even be under the

necessity of departing. And yet it is one thing if it be simply some

one out of a great multitude who withdraws in order to recruit his

strength, he being also already under the obligations which result from

participation in the sacraments; and it is quite another thing if the

person withdrawing is one (inasmuch as it is usually the case in these

circumstances that the man is unavoidably urged to that course by the

fear that he should even fall, overcome by internal weakness) who has

to be initiated in the first sacraments; for a person in this position

is at once restrained by the sense of shame from stating the reason of

his going, and not permitted to stand through the force of his

weakness. This I speak from experience. For this was the case with a

certain individual, a man from the country, when I was instructing him

catechetically: and from his instance I have learned that this kind of

thing is carefully to be guarded against. For who can endure our

arrogance when we fail to make men who are our brethren, [1413] or even

those who are not yet in that relation to us (for our solicitude then

should be all the greater to get them to become our brethren), to be

seated in our presence, seeing that even a woman sat as she listened to

our Lord Himself, in whose service the angels stand alert? [1414] Of

course if the address is to be but short, or if the place is not well

adapted for sitting, they should listen standing. But that should be

the case only when there are many hearers, and when they are not to be

formally admitted [1415] at the time. For when the audience consists

only of one or two, or a few, who have come with the express purpose of

being made Christians, there is a risk in speaking to them standing.

Nevertheless, supposing that we have once begun in that manner, we

ought at least, whenever we observe signs of weariness on the part of

the hearer, to offer him the liberty of being seated; nay more, we

should urge him by all means to sit down, and we ought to drop some

remark calculated at once to refresh him and to banish from his mind

any anxiety which may have chanced to break in upon him and draw off

his attention. For inasmuch as the reasons why he remains silent and

declines to listen cannot be certainly known to us, now that he is

seated we may speak to some extent against the incidence of thoughts

about worldly affairs, delivering ourselves either in the cheerful

spirit to which I have already adverted, or in a serious vein; so that,

if these are the particular anxieties which have occupied his mind,

they may be made to give way as if indicted by name: while, on the

other hand, supposing them not to be the special causes (of the loss of

interest), and supposing him to be simply worn out with listening, his

attention will be relieved of the pressure of weariness when we address

to him some unexpected and extraordinary strain of remark on these

subjects, in the mode of which I have spoken, as if they were the

particular anxieties,--for indeed we are simply ignorant (of the true

causes). But let the remark thus made be short, especially considering

that it is thrown in out of order, lest the very medicine even increase

the malady of weariness which we desire to relieve; and, at the same

time, we should go on rapidly with what remains, and promise and

present the prospect of a conclusion nearer than was looked for.

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[1411] Or = by the reverence which he feels for the man: humana

verecundia.

[1412] The text gives simply Catholic�. One ms. has Catholic� fidei =

the Catholic faith. But it is most natural to supply Ecclesi�.

[1413] Instead of viros fratres, some mss. read veros fratres = our

genuine brethren.

[1414] Luke x. 39

[1415] Initiandi = initiated.

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Chapter 14.--Of the Remedy Against the Fifth and Sixth Sources of

Weariness.

20. If, again, your spirit has been broken by the necessity of giving

up some other employment, on which, as the more requisite, you were now

bent; and if the sadness caused by that constraint makes you catechise

in no pleasant mood, you ought to ponder the fact that, excepting that

we know it to be our duty, in all our dealings with men, to act in a

merciful manner, and in the exercise of the sincerest charity,--with

this one exception, I say, it is quite uncertain to us what is the more

profitable thing for us to do, and what the more opportune thing for us

either to pass by for a time or altogether to omit. For inasmuch as we

know not how the merits of men, on whose behalf we are acting, stand

with God, the question as to what is expedient for them at a certain

time is something which, instead of being able to comprehend, we can

rather only surmise, without the aid of any (clear) inferences, or (at

best) with the slenderest and the most uncertain. Therefore we ought

certainly to dispose the matters with which we have to deal according

to our intelligence; and then, if we prove able to carry them out in

the manner upon which we have resolved, we should rejoice, not indeed

that it was our will, but that it was God's will, that they should thus

be accomplished. But if anything unavoidable happens, by which the

disposition thus proposed by us is interfered with, we should bend

ourselves to it readily, lest we be broken; so that the very

disposition of affairs which God has preferred to ours may also be made

our own. For it is more in accordance with propriety that we should

follow His will than that He should follow ours. Besides, as regards

this order in the doing of things, which we wish to keep in accordance

with our own judgment, surely that course is to be approved of in which

objects that are superior have the precedence. Why then are we

aggrieved that the precedence over men should be held by the Lord God

in His vast superiority to us men, so that in the said love which we

entertain for our own order, we should thus (exhibit the disposition

to) despise order? For "no one orders for the better" what he has to

do, except the man who is rather ready to leave undone what he is

prohibited from doing by the divine power, than desirous of doing that

which he meditates in his own human cogitations. For "there are many

devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord stands

for ever." [1416]

21. But if our mind is agitated by some cause of offense, so as not to

be capable of delivering a discourse of a calm and enjoyable strain,

our charity towards those for whom Christ died, desiring to redeem them

by the price of His own blood from the death of the errors of this

world, ought to be so great, that the very circumstance of intelligence

being brought us in our sadness, regarding the advent of some person

who longs to become a Christian, ought to be enough to cheer us and

dissipate that heaviness of spirit, just as the delights of gain are

wont to soften the pain of losses. For we are not (fairly) oppressed by

the offense of any individual, unless it be that of the man whom we

either perceive or believe to be perishing himself, or to be the

occasion of the undoing of some weak one. Accordingly, one who comes to

us with the view of being formally admitted, in that we cherish the

hope of his ability to go forward, should wipe away the sorrow caused

by one who fails us. For even if the dread that our proselyte may

become the child of hell [1417] comes into our thoughts, as, there are

many such before our eyes, from whom those offenses arise by which we

are distressed, this ought to operate, not in the way of keeping us

back, but rather in the way of stimulating us and spurring us on. And

in the same measure we ought to admonish him whom we are instructing to

be on his guard against imitating those who are Christians only in name

and not in very truth, and to take care not to suffer himself to be so

moved by their numbers as either to be desirous of following them, or

to be reluctant to follow Christ on their account, and either to be

unwilling to be in the Church of God, where they are, or to wish to be

there in such a character as they bear. And somehow or other, in

admonitions of this sort, that address is the more glowing to which a

present sense of grief supplies the fuel; so that instead of being

duller, we utter with greater fire and vehemence under such feelings

things which, in times of greater ease, we would give forth in a colder

and less energetic manner. And this should make us rejoice that an

opportunity is afforded us under which the emotions of our mind pass

not away without yielding some fruit.

22. If, however, grief has taken possession of us on account of

something in which we ourselves have erred or sinned, we should bear in

mind not only that a "broken spirit is a sacrifice to God," [1418] but

also the saying, "Like as water quencheth fire, so alms sin;" [1419]

and again, "I will have mercy," saith He, "rather than sacrifice."

[1420] Therefore, as in the event of our being in peril from fire we

would certainly run to the water in order to get the fire extinguished,

and we would be grateful if any person were to offer it in the

immediate vicinity; so, if some flame of sin has risen from our own

stack, [1421] and if we are troubled on that account, when an

opportunity has been given for a most merciful work, we should rejoice

in it, as if a fountain were offered us in order that by it the

conflagration which had burst forth might be extinguished. Unless haply

we are foolish enough to think that we ought to be readier in running

with bread, wherewith we may fill the belly of a hungry man, than with

the word of God, wherewith we may instruct the mind of the man who

feeds on it. [1422] There is this also to consider, namely, that if it

would only be of advantage to us to do this thing, and entail no

disadvantage to leave it undone, we might despise a remedy offered in

an unhappy fashion in the time of peril with a view to the safety, not

now of a neighbor, but of ourselves. But when from the mouth of the

Lord this so threatening sentence is heard, "Thou wicked and slothful

servant, thou oughtest to give my money to the exchangers," [1423] what

madness, I pray thee, is it thus, seeing that our sin pains us, to be

minded to sin again, by refusing to give the Lord's money to one who

desires it and asks it! When these and such like considerations and

reflections have succeeded in dispelling the darkness of weary

feelings, the bent of mind is rendered apt for the duty of catechising,

so that that is received in a pleasant manner which breaks forth

vigorously and cheerfully from the rich vein of charity. For these

things indeed which are uttered here are spoken, not so much by me to

you, as rather to us all by that very "love which is shed abroad in our

hearts by the Holy Spirit that is given to us." [1424]

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[1416] Prov. xix. 21

[1417] Matt. xxiii. 15

[1418] Ps. li. 17

[1419] Ecclus. iii. 30

[1420] Hos. vi. 6

[1421] F�no= hay.

[1422] Reading istud edentis; for which some editions give studentis =

of one who studies it.

[1423] Matt. xxv. 26, 27

[1424] Rom. v. 5

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Chapter 15.--Of the Method in Which Our Address Should Be Adapted to

Different Classes of Hearers.

23. But now, perhaps, you also demand of me as a debt that which,

previous to the promise which I made, I was under no obligation to

give, namely, that I should not count it burdensome to unfold some sort

of example of the discourse intended, and to set it before you for your

study, just as if I were myself engaged in catechising some individual.

Before I do that, however, I wish you to keep in mind the fact that the

mental effort is of one kind in the case of a person who dictates, with

a future reader in his view, and that it is of quite another kind in

the case of a person who speaks with a present hearer to whom to direct

his attention. And further, it is to be remembered that, in this latter

instance in particular, the effort is of one kind when one is

admonishing in private, and when there is no other person at hand to

pronounce judgment on us; whereas it is of a different order when one

is conveying any instruction in public, and when there stands around

him an audience of persons holding dissimilar opinions; and again, that

in this exercise of teaching, the effort will be of one sort when only

a single individual is being instructed, while all the rest listen,

like persons judging or attesting things well known to them, and that

it will be different when all those who are present wait for what we

have to deliver to them; and once more, that, in this same instance,

the effort will be one thing when all are seated, as it were, in

private conference with a view to engaging in some discussion, and that

it will be quite another thing when the people sit silent and intent on

giving their attention to some single speaker who is to address them

from a higher position. It will likewise make a considerable

difference, even when we are discoursing in that style, whether there

are few present or many, whether they are learned or unlearned, or made

up of both classes combined; whether they are city-bred or rustics, or

both the one and the other together; or whether, again, they are a

people composed of all orders of men in due proportion. For it is

impossible but that they will affect in different ways the person who

has to speak to them and discourse with them, and that the address

which is delivered will both bear certain features, as it were,

expressive of the feelings of the mind from which it proceeds, and also

influence the hearers in different ways, in accordance with that same

difference (in the speaker's disposition), while at the same time the

hearers themselves will influence one another in different ways by the

simple force of their presence with each other. But as we are dealing

at present with the matter of the instruction of the unlearned, I am a

witness to you, as regards my own experience, that I find myself

variously moved, according as I see before me, for the purposes of

catechetical instruction, a highly educated man, a dull fellow, a

citizen, a foreigner, a rich man, a poor man, a private individual, a

man of honors, a person occupying some position of authority, an

individual of this or the other nation, of this or the other age or

sex, one proceeding from this or the other sect, from this or the other

common error,--and ever in accordance with the difference of my

feelings does my discourse itself at once set out, go on, and reach its

end. And inasmuch as, although the same charity is due to all, yet the

same medicine is not to be administered to all, in like manner charity

itself travails with some, is made weak together with others; is at

pains to edify some, tremblingly apprehends being an offense to others;

bends to some, lifts itself erect to others; is gentle to some, severe

to others; to none an enemy, to all a mother. And when one, who has not

gone through the kind of experience to which I refer in the same spirit

of charity, sees us attaining, in virtue of some gift which has been

conferred upon us, and which carries the power of pleasing, a certain

repute of an eulogistic nature in the mouth of the multitude, he counts

us happy on that account. But may God, into whose cognizance the

"groaning of them that are bound enters," [1425] look upon our

humility, and our labor, and forgive us all our sins. [1426] Wherefore,

if anything in us has so far pleased you as to make you desirous of

hearing from us some remarks on the subject of the form of discourse

which you ought to follow, [1427] you should acquire a more thorough

understanding of the matter by contemplating us, and listening to us

when we are actually engaged with these topics, than by a perusal when

we are only dictating them.

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[1425] Ps. lxxix. 11

[1426] Cf. Ps. xxv. 18

[1427] Ut aliquam observationem sermonis tui a nobis audire qu�reres

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Chapter 16.--A Specimen of a Catechetical Address; And First, the Case

of a Catechumen with Worthy Views.

24. Nevertheless, however that may be, let us here suppose that some

one has come to us who desires to be made a Christian, and who belongs

indeed to the order of private persons, [1428] and yet not to the class

of rustics, but to that of the city-bred, such as those whom you cannot

fail to come across in numbers in Carthage. Let us also suppose that,

on being asked whether the inducement leading him to desire to be a

Christian is any advantage looked for in the present life, or the rest

which is hoped for after this life, he has answered that his inducement

has been the rest that is yet to come. Then perchance such a person

might be instructed by us in some such strain of address as the

following: "Thanks be to God, my brother; cordially do I wish you joy,

and I am glad on your account that, amid all the storms of this world,

which are at once so great and so dangerous, you have bethought

yourself of some true and certain security. For even in this life men

go in quest of rest and security at the cost of heavy labors, but they

fail to find such in consequence of their wicked lusts. For their

thought is to find rest in things which are unquiet, and which endure

not. And these objects, inasmuch as they are withdrawn from them and

pass away in the course of time, agitate them by fears and griefs, and

suffer them not to enjoy tranquillity. For if it be that a man seeks to

find his rest in wealth, he is rendered proud rather than at ease. Do

we not see how many have lost their riches on a sudden,--how many, too,

have been undone by reason of them, either as they have been coveting

to possess them, or as they have been borne down and despoiled of them

by others more covetous than themselves? And even should they remain

with the man all his life long, and never leave their lover, yet would

he himself (have to) leave them at his death. For of what measure is

the life of man, even if he lives to old age? Or when men desire for

themselves old age, what else do they really desire but long infirmity?

So, too, with the honors of this world,--what are they but empty pride

and vanity, and peril of ruin? For holy Scripture speaks in this wise:

All flesh is grass, and the glory of man is as the flower of grass. The

grass withereth, the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the

Lord endureth for ever.' [1429] Consequently, if any man longs for true

rest and true felicity, he ought to lift his hope off things which are

mortal and transitory, and fix it on the word of the Lord; so that,

cleaving to that which endures for ever, he may himself together with

it endure for ever.

