

Lectures
on the
Letter to the Romans
by
Saint Thomas Aquinas

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The Structure of the Pauline Corpus According to St. Thomas Aquinas

I. All of the letters are about the grace of Christ. Nine letters consider the grace of Christ as it exists in the mystical body itself:

A. This grace is considered in three ways. First, in itself, and this is how it is treated in the letter to the Romans.

B. Second, in the sacraments which communicate it:

1. In 1 Corinthians, the sacraments themselves are considered;

2. In 2 Corinthians, the ministers of the sacraments are discussed;

3. In Galatians, certain sacraments (namely those of the Old Law) are excluded;

C. Third, in its effect, namely the unity of the mystical body, the Church:

1. First, the unity itself is discussed:

a) In Ephesians, the foundation [*institutio*] of the Church's unity is considered;

b) In Philippians, the progress and confirmation of the Church's unity is set forth;

2. Second, its defense:

a) Against error, in the letter to the Colossians;

b) Against persecution:

(1) In the present in 1 Thessalonians;

(2) In the future (and chiefly at the time of the Anti-Christ) in 2 Thessalonians

II. Four letters consider the grace of Christ as it exists in the chief members of the Church, namely the prelates:

A. First, in the spiritual prelates, in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus;

B. Second, in temporal prelates, and this is how it is considered in the letter to Philemon;

III. One letter, that to the Hebrews, considers the grace of Christ as it exists in the head of the body, Christ himself.

The Structure of the Epistle to the Romans According to St. Thomas Aquinas

1:1-1:7 The Salutation: description of the author, the recipients of the letter, and the salutation wished.

1:8-16:27 The Epistle

1:8-15 Paul shows his affection toward those in Rome, to render them benevolent listeners.

1:16-16:27 He instructs them concerning the truth of the grace of Christ.

I. 1:16-11:36 He shows the power of the gospel of grace

1:16-17 He proposes what he intends to prove

1:18-11:36 He proves the thing proposed

A. 1:18-4:25 The gospel of grace is necessary for salvation

1) 1:18-32 It is necessary to the Gentiles, because the wisdom in which they were confident was unable to save them

2) 2:1-4:25 It was necessary to the Jews, because the law and the other things in which they were confident did not bring them to salvation

a) 2:1-29 The Jews were not justified by the Law

i) 2:1-12 He denounces both Jews and Gentiles for their inordinate judgement

2:1 He confutes human judgement

2:2-12 He commends the divine judgement

ii) 2:13-29 He shows that the Jews especially were unworthy of reward, because those things in which they were glorying were not sufficient for salvation

2:13-24 He shows that the law heard or received does not suffice for salvation

2:25-29 He shows the same thing about circumcision

b) 3:1-31 He answers objections to the previous section, showing that the Jews were not justified by their ancestry, about which they were glorying

i) 3:1-8 He sets forth the prerogatives of the Jews

ii) 3:9-31 He excludes their glory

3:10-20 He shows that the Jews did not exceed the Gentiles as regards the preceding state of sin

3:21-31 He shows that they do not exceed the Gentiles as regards the subsequent state of justice

3:21-26 He proves what he intends

3:27-28 He draws his conclusion

3:29 He replies to an objection, namely that he is destroying the law

c) 4:1-5:1 The Jews were not justified by circumcision; a fuller treatment of the question in 2:25-29

i) 4:1-19 He proves that Abraham, the very source of circumcision, did not find justification through circumcision

4:1-12 He argues from the divine acceptance of Abraham

4:13-19 He argues from the divine promise made to Abraham

ii) 4:20-25 He commends the faith of Abraham

B. 5:1-11:39 He shows that the gospel of grace is sufficient for salvation

1) 5:1-11 He shows what goods we obtain through grace

a) 5:2-10 Through grace we have the glory of hope

- i) 5:2-4 He shows the greatness and vehemence of this hope in which we glory
 - ii) 5:5-10 He shows firmness of this hope
 - 5:5 by an argument from the gift of the Holy Spirit
 - 5:6-10 by an argument from the death of Christ
 - b) 5:11 Through grace we have the glory of God
- 2) 5:12-8:39 He shows from what evils we are liberated through grace
 - a) 5:12-6:23 Through the grace of Christ we are liberated from the servitude of sin
 - i) 5:12-21 We are liberated from preceding original sin
 - ii) 6:1-23 Through Christ we receive the ability to resist future sins
 - b) 7:1-25 Through the grace of Christ we are liberated from the servitude of law
 - i) 7:1-5 He proves what he intends
 - ii) 7:6-25 He excludes the objection that he is saying the law to be sin
 - 7:6-13 He resolves an objection by which it seems that the law is sin
 - 7:14-25 He shows that the law is good
 - c) 8:1-39 Through the grace of Christ we are liberated from condemnation (“damnation” in Latin)
 - i) 8:1-9 We are liberated from the condemnation of guilt
 - ii) 8:10-39 We are liberated from the condemnation of punishment
 - 8:10-25 in the future, from bodily death
 - 8:26-39 meanwhile, we are aided by the Holy Spirit against the weaknesses of this present life
 - 8:26-27 as regards the fulfillment of our desires or petitions
 - 8:28-39 as regards the direction of exterior events, which are directed to our good

C. 9:1-11:36 He treats of the origin of grace, of whether it be given by the sole election of God or by preceding merits of works, taking occasion from the seeming rejection of the Jews

- 1) 9:1-33 The election of the Gentiles
 - a) 9:1-5 He commemorates the dignity of the Jews
 - b) 9:6-33 He shows that the dignity does not pertain to those who are carnally descended from the patriarchs, but to the spiritual seed which is elected by God
 - i) 9:6-13 He shows how men have gained spiritual dignity by this election
 - ii) 9:14-33 He deals with a question about the justice of the divine election
- 2) 10:1-11:36 Here he treats specially of the fall of the Jews
 - a) 10:1-21 He manifests the cause of their fall, upon which he touched above, from which he shows that their fall is to be pitied
 - b) 11:1-10 He shows that their fall is not universal
 - c) 11:11-36 He shows that their fall is neither useless nor irreparable
 - i) 11:11-16 He shows that their fall is useful and reparable
 - ii) 11:17-36 He excludes the glory of the Gentiles who insult the Jews

