

AUGUSTINE AND THE HEALING OF THE AFFECTIONS

I. MAN OF GOD

1. Love as Passion

1.1

Love, and do what thou wilt; whether thou hold thy peace, of love hold thy peace; whether thou cry out, of love cry out; whether thou correct, of love correct; whether thou spare, through love do thou spare; let the root of love be within, of this root can nothing spring but what is good.

In Epist. Joannis ad Parthos, Tr. vii, 8.

1.2

What man doth live without affections? And do you suppose, brethren, that those who fear God, worship God, love God, have no affections? Do you really suppose, and do you dare suppose, that painting, the theatre, hunting, hawking, fishing,

engage the affections, and that meditation on God doth not engage certain interior affections of their own, when we contemplate the universe and place before our eyes the spectacle of the nature of things, and therein seek to discover the Creator, and find Him nowhere displeasing but pleasing above all things?

In Ps. LXXVI, 14.

1.3

As impure love inflames the mind and summons the soul destined to perish to lust after earthly things, and to follow what is perishable, and precipitates it into the lowest places, and sinks it in the abyss; so holy love raiseth us to supernal things, and inflames us to what is eternal, and excites the soul to those things which do not pass away and die, and from the depths of hell

raiseth it to heaven. Yet all love hath a power of its own, nor can love in the soul of the lover be idle; it must needs draw it on. But dost thou wish to know of what sort love is? See whither it leadeth. We do not therefore warn you to love nothing; but that you love not the world, that you may freely love Him who made the world. For the soul when bound by the love of the earth, hath as it were birdlime on its wings; it cannot fly. But when purged from the sordid affections of the world, extending as it were its pair of wings, and freeing them from every impediment, flieth upon them, that is to say, upon the two commandments of love unto God and our neighbour. Whither will it fly, but by rising in its flight to God? For it riseth by loving. Before it can do this, it groaneth on earth, if it hath already in it the desire for flight; and saith, 'who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest' (Ps. liv, 7). . . . From the midst of offences, then, from the medley of evil men, from the chaff mingled with the grain, it longeth to fly, where it may not suffer the society of any wicked one, but may live in the holy company of angels, the citizens of the eternal Jerusalem.

In Ps. CXXI, 1.

1.4

For thy desire is thy prayer; and if thy desire is without ceasing, thy prayer will also be without ceasing. . . . There is interior prayer without ceasing, and this is your desire. Whatever else you do, if you do but long for that sabbath, you do not cease to pray. If you would never cease to pray, never cease to long after it. The continuance of your longing is the continuance of your prayer. You will be ceasing to speak if you cease to love. . . . The chilling of charity is the silence of the heart; the glowing of charity is the cry of the heart. If love is without ceasing, you are always lifting up your voice; if you are ever lifting up your voice, you are for ever longing after something; if you are longing, the rest you long for is in your mind.

In Ps. XXXVII, 4.

2. Inpouring Love

2.1

For we would not have wherewithal to love Him, unless we received it from Him by His first loving us.

De grat. Christi xxvi, 27.

2.2

Now this is our highest reward that we should fully enjoy God, and that all who enjoy Him should enjoy one another in Him. . . . But when you have joy of a man in God, it is God rather than the man whom you enjoy. For you enjoy Him by whom you are made happy, and you rejoice to have come to Him in whom you place your hope that you may come to Him. Accordingly St. Paul says to Philemon: 'Yes, brother. May I enjoy thee in the Lord!' (Philem. 20). For if he had not added 'in the Lord,' but had only said 'may I enjoy thee,' he would have implied that he set his hope of happiness in him, although even in the immediate context 'to enjoy' is used in the sense of 'to use with delight.' For when what we love is near us, it necessarily brings delight with it. But if you pass beyond this delight and make it a means to that in which you are to rest for ever, you are using it, and it is improper and an abuse of language to say that you enjoy it. But if you cling to it, and rest in it, placing in it the goal of your happiness, then you may truly and properly be said to enjoy it. And this we must never do except in the case of the Blessed Trinity, that is to say of the supreme and immutable good.

De doct. christ. I, xxxii, 35; xxxiii, 37.

2.3

For a man is never in so good a state as when his whole life is a journey towards the immutable life, and his affections are entirely set upon it. If, however, he loves himself for his own sake, he does not look at himself in relation to God, but turns his mind in upon himself, and so is not occupied with anything that is immutable. And thus he does not enjoy himself at his best, because he is better when he is wholly set upon and wrapped up in the immutable good than when he turns from that to enjoy himself. If therefore you ought not to love even yourself for your own sake, but only for His in whom your love finds its most worthy object, no other man has a right to be angry if you love him too for God's sake. For this is the divinely ordained rule of love: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'; but 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind' (Lev. xix, 18; Deut. vi, 5; Matt. xxii, 37 *seq.*); so that you are to concentrate all your thoughts, your whole life, and all your intelligence upon Him from whom you derive all that you bring. For when He says, 'With thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind,' He means that no part of our life is to be unoccupied, and to afford room, as it were, for the wish to enjoy some other object, but that whatever else suggests itself to the mind as something worthy of love is to be borne into the same channel in which the whole current of our affections flows. Whoever, therefore, loves his neighbour aright, ought to urge upon him that he too love God with his whole heart and with his whole soul and with his whole mind. For in this way, loving his neighbour as himself, a man turns the whole current of his love both for himself and his neighbour into the channel of the love of God, which suffers no stream to be drawn off from itself by whose diversion its own volume would be diminished.