25. "There are also other men who neither crave to be rich nor go about

seeking the vain pomps of honors, but who nevertheless are minded to

find their pleasure and rest in dainty meats, and in fornications, and

in those theatres and spectacles which are at their disposal in great

cities for nothing. But it fares with these, too, in the same way; or

they waste their small means in luxury, and subsequently, under

pressure of want, break out into thefts and burglaries, and at times

even into highway robberies, and so they are suddenly filled with fears

both numerous and great; and men who a little before were singing in

the house of revelry, are now dreaming of the sorrows of the prison.

Moreover, in their eager devotion to the public spectacles, they come

to resemble demons, as they incite men by their cries to wound each

other, and instigate those who have done them no hurt to engage in

furious contests with each other, while they seek to please an insane

people. And if they perceive any such to be peaceably disposed, they

straightway hate them and persecute them, and raise an outcry, asking

that they should be beaten with clubs, as if they had been in collusion

to cheat them; and this iniquity they force even the judge, who is the

(appointed) avenger of iniquities, to perpetrate. On the other hand, if

they observe such men exerting themselves in horrid hostilities against

each other, whether they be those who are called sintoe, [1430] or

theatrical actors and players, [1431] or charioteers, or

hunters,--those wretched men whom they engage in conflicts and

struggles, not only men with men, but even men with beasts,--then the

fiercer the fury with which they perceive these unhappy creatures rage

against each other, the better they like them, and the greater the

enjoyment they have in them; and they favor them when thus excited,

[1432] and by so favoring them they excite them all the more, the

spectators themselves striving more madly with each other, as they

espouse the cause of different combatants, than is the case even with

those very men whose madness they madly provoke, while at the same time

they also long to be spectators of the same in their mad frenzy. [1433]

How then can that mind keep the soundness of peace which feeds on

strifes and contentions? For just as is the food which is received,

such is the health which results. In fine, although mad pleasures are

no pleasures, nevertheless let these things be taken as they are, and

it still remains the case that, whatever their nature may be, and

whatever the measure of enjoyment yielded by the boasts of riches, and

the inflation of honors, and the spendthrift pleasures of the taverns,

and the contests of the theatres, and the impurity of fornications, and

the pruriency of the baths, they are all things of which one little

fever deprives us, while, even from those who still survive, it takes

away the whole false happiness of their life. Then there remains only a

void and wounded conscience, destined to apprehend that God as a Judge

whom it refused to have as a Father, and destined also to find a severe

Lord in Him whom it scorned to seek and love as a tender Father. But

thou, inasmuch as thou seekest that true rest which is promised to

Christians after this life, wilt taste the same sweet and pleasant rest

even here among the bitterest troubles of this life, if thou continuest

to love the commandments of Him who hath promised the same. For quickly

wilt thou feel that the fruits of righteousness are sweeter than those

of unrighteousness, and that a man finds a more genuine and pleasurable

joy in the possession of a good conscience in the midst of troubles

than in that of an evil conscience in the midst of delights. For thou

hast not come to be united to the Church of God with the idea of

seeking from it any temporal advantage.

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[1428] Idiotarum

[1429] Isa. xl. 6, 8; 1 Pet. i. 24, 25

[1430] Reading sive sintoe qui appellantur, for which there occur such

varieties of reading as these: sint athlet� qui appellantur = those who

are called athletes; or sint �qui appellantur; or simply sint qui

appellantur = whatever name they bear, whether actors, etc. The term

sint�, borrowed from the Greek Sintai = devourers, spoilers, may have

been a word in common use among the Africans, as the Benedictine

editors suggest, for designating some sort of coarse characters.

[1431] Thymelici, strictly = the musicians belonging to the thymele, or

orchestra.

[1432] Reading incitatis favent, for which some mss. give incitati =

excited themselves, they favor them; and others have incitantes =

exciting them, they favor them.

[1433] Compare a passage in the Confessions, vi. 13.

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Chapter 17.--The Specimen of Catechetical Discourse Continued, in

Reference Specially to the Reproval of False Aims on the Catechumen's

Part.

26. "For there are some whose reason for desiring to become Christians

is either that they may gain the favor of men from whom they look for

temporal advantages, or that they are reluctant to offend those whom

they fear. But these are reprobate; and although the church bears them

for a time, as the threshing-floor bears the chaff until the period of

winnowing, yet if they fail to amend and begin to be Christians in

sincerity in view of the everlasting rest which is to come, they will

be separated from it in the end. And let not such flatter themselves,

because it is possible for them to be in the threshing-floor along with

the grain of God. For they will not be together with that in the barn,

but are destined for the fire, which is their due. There are also

others of better hope indeed, but nevertheless in no inferior danger. I

mean those who now fear God, and mock not the Christian name, neither

enter the church of God with an assumed heart, but still look for their

felicity in this life, expecting to have more felicity in earthly

things than those enjoy who refuse to worship God. And the consequence

of this false anticipation is, that when they see some wicked and

impious men strongly established and excelling in this worldly

prosperity, while they themselves either possess it in a smaller degree

or miss it altogether, they are troubled with the thought that they are

serving God without reason, and so they readily fall away from the

faith.

27. "But as to the man who has in view that everlasting blessedness and

perpetual rest which is promised as the lot destined for the saints

after this life, and who desires to become a Christian, in order that

he may not pass into eternal fire with the devil, but enter into the

eternal kingdom together with Christ, [1434] such an one is truly a

Christian; (and he will be) on his guard in every temptation, so that

he may neither be corrupted by prosperity nor be utterly broken in

spirit by adversity, but remain at once modest and temperate when the

good things of earth abound with him, and brave and patient when

tribulations overtake him. A person of this character will also advance

in attainments until he comes to that disposition of mind which will

make him love God more than he fears hell; so that even were God to say

to him, Avail yourself of carnal pleasures for ever, and sin as much as

you are able, and you shall neither die nor be sent into hell, but you

will only not be with me, he would be terribly dismayed, and would

altogether abstain from sinning, not now (simply) with the purpose of

not falling into that of which he was wont to be afraid, but with the

wish not to offend Him whom he so greatly loves: in whom alone also

there is the rest which eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard,

neither hath it entered into the heart of man (to conceive),--the rest

which God hath prepared for them that love Him. [1435]

28. "Now, on the subject of this rest Scripture is significant, and

refrains not to speak, when it tells us how at the beginning of the

world, and at the time when God made heaven and earth and all things

which are in them, He worked during six days, and rested on the seventh

day. [1436] For it was in the power of the Almighty to make all things

even in one moment of time. For He had not labored in the view that He

might enjoy (a needful) rest, since indeed "He spake, and they were

made; He commanded, and they were created;" [1437] but that He might

signify how, after six ages of this world, in a seventh age, as on the

seventh day, He will rest in His saints; inasmuch as these same saints

shall rest also in Him after all the good works in which they have

served Him,--which He Himself, indeed, works in them, who calls them,

and instructs them, and puts away the offenses that are past, and

justifies the man who previously was ungodly. For as, when by His gift

they work that which is good, He is Himself rightly said to work (that

in them), so, when they rest in Him, He is rightly said to rest

Himself. For, as regards Himself, He seeks no cessation, because He

feels no labor. Moreover He made all things by His Word; and His Word

is Christ Himself, in whom the angels and all those purest spirits of

heaven rest in holy silence. Man, however in that he fell by sin, has

lost the rest which he possessed in His divinity, and receives it again

(now) in His humanity; and for this purpose He became man, and was born

of a woman, at the seasonable time at which He Himself knew it behoved

it so to be fulfilled. And from the flesh assuredly He could not

sustain any contamination, being Himself rather destined to purify the

flesh. Of His future coming the ancient saints, in the revelation of

the Spirit, had knowledge, and prophesied. And thus were they saved by

believing that He was to come, even as we are saved by believing that

He has come. Hence ought we to love God who has so loved us as to have

sent His only Son, in order that He might endue Himself with the

lowliness [1438] of our mortality, and die both at the hands of sinners

and on behalf of sinners. For even in times of old, and in the opening

ages, the depth of this mystery ceases not to be prefigured and

prophetically announced.

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[1434] Cf. Matt. xxv. 34, 41

[1435] 1 Cor. ii. 9

[1436] Gen. ii. 1-3

[1437] Ps. cxlviii. 5

[1438] Humanitate, = humanity, also occurs instead of humilitate.

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Chapter 18.--Of What is to Be Believed on the Subject of the Creation

of Man and Other Objects.

29. "Whereas, then, the omnipotent God, who is also good and just and

merciful, who made all things,--whether they be great or small, whether

they be highest or lowest, whether they be things which are seen, such

as are the heavens and the earth and the sea, and in the heavens, in

particular, the sun and the moon and other luminaries, and in the earth

and the sea, again, trees and shrubs and animals each after their kind,

and all bodies celestial or terrestrial alike, or whether they be

things which are not seen, such as are those spirits whereby bodies are

animated and endowed with life,--made also man after His own image, in

order that, as He Himself, in virtue of His omnipotence, presides over

universal creation, so man, in virtue of that intelligence of his by

which he comes to know even his Creator and worships Him, might preside

over all the living creatures of earth: Whereas, too, he made the woman

to be an helpmeet for him: not for carnal concupiscence,--since,

indeed, they had not corruptible bodies at that period, before the

punishment of sin invaded them in the form of mortality,--but for this

purpose, that the man might at once have glory of the woman in so far

as he went before her to God, and present in himself an example to her

for imitation in holiness and piety, even as he himself was to be the

glory of God in so far as he followed his wisdom:

30. "Therefore did he place them in a certain locality of perpetual

blessedness, which the Scripture designates Paradise: and he gave them

a commandment, on condition of not violating which they were to

continue for ever in that blessedness of immortality; while, on the

other hand, if they transgressed it, they were to sustain the penalties

of mortality. Now God knew beforehand that they would trangress it.

Nevertheless, in that He is the author and maker of everything good, He

chose rather to make them, as He also made the beasts, in order that He

might replenish the earth with the good things proper to earth. And

certainly man, even sinful man, is better than a beast. And the

commandment, which they were not to keep, He yet preferred to give

them, in order that they might be without excuse when He should begin

to vindicate Himself against them. For whatever man may have done, he

finds God worthy to be praised in all His doings: if he shall have

acted rightly, he finds Him worthy to be praised for the righteousness

of His rewards: if he shall have sinned, he finds Him worthy to be

praised for the righteousness of His punishments: if he shall have

confessed his sins and returned to an upright life, he finds Him worthy

to be praised for the mercy of His pardoning favors. Why, then, should

God not make man, although He foreknew that he would sin, when He might

crown him if he stood, and set him right if he fell, and help him if he

rose, Himself being always and everywhere glorious in goodness,

righteousness, and clemency? Above all, why should He not do so, since

He also foreknew this, namely, that from the race of that mortality

there would spring saints, who should not seek their own, but give

glory to their Creator; and who, obtaining deliverance from every

corruption by worshipping Him, should be counted worthy to live for

ever, and to live in blessedness with the holy angels? For He who gave

freedom of will to men, in order that they might worship God not of

slavish necessity but with ingenuous inclination, gave it also to the

angels; and hence neither did the angel, who, in company with other

spirits who were his satellites, forsook in pride the obedience of God

and became the devil, do any hurt to God, but to himself. For God

knoweth how to dispose of souls [1439] that leave Him, and out of their

righteous misery to furnish the inferior sections of His creatures with

the most appropriate and befitting laws of His wonderful dispensation.

Consequently, neither did the devil in any manner harm God, whether in

falling himself, or in seducing man to death; nor did man himself in

any degree impair the truth, or power, or blessedness [1440] of His

Maker, in that, when his partner was seduced by the devil, he of his

own deliberate inclination consented unto her in the doing of that

which God had forbidden. For by the most righteous laws of God all were

condemned, God Himself being glorious in the equity of retribution,

while they were shamed through the degradation of punishment: to the

end that man, when he turned away from his Creator, should be overcome

by the devil and made his subject, and that the devil might be set

before man as an enemy to be conquered, when he turned again to his

Creator; so that whosoever should consent unto the devil even to the

end, might go with him into eternal punishments; whereas those who

should humble themselves to God, and by His grace overcome the devil,

might be counted worthy of eternal rewards.

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[1439] Rather "spirits." See the correction made in the Retractations,

ii. 14, as given above in the Introductory Notice.

[1440] The beatitatem is omitted by several mss.

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Chapter 19.--Of the Co-Existence of Good and Evil in the Church, and

Their Final Separation.

31. "Neither ought we to be moved by the consideration that many

consent unto the devil, and few follow God; for the grain, too, in

comparison with the chaff, has greatly the defect in number. But even

as the husbandman knows what to do with the mighty heap of chaff, so

the multitude of sinners is nothing to God, who knows what to do with

them, so as not to let the administration of His kingdom be disordered

and dishonored in any part. Nor is the devil to be supposed to have

proved victorious for the mere reason of his drawing away with him more

than the few by whom he may be overcome. In this way there are two

communities--one of the ungodly, and another of the holy--which are

carried down from the beginning of the human race even to the end of

the world, which are at present commingled in respect of bodies, but

separated in respect of wills, and which, moreover, are destined to be

separated also in respect of bodily presence in the day of judgment.

For all men who love pride and temporal power with vain elation and

pomp of arrogance, and all spirits who set their affections on such

things and seek their own glory in the subjection of men, are bound

fast together in one association; nay, even although they frequently

fight against each other on account of these things, they are

nevertheless precipitated by the like weight of lust into the same

abyss, and are united with each other by similarity of manners and

merits. And, again, all men and all spirits who humbly seek the glory

of God and not their own, and who follow Him in piety, belong to one

fellowship. And, notwithstanding this, God is most merciful and patient

with ungodly men, and offers them a place for penitence and amendment.

32. "For with respect also to the fact that He destroyed all men in the

flood, with the exception of one righteous man together with his house,

whom He willed to be saved in the ark, He knew indeed that they would

not amend themselves; yet, nevertheless, as the building of the ark

went on for the space of a hundred years, the wrath of God which was to

come upon them was certainly preached to them: [1441] and if they only

would have turned to God, He would have spared them, as at a later

period He spared the city of Nineveh when it repented, after He had

announced to it, by means of a prophet, the destruction that was about

to overtake it. [1442] Thus, moreover, God acts, granting a space for

repentance even to those who He knows will persist in wickedness, in

order that He may exercise and instruct our patience by His own

example; whereby also we may know how greatly it befits us to bear with

the evil in long-suffering, when we know not what manner of men they

will prove hereafter, seeing that He, whose cognizance nothing that is

yet to be escapes, spares them and suffers them to live. Under the

sacramental sign of the flood, however, in which the righteous were

rescued by the wood, there was also a fore-announcement of the Church

which was to be, which Christ, its King and God, has raised on high; by

the mystery of His cross, in safety from the submersion of this world.