II. 12:1-16:27 He teaches the use of grace, which pertains to moral instruction

A. 12:1-15:13 He sets out moral doctrine in general

- 1) 12:1-13:14 He teaches how a man should become perfect

- a) 12:1-21 He leads men on to perfection of life as regards the sanctity which a man preserves for God
- b) 13:1-10 perfection of life as regards the justice which a man shows his neighbor
- c) 13:11-14 perfection of life as regards the purity which a man conserves in himself
- 2) 14:1-15:13 He teaches how the perfect man should relate to imperfect men
 - a) 14:1-23 He shows that he ought not to scandalize or to judge them
 - i) 14:1-13a He prohibits inordinate judgement
 - ii) 14:13b-23 He prohibits the scandalizing of the weak
 - b) 15:1-13 He shows that he ought to sustain them
- B. 15:14-16:27 He descends to particular questions pertaining to those to whom he writes**
 - 1) 15:14-33 Certain matters pertaining to himself
 - 2) 16:1-27 Matters pertaining to others, in Rome
 - a) 16:1-20 First, he advises them about what they should do toward others
 - b) 16:21-25 Second, he shows what others do toward them
 - c) 16:26-27 Third, he ends the epistle in an act of thanksgiving

Prologue

This man is to me a chosen vessel to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel (Ac 9:15).

1. In sacred Scripture men are compared to vessels from four viewpoints: their construction, contents, use and fruit.

From the viewpoint of construction, vessels depend on the good pleasure of their maker: “he reworked it into another vessel as it seemed good to him” (Jer 18:4). In the same way men’s construction¹ depends on God’s good pleasure: “He fashioned us and not we ourselves” (Ps 100:3 Vul 99:3); hence Is (45:9) asks: “Does the clay say to him who fashions it, ‘What are you making?’”: In the same vein St Paul asks: “Will what is molded say to its molder, ‘Why have you made me thus?’” (Rom 9:20). Hence, it is the Creator’s will that determines the variety of construction among his vessels: “In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earthenware” (2 Tim 2:20).

In the above words, blessed Paul is described as a vessel. What sort of vessel he was is described in Sirach (50:9): “As a vessel of solid gold adorned with all kinds of precious stones.”

He was a golden vessel on account of his brilliant wisdom; what is said in Genesis (2:12) can be understood as speaking of this: “The gold of that land is the best,” because, as is said in Proverbs (3:15), “it is more precious than all riches.” Whence even blessed Peter bears witness to him: “So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him” (2 Pt 3:15).

¹ Latin *constitutio* can refer both to the “construction” of a vessel and to the “character” of a man.

He was solid on account of the virtue of love, of which the Song of Songs (8:6) says, “Love is strong as death.” Hence Paul himself writes: “I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God” (Rom 8:38ff).

Furthermore, he was adorned with all manner of precious stones, i.e., with all the virtues, concerning which it says in 1 Cor (3:12): “Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones ..., each man’s work will become manifest.” Hence, he says: “Our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience that we have conducted ourselves in the world with simplicity of heart and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God” (2 Cor 1:12).

2. The nature of this vessel is thus indicated by the sort of things it poured out;² for Paul taught the mysteries of the most lofty divinity, which requires wisdom: “Among the mature we do speak wisdom” (1Cor 2:6). He extolled love in the loftiest terms in 1 Corinthians 13. He taught men about the different virtues: “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, meekness ... patience” (Col 3:12).

3. In the second place it is customary for vessels to be filled with some sort of liquid, as is clear in 1King (4:3), “They gave him vessels and she filled them.”³

Now it is by reason of what is poured into them that vessels are classified: for some are wine vessels, some oil vessels, and so on. In the same way, God fills men with diverse graces, as though with diverse liquids: “To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit” (1 Cor 12:8).

² Reading *propinavit* for *propinabit*.

³ This does not exactly match the phrasing of the Vulgate or of the Hebrew.

But the vessel about which we are now speaking was filled with a precious liquid, the name of Christ, of which it is said: “Your name is oil poured out” (Song 1:3). Hence, our text says **to carry my name**, for he seems to have been thoroughly filled with this name, in accord with Revelation 3(:12), “I will write my name upon him.”

For he possessed this name in the knowledge of his intellect: “For I decided to know nothing among you except Christ” (1 Cor 2:2).

He also possessed this name in the love of his affections: “Who will separate us from the love of Christ?” (Rom 8:35); “If any one does not love our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed” (1 Cor 16:21).

Finally, he possessed it in his whole way of life; Hence he said, “It is no longer I who love, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal 2:20).

4. In the third place, with regard to use, one should consider that all vessels are set aside for a definite use, but some for a more honorable and some for a baser use: “Has not the potter power to make from the same lump one vessel for beauty and another for dishonor?” (Rom 9:21). So, too, according to God’s decree, men are set aside for different uses: “All men are from the ground and from the earth, whence also Adam was created. In the fullness of his knowledge the Lord distinguished them and appointed their different uses; some of them he blessed and exalted, but some of them he cursed and brought low” (Sir 33:11-12).

This vessel, however, was set apart for noble use, for it is a vessel such as carries the divine name; for [the text] says **to carry my name**. It was, indeed, necessary for this name to be carried, because it was far from men: “Behold the name of the Lord comes from afar” (Is 30:27).

It is far from us on account of sin: “Salvation is far from the wicked” (Ps 119:155). It is also far from us on account of the darkness of our understanding; hence it was said of some that “they beheld it from afar” (Heb 11:13) and “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not nigh” (Num 24:17). Consequently, just as the angels bestow God’s light on us as being far from God, so the apostles brought us the gospel teaching from Christ; and just as in the Old Testament after the law of Moses the prophets were read to instruct the people in the teachings of the law—“Remember the law of my servant, Moses” (Mal 4:4)—so also, in the New Testament, after the gospels are read the teachings of the apostles, who handed down to the faithful the words they had heard from the Lord: “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you” (1 Cor 11:23).