De doct. christ. I, xxii, 21.

2.4

The soul which went away from herself is recalled to herself. As she had gone away from herself, so she went away from her

Lord. For she had respect to herself, and pleased herself, and became enamoured of her own power. She withdrew from Him, and abode not in herself; and from her own self she is repelled, and is shut out from herself, and she falleth away unto things without her. She loves the world, loves temporal things, loves earthly things. And if she loved herself to the neglect of Him by whom she was made, she would at once be less, would at once fail by loving that which is less. For she is less than God, and less by far, by so much less as the thing made is less than the Maker. It was God, therefore, that ought to have been loved, and in such wise loved that, if this be possible, we forget ourselves. What then is this change? The soul forgot herself, but this was by loving the world; let her now forget herself by loving the Creator of the world.

Serm. (de Script. N.T.) CXLII, iii, 3.

2.5

The price of the wheat is thy copper, the price of the farm is thy silver, the price of the pearl is thy gold; the price of charity is thyself. Thou seekest how thou mayest get a farm, a precious stone, a beast of burden: thou seekest with what to buy a farm and thou seekest in thy house. But if thou wishest to have charity, seek thyself, and find thyself. What, dost thou fear to give thyself, lest thou spend thyself utterly? Nay, if thou dost not give thyself, thou lovest thyself. . . . 'My son, give me thy heart' (Prov. xxiii, 26). . . . It was bad when it was away from thee, when it was thine. . . . Let it be mine, and it is not lost to thee. . . . He demands the whole of thee, Who made thee. . . . With this thou lovest thyself, because thou lovest God with thy whole self. Dost thou think to profit God because thou lovest God? And that something is added to God because thou lovest Him? and that if thou dost not love Him,

He will have less? When thou lovest Him, thou dost profit thou wilt be there where thou art not lost.

Serm. XXXIV, lv, 7; v, 8.

II. MAN TO GOD

3. Man-Untruth to God-Truth

3.1

When I set before the eyes of my heart, such as they be, the intellectual beauty of Him out of whose mouth nothing false proceedeth, though my weak and throbbing senses are driven

back where truth in her radiance doth more and more brighten upon me, yet I am so inflamed with love of that surpassing comeliness, that I despise all human considerations which would recall me thence.

Contra mend. xviii, 36.

4. Man's Poverty to God's Abundance

4.1

God's poor one is poor in spirit, not in his purse. Sometimes a man appeareth who hath a full house, rich lands, many estates, much gold and silver; he knoweth that he must not trust in these, he humbleth himself before God, he doth good with them. Thus his heart is raised to God, so that he is aware that not only do riches themselves profit him nothing, but that they even impede his feet, save God rule and direct them. He is counted among the poor who are satisfied with bread (Ps. cxxxi, 15). Thou findest another a beggar and puffed up; he may be not puffed up because he hath nothing, yet seeking whereby he may be puffed up. God doth not heed the means a man hath, but his desire, and judgeth him according to the

desire with which he regards temporal blessings, not according to the means which it is not his lot to have. . . . Let them, saith the Apostle, 'lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life' (1 Tim. vi, 19). When they have laid hold of it, then they will be rich; but since they have it not as yet, they should know that they are poor. Thus it is that God numbereth among His poor all the humble of heart who are established in that twofold commandment of love (v. Matt. xxii, 37, 39), whatever they may have in this world. And these are they whom he satisfieth with bread.

In Ps. CXXXI, 26.

4.2

Let each one . . . look within himself, weigh himself, prove himself in all his actions, in all his good works which he doeth with charity, not looking for temporal recompense but for the promise of God, the face of God. For whatever God promiseth thee availeth nothing without God himself. Most truly God would not satisfy me unless he promised me Himself, the very God. What is the whole earth? What is the whole sea? What is the whole sky? What are all the stars? What the sun? What the moon? What the hosts of Angels? It is for the Creator of them all I hunger, for Him I thirst. To Him I say, 'For with Thee is the fountain of life' (Ps. xxxv, 10), and He saith to me, 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven'

(John vi, 41). Let my pilgrimage hunger and thirst that my presence may be made full. The world smiles with its multitude of objects, beautiful, strong, diversified; but He who made them is more beautiful; stronger and brighter is He who made them; sweeter is He who made them. 'I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall appear' (Ps. xvi, 15).

Serm. (de Script. N.T.) CLVIII, vii, 7.

4.3

The greatest of all men was sent, a man who was to bear witness to Him who was greater than man. For when he, than whom none greater had risen among them that are born of women (Matt. xi, 11), says, 'I am not the Christ,' and humbles himself before Christ, we must understand something that is more than man. . . . For if thou seekest John as the greatest of all men, Christ is more than man. . . . Therefore if we have rightly understood the mystery, my brethren, John is man, Christ is God, the man is humbled, and God is exalted. . . . Let us grow less in man, let us grow greater in God. Let us be humbled in ourselves, that we may be exalted in Him.