Moreover, God was not ignorant of the fact that, even of those who had

been saved in the ark, there would be born wicked men, who would cover

the face of the earth a second time with iniquities. But, nevertheless,

He both gave them a pattern of the future judgment, and fore-announced

the deliverance of the holy by the mystery of the wood. For even after

these things wickedness did not cease to sprout forth again through

pride, and lusts, and illicit impieties, when men, forsaking their

Creator, not only fell to the (standard of the) creature which God

made, so as to worship instead of God that which God made, but even

bowed their souls to the works of the hands of men and to the

contrivances of craftsmen, wherein a more shameful triumph was to be

won over them by the devil, and by those evil spirits who rejoice in

finding themselves adored and reverenced in such false devices, while

they feed [1443] their own errors with the errors of men.

33. "But in truth there were not wanting in those times righteous men

also of the kind to seek God piously and to overcome the pride of the

devil, citizens of that holy community, who were made whole by the

humiliation of Christ, which was then only destined to enter, but was

revealed to them by the Spirit. From among these, Abraham, a pious and

faithful servant of God, was chosen, in order that to him might be

shown the sacrament of the Son of God, so that thus, in virtue of the

imitation of his faith, all the faithful of all nations might be called

his children in the future. Of him was born a people, by whom the one

true God who made heaven and earth should be worshipped when all other

nations did service to idols and evil spirits. In that people, plainly,

the future Church was much more evidently prefigured. For in it there

was a carnal multitude that worshipped God with a view to visible

benefits. But in it there were also a few who thought of the future

rest, and looked longingly for the heavenly fatherland, to whom through

prophecy was revealed the coming humiliation of God in the person of

our King and Lord Jesus Christ, in order that they might be made whole

of all pride and arrogance through that faith. And with respect to

these saints who in point of time had precedence of the birth of the

Lord, not only their speech, but also their life, and their marriages,

and their children, and their doings, constituted a prophecy of this

time, at which the Church is being gathered together out of all nations

through faith in the passion of Christ. By the instrumentality of those

holy patriarchs and prophets this carnal people of Israel, who at a

later period were also called Jews, had ministered unto them at once

those visible benefits which they eagerly desired of the Lord in a

carnal manner, and those chastisements, in the form of bodily

punishments, which were intended to terrify them for the time, as was

befitting for their obstinacy. And in all these, nevertheless, there

were also spiritual mysteries signified, such as were meant to bear

upon Christ and the Church; of which Church those saints also were

members, although they existed in this life previous to the birth of

Christ, the Lord, according to the flesh. For this same Christ, the

only-begotten Son of God, the Word of the Father, equal and co-eternal

with the Father, by whom all things were made, was Himself also made

man for our sakes, in order that of the whole Church, as of His whole

body, He might be the Head. But just as when the whole man is in the

process of being born, although he may put the hand forth first in the

act of birth, yet is that hand joined and compacted together with the

whole body under the head, even as also among these same patriarchs

some were born [1444] with the hand put forth first as a sign of this

very thing: so all the saints who lived upon the earth previous to the

birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, although they were born antecedently,

were nevertheless united under the Head with that universal body of

which He is the Head.

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[1441] Gen. vi. 7

[1442] Jonah iii

[1443] Instead of pascunt the reading miscent, = mix, is also found.

[1444] Gen. xxv. 26, xxxviii. 27-30

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Chapter 20.--Of Israel's Bondage in Egypt, Their Deliverance, and Their

Passage Through the Red Sea.

34. "That people, then, having been brought down into Egypt, were in

bondage to the harshest of kings; and, taught by the most oppressive

labors, they sought their deliverer in God; and there was sent to them

one belonging to the people themselves, Moses, the holy servant of God,

who, in the might of God, terrified the impious nation of the Egyptians

in those days by great miracles, and led forth the people of God out of

that land through the Red Sea, where the water parted and opened up a

way for them as they crossed it, whereas, when the Egyptians pressed on

in pursuit, the waves returned to their channel and overwhelmed them,

so that they perished. Thus, then, just as the earth through the agency

of the flood was cleansed by the waters from the wickedness of the

sinners, who in those times were destroyed in their inundation, while

the righteous escaped by means of the wood; so the people of God, when

they went forth from Egypt, found a way through the waters by which

their enemies were devoured. Nor was the sacrament of the wood wanting

there. For Moses smote with his rod, in order that that miracle might

be effected. Both these are signs of holy baptism, by which the

faithful pass into the new life, while their sins are done away with

like enemies, and perish. But more clearly was the passion of Christ

prefigured in the case of that people, when they were commanded to slay

and eat the lamb, and to mark their door-posts with its blood, and to

celebrate this rite every year, and to designate it the Lord's

passover. For surely prophecy speaks with the utmost plainness of the

Lord Jesus Christ, when it says that "He was led as a lamb to the

slaughter." [1445] And with the sign of His passion and cross, thou art

this day to be marked on thy forehead, as on the door-post, and all

Christians are marked with the same.

35. "Thereafter this people was conducted through the wilderness for

forty years. They also received the law written by the finger of God,

under which name the Holy Spirit is signified, as it is declared with

the utmost plainness in the Gospel. For God is not defined [1446] by

the form of a body, neither are members and fingers to be thought of as

existent in Him in the way in which we see them in ourselves. But,

inasmuch as it is through the Holy Spirit that God's gifts are divided

to His saints, in order that, although they vary in their capacities,

they may nevertheless not lapse from the concord of charity, and

inasmuch as it is especially in the fingers that there appears a

certain kind of division, while nevertheless there is no separation

from unity, this may be the explanation of the phrase. But whether this

may be the case, or whatever other reason may be assigned for the Holy

Spirit being called the finger of God, we ought not at any rate to

think of the form of a human body when we hear this expression used.

The people in question, then, received the law written by the finger of

God, and that in good sooth on tables of stone, to signify the hardness

of their heart in that they were not to fulfill the law. For, as they

eagerly sought from the Lord gifts meant for the uses of the body, they

were held by carnal fear rather than by spiritual charity. But nothing

fulfills the law save charity. Consequently, they were burdened with

many visible sacraments, to the intent that they should feel the

pressure of the yoke of bondage in the observances of meats, and in the

sacrifices of animals, and in other rites innumerable; which things, at

the same time, were signs of spiritual matters relating to the Lord

Jesus Christ and to the Church; which, furthermore, at that time were

both understood by a few holy men to the effect of yielding the fruit

of salvation, and observed by them in accordance with the fitness of

the time, while by the multitude of carnal men they were observed only

and not understood.

36. "In this manner, then, through many varied signs of things to come,

which it would be tedious to enumerate in complete detail, and which we

now see in their fulfillment in the Church, that people were brought to

the land of promise, in which they were to reign in a temporal and

carnal way in accordance with their own longings: which earthly

kingdom, nevertheless, sustained the image of a spiritual kingdom.

There Jerusalem was founded, that most celebrated city of God, which,

while in bondage, served as a sign of the free city, which is called

the heavenly Jerusalem [1447] which latter term is a Hebrew word, and

signifies by interpretation the vision of peace.' The citizens thereof

are all sanctified men, who have been, who are, and who are yet to be;

and all sanctified spirits, even as many as are obedient to God with

pious devotion in the exalted regions of heaven, and imitate not the

impious pride of the devil and his angels. The King of this city is the

Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, by whom the highest angels are

governed, and at the same time the Word that took unto Himself human

nature, [1448] in order that by Him men also might be governed, who, in

His fellowship, shall reign all together in eternal peace. In the

service of prefiguring this King in that earthly kingdom of the people

of Israel, King David stood forth pre-eminent, [1449] of whose seed

according to the flesh that truest King was to come, to wit, our Lord

Jesus Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever.' [1450] In that

land of promise many things were done, which held good as figures of

the Christ who was to come, and of the Church, with which you will have

it in your power to acquaint yourself by degrees in the Holy Books.

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[1445] Isa. liii. 7

[1446] Or = circumscribed, definitus.

[1447] Cf. Gal. iv. 26

[1448] Hominem.

[1449] 1 Kings xi. 13

[1450] Rom. ix. 5

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Chapter 21.--Of the Babylonish Captivity, and the Things Signified

Thereby.

37. "Howbeit, after the lapse of some generations, another type was

presented, which bears very emphatically on the matter in hand. For

that city [1451] was brought into captivity, and a large section of the

people were carried off into Babylonia. Now, as Jerusalem signifies the

city and fellowship of the saints, so Babylonia signifies the city and

fellowship of the wicked, seeing that by interpretation it denotes

confusion. On the subject of these two cities, which have been running

their courses, mingling the one with the other, through all the changes

of time from the beginning of the human race, and which shall so move

on together until the end of the world, when they are destined to be

separated at the last judgment, we have spoken already a little ago.

[1452] That captivity, then, of the city of Jerusalem, and the people

thus carried into Babylonia in bondage, were ordained so to proceed by

the Lord, by the voice of Jeremiah, a prophet of that time. [1453] And

there appeared kings [1454] of Babylon, under whom they were in

slavery, who on occasion of the captivity of this people were so

wrought upon by certain miracles that they came to know the one true

God who founded universal creation, and worshipped Him, and commanded

that He should be worshipped. Moreover the people were ordered both to

pray for those by whom they were detained in captivity, and in their

peace to hope for peace, to the effect that they should beget children,

and build houses, and plant gardens and vineyards. [1455] But at the

end of seventy years, release from their captivity was promised to

them. [1456] All this, furthermore, signified in a figure that the

Church of Christ in all His saints, who are citizens of the heavenly

Jerusalem, would have to do service under the kings of this world. For

the doctrine of the apostles speaks also in this wise, that every soul

should be subject to the higher powers,' and that there should be

rendered all things to all men, tribute to whom tribute (is due),

custom to whom custom,' [1457] and all other things in like manner

which, without detriment to the worship of our God, we render to the

rulers in the constitution of human society: for the Lord Himself also,

in order to set before us an example of this sound doctrine, did not

deem it unworthy of Him to pay tribute [1458] on account of that human

individuality [1459] wherewith He was invested. Again, Christian

servants and good believers are also commanded to serve their temporal

masters in equanimity and faithfulness; [1460] whom they will hereafter

judge, if even on to the end they find them wicked, or with whom they

will hereafter reign in equality, if they too shall have been converted

to the true God. Still all are enjoined to be subject to the powers

that are of man and of earth, even until, at the end of the

predetermined time which the seventy years signify, the Church shall be

delivered from the confusion of this world, like as Jerusalem was to be

set free from the captivity in Babylonia. By occasion of that

captivity, however, the kings of earth too have themselves been led to

forsake the idols on account of which they were wont to persecute the

Christians, and have come to know, and now worship, the one true God

and Christ the Lord; and it is on their behalf that the Apostle Paul

enjoins prayer to be made, even although they should persecute the

Church. For he speaks in these terms: I entreat, therefore, that first

of all supplications, adorations, [1461] intercessions, and givings of

thanks be made for kings, for all men, and all that are in authority,

that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, with all godliness and

charity.' [1462] Accordingly peace has been given to the Church by

these same persons, although it be but of a temporal sort,--a temporal

quiet for the work of building houses after a spiritual fashion, and

planting gardens and vineyards. For witness your own case, too,--at

this very time we are engaged, by means of this discourse, in building

you up and planting you. And the like process is going on throughout

the whole circle of lands, in virtue of the peace allowed by Christian

kings, even as the same apostle thus expresses himself: Ye are God's

husbandry; ye are God's building.' [1463]

38. "And, indeed, after the lapse of the seventy years of which

Jeremiah had mystically prophesied, to the intent of prefiguring the

end of times, with a view still to the perfecting of that same figure,

no settled peace and liberty were conceded again to the Jews. Thus it

was that they were conquered subsequently by the Romans and made

tributary. From that period, in truth, at which they received the land

of promise and began to have kings, in order to preclude the

supposition that the promise of the Christ who was to be their

Liberator had met its complete fulfillment in the person of any one of

their kings, Christ was prophesied of with greater clearness in a

number of prophecies; not only by David himself in the book of Psalms,

but also by the rest of the great and holy prophets, even on to the

time of their conveyance into captivity in Babylonia; and in that same

captivity there were also prophets whose mission was to prophesy of the

coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Liberator of all. And after the

restoration of the temple, when the seventy years had passed, the Jews

sustained grievous oppressions and sufferings at the hands of the kings

of the Gentiles, fitted to make them understand that the Liberator was

not yet come, whom they failed to apprehend as one who was to effect

for them a spiritual deliverance, and whom they fondly longed for on

account of a carnal liberation.

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[1451] Or = community, civitas.

[1452] See Chapter xix.

[1453] Jer. xxv. 18, xxix. 1

[1454] Dan. ii. 47, iii. 29, vi. 26; 1 Esdr. ii. 7; Bel. 41

[1455] Jer. xxix. 4-7

[1456] Jer. xxv. 12

[1457] Rom. xiii. 1, 7

[1458] Matt. xvii. 27

[1459] Pro capite hominis, literally = "on" account of that head of

man, etc.

[1460] Eph. vi. 5

[1461] Instead of orationes; the better authenticated reading is

adorationes.

[1462] 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2

[1463] 1 Cor. iii. 9; cf. Jer. xxv. 12, xxix. 10

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Chapter 22.--Of the Six Ages of the World.

39. "Five ages of the world, accordingly, having been now completed

(there has entered the sixth). Of these ages the first is from the

beginning of the human race, that is, from Adam, who was the first man

that was made, down to Noah, who constructed the ark at the time of the

flood. [1464] Then the second extends from that period on to Abraham,

who was called [1465] the father indeed of all nations [1466] which

should follow the example of his faith, but who at the same time in the

way of natural descent from his own flesh was the father of the

destined people of the Jews; which people, previous to the entrance of

the Gentiles into the Christian faith, was the one people among all the

nations of all lands that worshipped the one true God: from which

people also Christ the Saviour was decreed to come according to the

flesh. For these turning-points [1467] of those two ages occupy an

eminent place in the ancient books. On the other hand, those of the

other three ages are also declared in the Gospel, [1468] where the

descent of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh is likewise

mentioned. For the third age extends from Abraham on to David the king;

the fourth from David on to that captivity whereby the people of God

passed over into Babylonia; and the fifth from that transmigration down

to the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. With His coming the sixth age

has entered on its process; so that now the spiritual grace, which in

previous times was known to a few patriarchs and prophets, may be made

manifest to all nations; to the intent that no man should worship God

but freely, [1469] fondly desiring of Him not the visible rewards of

His services and the happiness of this present life, but that eternal

life alone in which he is to enjoy God Himself: in order that in this

sixth age the mind of man may be renewed after the image of God, even

as on the sixth day man was made after the image of God. [1470] For

then, too, is the law fulfilled, when all that it has commanded is

done, not in the strong desire for things temporal, but in the love of

Him who has given the commandment. Who is there, moreover, who should

not be earnestly disposed to give the return of love to a God of

supreme righteousness and also of supreme mercy, who has first loved

men of the greatest unrighteousness and the loftiest pride, and that,

too, so deeply as to have sent in their behalf His only Son, by whom He

made all things, and who being made man, not by any change of Himself,

but by the assumption of human nature, was designed thus to become

capable not only of living with them, but also of dying at once for

them and by their hands?