5. The blessed Paul carried Christ’s name, first of all, in his body by imitating his life and sufferings: “I bear on my body the marks of Jesus” (Gal 6:17).

6. Secondly, in his speech, for he names Christ very frequently in his epistles: “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Mt 12:34).

Hence, he can be signified by the dove of which it is said that it returned to the ark bearing an olive branch in its mouth (Gen 8:11). For since the olive signifies mercy, it is fittingly taken to stand for Christ’s name, which also signifies mercy: “You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:21).

This olive branch bearing leaves was brought to the ark, i.e., to the church, when he explained its power and meaning in many ways, disclosing Christ’s grace and mercy. Thus, he says: “I received mercy for this reason that in me, as in the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience” (1 Tim 1:16). Hence, just as the most frequently used writings of the Old Testament in the church are the psalms of David, who

obtained pardon after his sin, so the most frequently used writings of the New Testament are the epistles of Paul, who obtained mercy, so that by these examples of sinners might be aroused to hope; although another reason for this custom could be that in each of these writings is contained almost the whole teaching of theology.

7. Thirdly, he carried this name not only to those who were present but also to those absent and as yet unborn by handing down the meaning of the Scriptures: “Take a large tablet and write upon it in common characters” (Is 8:1).

8. In this role of carrying God’s name his excellence is shown in regard to three things: first, in regard to the grace of being chosen; hence he is called *a chosen vessel*: “He chose us in him before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4). Secondly, in regard to his dedication, because he sought nothing of his own but what was Christ’s: “For what we preach is not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord” (2 Cor 4:5). Hence, it is stated that he is a chosen vessel *of mine*. Thirdly, in regard to his unique excellence: “I worked harder than any of them” (1 Cor 15:10). Hence, *he is a chosen vessel of mine* in a more outstanding way than the others.

9. As regards fruit, one should consider that that some men are, so to speak, useless vessels, either on account of sin or of error, in accord with Jer (51:34): “He has made me an empty vessel.” But Paul was free of sin or of error; consequently, he was a useful chosen vessel, as he himself testified: “If anyone purifies himself from these things,” i.e., from errors and sins, “then he will be a vessel set aside for a noble use, useful to the Lord” (2 Tim 2:21).

Hence the usefulness or fruit of this vessel is expressed by the words, *before the Gentiles*, whose teacher he was: “A teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth” (1 Tim 2:7),

and kings, to whom he preached the faith of Christ, for example, to Agrippa (Ac 16) and even to Nero and his princes. Hence he says: “What has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole praetorian guard that my imprisonment is for Christ” (Phil 1:12); “Kings shall see and princes shall arise” (Is 49:7). *And the sons of Israel*, against whom he argued about Christ: “But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ” (Ac 9:22).

10. From the words of our text, therefore, we gather the four causes of this work, i.e. of Paul’s letters, which we have before us.

First, the author, in the word, *vessel*; secondly, the matter, in the words, *my name*, of which the vessel is full, because this entire teaching is about the teaching of Christ; thirdly, the manner, in the word, *carry*. For this teaching is conveyed in the manner of letters which were customarily carried by messengers: “So curriers went with letters from the king and his princes” (2 Ch 30:6). Fourthly, the difference [*distinctio*] of the work in the usefulness mentioned.

11. For he wrote fourteen letters, nine of which instructed the church of the Gentiles; four, the prelates and princes of the church, i.e., *kings*; and one to the people of *Israel*, namely, the letter to the Hebrews.

For this entire teaching is about Christ’s grace, which can be considered in three ways:

In one way, as it is in the Head, namely, Christ, and in this regard it is explained in the letter to the Hebrews.

In another way, as it is found in the chief members of the Mystical Body, and this is explained in the letters to the prelates.

In a third way, as it is found in the Mystical Body itself, that is, the Church, and this is explained in the letters sent to the Gentiles. These last letters are distinguished from one another according to the three ways the grace of Christ can be considered: in one way, as it is in itself, and thus it is set out in the letter to the Romans; in another way, as it exists in the Sacraments of the Church, which is explained in the two letters to the Corinthians—in the first of these the nature of the Sacraments is treated; in the second, the dignity of the minister—and in the letter to the Galatians, in which superfluous sacraments are rejected against certain men who wanted to join the old sacraments to the new ones. In a third way, Christ's grace is considered in regard to the unity it produces in the Church.

Hence, the Apostle deals first with the establishment of ecclesial unity in the letter to the Ephesians; secondly, with its consolidation and progress in the letter to the Philippians; thirdly, of its defense against certain errors in the letter to the Colossians; against existing persecutions in the first letter to the Thessalonians and against persecutions to come, especially in the time of anti-Christ, in the second letter to the Thessalonians.

He instructs the prelates of the Church, both spiritual and temporal. He instructs the spiritual prelates of the Church about establishing, preserving and governing ecclesial unity in the first letter to Timothy, about resistance against persecutors in the second, and about defense against heretics in the letter to Titus. He instructs temporal lords in the letter to Philemon.

And thus the division and order of all the epistles is clear.

12. But it appears that the letter to the Romans is not first. For he seems to have written first to the Corinthians, according to the last chapter of Romans (16:1): “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is in the ministry of the church at Cenchreae,” which is a Corinthian port.

But one should say rather that the letter to the Corinthians is first as regards its time of writing. Nonetheless, the letter to the Romans is placed ahead of it, both because of the dignity of the Romans, who ruled the other nations, since in this letter pride is rebuked, which is the source of all sin (Sir 10:14); and because the order of teaching requires that grace should first be considered in itself before being considered as it is found in the Sacraments.

13. Another question concerns the place from which the Apostle wrote this letter. Augustine says that it was written in Athens, Jerome that it was written from Corinth. Both could be right, because he could have begun it in Athens and finished it in Corinth.