Serm. CCLXXXIX, 5.

4.4

Let us continue in Him who continueth in us. As for us, if we continue not in Him, we fall; but He, if He continue not in us, hath not on that account lost an habitation. For He, who never leaveth Himself, is able to continue in Himself. But for man, who hath lost himself, God forbid that he should continue in himself. So then we continue in Him through indigence, but He in us through mercy.

Serm. (de Script. N.T.) CXXXIV, i, 1.

4.5

However much I may draw near, however much I may ascend, however much I leap over, I shall be under God, not against God. Safely therefore I mount above other things when He that is above all things doth hold me under Him.

In Ps. LXI, 2.

4.6

'In God I will praise my words' (Ps. lv, 5). . . . For thou wilt have thy words either false, and therefore thine own, because false; or if thy words shall be true and thou shalt deem thyself not to have them from God, but of thyself to be speaking, they will be true, but thou wilt be false. But if thou shalt have known that thou canst say nothing true in the wisdom of God, in the faith of the Truth, save that which thou hast received from Him, of Whom it is said: 'For what hast thou that thou hast not received?' (1 Cor. iv, 7) then in God thou art praising thy words, in order that in God thou mayest be praised by the words of God. For if whatever is in thee that is of God is honoured by thee, thou also having been made by God will be honoured in God. But if whatsoever is in thee that is of God is honoured by thee as thine own and not of God, like as that people was put afar off from holy men, so too wilt thou be put afar off from the Holy One. Therefore 'in God I will praise my words.' If 'in God,' wherefore 'my?' Both in God and mine. In God, because they are from Him; mine, because I have received them. He Himself Who hath given, willed them to be mine, by loving Him of Whom they are; and they have been made mine because they are come to me from Him. . . . By asking of Him thou wilt not be empty; by confessing it to be thine thou wilt not be ungrateful. For if thou say it is not

thine, thou hast not received it. Again, if thou say 'thine' as if that which thou callest thine were from thyself, thou lovest what thou hast received, because thou art ungrateful to Him from Whom thou hast received. 'In God, therefore, 'I will praise my words,' because He is there Himself as the fountain of true words. 'Mine,' because, thirsting, I have drawn near and drunk.

In Ps. LV, 7.

4.7

This then is the sum of great knowledge for a man to know that by himself he is nothing, and that whatever he is, he is from God and is for God. . . . It is however not enough that thou acknowledge that which in thee is good to be from God, unless also on that account thou exalt not thyself above him that hath not yet, who perchance will outstrip thee when he shall have received.

In Ps. LXX, Sermon. I, 1, 4.

5. Man-Beggar to God-Goodness

5.1

He gave us a nature, that we might be; He gave us a soul, that we might live; He gave us a mind that we might understand; He gave us foods, that we might sustain mortal life; He gave us light from the sky, waters from the earth. But all these things are gifts common to the good and the wicked. If he has given all these things also to the wicked, does He reserve nothing special for the good? Assuredly He does. And what is it that He reserves for the good? 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard: neither hath it risen up into the heart of man' (1 Cor. ii, 9). Now that which rises up into the heart of man was below the heart of man, and therefore it rises up into the heart, since above it is the heart to which it is rising. The heart rises to that which He reserves for the good. Not that which rises up into thy heart, but that to which thy heart rises: this is what God reserves for thee. . . . Look what it is that God reserves for the good alone, whom nevertheless He Himself has made good. Look what it is. Our reward is concisely defined through the Prophet: 'I will be their God: and they shall be my people' (Lev. xxvi, 12; 2 Cor. vi, 16). . . . For a reward He promises Himself to us. . . . He gives Himself to us, and it is enough for us. May He give Himself to us and satisfy us! (cf. John. xiv, 8).

Sermon. CCCXXXI, iv, 3.

5.2

For a sick man too asketh many things of the physician; but the physician giveth them not. His concern is not with the patient's desires but with his cure. Make God therefore thy Physician. Seek health of Him, and He Himself will be thy health. Seek not as if thou wouldst find salvation from any other source, but so that He Himself may be salvation unto thee; lest thou shouldst again love any salvation save Him. . . . What is it to thee what He saith to thee, if He do but give Himself to thee? Dost thou wish that He give Himself to thee? What if He wills that thou shouldst not have what thou desirest, in order that He may give Himself to thee? He removes impediments, that He may enter into thee.

In Ps. LXXXV, 9.

5.3

He whom we desire to receive Himself causeth us to ask; He whom we wish to find causeth us to seek; He to whom we strive to attain causeth us to knock. . . . And when He is received, He brings it about that He is besought by asking, by seeking, by knocking, to be more fully received.

In Ps. CXVIII, Sermon. XIV, 2.

5.4

Great is the secrecy of a judge; . . . great is the fear of those whose cause is before him. What he is thinking, and what he is writing, is not known. And he is a man, and those on whom he is passing judgment are certainly men. But our judge is our God, 'and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand' (Ps. xciv, 7). And since He is the Creator, we the creature; He immortal, we mortal; He invisible, we visible; He did not will that in this life we should remain ignorant of the fact that at the last day He would pronounce the final sentence. No one says beforehand, I condemn, when he intends to condemn; no one says beforehand I am hitting when he intends to hit. Great tenderness, therefore, great mercy, great gentleness, but only if we do not misuse His patience to our own evil ends, and do not add to our sins by further sins, to make them as it were a burden to Him Who bears our sins, as if He should bear more, to Whom it is no labour to bear them: our sins, which He as yet forbears to punish, because as yet He is bearing them, show forth His patience, and pile up our burden.