40. "Thus, then, showing forth the New Testament of our everlasting

inheritance, wherein man was to be renewed by the grace of God and lead

a new life, that is, a spiritual life; and with the view of exhibiting

the first one as an old dispensation, wherein a carnal people acting

out the old man (with the exception of a few patriarchs and prophets,

who had understanding, and some hidden saints), and leading a carnal

life, desiderated carnal rewards at the hands of the Lord God, and

received in that fashion but the figures of spiritual blessings;--with

this intent, I say, the Lord Christ, when made man, despised all

earthly good things, in order that He might show us how these things

ought to be despised; and He endured all earthly ills which He was

inculcating as things needful to be endured; so that neither might our

happiness be sought for in the former class, nor our unhappiness be

apprehended in the latter. For being born of a mother who, although she

conceived without being touched by man and always remained thus

untouched, in virginity conceiving, in virginity bringing forth, in

virginity dying, had nevertheless been espoused to a handicraftsman, He

extinguished all the inflated pride of carnal nobility. Moreover, being

born in the city of Bethlehem, which among all the cities of Jud�a was

so insignificant that even in our own day it is designated a village,

He willed not that any one should glory in the exalted position of any

city of earth. He, too, whose are all things and by whom all things

were created, was made poor, in order that no one, while believing in

Him, might venture to boast himself in earthly riches. He refused to be

made by men a king, because He displayed the pathway of humility to

those unhappy ones whom pride had separated from Him; [1471] and yet

universal creation attests the fact of His everlasting kingdom. An

hungered was He who feeds all men; athirst was He by whom is created

whatsoever is drunk, and who in a spiritual manner is the bread of the

hungry and the fountain of the thirsty; in journeying on earth, wearied

was He who has made Himself the way for us into heaven; as like one

dumb and deaf in the presence of His revilers was He by whom the dumb

spoke and the deaf heard; bound was He who freed us from the bonds of

infirmities; scourged was He who expelled from the bodies of man the

scourges of all distresses; crucified was He who put an end to our

crucial pains; [1472] dead did He become who raised the dead. But He

also rose again, no more to die, so that no one should from Him learn

so to contemn death as if he were never to live again.

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[1464] Gen. vi. 22

[1465] Instead of dictus est the mss. give also electus est = was

chosen to be.

[1466] Gen. xvii. 4

[1467] articuli = articles.

[1468] Matt. i. 17

[1469] Gratis.

[1470] Gen. i. 27

[1471] Reading ab eo; for which some editions give ab ea = from that

humility.

[1472] There is a play in the words here: crucifixus est qui cruciatus

nostros finivit.

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Chapter 23.--Of the Mission of the Holy Ghost Fifty Days After Christ's

Resurrection.

41. "Thereafter, having confirmed the disciples, and having sojourned

with them forty days, He ascended up into heaven, as these same persons

were beholding Him. And on the completion of fifty days from His

resurrection He sent to them the Holy Spirit (for so He had promised),

by whose agency they were to have love shed abroad in their hearts,

[1473] to the end that they might be able to fulfill the law, not only

without the sense of its being burdensome, but even with a joyful mind.

This law was given to the Jews in the ten commandments, which they call

the Decalogue. And these commandments, again, are reduced to two,

namely that we should love God with all our heart, with all our soul,

with all our mind; and that we should love our neighbor as ourselves.

[1474] For that on these two precepts hang all the law and the

prophets, the Lord Himself has at once declared in the Gospel and shown

in His own example. For thus it was likewise in the instance of the

people of Israel, that from the day on which they first celebrated the

passover in a form, [1475] slaying and eating the sheep, with whose

blood their door-posts were marked for the securing of their safety,

[1476] --from this day, I repeat, the fiftieth day in succession was

completed, and then they received the law written by the finger of God,

[1477] under which phrase we have already stated that the Holy Spirit

is signified. [1478] And in the same manner, after the passion and

resurrection of the Lord, who is the true passover, the Holy Ghost was

sent personally to the disciples on the fiftieth day: not now, however,

by tables of stone significant of the hardness of their hearts; but,

when they were gathered together in one place at Jerusalem itself,

suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as if a violent blast were

being borne onwards, and there appeared to them tongues cloven like

fire, and they began to speak with tongues, in such a manner that all

those who had come to them recognized each his own language [1479] (for

in that city the Jews were in the habit of assembling from every

country wheresoever they had been scattered abroad, and had learned the

diverse tongues of diverse nations); and thereafter, preaching Christ

with all boldness, they wrought many signs in His name,--so much so,

that as Peter was passing by, his shadow touched a certain dead person,

and the man rose in life again. [1480]

42. "But when the Jews perceived so great signs to be wrought in the

name of Him, whom, partly through ill-will and partly in ignorance,

they crucified, some of them were provoked to persecute the apostles,

who were His preachers; while others, on the contrary, marvelling the

more at this very circumstance, that so great miracles were being

performed in the name of Him whom they had derided as one overborne and

conquered by themselves, repented, and were converted, so that

thousands of Jews believed on Him. For these parties were not bent now

on craving at the hand of God temporal benefits and an earthly kingdom,

neither did they look any more for Christ, the promised king, in a

carnal spirit; but they continued in immortal fashion to apprehend and

love Him, who in mortal fashion endured on their behalf at their own

hands sufferings so heavy, and imparted to them the gift of forgiveness

for all their sins, even down to the iniquity of His own blood, and by

the example of His own resurrection unfolded immortality as the object

which they should hope for and long for at His hands. Accordingly, now

mortifying the earthly cravings of the old man, and inflamed with the

new experience of the spiritual life, as the Lord had enjoined in the

Gospel, they sold all that they had, and laid the price of their

possessions at the feet of the apostles, in order that these might

distribute to every man according as each had need; and living in

Christian love harmoniously with each other, they did not affirm

anything to be their own, but they had all things in common, and were

one in soul and heart toward God. [1481] Afterwards these same persons

also themselves suffered persecution in their flesh at the hands of the

Jews, their carnal fellow-countrymen, and were dispersed abroad, to the

end that, in consequence of their dispersion, Christ should be preached

more extensively, and that they themselves at the same time should be

followers of the patience of their Lord. For He who in meekness had

endured them, [1482] enjoined them in meekness to endure for His sake.

43. "Among those same persecutors of the saints the Apostle Paul had

once also ranked; and he raged with eminent violence against the

Christians. But, subsequently, he became a believer and an apostle, and

was sent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, suffering (in that

ministry) things more grievous on behalf of the name of Christ than

were those which he had done against the name of Christ. Moreover, in

establishing churches throughout all the nations where he was sowing

the seed of the gospel, he was wont to give earnest injunction that, as

these converts (coming as they did from the worship of idols and

without experience in the worship of the one God) could not readily

serve God in the way of selling and distributing their possessions,

they should make offerings for the poor brethren among the saints who

were in the churches of Judea which had believed in Christ. In this

manner the doctrine of the apostle constituted some to be, as it were,

soldiers, and others to be, as it were, provincial tributaries, while

it set Christ in the centre of them like the corner-stone (in

accordance with what had been announced beforetime by the prophet),

[1483] in whom both parties, like walls advancing from different sides,

that is to say, from Jews and from Gentiles, might be joined together

in the affection of kinship. But at a later period heavier and more

frequent persecutions arose from the unbelieving Gentiles against the

Church of Christ, and day by day was fulfilled that prophetic word

which the Lord spake when He said, Behold, I send you as sheep in the

midst of wolves.' [1484]

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[1473] Cf. Rom. v. 5

[1474] Matt. xxii. 37-40

[1475] In imagine.

[1476] Ex. xii

[1477] Ex. xxxiv. 28

[1478] Luke xi. 20

[1479] Acts ii

[1480] The reference evidently is to Acts v. 15, where, however, it is

only the people's intention that is noticed, and that only in the

instance of the sick, and not of any individual actually dead.

[1481] Acts ii. 44, iv. 34

[1482] Adopting the Benedictine version, qui eos mansuetus passus

fuerat, and taking it as a parallel to Acts xiii. 18, Heb. xii. 3.

There is, however, great variety of reading here. Thus we find qui ante

eos, etc. = who had suffered in meekness before them: qui pro eis, etc.

= who had suffered in their stead: qui propter eos, etc. = who had

suffered on their account: and qui per eos, etc. = who had suffered

through them, etc. But the reading in the text appears best

authenticated.

[1483] Ps. cxviii. 22; Isa. xxviii. 16

[1484] Matt. x. 16

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Chapter 24.--Of the Church in Its Likeness to a Vine Sprouting and

Suffering Pruning.

44. "But that vine, which was spreading forth its fruitful shoots

throughout the circle of lands, according as had been prophesied with

regard to it, and as had been foretold by the Lord Himself, sprouted

all the more luxuriantly in proportion as it was watered with richer

streams of the blood of martyrs. And as these died in behalf of the

truth of the faith in countless numbers throughout all lands, even the

persecuting kingdoms themselves desisted, and were converted to the

knowledge and worship of Christ, with the neck of their pride broken.

Moreover it behoved that this same vine should be pruned in accordance

with the Lord's repeated predictions, [1485] and that the unfruitful

twigs should be cut out of it, by which heresies and schisms were

occasioned in various localities, under the name of Christ, on the part

of men who sought not His glory but their own; whose oppositions,

however, also served more and more to discipline the Church, and to

test and illustrate both its doctrine and its patience.

45. "All these things, then, we now perceive to be realized precisely

as we read of them in predictions uttered so long before the event. And

as the first Christians, inasmuch as they did not see these things

literally made good in their own day, were moved by miracles to believe

them; so as regards ourselves, inasmuch as all these things have now

been brought to pass exactly as we read of them in those books which

were written a long time previous to the fulfillment of the things in

question, wherein they were all announced as matters yet future, even

as they are now seen to be actually present, we are built up unto

faith, so that, enduring and persevering in the Lord, we believe

without any hesitation in the destined accomplishment even of those

things which still remain to be realized. For, indeed, in the same

Scriptures, tribulations yet to come are still read of, as well as the

final day of judgment itself, when all the citizens of these two states

shall receive their bodies again, and rise and give account of their

life before the judgment-seat of Christ. For He will come in the glory

of His power, who of old condescended to come in the lowliness of

humanity; and He will separate all the godly from the ungodly,--not

only from those who have utterly refused to believe in Him at all, but

also from those who have believed in Him to no purpose and without

fruit. To the one class He will give an eternal kingdom together with

Himself, while to the other He will award eternal punishment together

with the devil. But as no joy yielded by things temporal can be found

in any measure comparable to the joy of life eternal which the saints

are destined to attain, so no torment of temporal punishments can be

compared to the everlasting torments of the unrighteous.

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[1485] John xv. 2

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Chapter 25.--Of Constancy in the Faith of the Resurrection.

46. "Therefore, brother, confirm yourself in the name and help of Him

in whom you believe, so as to withstand the tongues of those who mock

at our faith, in whose case the devil speaks seductive words, bent

above all on making a mockery of the faith in a resurrection. But,

judging from your own history, [1486] believe that, seeing you have

been, you will also be hereafter, even as you perceive yourself now to

be, although previously you were not. For where was this great

structure of your body, and where this formation and compacted

connection of members a few years ago, before you were born, or even

before you were conceived in your mother's womb? Where, I repeat, was

then this structure and this stature of your body? Did it not come

forth to light from the hidden secrets of this creation, under the

invisible formative operations of the Lord God, and did it not rise to

its present magnitude and fashion by those fixed measures of increase

which come with the successive periods of life? [1487] Is it then in

any way a difficult thing for God, who also in a moment brings together

out of secrecy the masses of the clouds and veils the heavens in an

instant of time, to make this quantity of your body again what it was,

seeing that He was able to make it what formerly it was not? [1488]

Consequently, believe with a manful and unshaken spirit that all those

things which seem to be withdrawn from the eyes of men as if to perish,

are safe and exempt from loss in relation to the omnipotence of God,

who will restore them, without any delay or difficulty, when He is so

minded,--those of them at least, I should say, that are judged by His

justice to merit restoration; in order that men may give account of

their deeds in their very bodies in which they have done them; and that

in these they may be deemed worthy to receive either the exchange of

heavenly incorruption in accordance with the deserts of their piety, or

the corruptible condition of body [1489] in accordance with the deserts

of their wickedness,--and that, too, not a condition such as may be

done away with by death, but such as shall furnish material for

everlasting pains.

47. "Flee, therefore, by steadfast faith and good manners,--flee,

brother, those torments in which neither the torturers fail, nor do the

tortured die; to whom it is death without end, to be unable to die in

their pains. And be kindled with love and longing for the everlasting

life of the saints, in which neither will action be toilsome nor will

rest be indolent; in which the praise of God will be without

irksomeness and without defect; wherein there will be no weariness in

the mind, no exhaustion in the body; wherein, too, there shall be no

want, whether on your own part, so that you should crave for relief, or

on your neighbor's part, so that you should be in haste to carry relief

to him. God will be the whole enjoyment and satisfaction [1490] of that

holy city, which lives in Him and of Him, in wisdom and beatitude. For

as we hope and look for what has been promised by Him, we shall be made

equal to the angels of God, [1491] and together with them we shall

enjoy that Trinity now by sight, wherein at present we walk by faith.

[1492] For we believe that which we see not, in order that through

these very deserts of faith we may be counted worthy also to see that

which we believe, and to abide in it; to the intent that these

mysteries of the equality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

and the unity of this same Trinity, and the manner in which these three

subsistences are one God, need no more be uttered by us in words of

faith and sounding syllables, but may be drunk in in purest and most

burning contemplation in that silence.