14. Finally, there is an objection against what is said in the gloss, that some believers preached to the Romans before Peter did, whereas in the *Ecclesiastical History* it says that Peter was the first to preach to them.⁴ However this can be taken to mean that Peter was the first apostle to teach the Romans and the first to reap a great harvest among them. Already Barnabas had preached at Rome, as the *Itinerary of Clement* states.⁵

⁴ See Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica*, book 3, chapter 1.

⁵ For the pseudo-Clementine writings, see Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha* (trans. R. McL. Wilson; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965), II: 536-570; for the preaching of Barnabas, see page 538 of the same volume.

Chapter 1

Lecture 1

(1) [nn. 15-24] Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God.

15. This letter is divided into two parts, namely, the greeting and the body of the letter [*epistularem tractatum*], which begins there [n. 74] at “first indeed” and so on (1:8).

In the first part three things are done:

first, the person sending the greeting is described;

secondly, the persons greeted, there [n. 66] at “to all who are in Rome” (1:7a);

thirdly, the blessings invoked, there [n. 70] at “Grace to you” and so on (1:7b).

16. The person writing is described by four things [nn. 16, 20, 22, 23].

First, by his name, *Paul*, concerning which one should consider three things [nn. 17-19].

First, its accuracy; for this name, as it is spelled here, cannot be Hebrew because Hebrew does not have the letter P in its alphabet; but it can be Greek and Latin. Still, if it be taken as some letter close to P, it can be Hebrew.

17. Secondly, one should consider its meaning. Considered as Hebrew, it means “wonderful” or “chosen”; taken as Greek, it means “quiet;” taken as Latin it means “small.”

And these meanings suit him. For he was chosen as regards grace; hence “he is a chosen vessel of mine” (Ac 9:15). He was wonderful in his work: “A marvelous vessel, the work of the Most High” (Si 43:2). He was quiet in contemplation: “When I enter my

house, I shall find rest with her” (Wis 8:16). He was small by humility: “I am the least of the apostles: (1 Cor 15:9).

18. Thirdly, one should consider when that name was conferred on the Apostle, since he had formerly been called Saul, as is found in Acts 9.

There are three opinions about this.

Jerome says that whereas he had formerly been called Saul, later he wished to be called Paul on account of something notable he had done, namely that he converted Sergius Paulus, a proconsul (Act 13), just as Scipio was called Africanus because he had conquered Africa.

Others say that this name was conferred on account of the growth in virtue which is signified by this name, as was said. For names are conferred by God on certain men at the very beginning of the lives to indicate the grace they receive at the beginning, as in the case of John the Baptist. In other cases the names of persons are changed to indicate their growth in virtue, as Chrysostom says. This is clear in the cases of Abraham (Gen 17) and Peter (Mt 16).

But others have a better explanation, namely, that Paul always went by two names. For it was customary among the Jews, along with their Hebrew name, to take a name from among the people they served; thus, those who served the Greeks took Greek names, as is clear in the cases of Jason and Menelaus (2 Macc 4).

19. Now the name Paul was held in esteem among the Romans from the earliest times; accordingly, he was called Saul among the Hebrews and Paul among the Romans, although he does not seem to have used the latter until he began to preach to the Gentiles.

Hence, Acts (13:9) says: “But Saul, who is also called Paul.” This third opinion is the one Augustine favors.⁶

20. Secondly, the writer’s person is described by his station when he says, *a servant of Christ*.

Now the state of servitude seems a lowly one, if it be considered absolutely; this is why it is imposed with a curse as a punishment for sin: “Cursed be Canaan; a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers” (Gen 9:25). But it is made commendable by reason of what is added, namely, *of Jesus Christ*.

For “Jesus” means Savior: “He will save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:21); “Christ” means anointed: “Therefore God, your God, has anointed you” (Ps 45:7). This indicates Christ’s dignity both in regard to his holiness, since priests were anointed, as is clear from Exodus 29; and in regard to his power, since kings, too, were anointed, as is clear in the cases of David and Solomon; and in regard to his knowledge, since prophets were also anointed, as in the case of Elisha.

Furthermore, it is praiseworthy for a person to be subjected to his well-being⁷ and to the spiritual anointing of grace, because a thing is perfect to the extent that it is subjected to its perfection, as the body to the soul and air to light: “O Lord, I am your servant” (Ps 116:16).

21. This seems to conflict with John 15(:15), “No longer do I call you servants, but friends.”

But one should say that there are two kinds of servitude: one is the servitude of fear, which does not befit saints: “You did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back

⁶ See Augustine’s *Expositions on the Psalms*, at Psalm 73.

⁷ *Salus* might also be rendered “salvation.”

into fear, but you have received the spirit of the adoption of sons” (Rom 8:15); the other is that of humility and love, which does befit saints: “Say, ‘We are unworthy servants.’” (Lk 17:10). For since a free man is one who exists for his own sake [*causa sui*], whereas a servant is one who exists for the sake of another [*causa alterius*], as moving by reason of another’s moving him; then, if a person acts for the sake of another [*causa alterius*] as though moved by him, the service is one of fear, which forces a man to act in opposition to his own will. But if he acts for the sake of another [*causa alterius*] as an end, then it is the servitude of love; because a friend serves and does good to his friend for the friend’s own sake, as the Philosopher says in the ninth book of the *Ethics* [chapter 4].

22. Thirdly, the person writing is described by his dignity when it says *called to be an apostle*.

The apostolic dignity is the foremost in the Church, in accord with 1Corinthians 12:(18), “God has appointed in the church, first, apostles.” For “apostle” means “sent”: “As the Father has sent me, even so I send you” (Jn 20:21), i.e., out of the same love and with the same authority.

Moreover, he says, *called* to be an apostle, to indicate a gift: “One does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God as Aaron was” (Heb 5:4); or to emphasize the excellence of apostleship, so that just as Rome is antonomastically⁸ called *the city*, so Paul is called *the apostle*: “I worked harder than any of them” (1 Cor 15:10); or to show his humility, as though to say: I do not dare to call myself an apostle, but men call me that: “I am unfit to be called an apostle” (1 Cor 15:9).