Sermon. XLVII, iii, 4-iv, 5.

6. Man Straightway to God

6.1

We ascend into heaven if we think of God, who hath made modes of ascent in the heart. What is to ascend in heart? To advance towards God. As every one who faileth, doth not descend but falleth; so every one who progresseth, doth ascend, provided he so progress as to avoid pride; but if while he is progressing he become proud, in ascending he again falleth. But what ought he to do to avoid becoming proud? Let him not heed himself, but let him lift up his eyes to Him Who dwelleth in heaven. For every proud man heedeth himself, and he who pleaseth himself seemeth to himself to be great. But he who pleaseth himself, pleaseth a fool; for he is himself a fool when he pleaseth himself. He alone safely pleaseth, who pleaseth God. And who is he who pleaseth God? He whom God hath pleased. God cannot displease Himself. May He please thee also, that thou mayest please Him. But He cannot please thee, except thou hast displeased thyself. But if thou displeasest thyself, remove thine eyes from thyself. For why dost thou regard thyself? For if thou truly regard thyself, thou findest in thee what will displease thee; and thou sayest to God, 'My sin is always before me' (Ps. 1, 5). Let thy sin be before thee, that it may not be before God; and refuse to be before thyself, that thou mayest be before God. For as we wish that God may not turn away His face from us, so do we wish that He may turn His face from our sins. . . . He who saith, 'Turn not away thy face from me,' saith in another place, 'Turn away thy face from my sins' (Ps. xxvi, 9; 1, 11). If thou wouldst have Him turn away His face from thy sins, do thou turn away thy face from thyself, and do thou not turn away thy face from thy sins. For if thou turn not away thy face from them, thou art thyself angry with thy sins, and if thou turn not away thy face from thy sins, thou dost confess them and God will pardon them.

In Ps. CXXXII, 3.

7. ... Giving Praise

7.1

If thou wilt be brought from the road of faith to the possession of the reality, 'begin in confession' (Ps. cxlvi, 7). First accuse thyself, and, having accused thyself, praise God. Call on Him whom as yet thou knowest not, that He come and be known; not that He come to thee himself, but that He lead thee to Him.

In Ps. CXLVI, 14.

7.2

Whoso praiseth himself doth not praise God; as when a man chooses to withdraw from a fire, the fire continues warm, but he grows cold; as when a man chooses to withdraw from the light, if he withdraws, the light continues bright in itself, but he is in darkness.

Serm. (de Script. N.T.) CLXX, xi, 11.

7.3

In either case it is a godly confession, either when thou blamest thyself who art not without sin, or when thou praisest Him who can have no sin. But properly considered, thine own blame is His praise. For why is it that thou dost now make confession in accusing thyself of sin, . . . but because thou art become alive from the dead?

Serm. (de Script. N.T.) LXVII, i, 1-2.

7.4

Man's chief work is but to praise God. To Him it belongs to satisfy thee by His beauty, to thee to praise Him in acts of thanksgiving. If thy works be not the praise of God, thou art beginning to love thyself. . . . Be dissatisfied with thyself; find satisfaction in Him Who made thee, in that thou art dissatisfied with that in thee which thou thyself hast made. Let therefore thy work be the praise of God.

In Ps. XLIV, 9.

7.5

'I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart' (Ps. cxxxvii, 1). My whole heart I lay upon the altar of thy praise, a holocaust of praise I offer to Thee. . . . Let the flame of Thy love set on fire my whole heart; let nought in me be left to me, nought wherein I may look to myself, but may I wholly burn towards Thee, wholly be on fire towards Thee, wholly love Thee, as though set aflame by Thee.

In Ps. CXXXVII, 2.

8. ...In the Cult of Chaste Love

8.1

When by God's gift we live by the true faith, God himself is present, to enlighten the mind, to overcome concupiscence, to bear affliction. For all this is rightly done when it is done for His sake, that is, when He is loved for no reward; but love such as this cannot be ours, except it be from Him. For the rest, when a man is much pleased with himself, and puts his trust in his own powers, if he surrenders to the desires of his pride, this evil will be increased the more in proportion as the other lusts have abated in him, and pandering to that one, he restrains them as if he were laudable in so doing.

Contra Julianum, V, iii, 9.

8.2

If thou dost love to see thy God, if in this exile thou sighest with that love; behold the Lord thy God maketh trial of thee, as if He were saying to thee, 'See, do what thou wilt, fulfil thy desires, prolong wickedness, enlarge luxuriousness, think whatever pleaseth lawful. I will not punish thee for this, I will not send thee to hell, I will only deny thee My face.' If thou hast been horrorstruck, thou hast loved. If at this that was said, 'Thy God will deny thee His face,' thy whole heart hath trembled, if in the not seeing thy God thou hast imagined a great punishment, thou hast loved gratis.