48. "These things hold fixed in your heart, and call upon the God in

whom you believe, to defend you against the temptations of the devil;

and be careful, lest that adversary come stealthily upon you from a

strange quarter, who, as a most malevolent solace for his own

damnation, seeks others whose companionship he may obtain in that

damnation. For he is bold enough not only to tempt Christian people

through the instrumentality of those who hate the Christian name, or

are pained to see the world taken possession of by that name, and still

fondly desire to do service to idols and to the curious rites of evil

spirits, but at times he also attempts the same through the agency of

such men as we have mentioned a little ago, to wit, persons severed

from the unity of the Church, like the twigs which are lopped off when

the vine is pruned, who are called heretics or schismatics. Howbeit

sometimes also he makes the same effort by means of the Jews, seeking

to tempt and seduce believers by their instrumentality. Nevertheless,

what ought above all things to be guarded against is, that no

individual may suffer himself to be tempted and deceived by men who are

within the Catholic Church itself, and who are borne by it like the

chaff that is sustained against the time of its winnowing. For in being

patient toward such persons, God has this end in view, namely, to

exercise and confirm the faith and prudence of His elect by means of

the perverseness of these others while at the same time He also takes

account of the fact that many of their number make an advance, and are

converted to the doing of the good pleasure of God with a great

impetus, when led to take pity upon their own souls. [1493] For not all

treasure up for themselves, through the patience of God, wrath in the

day of the wrath of His just judgment; [1494] but many are brought by

the same patience of the Almighty to the most wholesome pain of

repentance. [1495] And until that is effected, they are made the means

of exercising not only the forbearance, but also the compassion of

those who are already holding by the right way. Accordingly, you will

have to witness many drunkards, covetous men, deceivers gamesters,

adulterers, fornicators, men who bind upon their persons sacrilegious

charms and others given up to sorcerers and astrologers, [1496] and

diviners practised in all kinds of impious arts. You will also have to

observe how those very crowds which fill the theatres on the festal

days of the pagans also fill the churches on the festal days of the

Christians. And when you see these things you will be tempted to

imitate them. Nay, why should I use the expression, you will see, in

reference to what you assuredly are acquainted with even already? For

you are not ignorant of the fact that many who are called Christians

engage in all these evil things which I have briefly mentioned. Neither

are you ignorant that at times, perchance, men whom you know to bear

the name of Christians are guilty of even more grievous offenses than

these. But if you have come with the notion that you may do such things

as in a secured position, you are greatly in error; neither will the

name of Christ be of any avail to you when He begins to judge in utmost

strictness, who also of old condescended in utmost mercy to come to

man's relief. For He Himself has foretold these things, and speaks to

this effect in the Gospel: Not every one that saith unto me, Lord,

Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the

will of my Father. Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, in

thy name we have eaten and drunken.' [1497] For all, therefore, who

persevere in such works the end is damnation. Consequently, when you

see many not only doing these things but also defending and

recommending them, keep yourself firmly by the law of God, and follow

not its willful transgressors. For it is not according to their mind,

but according to His [1498] truth that you will be judged.

49. "Associate with the good, whom you perceive to be at one with you

in loving your King. For there are many such for you to discover, if

you also begin to cultivate that character yourself. For if in the

public spectacles you wished to be in congenial company, and to attach

yourself closely [1499] to men who are united with you in a liking for

some charioteer, or some hunter, or some player or other, how much more

ought you to find pleasure in associating with those who are at one

with you in loving that God, with regard to whom no one that loves Him

shall ever have cause for the blush of shame, inasmuch as not only is

He Himself incapable of being overcome, but He will also render those

unconquerable who are affectionately disposed toward Him. At the same

time, not even on those same good men, who either anticipate you or

accompany you on the way to God, ought you to set your hope, seeing

that no more ought you to place it on yourself, however great may be

the progress you have made, but on Him who justifies both them and you,

and thus makes you what you are. For you are secure in God, because He

changes not; but in man no one prudently counts himself secure. But if

we ought to love those who are not righteous as yet, with the view that

they may be so, how much more warmly ought those to be loved who

already are righteous? At the same time, it is one thing to love man,

and another thing to set one's hope in man; and the difference is so

great, that God enjoins the one and forbids the other. Moreover, if you

have to sustain either any insults or any sufferings in the cause of

the name of Christ, and neither fall away from the faith nor decline

from the good way, [1500] you are certain to receive the greater

reward; whereas those who give way to the devil in such circumstances,

lose even the less reward. But be humble toward God, in order that He

may not permit you to be tempted beyond your strength."

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[1486] Sed ex te ipso crede. It may also = but, on your side, do you

believe.

[1487] Certisque �tatum incrementis, etc.

[1488] Reading sicut non erat; for which, however, cum non erat also

occurs = seeing He was able to make it when it was not.

[1489] Corruptibilem corporis conditionem. But corruptibilis also

occurs = the condition of a corruptible body.

[1490] Satietas. Some editions, however, give societas = the society.

[1491] Luke xx. 36

[1492] 2 Cor. v. 7

[1493] Ad placendum Deo miserati animas suas, etc. Instead of miserati

the reading miseranti also occurs = "to" the doing of the good pleasure

of the God who takes pity on their souls. The Benedictine editors

suggest that the whole clause is in reference to Ecclesiasticus xxx.

24, (23), which in the Latin runs thus: miserere anim� tu� placens Deo.

[1494] Rom. ii. 5

[1495] Cf. Rom. ii. 4

[1496] Mathematicis

[1497] Matt. vii. 21, 22

[1498] Or = its (i.e. the law's) truth.

[1499] Adopting nam si in spectaculis cum illis esse cupiebas et eis

inh�rere. Another, but less weightily supported reading, is, nam si in

spectaculis et vanitatibus insanorum certaminum illis cupiebas inh�rere

= for if in the public spectacles and vanities of mad struggles you

wish to attach yourself closely to men, etc.

[1500] Bona via. Another and well authenticated rendering is, bona vita

= the good life.

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Chapter 26.--Of the Formal Admission of the Catechumen, and of the

Signs Therein Made Use of.

50. At the conclusion of this address the person is to be asked whether

he believes these things and earnestly desires to observe them. And on

his replying to that effect then certainly he is to be solemnly signed

and dealt with in accordance with the custom of the Church. On the

subject of the sacrament, indeed, [1501] which he receives, it is first

to be well impressed upon his notice that the signs of divine things

are, it is true, things visible, but that the invisible things

themselves are also honored in them, and that that species, [1502]

which is then sanctified by the blessing, is therefore not to be

regarded merely in the way in which it is regarded in any common use.

And thereafter he ought to be told what is also signified by the form

of words to which he has listened, and what in him is seasoned [1503]

by that (spiritual grace) of which this material substance presents the

emblem. Next we should take occasion by that ceremony to admonish him

that, if he hears anything even in the Scriptures which may carry a

carnal sound, he should, even although he fails to understand it,

nevertheless believe that something spiritual is signified thereby,

which bears upon holiness of character and the future life. Moreover,

in this way he learns briefly that, whatever he may hear in the

canonical books of such a kind as to make him unable to refer it to the

love of eternity, and of truth, and of sanctity, and to the love of our

neighbor, he should believe that to have been spoken or done with a

figurative significance; and that, consequently, he should endeavor to

understand it in such a manner as to refer it to that twofold (duty of)

love. He should be further admonished, however, not to take the term

neighbor in a carnal sense, but to understand under it every one who

may ever be with him in that holy city, whether there already or not

yet apparent. And (he should finally be counselled) not to despair of

the amendment of any man whom he perceives to be living under the

patience of God for no other reason, as the apostle [1504] says, than

that he may be brought to repentance.

51. If this discourse, in which I have supposed myself to have been

teaching some uninstructed person in my presence, appears to you to be

too long, you are at liberty to expound these matters with greater

brevity. I do not think, however, that it ought to be longer than this.

At the same time, much depends on what the case itself, as it goes on,

may render advisable, and what the audience actually present shows

itself not only to bear, but also to desire. When, however, rapid

despatch is required, notice with what facility the whole matter admits

of being explained. Suppose once more that some one comes before us who

desires to be a Christian; and accordingly, suppose further that he has

been interrogated, and that he has returned the answer which we have

taken the former catechumen to have given; for, even should he decline

to make this reply, it must at least be said that he ought to have

given it;--then all that remains to be said to him should be put

together in the following manner:--

52. Of a truth, brother, that is great and true blessedness which is

promised to the saints in a future world. All visible things, on the

other hand, pass away, and all the pomp, and pleasure, and solicitude

[1505] of this world will perish, and (even now) they drag those who

love them along with them onward to destruction. The merciful God,

willing to deliver men from this destruction, that is to say, from

everlasting pains, if they should not prove enemies to themselves, and

if they should not withstand the mercy of their Creator, sent His

only-begotten Son, that is to say, His Word, equal with Himself, by

whom He made all things. And He, while abiding indeed in His divinity,

and neither receding from the Father nor being changed in anything, did

at the same time, by taking on Himself human nature, [1506] and

appearing to men in mortal flesh, come unto men; in order that, just as

death entered among the human race by one man, to wit, the first that

was made, that is to say, Adam, because he consented unto his wife when

she was seduced by the devil to the effect that they (both)

transgressed the commandment of God; even so by one man, Jesus Christ,

who is also God, the Son of God, all those who believe in Him might

have all their past sins done away with, and enter into eternal life.

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[1501] It has been supposed by the Benedictine editors that sane may be

a misreading for salis. Whether that be or be not the case, the

sacramentum intended here appears to be the sacramentum salis, in

reference to which Neander (Church History iii. p. 458, Bohn's

Translation) states that "in the North African Church the bishop gave

to those whom he received as competentes, while signing the cross over

them as a symbol of consecration, a portion of salt over which a

blessing had been pronounced. This was to signify the divine word

imparted to the candidates as the true salt for human nature." There is

an allusion to the same in the Confessions (i. 11), where Augustin

says, "Even from my mother's womb who greatly hoped in thee, I was

signed with the sign of His cross, and seasoned with His salt."

[1502] Speciem = kind, in reference to the outward and sensible sign of

the salt.

[1503] Adopting condiat, which unquestionably is the reading most

accordant with the figure of the sacramental salt here dealt with. Some

editions give condatur = what is hidden in it, i.e. in the said form of

words.

[1504] Rom. ii . 4

[1505] Curiositas

[1506] Hominem

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Chapter 27.--Of the Prophecies of the Old Testament in Their Visible

Fulfillment in the Church.

53. "For all those things, which at present you witness in the Church

of God, and which you see to be taking place under the name of Christ

throughout the whole world, were predicted long ages ago. And even as

we read of them, so also we now see them. And by means of these things

we are built up unto faith. Once of old there occurred a flood over the

whole earth, the object of which was that sinners might be destroyed.

And, nevertheless, those who escaped in the ark exhibited a sacramental

sign of the Church that was to be, which at present is floating on the

waves of the world, and is delivered from submersion by the wood of the

cross of Christ. It was predicted to Abraham, a faithful servant of

God, a single man, that of Him it was determined that a people should

be born who should worship one God in the midst of all other nations

which worshipped idols; and all things which were prophesied of as

destined to happen to that people have come to pass exactly as they

were foretold. Among that people Christ, the King of all saints and

their God, was also prophesied of as destined to come of the seed of

that same Abraham according to the flesh, which (flesh) He took unto

Himself, in order that all those also who became followers of His faith

might be sons of Abraham; and thus it has come to pass: Christ was born

of the Virgin Mary, who belonged to that race. It was foretold by the

prophets that He would suffer on the cross at the hands of that same

people of the Jews, of whose lineage, according to the flesh, He came;

and thus it has come to pass. It was foretold that He would rise again:

He has risen again; and, in accordance with these same predictions of

the prophets, He has ascended into heaven and has sent the Holy Spirit

to His disciples. It was foretold not only by the prophets, but also by

the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that His Church would exist throughout

the whole world, extended by the martyrdoms and sufferings of the

saints; and this was foretold at a time when as yet His name was at

once undeclared to the Gentiles, and made a subject of derision where

it was known; and, nevertheless, in the power of His miracles, whether

those which He wrought by His own hand or those which he effected by

means of His servants, as these things are being reported and believed,

we already see the fulfillment of that which was predicted, and behold

the very kings of the earth, who formerly were wont to persecute the

Christians, even now brought into subjection to the name of Christ. It

was also foretold that schisms and heresies would arise from His

Church, and that under His name they would seek their own glory instead

of Christ's, in such places as they might be able to command; and these

predictions have been realized.

54. "Will those things, then, which yet remain fail to come to pass? It

is manifest that, just as the former class of things which were

foretold have come to pass, so will these latter also come to pass. I

refer to all the tribulations of the righteous, which yet wait for

fulfillment, and to the day of judgment, which will separate all the

wicked from the righteous in the resurrection of the dead;--and not

only will it thus separate those wicked men who are outside the Church,

but also it will set apart for the fire, which is due to such, the

chaff of the Church itself, which must be borne with in utmost patience

on to the last winnowing. Moreover, they who deride the (doctrine of a)

resurrection, because they think that this flesh, inasmuch as it

becomes corrupt, cannot rise again, will certainly rise in the same

unto punishment, and God will make it plain to such, that He who was

able to form these bodies when as yet they were not, is able in a

moment to restore them as they were. But all the faithful who are

destined to reign with Christ shall rise with the same body in such

wise that they may also be counted worthy to be changed into angelic

incorruption; so that they may be made equal unto the angels of God,

even as the Lord Himself has promised; [1507] and that they may praise

Him without any failure and without any weariness, ever living in Him

and of Him, with such joy and blessedness as can be neither expressed

nor conceived by man.

55. "Believe these things, therefore, and be on your guard against

temptations (for the devil seeks for others who may be brought to

perish along with himself); so that not only may that adversary fail to

seduce you by the help of those who are without the Church, whether

they be pagans, or Jews, or heretics; but you yourself also may decline

to follow the example of those within the Catholic Church itself whom

you see leading an evil life, either indulging in excess in the

pleasures of the belly and the throat, or unchaste, or given up to the

vain and unlawful observances of curious superstitions, whether they be

addicted to (the inanities of) public spectacles, or charms, or

divinations of devils, [1508] or be living in the pomp and inflated

arrogance of covetousness and pride, or be pursuing any sort of life

which the law condemns and punishes. But rather connect yourself with

the good, whom you will easily find out, if you yourself were once

become of that character; so that you may unite with each other in

worshipping and loving God for His own sake; [1509] for He himself will

be our complete reward to the intent that we may enjoy His goodness and

beauty [1510] in that life. He is to be loved, however, not in the way

in which any object that is seen with the eyes is loved, but as wisdom

is loved, and truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and charity,

[1511] and whatever else may be mentioned as of kindred nature; and

further, with a love conformable to these things not as they are in

men, but as they are in the very fountain of incorruptible and

unchangeable wisdom. Whomsoever, therefore, you may observe to be

loving these things, attach yourself to them, so that through Christ,

who became man in order that He might be the Mediator between God and

men, you may be reconciled to God. But as regards the perverse, even if

they find their way within the walls of the Church, think not that they

will find their way into the kingdom of heaven; for in their own time

they will be set apart, if they have not altered to the better.