⁸ Antonomasia is the substitution of a title or epithet for a proper name, as Aquinas illustrates by the example of Rome.

23. Fourthly, the person writing is described by his office when it says *set apart for the gospel for God*.

Set apart, I say, from unbelievers by his conversion: “But when he who had set me apart from the womb of my mother,” i.e., of the synagogue (Gal 1:15); or set apart from other disciples by his being chosen: “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (Ac 13:2).

“*Gospel*” means good news. For it announces the news of man’s union with God, which is man’s good: “It is good for me to cleave to God” (Ps 73:28).

24. Indeed, a threefold union of man with God is announced in the gospel.

The first is by the grace of union: “The Word was made flesh” (Jn 1:14). The second is by the grace of adoption, as implied in Psalm 82(:6) “I say, ‘You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you.’” The third is by the glory of attainment: “This is eternal life, that they know you” (Jn 17:3); “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings” (Is 52:7).

These good tidings were not from men, but from God: “What I have heard from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I announce to you” (Is 21:10). Hence he says, *for the gospel of God*.

Lecture 2

(2) [n. 26] Which he had promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures (3) [n. 29] concerning his Son, who was made for him from the seed of David according to the flesh.

25. The person of the writer described [n. 16], now the task committed to him is commended, namely, the gospel, which has already been commended from two viewpoints in the preceding verse. One of these concerns the usefulness it has due to its content, which is signified by its very name, “gospel,” which implies that in it good things are announced. The other is based on the authority it has on the side of its author, which is set out when it says, *of God*.

Now the Apostle pursues these two commendations further:

first, on the part of the author;

secondly, on the part of its content there [n. 28] at “concerning his Son” (v. 3).

26. From the first viewpoint the Gospel is commended in four ways:

First, by its antiquity. This was required against the pagans, who belittled the Gospel as something suddenly appearing after all the preceding centuries. To counter this he says *which he promised beforehand*; because, although it began to be preached at a certain point in time, it had been foretold previously in a divine way: “Before they came to pass, I announced them to you” (Is 48:5).

Secondly, from its reliability, which is indicated when he says, *he promised*, because the promise was made beforehand by one who does not lie: “We bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled” (Ac 13:32).

Thirdly, from the dignity of its ministers or witnesses, when he says, *through his prophets*, to whom had been revealed the things fulfilled concerning the Incarnate Word: “The Lord will not make a word,” namely, make it be incarnate, “without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7); “To him all the prophets bear witness,” and so on (Acts 10:43).

It is significant that he says “his” prophets, for some prophets spoke by a human spirit: “They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord” (Jer 23:16). Hence, he says: “One of themselves spoke, a prophet of their own” (Tit 1:12). There are even prophets of demons who are inspired by an unclean spirit, such as the prophets whom Elijah slew (1 Kg 18). But those are called God’s prophets who are inspired by the divine Spirit: “I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh and you sons and daughters will prophesy” (Joel 2:28).

Fourthly, from the way it was delivered, because these promises were not merely spoken but recorded in writing. Hence he says *in the holy scriptures*: “Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets” (Hab 2:2). For it was the custom to record only important matters worthy of remembrance and of being handed down to later generations. Consequently, as Augustine says in *City of God* XVIII, the prophecies about Christ made by Isaiah and Hosea began to be written when Rome was being founded, under whose rule Christ would be born and his faith preached to the Gentiles: “You search the scriptures because you think to have eternal life by them (Jn 5:39).

27. He adds, *holy*, to distinguish these writings from those of the Gentiles. They are called holy first because, as it is written: “Men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (2 Pt 1:21); “All Scripture is inspired by God” (2 Tim 3:16). Secondly, because

they contain holy things: “Give thanks to his holy name” (Ps 97:12). Thirdly, because they make holy: “Make them holy in the truth; thy word is truth” (Jn 17:17). Hence, it says in 1 Macc (12:9): “We have as encouragement the holy books which are in our hands.”

28. Secondly [n. 25], he continues the commendation on the part of the good things announced in the Gospel and which make up the content of the Gospel, which is Christ, whom he commends in three ways:

first, from his origin;

secondly, from his dignity or virtue, there [n. 42] at “who was predestined” (v. 4);

thirdly, from his liberality, there [n. 60] at “through whom we have received” (v. 5).

29. He describes the origin of Christ in two ways [cf. n. 34].

First he describes his eternal origin when he says, *concerning his Son*. In this he reveals the excellence of the gospel, for the mystery of the eternal generation had been previously hidden; hence Solomon asks: “What is his name and the name of his son, if you know?” (Pr 30:4). But it has been revealed in the Gospel on the testimony of the Father: “This is my beloved Son” (Mt 3:17).

Indeed, the Son of God is deservedly called the subject matter of the Holy Scriptures, which reveal the divine wisdom, as Deuteronomy (4:6) declares: “This will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of all the peoples.”

For the Son is said to be the Word and wisdom begotten: “Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:24).

30. But men have erred three ways about this sonship.

For some said that he has an adoptive sonship; for example, Photinus taught that Christ derived his origin from the Virgin Mary as a mere man, who by the merits of his life reached such an exalted state that he could be called a son of God above all other saints.

But if this were true, Christ would not be described as lowering himself to manhood but as rising up to the Godhead, whereas it says in Jn (6:38): “I have come down from heaven.”

31. Others taught that this sonship was a sonship in name only, as Sabellius, who said that the Father himself became incarnate and for that reason took the name of Son, such that the Person would be the same and the names alone different.

But if this were true, the Son would not be described as sent by the Father; which is false, since he himself said that he came down from heaven to do the will of him who sent him (Jn 6:38).

32. Others, such as Arius, taught that this sonship was a created one, so that the Son of God would be the most perfect creature, albeit produced from nothing after previously not existing.

But if this were true, all things would not have been made through Him, the contrary of which is stated in John 1(:3). For the one through whom all things were made cannot himself have been made.