Serm. (de Script. N.T.) CLXXXVIII, x, 11.

8.3

Behold and see in what manner he hath loved him. He hath made his heart chaste: 'the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever' (Ps. lxxii, 26). His heart is become chaste, his love for God is now gratuitous, and he seeks no other reward from Him. He that seeks any other reward from God, and is willing to serve God for it, makes that which he wishes to receive more precious than Him from whom he wishes to receive it. What is this? Has God no reward? None except Himself. The reward belonging to God is God Himself. This he loveth, this he esteemeth, if he shall have loved anything else, the love will not be chaste. Thou art receding from the immortal fire, thou wilt grow cold, wilt be corrupted. Do not recede. It will be thy corruption, it will be thy fornication. . . . To this fornication is opposed chaste love. . . . Now the soul doth love her Bridegroom: what doth she require of Him, from her Bridegroom whom she loveth? . . . She doth love Him alone, she doth love Him asking no reward, because in Him she hath all things, for 'all things were made by Him' (John i, 3). . . . Dissolute men are loved gratuitously, and is a reward to be required of God in order that He may be loved? Love God for no reward; grudge God to no one. Seize Him as many of you as are able, as many as shall possess Him. He is not contained by any bounds; you will find no limits in Him; each of you will possess Him in whole, you all will have Him wholly.

In Ps. LXXII, 32-34.

8.4

God would have Himself gratuitously worshipped, would have Himself gratuitously loved, that is chastely loved; not to be loved for the reason that He giveth anything besides Himself, but because He giveth Himself. He therefore that calleth upon God in order that he may be made rich, doth not

call on God, for he calleth upon that which he wisheth to come to him. For what is to 'call upon' but to call to oneself? To call to oneself, therefore, means to call upon. For when thou sayest, O God, give me riches; thou dost not wish that God Himself should come to thee, but that riches should come to thee. That which thou wishest should come to thee, upon that thou callest. But if thou wert to call upon God, He would Himself come to thee, He would be thy riches. But now thou wouldest have thy coffer filled and thy conscience void. God filleth not coffer but heart. What do outward riches profit thee if inward need presseth thee?

In Ps. LII, 8.

9. ... In Chaste Fear

9.1

'With fear and trembling,' saith the Apostle, 'work out your own salvation.' If we do work out our own salvation, why with fear, why with trembling, when what we work out is in our own power? Hear why it is with fear and trembling: 'For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will' (Phil. ii, 12 *sq.*). Therefore with fear and trembling, that it may delight our Maker to work in the lowly valley.

In Ps. CXLII, 10.

9.2

What is chaste fear? By which we ought, my brethren, to understand what is said: 'Blessed are all they that fear the Lord; that walk in His ways' (Ps. cxxvii, 1). If I shall be enabled to speak worthily of this chaste fear, the Lord our God helping me, many will perchance be inflamed by this chaste fear to a chaste love. Nor can I perhaps explain, except by putting forward some similitude. Suppose some chaste woman, fearing her Husband; suppose another, an adulterous woman, and she also feareth her husband; the chaste woman feareth lest her husband depart; the adulterous wife feareth lest hers come. What if both be absent? The one feareth lest he come, the other lest he tarry in coming. He to Whom we have been betrothed is in a certain sense absent. He is absent, Who gave us as a pledge the Holy Ghost; He is absent, Who redeemed us with His blood; He is that Bridegroom than whom there is nothing more beautiful. . . . He is beautiful, and is absent. Let the spouse ask herself if she be chaste. We are all among His members, my brethren; we are among His members, and for this reason we are one man. Let each man see what sort of fear he hath, whether that which charity casteth out, or that chaste fear which endureth for ever and ever. . . . Our Bridegroom is absent; ask thy conscience; dost thou wish that He come, or dost thou still wish that He tarry? . . . What the consciences of each one of you may have answered, . . . He who is absent in respect of bodily presence, but is present in the power of His majesty, hath heard. How many, if it be said to them, Lo, here is Christ, to-morrow is the day of judgment, do not say, would that He may come! Those who speak thus, love much; and if they are told, He will delay, they fear lest He delay, for their fear is chaste. And as His tarrying is now feared, so after His coming, His leaving will be feared. That will be a chaste fear, for it is tranquil and secure. For we shall not be forsaken by Him when He hath found us, since He sought us before we sought Him. A chaste fear therefore, my brethren, hath this quality, that it cometh from love. But that fear which is not yet chaste, feareth His presence and punishment. From fear the man doeth whatever of good he doeth: not from fear of losing that good, but from fear of suffering that evil. He feareth not lest he lose the embraces of his most beautiful spouse, but lest he be cast into hell. This fear is good and useful; it will not indeed endure for ever; it is not yet that chaste fear which endureth for ever and ever.

In Ps. CXXVII, 8.

10. ...In Loving Fear and Fearing Love

10.1

Thou who art more inward than my most inmost self, hast set a law within my heart by Thy Spirit, as it were by Thy fingers, that I might not fear it as a slave without love, but might love it with a chaste fear as a son, and fear it with a chaste love.

In Ps. CXVIII, Serm. xcii, 6.