Consequently, follow the example of good men, bear with the wicked,

love all; forasmuch as you know not what he will be to-morrow who

to-day is evil. Howbeit, love not the unrighteousness of such; but love

the persons themselves with the express intent that they may apprehend

righteousness; for not only is the love of God enjoined upon us, but

also the love of our neighbor, on which two commandments hang all the

law and the prophets. [1512] And this is fulfilled by no one save the

man who has received the (other) gift, [1513] the Holy Spirit, who is

indeed equal with the Father and with the Son; for this same Trinity is

God; and on this God every hope ought to be placed. On man our hope

ought not to be placed, of whatsoever character he may be. For He, by

whom we are justified, is one thing; and they, together with whom we

are justified, are another. Moreover, it is not only by lusts that the

devil tempts, but also by the terrors of insults, and pains, and death

itself. But whatever a man shall have suffered on behalf of the name of

Christ, and for the sake of the hope of eternal life, and shall have

endured in constancy, (in accordance therewith) the greater reward

shall be given him; whereas, if he shall give way to the devil, he

shall be damned along with him. But works of mercy, conjoined with

pious humility, meet with this acknowledgment from God, to wit, that He

will not suffer His servants to be tempted more than they are able to

bear." [1514]

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[1507] Luke xx. 36

[1508] Remediorum aut divinationum diabolicarum. Some editions insert

sacrilegorum after remediorum = sacrilegious charms or divinations of

devils.

[1509] Gratis.

[1510] Cf. Zech. ix. 17

[1511] Many mss. omit the words: and holiness, and righteousness, and

charity.

[1512] Matt. xxii. 37, 39

[1513] One edition reads Dominum, the Lord, the Holy Spirit, etc.,

instead of donum.

[1514] 1 Cor. x. 13

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[1331] [The Oxford Library and H. de Romestin translate the title: On

Instructing the Unlearned.--P.S.]

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A Treatise on Faith and the Creed.

[De Fide Et Symbolo.]

in One Book.

Translated by

Rev. S. D. F. Salmond, D.D.,

Professor of Systematic Theology, Free Church College, Aberdeen.

[A discourse delivered before a council of the whole North African

Episcopate assembled at Hippo-Regius.]

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Introductory Notice.

The occasion and date of the composition of this treatise are indicated

in a statement which Augustin makes in the seventeenth chapter of the

First Book of his Retractations.

From this we learn that, in its original form, it was a discourse which

Augustin, when only a presbyter, was requested to deliver in public by

the bishops assembled at the Council of Hippo-Regius, and that it was

subsequently issued as a book at the desire of friends. The general

assembly of the North African Church, which was thus convened at what

is now Bona, in the modern territory of Algiers, took place in the year

393 A.D., and was otherwise one of some historical importance, on

account of the determined protest which it emitted against the position

elsewhere allowed to Patriarchs in the Church, and against the

admittance of any more authoritative or magisterial title to the

highest ecclesiastical official than that of simply "Bishop of the

first Church" (prim� sedis episcopus).

The work constitutes an exposition of the several clauses of the

so-called Apostles' Creed. The questions concerning the mutual

relations of the three Persons in the Godhead are handled with greatest

fullness; in connection with which, especially in the use made of the

analogies of Being, Knowledge, and Love, and in the cautions thrown in

against certain applications of these and other illustrations taken

from things of human experience, we come across sentiments which are

also repeated in the City of God, the books on the Trinity, and others

of his doctrinal writings.

The passage referred to in the Retractations is as follows: About the

same period, in presence of the bishops, who gave me orders to that

effect, and who were holding a plenary Council of the whole of Africa

at Hippo-Regius, I delivered, as presbyter, a discussion on the subject

of Faith and the Creed. This disputation, at the very pressing request

of some of those who were on terms of more than usual intimacy and

affection with us, I threw into the form of a book, in which the themes

themselves are made the subjects of discourse, although not in a method

involving the adoption of the particular connection of words which is

given to the competentes [1515] to be committed to memory. In this

book, when discussing the question of the resurrection of the flesh, I

say: [1516] Rise again the body will, according to the Christian faith,

which is incapable of deceiving. And if this appears incredible to any

one, [it is because] he looks simply to what the flesh is at present,

while he fails to consider of what nature it shall be hereafter. For at

that time of angelic change it will no more be flesh and blood, but

only body;' and so on, through the other statements which I have made

there on the subject of the change of bodies terrestrial into bodies

celestial, as the apostle, when he spake from the same point, said,

Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' [1517] But if

any one takes these declarations in a sense leading him to suppose that

the earthly body, such as we now have it, is changed in the

resurrection into a celestial body, in any such wise as that neither

these members nor the substance of the flesh will subsist any more,

undoubtedly he must be set right, by being put in mind of the body of

the Lord, who subsequently to His resurrection appeared in the same

members, as One who was not only to be seen with the eyes, but also

handled with the hands; and made His possession of the flesh likewise

surer by the discourse which He spake, saying, Handle me, and see; for

a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.' [1518] Hence it

is certain that the apostle did not deny that the substance of the

flesh will exist in the kingdom of God, but that under the name of

flesh and blood' he designated either men who live after the flesh, or

the express corruption of the flesh, which assuredly at that period

shall subsist no more. For after he had said, Flesh and blood shall not

inherit the kingdom of God,' what he proceeds to say next,--namely,

neither shall corruption inherit incorruption,'--is rightly taken to

have been added by way of explaining his previous statement. And on

this subject, which is one on which it is difficult to convince

unbelievers, any one who reads my last book, On the City of God, will

find that I have discoursed with the utmost carefulness of which I am

capable. [1519] The performance in question commences thus: Since it is

written,' etc."

[Additional Note by the American Editor.]

[Another English edition of this treatise De Fide et Symbolo was

prepared by the Rev. Charles a. Heurtley, D.D., Margaret Professor of

Divinity and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, and published by Parker &

Co., Oxford and London, 1886.

The following text of the Apostles' Creed may be collected from this

book of St. Augustin, and was current in North Africa towards the close

of the fourth century:

1. I Believe in God the Father Almighty. Chs. 2 and 3.

2. (And) In Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-Begotten of the

Father, or, His Only Son, Our Lord. Ch. 3.

3. Who Was Born Through the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary. Ch. 4 (�

8.)

4. Who Under Pontius Pilate Was Crucified and Buried. Ch. 5 (� 11.)

5. On the Third Day He Rose Again from the Dead. Ch. 5 (� 12.)

6. He Ascended into Heaven. Ch. 6 (� 13.)

7. He Sitteth at the Right Hand of the Father. Ch. 7 (� 14.)

8. From Thence He Will Come and Judge the Living and the Dead. Ch. 8

(� 15.)

9. (and I Believe) in the Holy Spirit. Ch. 9 (� 16-19.)

10. I Believe the Holy Church (Catholic). Ch. 10 (� 21.)

11. The Forgiveness of Sin. Ch. 10 (� 23.)

12. The Resurrection of the Body. Ch. 10 (� 23, 24.)

13. The Life Everlasting. Ch. 10 (� 24.)]

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[1515] i.e.the third order of catechumens, embracing those thoroughly

prepared for baptism.

[1516] Chap. x. � 24.

[1517] 1 Cor. xv. 50

[1518] Luke xxiv. 39

[1519] City of God, Bk. xxii. Ch. 21.

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A Treatise on Faith and the Creed.

Chapter 1.--Of the Origin and Object of the Composition.

1. Inasmuch as it is a position, written and established on the most

solid foundation of apostolic teaching, "that the just lives of faith;"

[1520] and inasmuch also as this faith demands of us the duty at once

of heart and tongue,--for an apostle says, "With the heart man

believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made

unto salvation," [1521] --it becomes us to be mindful both of

righteousness and of salvation. For, destined as we are to reign

hereafter in everlasting righteousness, we certainly cannot secure our

salvation from the present evil world, unless at the same time, while

laboring for the salvation of our neighbors, we likewise with the mouth

make our own profession of the faith which we carry in our heart. And

it must be our aim, by pious and careful watchfulness, to provide

against the possibility of the said faith sustaining any injury in us,

on any side, through the fraudulent artifices [or, cunning fraud] of

the heretics.

We have, however, the catholic faith in the Creed, known to the

faithful and committed to memory, contained in a form of expression as

concise as has been rendered admissible by the circumstances of the

case; the purpose of which [compilation] was, that individuals who are

but beginners and sucklings among those who have been born again in

Christ, and who have not yet been strengthened by most diligent and

spiritual handling and understanding of the divine Scriptures, should

be furnished with a summary, expressed in few words, of those matters

of necessary belief which were subsequently to be explained to them in

many words, as they made progress and rose to [the height of] divine

doctrine, on the assured and steadfast basis of humility and charity.

It is underneath these few words, therefore, which are thus set in

order in the Creed, that most heretics have endeavored to conceal their

poisons; whom divine mercy has withstood, and still withstands, by the

instrumentality of spiritual men, who have been counted worthy not only

to accept and believe the catholic faith as expounded in those terms,

but also thoroughly to understand and apprehend it by the enlightenment

imparted by the Lord. For it is written, "Unless ye believe, ye shall

not understand." [1522] But the handling of the faith is of service for

the protection of the Creed; not, however, to the intent that this

should itself be given instead of the Creed, to be committed to memory

and repeated by those who are receiving the grace of God, but that it

may guard the matters which are retained in the Creed against the

insidious assaults of the heretics, by means of catholic authority and

a more entrenched defence.

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[1520] Hab. ii. 4; Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11; Heb. x. 38

[1521] Rom. x. 10

[1522] Isa. vii. 9, according to the rendering of the Septuagint.

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Chapter 2.--Of God and His Exclusive Eternity.

2. For certain parties have attempted to gain acceptance for the

opinion that God the Father is not Almighty: not that they have been

bold enough expressly to affirm this, but in their traditions they are

convicted of entertaining and crediting such a notion. For when they

affirm that there is a nature [1523] which God Almighty did not create,

but of which at the same time He fashioned this world, which they admit

to have been disposed in beauty, [1524] they thereby deny that God is

almighty, to the effect of not believing that He could have created the

world without employing, for the purpose of its construction, another

nature, which had been in existence previously, and which He Himself

had not made. Thus, forsooth, [they reason] from their carnal

familiarity with the sight of craftsmen and house-builders, and

artisans of all descriptions, who have no power to make good the effect

of their own art unless they get the help of materials already

prepared. And so these parties in like manner understand the Maker of

the world not to be almighty, if [1525] thus He could not fashion the

said world without the help of some other nature, not framed by

Himself, which He had to use as His materials. Or if indeed they do

allow God, the Maker of the world, to be almighty, it becomes matter of

course that they must also acknowledge that He made out of nothing the

things which He did make. For, granting that He is almighty, there

cannot exist anything of which He should not be the Creator. For

although He made something out of something, as man out of clay, [1526]

nevertheless He certainly did not make any object out of aught which He

Himself had not made; for the earth from which the clay comes He had

made out of nothing. And even if He had made out of some material the

heavens and the earth themselves, that is to say, the universe and all

things which are in it, according as it is written, "Thou who didst

make the world out of matter unseen," [1527] or also "without form," as

some copies give it; yet we are under no manner of necessity to believe

that this very material of which the universe was made, although it

might be "without form," although it might be "unseen," whatever might

be the mode of its subsistence, could possibly have subsisted of

itself, as if it were co-eternal and co-eval with God. But whatsoever

that mode was which it possessed to the effect of subsisting in some

manner, whatever that manner might be, and of being capable of taking

on the forms of distinct things, this it did not possess except by the

hand of Almighty God, by whose goodness it is that everything

exists,--not only every object which is already formed, but also every

object which is formable. This, moreover, is the difference between the

formed and the formable, that the formed has already taken on form,

while the formable is capable of taking the same. But the same Being

who imparts form to objects, also imparts the capability of being

formed. For of Him and in Him is the fairest figure [1528] of all

things, unchangeable; and therefore He Himself is One, who communicates

to everything its possibilities, not only that it be beautiful

actually, but also that it be capable of being beautiful. For which

reason we do most right to believe that God made all things of nothing.

For, even although the world was made of some sort of material, this

self-same material itself was made of nothing; so that, in accordance

with the most orderly gift of God, there was to enter first the

capacity of taking forms, and then that all things should be formed

which have been formed. This, however, we have said, in order that no

one might suppose that the utterances of the divine Scriptures are

contrary the one to the other, in so far as it is written at once that

God made all things of nothing, and that the world was made of matter

without form.

3. As we believe, therefore, in God the Father Almighty, we ought to

uphold the opinion that there is no creature which has not been created

by the Almighty. And since He created all things by the Word, [1529]

which Word is also designated the Truth, and the Power, and the Wisdom

of God, [1530] --as also under many other appellations the Lord Jesus

Christ, who [1531] is commended to our faith, is presented likewise to

our mental apprehensions, to wit, our Deliverer and Ruler, [1532] the

Son of God; for that Word, by whose means all things were founded,

could not have been begotten by any other than by Him who founded all

things by His instrumentality;--

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[1523] Naturam

[1524] Reading pulchre ordinatum. Some editions give pulchre ornatum =

beautifully adorned.

[1525] Si mundum fabricare non posset. For si some mss. give qui =

inasmuch as He could not, etc.

[1526] De limo = of mud.

[1527] Wisd. xi. 17

[1528] Speciosissima species = the seemliest semblance.

[1529] John i. 3

[1530] John xiv. 6; 1 Cor. i. 24

[1531] For qui several mss. give quibus here = "under" many other

appellations is the Lord Jesus Christ introduced to our mental

apprehensions, by which He is commended to our faith.

[1532] For Rector we also find Creator = Creator.

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Chapter 3.--Of the Son of God, and His Peculiar Designation as the

Word.