33. These three opinions are excluded by the significantly added word, *his*, i.e., his very own and natural. For Hilary says: “This true and personal Son is a Son by origin and not by adoption, in truth and not in name only, by birth and not by creation; for he

comes forth from the Father as a word from the heart.”⁹ Such a word belongs to the same nature, especially in God, to whom nothing inheres accidentally. Hence he himself says, “I and the Father are one” (Jn 10:30). “The fact that he says *one* frees you from Arius; that he says *we are* frees you from Sabellius,” as Augustine says.¹⁰

34. Secondly, he touches on the temporal origin when he says, *who was made*.

Here right away the three aforementioned errors seem to find a defense in the fact that it says *who was made for him*. For they do not admit an eternal Son but one that was made. But the words that follow destroy their goal.

For when he says, *was made to him*, the error of Sabellius is excluded. For he could not be made a son for the Father if he were the same person as the Father; rather, through incarnation he will be the son of the Virgin.

By saying, *descended from David*, he destroys Photinus’ goal. For if He were made the Son of God by adoption, he would not be described as made from the seed of David but from the Spirit, who is the Spirit of adoption of sons, (Rom 8:23) and from the seed of God (1 Jn 3:9).

The words, *according to the flesh*, destroy Arius’ opinion that He was created both according to the flesh and the divine nature.

35. We should also recall that men have erred in a number of ways in regard to the mystery of the incarnation itself.

For Nestorius taught that the union of the Word with human nature consisted solely in an indwelling, in the sense that the Son of God dwelt in that man more fully than in others.

⁹ See book 3 of Hilary’s *De Trinitate*.

¹⁰ See Augustine’s *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, number 36.

But it is obvious that the substance of the dweller and that of the dwelling are distinct, for example, a man and a house. Accordingly, he taught that the person or hypostasis of the Word was distinct from that of the man, so that the Son of God would be one person and the Son of Man another.

This is shown to be false by that fact that the Apostle in Philippians 2(:7) calls this sort of union an emptying of himself (Phil 2:7). But since the Father and the Holy Spirit dwell in men, as John (14:23) declares: “We will come to him and make our home with him,” it follows that they, too, would be emptying themselves; which is absurd. This opinion, therefore, is excluded when the Apostle says, *concerning his Son who*, namely, the Son of God, *was made according to the flesh*, i.e., having his flesh, *from the seed of David*. He would not have spoken in this manner if the union were a mere indwelling.

Furthermore, in regard to others in whom the Word dwells, it is never said that the Word was made this or that person, but that it was made to Jeremiah or Isaiah.

Therefore, since the Apostle, after saying, *concerning his Son*, added, *who was made to him from the seed of David*, the above error is clearly excluded.

36. Others again, although they do not suppose two persons in Christ, do suppose two hypostases or supposita. But this amounts to the same thing, because a person is nothing other than a suppositum or hypostasis of a rational nature. Therefore, since there is only one hypostasis and suppositum in Christ, which is the suppositum or hypostasis of the eternal Word, that hypostasis cannot be said to have become the Son of God, because it never began to be the Son of God. Therefore, it is not altogether correct to say that man was made God or the Son of God. Yet if this is found to be taught by any teacher, it should be interpreted thus: it was made to be that man be God.

Accordingly, it is correct to say that the Son of God was made man because He was not always man. Therefore, what is written here must be understood so that the *who* refers to the subject, the sense being that this Son of God was made from the seed of David, and not to the predicate, because then the sense would be that someone existing from the seed of David became the Son of God, which is neither true nor correct, as has been said.

37. Again, there were others who taught that the union was made by the conversion of the Word into flesh, as it is said that air is made to become fire. Hence Eutyches said that before the Incarnation there were two natures, but after the Incarnation only one.

But this is clearly false because, since God is immutable—"I, the Lord, do not change" (Mal 3:6)—he cannot be changed into anything else.

Hence, when it is said, *he was made*, this should not be understood as a change but as a union without any divine change.

For something can be newly said of something in a relative sense without the thing itself being changed; thus, a person remaining in one place comes newly to be on the right of something, which was moved from his right to his left. This is the way God is said to be Lord or Creator from a certain time, namely, by reason of a change affecting the creature. In the same way he is said to have been made something anew: "Lord, you have become our refuge" (Ps 90:1). Therefore, since union is a relation, it is through a change in the creature that God is newly said to have been made man, i.e., united in person to a human nature.

38. Finally, there were others, namely Arius and Apollinaris, who said that Christ had no soul, but that the Word was there in place of the soul. But this is refuted by John (10:18): “No one takes my soul.”¹¹ The words, *according to the flesh*, do not exclude a soul from Christ; rather, *flesh* stands for the entire man, as in Isaiah 40(:5), “All flesh shall see it together for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

39. It may be asked, since we believe that Christ was born of the Virgin, why the Apostle says he was made from a woman.

The answer is this: that is born which is produced in the natural order, as fruit from a tree or children from parents; that which is produced from the will of one acting, not according to the order of nature, as a house by a carpenter, cannot be said to be born but made.

Therefore, because Christ proceeded from the Virgin in the natural order in a certain respect, namely, that he was conceived from a woman and remained in her womb for a space of nine months, it is true to say that he was born. But because he proceeded in a certain respect not in the natural order but solely from divine power without male seed, he is said to have been made. Thus, Eve is described as made, not born, from Adam; Isaac was born, not made, from Abraham.

40. Another question is why he is said to have descended from the seed of David in particular and not from the seed of Abraham, to whom the promises about Christ had been made: “Now the promises were made to Abraham” (Gal 3:16).

¹¹ Aquinas here supplies the word “soul” from the previous verse in the Vulgate, which is a more literal rendering of the Greek than our English translations.

The answer is that this was done to give hope of pardon to sinners, for David was a sinner from whose seed Christ was born, while Abraham was a righteous man; and to commend Christ's royal dignity to the Romans, who ruled the nations.

41. The Apostle's words also exclude three errors of the Manicheans.

First, their assertion that the God of the Old Testament and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ are not the same. This is excluded when the Apostle says, *which God promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures*, i.e. of the Old Testament, *concerning his Son*.