III. MAN IN GOD

11. Man-Abyss

11.1

Thou seekest the depth of the sea, what is deeper than the human conscience?

In Ps. LXXVI, 18.

11.2

All the miracles done in this world are less wonderful than the world itself. . . . Yet God who made it all made it after a manner that man cannot conceive nor comprehend. For though these visible miracles of nature become commonplace from being seen so frequently, yet if they be wisely pondered, they are greater than the rarest and most extraordinary. For of all miracles which He works through man, man is the greatest miracle.

De civ. Dei X, xii.

11.3

If by 'abyss' we understand a great depth, is not man's heart an abyss? For what is there more profound than that abyss? Men may speak, may be seen by the operations of their members, may be heard speaking; but whose thought is penetrated, whose heart is seen into? What he is inwardly engaged on, what he is inwardly capable of, what he is inwardly doing, or what purposing, what he is inwardly wishing to happen or not to happen, who shall comprehend? . . . Do not you believe that there is in man a deep so profound as to be hidden even to him in whom it is?

In Ps. XLI, 13.

11.4

Every man is a stranger in this life, in which you see that we are girt round with flesh, through which flesh the heart cannot be seen. . . . In the sojourning of this carnal life each one carrieth his own heart, and every heart is closed to every other heart.

In Ps. LV, 9.

12. Night of the Heart

12.1

Certain it doubtless is, brethren, that either thou killest iniquity or art killed by iniquity. But do not seek to kill iniquity as if it were something outside thyself. Look to thyself, mark what fighteth with thee in thee, and take heed lest thy iniquity, thine enemy, defeat thee, if it have not been killed. For it is from out thee, and thy soul rebelleth against thyself, not any other thing. With some part of thyself thou cleavest to God, with some part thou art allured by the world. That wherewith thou delightest in the world fighteth against the mind which cleaveth to God. Let it cleave, let it adhere, let it not weaken, let it not give way; it hath great help. It conquereth that in itself which is in rebellion against itself, if it but persevere in fighting.

In Ps. LXIII, 9.

12.2

Suppose a man to be at first seeking nothing, living after the old life in a seductive sense of security; not thinking there is anything else after this life, when it shall sometime end; one

negligent and thoughtless, with his heart absorbed in the allurements of the world, and lulled to sleep with deadly delights: if such a man is to be roused to seek the grace of God, and to become anxious, and to wake as it were from sleep; is it not the hand of God that arouses him? But yet he knoweth not by whom he was aroused; however, he begins to belong to God now that he has come to know the belief of the Truth. But before he knoweth, he grieveth for his error. For he findeth himself in error, wisheth to know the Truth, knocketh where he can, trieth what he can, wandereth which way he can, feeleth even a hunger for the Truth itself. So then the first trial is one of wandering and hunger. When he hath grown weary in this trial and hath cried unto God, he is led to the way of faith, on which he may begin to journey towards the City of Peace. He is led therefore to Christ, who said, 'I am the way' (John xiv, 6).

When therefore he is come there, knowing now what he ought to observe, it happens sometimes that through attributing too much to himself, and as it were presuming on his own powers, he beginneth to think of striving against sins, and to be worsted because of his pride. He then findeth himself fettered by the difficulties of his desires, and because of his shackles unable to walk on the way. He feeleth himself imprisoned by the difficulty of his vices, with a wall, as it were, of impossibility built up, and the gates shut upon him, and how to get out and live aright he cannot discover. He already knoweth how he ought to live, for before he was wandering and suffered hunger for the Truth, but he hath now received the food of truth, and is set in the way. He heareth, Live rightly, according to that which thou knowest; for before, thou knewest not how thou shouldst live. Now thou hast received the truth and knowest. He tries; he cannot. He feels himself in fetters; he cries unto the Lord. The second trial therefore is that of the difficulty of working well, as the first was that of wandering and hunger. In this also he crieth to the Lord, and the Lord delivereth him from his necessities, breaketh the chains of difficulty, and establisheth him in the working of righteousness. That which had been difficult now begins to be easy to him. To abstain from evil things, not to commit adultery, not to steal, to do no murder, to commit no sacrilege, not to covet what is another's.

That which was before hard is become easy. God could grant this without the difficulty, but if we had it without the difficulty, we should not acknowledge the Giver of this good gift. For if man at first, when he wished, were able, and if he did not feel his desires striving against him, and if his soul were not bruised by the weight of its chains, he would attribute to his own strength what he felt himself able to do, and would not confess to the Lord His mercies.