--Since this is the case, I repeat, we believe also in Jesus Christ,

the Son of God the Only-Begotten of the Father, that is to say, His

Only Son, our Lord. This Word however, we ought not to apprehend merely

in the sense in which we think of our own words, which are given forth

by the voice and the mouth, and strike the air and pass on, and subsist

no longer than their sound continues. For that Word remains

unchangeably: for of this very Word was it spoken when of Wisdom it was

said, "Remaining in herself, she maketh all things new." [1533]

Moreover, the reason of His being named the Word of the Father, is that

the Father is made known by Him. Accordingly, just as it is our

intention, when we speak truth, that by means of our words our mind

should be made known to him who hears us, and that whatever we carry in

secrecy in our heart may be set forth by means of signs of this sort

for the intelligent understanding of another individual; so this Wisdom

that God the Father begot is most appropriately named His Word,

inasmuch as the most hidden Father is made known to worthy minds by the

same. [1534]

4. Now there is a very great difference between our mind and those

words of ours, by which we endeavor to set forth the said mind. We

indeed do not beget intelligible words, [1535] but we form them; and in

the forming of them the body is the underlying material. Between mind

and body, however, there is the greatest difference. But God, when He

begot the Word, begot that which He is Himself. Neither out of nothing,

nor of any material already made and founded did He then beget; but He

begot of Himself that which He is Himself. For we too aim at this when

we speak, (as we shall see) if we carefully consider the inclination

[1536] of our will; not when we lie, but when we speak the truth. For

to what else do we direct our efforts then, but to bring our own very

mind, if it can be done at all, in upon the mind of the hearer, with

the view of its being apprehended and thoroughly discerned by him; so

that we may indeed abide in our very selves, and make no retreat from

ourselves, and yet at the same time put forth a sign of such a nature

as that by it a knowledge of us [1537] may be effected in another

individual; that thus, so far as the faculty is granted us, another

mind may be, as it were, put forth by the mind, whereby it may disclose

itself? This we do, making the attempt [1538] both by words, and by the

simple sound of the voice, and by the countenance, and by the gestures

of the body,--by so many contrivances, in sooth, desiring to make

patent that which is within; inasmuch as we are not able to put forth

aught of this nature [in itself completely]: and thus it is that the

mind of the speaker cannot become perfectly known; thus also it results

that a place is open for falsehoods. God the Father, on the other hand,

who possessed both the will and the power to declare Himself with the

utmost truth to minds designed to obtain knowledge of Him, with the

purpose of thus declaring Himself begot this [Word] which He Himself is

who did beget; which [Person] is likewise called His Power and Wisdom,

[1539] inasmuch as it is by Him that He has wrought all things, and in

order disposed them; of whom these words are for this reason spoken:

"She (Wisdom) reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly

doth she order all things." [1540]

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[1533] Wisd. vii. 27

[1534] Adopting the Benedictine version per ipsam innotescit dignis

animis secretissimus Pater. There is, however, great variety of reading

here. Some mss. give ignis for dignis = the most hidden fire of the

Father is made known to minds. Others give signis = the most hidden

Father is made known by signs to minds. Others have innotescit animus

secretissimus Patris, or innotescit signis secretissimus Pater = the

most hidden mind of the Father is made known by the same, or = the most

hidden Father is made known by the same in signs.

[1535] Sonantia verba = sounding, vocal words.

[1536] Appetitum

[1537] Nostra notitia = our knowledge.

[1538] Reading conantes et verbis, etc. Three good mss. give conante

fetu verbi = as the offspring of the word makes the attempt. The

Benedictine editors suggest conantes fetu verbi = making the attempt by

the offspring of the word.

[1539] 1 Cor. i. 24

[1540] Wisd. viii. 1

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Chapter 4.--Of the Son of God as Neither Made by the Father Nor Less

Than the Father, and of His Incarnation.

5. Wherefore The Only-Begotten Son of God was neither made by the

Father; for, according to the word of an evangelist, "all things were

made by Him:" [1541] nor begotten instantaneously; [1542] since God,

who is eternally [1543] wise, has with Himself His eternal Wisdom: nor

unequal with the Father, that is to say, in anything less than He; for

an apostle also speaks in this wise, "Who, although He was constituted

in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

[1544] By this catholic faith, therefore, those are excluded, on the

one hand, who affirm that the Son is the same [Person] as the Father;

for [it is clear that] this Word could not possibly be with God, were

it not with God the Father, and [it is just as evident that] He who is

alone is equal to no one. And, on the other hand, those are equally

excluded who affirm that the Son is a creature, although not such an

one as the rest of the creatures are. For however great they declare

the creature to be, if it is a creature, it has been fashioned and

made. [1545] For the terms fashion and create [1546] mean one and the

same thing; although in the usage of the Latin tongue the phrase create

is employed at times instead of what would be the strictly accurate

word beget. But the Greek language makes a distinction. For we call

that creatura (creature) which they call ktisma or ktisis; and when we

desire to speak without ambiguity, we use not the word creare (create),

but the word condere (fashion, found). Consequently, if the Son is a

creature, however great that may be, He has been made. But we believe

in Him by whom all things (omnia) were made, not in Him by whom the

rest of things (cetera) were made. For here again we cannot take this

term all things in any other sense than as meaning whatsoever things

have been made.

6. But as "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," [1547] the

same Wisdom which was begotten of God condescended also to be created

among men. [1548] There is a reference to this in the word, "The Lord

created me in the beginning of His ways." [1549] For the beginning of

His ways is the Head of the Church, which is Christ [1550] endued with

human nature (homine indutus), by whom it was purposed that there

should be given to us a pattern of living, that is, a sure [1551] way

by which we might reach God. For by no other path was it possible for

us to return but by humility, who fell by pride, according as it was

said to our first creation, "Taste, and ye shall be as gods." [1552] Of

this humility, therefore, that is to say, of the way by which it was

needful for us to return, our Restorer Himself has deemed it meet to

exhibit an example in His own person, "who thought it not robbery to be

equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant;"

[1553] in order that He might be created Man in the beginning of His

ways, the Word by whom all things were made. Wherefore, in so far as He

is the Only-begotten, He has no brethren; but in so far as He is the

First-begotten, He has deemed it worthy of Him to give the name of

brethren to all those who, subsequently to and by means of His

pre-eminence, [1554] are born again into the grace of God through the

adoption of sons, according to the truth commended to us by apostolic

teaching. [1555] Thus, then, the Son according to nature (naturalis

filius) was born of the very substance of the Father, the only one so

born, subsisting as that which the Father is, [1556] God of God, Light

of Light. We, on the other hand, are not the light by nature, but are

enlightened by that Light, so that we may be able to shine in wisdom.

For, as one says, "that was the true Light, which lighteth every man

that cometh into the world." [1557] Therefore we add to the faith of

things eternal likewise the temporal dispensation [1558] of our Lord,

which He deemed it worthy of Him to bear for us and to minister in

behalf of our salvation. For in so far as He is the only-begotten Son

of God, it cannot be said of Him that He was and that He shall be, but

only that He is; because, on the one hand, that which was, now is not;

and, on the other, that which shall be, as yet is not. He, then, is

unchangeable, independent of the condition of times and variation. And

it is my opinion that this is the very consideration to which was due

the circumstance that He introduced to the apprehension of His servant

Moses the kind of name [which He then adopted]. For when he asked of

Him by whom he should say that he was sent, in the event of the people

to whom he was being sent despising him, he received his answer when He

spake in this wise: "I Am that I Am." Thereafter, too, He added this:

"Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, He that is (Qui est)

has sent me unto you." [1559]

7. From this, I trust, it is now made patent to spiritual minds that

there cannot possibly exist any nature contrary to God. For if He

is,--and this is a word which can be spoken with propriety only of God

(for that which truly is remains unchangeably; inasmuch as that which

is changed has been something which now it is not, and shall be

something which as yet it is not),--it follows that God has nothing

contrary to Himself. For if the question were put to us, What is

contrary to white? we would reply, black; if the question were, What is

contrary to hot? we would reply, cold; if the question were, What is

contrary to quick? we would reply, slow; and all similar interrogations

we would answer in like manner. When, however, it is asked, What is

contrary to that which is? the right reply to give is, that which is

not.

8. But whereas, in a temporal dispensation, as I have said, with a view

to our salvation and restoration, and with the goodness of God acting

therein, our changeable nature has been assumed by that unchangeable

Wisdom of God, we add the faith in temporal things which have been done

with salutary effect on our behalf, believing in that Son of God Who

Was Born Through the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. For by the gift of

God, that is, by the Holy Spirit, there was granted to us so great

humility on the part of so great a God, that He deemed it worthy of Him

to assume the entire nature of man (totum hominem) in the womb of the

Virgin, inhabiting the material body so that it sustained no detriment

(integrum), and leaving it [1560] without detriment. This temporal

dispensation is in many ways craftily assailed by the heretics. But if

any one shall have grasped the catholic faith, so as to believe that

the entire nature of man was assumed by the Word of God, that is to

say, body, soul, and spirit, he has sufficient defense against those

parties. For surely, since that assumption was effected in behalf of

our salvation, one must be on his guard lest, as he believes that there

is something belonging to our nature which sustains no relation to that

assumption, this something may fail also to sustain any relation to the

salvation. [1561] And seeing that, with the exception of the form of

the members, which has been imparted to the varieties of living objects

with differences adapted to their different kinds, man is in nothing

separated from the cattle but in [the possession of] a rational spirit

(rationali spiritu), which is also named mind (mens), how is that faith

sound, according to which the belief is maintained, that the Wisdom of

God assumed that part of us which we hold in common with the cattle,

while He did not assume that which is brightly illumined by the light

of wisdom, and which is man's peculiar gift?

9. Moreover, those parties [1562] also are to be abhorred who deny that

our Lord Jesus Christ had in Mary a mother upon earth; while that

dispensation has honored both sexes, at once the male and the female,

and has made it plain that not only that sex which He assumed pertains

to God's care, but also that sex by which He did assume this other, in

that He bore [the nature of] the man (virum gerendo), [and] in that He

was born of the woman. Neither is there anything to compel us to a

denial of the mother of the Lord, in the circumstance that this word

was spoken by Him: "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is

not yet come." [1563] But He rather admonishesus to understand that, in

respect of His being God, there was no mother for Him, the part of

whose personal majesty (cujus majestatis personam) He was preparing to

show forth in the turning of water into wine. But as regards His being

crucified, He was crucified in respect of his being man; and that was

the hour which had not come as yet, at the time when this word was

spoken, "What have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come;" that

is, the hour at which I shall recognize thee. For at that period, when

He was crucified as man, He recognized His human mother (hominem

matrem), and committed her most humanely (humanissime) to the care of

the best beloved disciple. [1564] Nor, again, should we be moved by the

fact that, when the presence of His mother and His brethren was

announced to Him, He replied, "Who is my mother, or who my brethren?"

etc. [1565] But rather let it teach us, that when parents hinder our

ministry wherein we minister the word of God to our brethren, they

ought not to be recognized by us. For if, on the ground of His having

said, "Who is my mother?" every one should conclude that He had no

mother on earth, then each should as matter of course be also compelled

to deny that the apostles had fathers on earth; since He gave them an

injunction in these terms: "Call no man your father upon the earth; for

one is your Father, which is in heaven." [1566]

10. Neither should the thought of the woman's womb impair this faith in

us, to the effect that there should appear to be any necessity for

rejecting such a generation of our Lord for the mere reason that

worthless men consider it unworthy (sordidi sordidam putant). For most

true are these sayings of an apostle, both that "the foolishness of God

is wiser than men," [1567] and that "to the pure all things are pure."

[1568] Those, [1569] therefore, who entertain this opinion ought to

ponder the fact that the rays of this sun, which indeed they do not

praise as a creature of God, but adore as God, are diffused all the

world over, through the noisomenesses of sewers and every kind of

horrible thing, and that they operate in these according to their

nature, and yet never become debased by any defilement thence

contracted, albeit that the visible light is by nature in closer

conjunction with visible pollutions. How much less, therefore, could

the Word of God, who is neither corporeal nor visible, sustain

defilement from the female body, wherein He assumed human flesh

together with soul and spirit, through the incoming of which the

majesty of the Word dwells in a less immediate conjunction with the

frailty of a human body! [1570] Hence it is manifest that the Word of

God could in no way have been defiled by a human body, by which even

the human soul is not defiled. For not when it rules the body and

quickens it, but only when it lusts after the mortal good things

thereof, is the soul defiled by the body. But if these persons were to

desire to avoid the defilements of the soul, they would dread rather

these falsehoods and profanities.

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[1541] John i. 3

[1542] According to the literal meaning of the phrase ex tempore. It

may, however, here be used as = under conditions of time, or in time.

[1543] Reading sempiterne: for which sempiternus = the eternal wise

God, is also given.

[1544] Phil. ii. 6

[1545] Condita et facta est

[1546] Condere and creare.

[1547] John i. 14

[1548] Adopting in hominibus creavi. One important ms. gives in omnibus

= amongst all.

[1549] Prov. viii. 22, with creavit me instead of the possessed me of

the English version.

[1550] Various editions give principium et caput Ecclesi� est Christus

= the beginning of His ways and the Head of the Church is Christ.

[1551] For via certa others give via recta = a right way.

[1552] Gen. iii. 5

[1553] Phil. ii. 6, 7

[1554] Per ejus primatum = by means of His standing as the Firstborn.

We follow the Benedictine reading, qui post ejus et per ejus primatum

in Dei gratiam renascuntur. But there is another, although less

authoritative, version, viz. qui post ejus primitias in Dei gratia

nascimur = all of us who, subsequently to His first-fruits, are born in

the grace of God.

[1555] Luke viii. 21; Rom. viii. 15-17; Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5; Heb. ii.

11

[1556] Id existens quod Pater est, etc. Another version is, idem

existens quod Pater Deus = subsisting as the same that God the Father

is.

[1557] John i. 9

[1558] The term dispensatio occurs very frequently as the equivalent of

the Greek oikonomia = economy, designating the Incarnation.

[1559] Ex. iii. 14

[1560] Deserens. With less point, deferens has been suggested = bearing

it, or delivering it.

[1561] Or it may = he should fail to have any relation to the

salvation.

[1562] Referring to the Manicheans.

[1563] John ii. 4

[1564] John xix. 26, 27

[1565] Matt. xii. 48

[1566] Matt. xxiii. 9

[1567] 1 Cor. i. 25

[1568] Tit. i. 15

[1569] In reference to the Manicheans.

[1570] The Benedictine text gives, quibus intervenientibus habitat

majestas Verbi ab humani corporis fragilitate secretius. Another

well-supported version is, ad humani corporis fragilitatem, etc. = more

retired in relation to the frailty of the human body.

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Chapter 5.--Of Christ's Passion, Burial, and Resurrection.

11. But little [comparatively] was the humiliation (humilitas) of our

Lord on our behalf in His being born: it was also added that He deemed

it meet to die in behalf of mortal men. For "He humbled Himself, being

made subject even unto death, yea, the death of the cross:" [1571] lest

any one of us, even were he able to have no fear of death [in general],

should yet shudder at some particular sort of death which men reckon

most shameful. Therefore do we believe in Him Who Under Pontius Pilate

Was Crucified and Buried. For it was requisite that the name of the

judge should be added, with a view to the cognizance of the times.