Secondly, their condemnation of the Old Testament writings, which the Apostle here calls *holy*. For no other writings were holy before the Gospel except those.

Thirdly, their claim that Christ had an imaginary body. This is excluded when the Apostle says that *Christ was made from the seed of David according to the flesh, to him*, i.e., to the glory of the Father: "I seek not my glory, but his who sent me" (Jn 8:50)

Lecture 3

(4) [n. 42] Who was predestined the Son of God in power according to the spirit of sanctification by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

42. Having commended Christ's origin [n. 28], he now commends his power; and mentions three things.

First, his predestination, when he says, *who was predestined*;
secondly, his dignity or power, when he says [n. 49] *Son of God in power*;
thirdly, the sign or effect, when he says [n. 58] *according to the spirit of sanctification*.

43. In regard to the first it should be noted that the word "predestination" is taken from "destination," for something is said to be predestined as though destined beforehand. But destination is taken in two senses: in one sense, to destine is to send, for those who are sent to achieve some purpose are said to be destined, in accord with 1Mac 1(:14), "Some of the people destined, and they went to the king."¹² In another sense to destine is to determine, as in 2Mac 6(:20): "Eleazar destined not to do any unlawful things." But this second meaning seems to be derived from the first. For as a courier, who is sent, is directed to something, so whatever we determine we direct to some end. According to this, therefore, to predestine is nothing more than to determine beforehand in the heart what is to be done in regard to some thing.

44. Now someone can determine about a future thing or action. In one way, as to its make-up, as a builder determines how he should build a house; in another way, as to

¹² The Douay renders the Vulgate as follows: "Some of the people determined to do this...." This translation takes *destinaverunt* in the second of the two senses proposed by Aquinas, which fits the context better and in fact seems a better rendering of the Greek text of Maccabees. Here one must reckon with the possibility that the student transcribing the lecture has supplied a biblical example where Aquinas had either none or some other example.

the use or governance of the thing, as when someone determines how to use his horse. It is to this second pre-determination and not the first that predestination pertains.

45. For what one uses is referred to its end, because, as Augustine says in the book *On Christian Doctrine*, “To use is to refer something to an end to be enjoyed.”¹³ When, however, a thing is made, it is not by that very fact directed to something else. Hence, the pre-determination of a thing’s make-up cannot properly be called predestination. Therefore, to deny predestination is the same as to deny the eternal divine pre-determination about things to be done in time. But because all natural things pertain to the make-up of the thing itself, for they are either the principles of which things are made or what follows from such principles, it follows that natural things do not properly fall under predestination; for example, it is not proper to say that man is predestined to have hands. What is left is that predestination is properly said only of things that are above nature, to which things the rational creature is ordained.

46. But God alone is above the nature of the rational creature, who is united to him by grace: in one way, as regards God’s own act, as when foreknowledge of the future, which belongs to God alone, is communicated to a man by the grace of prophecy. Of this sort are all the graces called graces freely given [*gratia gratis data*]. In another way, as regards God himself, to whom the rational creature is united in the common manner through the effect of love: “He who abides in love abides in God and God in him” (1 Jn 4:16). This is done through sanctifying grace [*gratia gratum facientem*], which is the grace of adoption. In another way, which is particular to Christ, it is done through a union in personal being [*esse personali*]; and this is called the grace of union.

¹³ *On Christian Doctrine*, book 1, chapter 4.

Therefore, just as a man's union with God through grace of adoption falls under predestination, so also the union with God in person through the grace of union falls under predestination. And as regards this he says, *who was predestinated son of God*.

47. But to prevent this from being referred to the sonship of adoption, he adds, *in power*. As if to say: He was predestinated to be such a Son as to have equal, indeed the same, power as God the Father, because, as it is said in Revelation 5(12), "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and divinity";¹⁴ in fact Christ himself is the power of God: "Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:24). Hence, "whatever the Father does the Son does likewise" (Jn 5:19).

In regard to the graces freely given [*gratia gratis data*], one is not said to be predestined in the strict sense, because such graces are not directly ordained to direct to his ultimate end the one who receives them, but to direct others by them, as it is stated in 1 Cor 12(7), "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit unto profit."

48. Now it is obvious that anything which exists of itself is the measure and rule of things which exist in virtue of something else and through participation. Hence, the predestination of Christ, who was predestinated to be the Son of God by nature, is the measure and rule of our life and therefore of our predestination, because we are predestined to adoptive sonship, which is a participation and image of natural sonship: "Those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom 8:29).

Therefore, just as the man Christ was not predestined to be the natural Son of God because of any antecedent merits, but solely from grace, so we are predestined to be

¹⁴ Due to a copyist's error, the Latin text of Rev 5:12 has *divinitatem* instead of *divitias*, which would be the proper rendering of the Greek text.

adopted sons of God solely from grace and not from our merits: “Do not say in you heart, after the Lord your God has thrust them out before you, ‘It is because of my righteousness that the Lord has brought me in to possess this land’” (Dt 9:4).

It is clear, therefore, what the goal of that predestination is, namely, that one be son of God in power.

49. But we must still inquire who it is that has been predestined to this.

For since predestination implies antecedence, it seems that the one predestined to be the son of God in power was not always the son of God in power; for predestination does not seem to be concerned with what always has been, since that involves nothing antecedent. Hence if we suppose, according to Nestorius, that the person of the Son of man were other than the person of the Son of God, there would be no problem, because we could say that the created person of the son of man did not exist eternally but began in time to be the son of God in power.

The same would apply if one were to say the hypostasis or supposit of the Son of God and of the Son of Man were distinct.

But this is alien to the faith, as has been said [n. 34ff].

Therefore, since not only the person but also the hypostasis and suppositum of the Son of God and of the Son of man are the same, so that it cannot be truly and properly said that the son of man was made the Son of God, lest any created suppositum be implied of whom “Son of God” would be newly predicated, for an equal reason it does not seem possible to say that the son of man was predestined to be the son of God, because “the son of man” presupposes the eternal suppositum, who was always the Son of God. Hence, the antecedence which predestination involves has no place.