After those trials, the first of wandering and of wanting the truth, the second of difficulty in acting rightly, a third trial overtakes a man—a man, I mean, who has already passed through the first two; for these, I admit, are known to many. For who doth not know that he came out of ignorance into truth, out of wandering into the way, out of a hunger for wisdom to the word of faith. Then there are many who are struggling with difficulties due to their own bad dispositions, and who, still bound by habit, are groaning as if shackled in a prison. They recognize this trial, and indeed perhaps may be saying, 'Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' (Rom. vii, 24). For note the most cramping chains: 'the flesh,' he saith, 'lusteth against the spirit; and the spirit against the flesh, so that you do not the things that you would' (Gal. v, 17). Accordingly, let him who has already been helped by the Spirit, so that wishing not to be an adulterer, he is not; and wishing not to be a thief, he is not; and all those other things which men desire to conquer, and often are bent and overcome by them, so that they cry out to God that He deliver them from their necessities, and being freed from them, confess to the Lord His mercies. Whoever, I say, is such an one, and hath conquered those difficulties, and now liveth commendably among men, without any complaint of evil living, is met by a third trial, that of a kind of weariness in the length of this life, so that it is sometimes no pleasure to him either to read or to pray. The third trial is contrary to the first, for then he was in danger through hunger, but now through distaste for his food. And what is the origin of this, but a certain apathy of the soul? Adultery no longer now allures thee, yet neither doth the word of God delight thee. Now, after the danger of ignorance and concupiscence, from which thou rejoicest to

have escaped, see that weariness and satiety stay thee not. This too is no slight trial; recognize that thou art in it, and cry unto the Lord, that here also He may free thee from thy necessities, and, when thou art free from this trial, let His mercies confess unto Him. . . . So that even when the word of God delighteth thee, thou attribute that not to thyself; nor be puffed up with any sort of arrogance on this account, nor because thou hast an appetite for food, spurn in thy pride those who are in danger from distaste for food.

In Ps. CVI, 4-6; 11.

13. Night in Love

13.1

When a Christian hath begun to think of spiritual progress, he beginneth to suffer from the tongues of adversaries. Whoever hath not yet suffered from these, hath not yet made progress; and whoever suffereth them not, doth not even endeavour to progress. Doth he wish to know what we mean? Let him experience at the same time what we have to listen to. Let him begin to progress, let him begin to wish to ascend, to wish to

despise earthly, perishable, temporal things, to hold the happiness of this world as nothing, to think of God alone, not to rejoice in gain, not to pine at losses, to wish to sell all his goods and to give them to the poor, and to follow Christ; let us see how he suffereth the tongues of detractors and many things from opponents, and—a still graver thing—the efforts of pretended counsellors who lead him away from salvation.

In Ps. CXIX, 3.

13.2

There is no sea so deep as these thoughts of God, Who maketh the wicked to flourish, and the good to be afflicted—nothing so profound, nothing so deep; and in that deep, in that profundity, every unbelieving soul is wrecked. Dost thou wish to cross this deep? Move not away from the wood of Christ's cross. Thou shalt not sink; hold thyself fast to Christ.

In Ps. XCI, 8.

13.3

Whether anyone is to persevere unto the end in that wherein he is evil, we do not know; and oft-times when thou seemest to thyself to have been hating an enemy, thou hast been hating a brother, and knowest it not. The devil and his angels have been manifested to us in the Holy Scriptures as being destined for everlasting fire. Of them only must amendment be despaired of; and against them we have a secret wrestling. . . . 'Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood'; that is, against men whom you see, 'but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness' (Eph. vi, 12). . . . Concerning these same rulers therefore we have a definite sentence of Scripture, that there is for any one of them no hope of any return thence. But of the darknesses themselves of whom these are the rulers we truly are not sure, whether haply they that were darkness may not be made light. Indeed, to them that were lately made believers the Apostle saith: 'You were heretofore

darkness, but now light in the Lord' (Eph. v, 8): Darkness in yourselves, light in the Lord. . . . Before thee this rule of goodness hath been set, that thou mayest imitate the goodness of the Father, 'who maketh His sun to rise upon the good, and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust' (Matt. v, 45). . . . Thou indeed hast for an enemy him that in common with thee was created, but God him that he hath created. . . . And He spareth them, He who hath nothing that an enemy may lay to His charge, to Whom every enemy is ungrateful; for from Him he hath whatever of good he hath. . . . As to thyself, what hast thou bestowed on thy enemy whom thou findest so intolerable to endure? If He hath him for an enemy, He Who hath bestowed so great things on him and 'maketh His sun to rise upon the good, and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust', thou that neither canst make the sun rise nor cause rain to fall upon the lands, canst thou not keep one thing for thine enemy, so that there may be to thee on earth peace to a man of good will? (cf. Luke ii, 14). Since therefore this rule of love is fixed for thee, that, imitating the Father, thou shouldst love an enemy; for He saith, 'Love your enemies' (Luke vi, 27, 35); how wouldst thou be exercised in this precept, if thou hadst no enemy to suffer? Thou seest then that he profiteth thee somewhat; and let the fact that God spareth evil men profit thee, so that thou show mercy; since thou too, if thou art a good man, hast perchance been made a good man out of an evil man. And if God spared not evil men, thou wouldst not even be found to return thanks. May He therefore that hath spared thee spare others also. For it were not right, when thou hadst passed through, to close up the way of godliness.

In Ps. LIV, 4.

13.4

'I have hated them with a perfect hatred' (Ps. cxxxviii, 22).
 . . . I hated in them their iniquities, I loved the work of Thy

hand. This it is to hate with a perfect hatred, that thou neither hate the man on account of the vices, nor love the vices on account of the man. . . . How will [the Psalmist] fulfil in them both his own words, 'Have I not hated them, O Lord, that hated thee' (*id.*, 21), and the Lord's command, 'Love your enemies'? (Matt. v, 44). How will he fulfil this save with that 'perfect hatred,' so that what he hates in them is that they are wicked, what he loves in them is that they are men? For even in the time of the Old Testament, when the carnal people was kept in restraint by visible punishments, how did Moses, the servant of God, who by understanding belonged to the New Testament, hate sinners, when he prayed for them? Or how did he not hate them when he slew them, save that he 'hated them with a perfect hatred'? For with such perfection did he hate the iniquity which he punished, as to love the manhood for which he prayed.