Moreover, when that burial is made an object of belief, there enters

also the recollection of the new tomb, [1572] which was meant to

present a testimony to Him in His destiny to rise again to newness of

life, even as the Virgin's womb did the same to Him in His appointment

to be born. For just as in that sepulchre no other dead person was

buried, [1573] whether before or after Him; so neither in that womb,

whether before or after, was anything mortal conceived.

12. We believe also, that On the Third Day He Rose Again from The Dead,

the first-begotten for brethren destined to come after Him, whom He has

called into the adoption of the sons of God, [1574] whom [also] He has

deemed it meet to make His own joint-partners and joint-heirs. [1575]

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[1571] Phil. ii. 8

[1572] For monumenti some editions give testamenti = testament.

[1573] John xix. 41

[1574] Eph. i. 5

[1575] Rom. viii. 17

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Chapter 6.--Of Christ's Ascension into Heaven.

13. We believe that He Ascended into Heaven, which place of blessedness

He has likewise promised unto us, saying, "They shall be as the angels

in the heavens," [1576] in that city which is the mother of us all,

[1577] the Jerusalem eternal in the heavens. But it is wont to give

offense to certain parties, either impious Gentiles or heretics, that

we should believe in the assumption of an earthly body into heaven. The

Gentiles, however, for the most part, set themselves diligently to ply

us with the arguments of the philosophers, to the effect of affirming

that there cannot possibly be anything earthly in heaven. For they know

not our Scriptures, neither do they understand how it has been said,

"It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body." [1578] For

thus it has not been expressed, as if body were turned into spirit and

became spirit; inasmuch as at present, too, our body, which is called

animal (animale), has not been turned into soul and become soul

(anima). But by a spiritual body is meant one which has been made

subject to spirit in such wise [1579] that it is adapted to a heavenly

habitation, all frailty and every earthly blemish having been changed

and converted into heavenly purity and stability. This is the change

concerning which the apostle likewise speaks thus: "We shall all rise,

but we shall not all be changed." [1580] And that this change is made

not unto the worse, but unto the better, the same [apostle] teaches,

when he says, "And we shall be changed." [1581] But the question as to

where and in what manner the Lord's body is in heaven, is one which it

would be altogether over-curious and superfluous to prosecute. Only we

must believe that it is in heaven. For it pertains not to our frailty

to investigate the secret things of heaven, but it does pertain to our

faith to hold elevated and honorable sentiments on the subject of the

dignity of the Lord's body.

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[1576] Matt. xxii. 30

[1577] Gal. iv. 26

[1578] 1 Cor. xv. 44

[1579] Adopting the Benedictine reading, quod ita spiritui subditum

est. But several mss. give quia ita coaptandum est = it is understood

to be a spiritual body, in that it is to be so adapted as to suit a

heavenly habitation.

[1580] 1 Cor. xv. 51, according to the Vulgate's transposition of the

negative.

[1581] 1 Cor. xv. 52

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Chapter 7.--Of Christ's Session at the Father's Right Hand.

14. We believe also that He Sitteth at the Right Hand of the Father.

This, however, is not to lead us to suppose that God the Father is, as

it were, circumscribed by a human form, so that, when we think of Him,

a right side or a left should suggest itself to the mind. Nor, again,

when it is thus said in express terms that the Father sitteth, are we

to fancy that this is done with bended knees; lest we should fall into

that profanity, in [dealing with] which an apostle execrates those who

"changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of

corruptible man." [1582] For it is unlawful for a Christian to set up

any such image for God in a temple; much more nefarious is it,

[therefore], to set it up in the heart, in which truly is the temple of

God, provided it be purged of earthly lust and error. This expression,

"at the right hand," therefore, we must understand to signify a

position in supremest blessedness, where righteousness and peace and

joy are; just as the kids are set on the left hand, [1583] that is to

say, in misery, by reason of unrighteousness, labors, and torments.

[1584] And in accordance with this, when it is said that God "sitteth,"

the expression indicates not a posture of the members, but a judicial

power, which that Majesty never fails to possess, as He is always

awarding deserts as men deserve them (digna dignis tribuendo); although

at the last judgment the unquestionable brightness of the only-begotten

Son of God, the Judge of the living and the dead, is destined yet to be

[1585] a thing much more manifest among men.

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[1582] Rom. i. 23

[1583] Matt. xxv. 33

[1584] Reading propter iniquitates, labores atque cruciatus. Several

mss. give propter iniquitatis labores, etc. = by reason of the labors

and torments of unrighteousness.

[1585] Reading futura sit; for which fulsura sit also occurs = is

destined to shine much more manifestly, etc.

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Chapter 8.--Of Christ's Coming to Judgment.

15. We believe also, that at the most seasonable time He Will Come from

Thence, and Will Judge the Quick and the Dead: whether by these terms

are signified the righteous and sinners, or whether it be the case that

those persons are here called the quick, whom at that period He shall

find, previous to [their] death, [1586] upon the earth, while the dead

denote those who shall rise again at His advent. This temporal

dispensation not only is, as holds good of that generation which

respects His being God, but also hath been and shall be. For our Lord

hath been upon the earth, and at present He is in heaven, and

[hereafter] He shall be in His brightness as the Judge of the quick and

the dead. For He shall yet come, even so as He has ascended, according

to the authority which is contained in the Acts of the Apostles. [1587]

It is in accordance with this temporal dispensation, therefore, that He

speaks in the Apocalypse, where it is written in this wise: "These

things saith He, who is, and who was, and who is to come." [1588]

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[1586] The text gives simply ante mortem. Some editions insert nostram

= previous to our death.

[1587] Acts i. 11

[1588] Rev. i. 8

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Chapter 9.--Of the Holy Spirit and the Mystery of the Trinity.

16. The divine generation, therefore, of our Lord, and his human

dispensation, having both been thus systematically disposed and

commended to faith, [1589] there is added to our Confession, with a

view to the perfecting of the faith which we have regarding God, [the

doctrine of] The Holy Spirit, who is not of a nature inferior [1590] to

the Father and the Son, but, so to say, consubstantial and co-eternal:

for this Trinity is one God, not to the effect that the Father is the

same [Person] as the Son and the Holy Spirit, but to the effect that

the Father is the Father, and the Son is the Son, and the Holy Spirit

is the Holy Spirit; and this Trinity is one God, according as it is

written, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one God." [1591] At the

same time, if we be interrogated on the subject of each separately, and

if the question be put to us, "Is the Father God?" we shall reply, "He

is God." If it be asked whether the Son is God, we shall answer to the

same effect. Nor, if this kind of inquiry be addressed to us with

respect to the Holy Spirit, ought we to affirm in reply that He is

anything else than God; being earnestly on our guard, [however],

against an acceptance of this merely in the sense in which it is

applied to men, when it is said, "Ye are gods." [1592] For of all those

who have been made and fashioned of the Father, through the Son, by the

gift of the Holy Spirit, none are gods according to nature. For it is

this same Trinity that is signified when an apostle says, "For of Him,

and in Him, and through Him, are all things." [1593] Consequently,

although, when we are interrogated on the subject of each [of these

Persons] severally, we reply that that particular one regarding whom

the question is asked, whether it be the Father, or the Son, or the

Holy Spirit, is God, no one, notwithstanding this, should suppose that

three Gods are worshipped by us.

17. Neither is it strange that these things are said in reference to an

ineffable Nature, when even in those objects which we discern with the

bodily eyes, and judge of by the bodily sense, something similar holds

good. For take the instance of an interrogation on the subject of a

fountain, and consider how we are unable then to affirm that the said

fountain is itself the river; and how, when we are asked about the

river, we are as little able to call it the fountain; and, again, how

we are equally unable to designate the draught, which comes of the

fountain or the river, either river or fountain. Nevertheless, in the

case of this trinity we use the name water [for the whole]; and when

the question is put regarding each of these separately, we reply in

each several instance that the thing is water. For if I inquire whether

it is water in the fountain, the reply is given that it is water; and

if we ask whether it is water in the river, no different response is

returned; and in the case of the said draught, no other answer can

possibly be made: and yet, for all this, we do not speak of these

things as three waters, but as one water. At the same time, of course,

care must be taken that no one should conceive of the ineffable

substance of that Majesty merely as he might think of this visible and

material [1594] fountain, or river, or draught. For in the case of

these latter that water which is at present in the fountain goes forth

into the river, and does not abide in itself; and when it passes from

the river or from the fountain into the draught, it does not continue

permanently there where it is taken from. Therefore it is possible here

that the same water may be in view at one time under the appellation of

the fountain and at another under that of the river, and at a third

under that of the draught. But in the case of that Trinity, we have

affirmed it to be impossible that the Father should be sometime the

Son, and sometime the Holy Spirit: just as, in a tree, the root is

nothing else than the root, and the trunk (robur) is nothing else than

the trunk, and we cannot call the branches anything else than branches;

for, what is called the root cannot be called trunk and branches; and

the wood which belongs to the root cannot by any sort of transference

be now in the root, and again in the trunk, and yet again in the

branches, but only in the root; since this rule of designation stands

fast, so that the root is wood, and the trunk is wood, and the branches

are wood, while nevertheless it is not three woods that are thus spoken

of, but only one. Or, if these objects have some sort of dissimilarity,

so that on account of their difference in strength they may be spoken

of, without any absurdity, as three woods; at least all parties admit

the force of the former example,--namely, that if three cups be filled

out of one fountain, they may certainly be called three cups, but

cannot be spoken of as three waters, but only as one all together. Yet,

at the same time, when asked concerning the several cups, one by one,

we may answer that in each of them by itself there is water; although

in this case no such transference takes place as we were speaking of as

occurring from the fountain into the river. But these examples in

things material (corporalia exempla) have been adduced not in virtue of

their likeness to that divine Nature, but in reference to the oneness

which subsists even in things visible, so that it may be understood to

be quite a possibility for three objects of some sort, not only

severally, but also all together, to obtain one single name; and that

in this way no one may wonder and think it absurd that we should call

the Father God, the Son God, the Holy Spirit God, and that nevertheless

we should say that there are not three Gods in that Trinity, but one

God and one substance. [1595]

18. And, indeed, on this subject of the Father and the Son, learned and

spiritual [1596] men have conducted discussions in many books, in

which, so far as men could do with men, they have endeavored to

introduce an intelligible account as to how the Father was not one

personally with the Son, and yet the two were one substantially; [1597]

and as to what the Father was individually (proprie), and what the Son:

to wit, that the former was the Begetter, the latter the Begotten; the

former not of the Son, the latter of the Father: the former the

Beginning of the latter, whence also He is called the Head of Christ,

[1598] although Christ likewise is the Beginning, [1599] but not of the

Father; the latter, moreover, the Image [1600] of the former, although

in no respect dissimilar, and although absolutely and without

difference equal (omnino et indifferenter �qualis). These questions are

handled with greater breadth by those who, in less narrow limits than

ours are at present, seek to set forth the profession of the Christian

faith in its totality. Accordingly, in so far as He is the Son, of the

Father received He it that He is, while that other [the Father]

received not this of the Son; and in so far as He, in unutterable

mercy, in a temporal dispensation took upon Himself the [nature of] man

(hominem),--to wit, the changeable creature that was thereby to be

changed into something better,--many statements concerning Him are

discovered in the Scriptures, which are so expressed as to have given

occasion to error in the impious intellects of heretics, with whom the

desire to teach takes precedence of that to understand, so that they

have supposed Him to be neither equal with the Father nor of the same

substance. Such statements [are meant] as the following: "For the

Father is greater than I;" [1601] and, "The head of the woman is the

man, the Head of the man is Christ, and the Head of Christ is God;"

[1602] and, "Then shall He Himself be subject unto Him that put all

things under Him;" [1603] and, "I go to my Father and your Father, my

God and your God," [1604] together with some others of like tenor. Now

all these have had a place given them, [certainly] not with the object

of signifying an inequality of nature and substance; for to take them

so would be to falsify a different class of statements, such as, "I and

my Father are one" (unum); [1605] and, "He that hath seen me hath seen

my Father also;" [1606] and, "The Word was God," [1607] for He was not

made, inasmuch as "all things were made by Him;" [1608] and, "He

thought it not robbery to be equal with God:" [1609] together with all

the other passages of a similar order. But these statements have had a

place given them, partly with a view to that administration of His

assumption of human nature (administrationem suscepti hominis), in

accordance with which it is said that "He emptied Himself:" not that

that Wisdom was changed, since it is absolutely unchangeable; but that

it was His will to make Himself known in such humble fashion to men.

Partly then, I repeat, it is with a view to this administration that

those things have been thus written which the heretics make the ground

of their false allegations; and partly it was with a view to the

consideration that the Son owes to the Father that which He is, [1610]

--thereby also certainly owing this in particular to the Father, to

wit, that He is equal to the same Father, or that He is His Peer (eidem

Patri �qualis aut par est), whereas the Father owes whatsoever He is to

no one.

19. With respect to the Holy Spirit, however, there has not been as

yet, on the part of learned and distinguished investigators of the

Scriptures, a discussion of the subject full enough or careful enough

to make it possible for us to obtain an intelligent conception of what

also constitutes His special individuality (proprium): in virtue of

which special individuality it comes to be the case that we cannot call

Him either the Son or the Father, but only the Holy Spirit; excepting

that they predicate Him to be the Gift of God, so that we may believe

God not to give a gift inferior to Himself. At the same time they hold

by this position, namely, to predicate the Holy Spirit neither as

begotten, like the Son, of the Father; for Christ is the only one [so

begotten]: nor as [begotten] of the Son, like a Grandson of the Supreme

Father: while they do not affirm Him to owe that which He is to no one,

but [admit Him to owe it] to the Father, of whom are all things; lest

we should establish two Beginnings without beginning (ne duo

constituamus principia isne principio), which would be an assertion at

once most false and most absurd, and one proper not to the catholic

faith, but to the error of certain heretics. [1611] Some, however, have

gone so far as to believe that the communion of the Father and the Son,

and (so to speak) their Godhead (deitatem), which the Greeks designate

theotes, is the Holy Spirit; so that, inasmuch as the Father is God and

the Son God, the Godhead itself, in which they are united with each

other,--to wit, the former by begetting the Son, and the latter by

cleaving to the Father, [1612] --should [thereby] be constituted equal

with Him by whom He is begotten. This Godhead, then, which they wish to

be understood likewise as the love and charity subsisting between these

two [Persons], the one toward the other, they affirm to have received

the name of the Holy Spiri