In Ps. CXXXVIII, 28.

14. Night of Life

14.1

For our depths (Ps. cxxix) is this mortal life. Whoever hath understood himself to be in the depths crieth out, groaneth, sigheth, until he be delivered from the depths, and come unto Him whose seat is above all depths and above the Cherubim' above all things He hath created not only bodily but also spiritual things; until the soul come to Him; until His own image, that image which is man, and which in these depths

hath been tossed about by constant waves and worn away by them, be liberated by Him. And except it be renewed and repaired by God, Who impressed it on man when He formed man, he is always in the depths; for though man could be equal to his own fall, he is not equal to his own rising again; and, as I have said, unless he be freed, he is ever in the depths. But when he crieth from the depths, he riseth from the depths; and his very cry suffereth him not to be long at the bottom. . . .

'If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities; Lord who shall stand it?' (*ibid.*, 2) Thus he hath disclosed from what depths he was crying out; for he crieth from under the weight and turbulence of his iniquities. He looked upon himself; he pondered upon his own life; he saw it everywhere buried in excesses and crimes. Wherever he looked, he found nothing good in himself, nothing of the serenity of justice could he meet. And when he saw so many and so great sins and such troops of his own crimes, he cried out as if terror-struck, 'If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities; Lord, who will stand it?' He did not say, I shall not stand it, but 'who shall stand it?' For he saw that nigh the whole of human life is ever bayed at by its sins, that all consciences are accused by their thoughts, that a chaste heart trusting in its own justice could not be found. If therefore a chaste heart that can trust in its own justice cannot be found, let the hearts of all trust in the mercy of God, and say, 'If thou O Lord, wilt mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand it?'

In Ps. CXXIX, 1, 2.

15. Night Between Nights

15.1

The wound of love is health-giving. In the Canticle of Canticles the Spouse of Christ sings, 'wounded with love am I' (Cant. v, 8). And this wound, when is it healed? When our desire is satisfied in good things. It is called wound as long as we desire and do not yet possess. For love is such that there is pain therein. When we have attained to what we desire, then the pain passes, but the love does not grow less.

Serm. CCXCVIII, ii, 2.

15.2

Our whole business therefore in this life is to restore to health the eye of the heart whereby God may be seen. To this end are celebrated the Holy Mysteries; to this end the word of God is preached; to this end are the moral exhortations of the Church made, those, that is to say, which relate to the correction of morals, to the amendment of carnal concupiscences, to the renunciation of this world, not in word only but in a change of life. To this end is directed the whole aim of the Divine and Holy Scriptures, that that interior eye may be purged of anything which hinders us from the sight of God. . . . God assuredly made the sun which we desire to see with sound eyes. Much brighter certainly is He who made it, nor is the light with which the mind of the eye is concerned of this kind at all. That light is eternal Wisdom. But God made thee, O man, after His own image. Would He give thee wherewithal to see the sun which He made, and not give thee wherewithal to see Him who made thee, when He made thee after His own image? He hath given thee this also; both hath He given to thee. But thou dost love much this outward eye, and dost neglect much that interior eye; it thou dost carry about bruised and wounded. It would be a punishment to thee if thy Creator should wish to manifest Himself to thee; it would be a punishment to that eye of thine, before that it is cured and made whole. For so Adam sinned in Paradise and hid himself from the face of God. As long as he had the sound heart of a pure conscience, he rejoiced in the presence of God. After that eye had been wounded by sin, he began to dread the divine light; he fled back into the darkness and the thick covert of the trees, fleeing the truth, seeking eagerly the shade.

Serm. (de Script. N.T.) LXXXVIII, v, 5; vi, 6.

15.3

It is wholly credible that then we shall see the worldly bodies of the new heaven and the new earth, as we see God present

everywhere and also governing all corporal things, by the bodies we shall carry, and which we shall see wheresoever we shall turn our eyes, and this with the most translucent clarity and not as now 'the invisible things of God' are seen and understood by the things that are made (Rom. i, 20) 'in part' only and as 'through a glass in a dark manner' (1 Cor. xiii, 12), where faith prevails more in us, by which we believe, than the appearance of corporal things which we perceive by corporal eyes. But even as, so soon as we behold men amongst whom we live, being alive and performing vital motions, we do not believe that they live, but see them to live, when we cannot see their life without their bodies, which notwithstanding we clearly behold by their bodies, all ambiguity being removed; so wheresoever we shall turn these spiritual eyes of our bodies we shall see incorporate God governing all things by our bodies. God therefore shall either so be seen by those eyes like unto the understanding whereby incorporeal nature is seen, . . . or . . . God shall be so known and conspicuous to us, that He may be seen by the spirit of every one of us in every one of us, of another in another, and may be seen in Himself.

De civ. Dei XXII, xxix, 6.

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