50. For this reason Origen says that the text should not read “who was predestinated” but “who was destined” to be the son of God in power so that no antecedence is indicated. If this accepted, the sense is plain, because Christ was destined, i.e., sent into the world by God the Father as the true Son of God in divine power.

But because all the Latin texts generally have, *who was predestined*, others have explained this according to the custom of Scripture whereby something is considered to be made when it is made known, as the Lord after the resurrection says: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Mt 28:18), because it was after the resurrection that he made known that such power had been given to him from eternity.

But if this is correct, the word “predestinated” is not taken in the proper sense, because predestination concerns matters pertaining to grace; whereas no grace was given to Christ by the fact that his divine power was made known, but rather to us.

Hence, it is even stated in a Gloss that according to this sense “predestinated” is used in the wider sense of “foreknown,” so that the sense would be: Christ was predestinated, i.e., foreknown, from eternity to be revealed in time as the Son of God in power.

51. Therefore, others, relating predestination to the union itself, did not attribute it to the person but to the nature, so that the sense would be: Who was predestinated son of God in power, i.e., whose nature was predestinated to be united to him who is the Son of God in power.

But even this explanation is improper and extorted. For since predestination implies an ordering to an end, predestination affects that to which it belongs to be ordered to an end by its own activity. But it is not the nature but the person that acts for an end.

Therefore, if the word “predestined” be taken in the strict sense, predestination must be attributed to the very person of Christ. But because the person of Christ subsists in two natures, the human and the divine, something can be said of him with respect to either nature. For just as something can be said of a man regarding his body, for example, to be touched or wounded, and something regarding his soul, for example, to understand and to will, so, too, something can be said of Christ both as to his divine nature, as when he says: “I and the Father are one” (Jn 10:30), and as to his human nature, as when we say that he was crucified and died. It is in this way that He is said to be predestinated according to His human nature. For although the person of Christ has always been the Son of God, nevertheless it was not always a fact that, while existing in a human nature, he was the Son of God; rather, this was due to an ineffable grace.

52. There is another consideration concerning the participle *made*, which designates a real act, and the participle *predestinated*, which designates an act of the soul.

For the soul, through its intellect and reason, can distinguish things that are joined in reality. For one can think of a white wall and speak separately about the fact that it is a wall and separately about the fact that it is white. So, too, in predestination. For predestination can be attributed to the person of Christ inasmuch as he subsists in a human nature, even though it is not attributed to him as subsisting in the divine nature.

This is why the Apostle first presents the Son of God as being incarnated and then attributes predestination to him, to let it be understood that he was predestined according as he was made from the seed of David according to the flesh. Thus from the Son of God he descends to the flesh and from the flesh, by way of predestination, he ascends to the Son of God, in order to show that neither did the glory of the Godhead prevent the

weakness of the flesh nor did the weakness of the flesh diminish the majesty of the Godhead.

53. In the Gloss it is asked, first, whether Christ is the Son of God according as he is man.

It seems so, because here is Christ, who was predestined to be [the Son of God]; but he was predestined to be [the Son of God] according as he is a man. Therefore, as a man he is the Son of God.

However, I answer that if the “as” denotes the unity of the person, it is true that as man he is the Son of God, because the person of God and man is one. But if it designates the condition of the nature or its cause, it is false. For it is not from the human nature that he is Son of God.

In the argument there is a fallacy of composition and division, because the “as” can modify the participle “predestined,” and taken this way it is true that as man he is predestined; or it can modify that being the Son of God to which the predestination is ordained, and taken this way it is false. For he was not predestined that as man he be Son of God; and this is the sense of the words assumed by the argument.

54. The second question [in the Gloss] is whether Christ as man is a person.

I answer that if the “as” is referred to the very supposit of the man, it must be admitted that this supposit is a divine person. But if it designates the condition of the nature or the cause, taken this way Christ as man is not a person, because the human nature does not cause a new personhood in Christ. For it is joined to a nobler person into whose personhood it passes.

55. Likewise, an objection is made against a statement in the Gloss, namely, that the one who assumed and what he assumed are one person. But what the Son of God assumed is a human nature. Therefore, the human nature is a person.

I answer that such expressions must be explained so that the meaning is this: he who assumed and the nature he assumed are united in one person.

56. The fourth question is whether this is true: “A man was assumed by the Word.”

It would seem so according to Ps (65:4): “Blessed is he whom thou dost choose and assume.”

I answer that since a man implies a supposit, in this case an eternal one, it cannot properly be said that a man was assumed by the Word; for a same thing is not assumed by itself. Hence, wherever the expression “man was assumed” is found, it is taken as the human nature.

57. The fifth question is whether this is true: “This man has always existed.”

The answer is that it is true, because a man supposes a supposit, in this case an eternal one. Hence it is stated in Heb (13:8): “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” However, the statement is not true if man is taken precisely as man. For it is not true that that man, as man, always has existed, but as He is Son of God.

So, the matters concerning the preordainment and power of the Son of God are clear.

58. But a third matter remains, namely concerning the sign, which is touched upon when he says, *according to the Spirit of holiness*.

It is the custom of divine power to sanctify men by conferring the Holy Spirit: “I am the Lord who sanctify you” (Lev 20:8). He alone can give the Holy Spirit: “Thus says God, the Lord who created the heavens, who gives breath to the people upon it and the Spirit to those who walk in it” (Is 42:5). Therefore, it is clear that Christ has divine power, because He gives the Holy Spirit: “When the Counselor comes whom I shall send” (Jn 15:26). Furthermore, it is by His power that we are sanctified: “You were sanctified, you were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:11).

He says, therefore: that Christ is the Son of God in power appears *according to the Spirit of holiness*, i.e., inasmuch as He gives the sanctifying Spirit. This sanctification began with the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord: “For as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (Jn 7:39). However, this does not mean that no one had received the sanctifying Spirit before Christ’s resurrection, but that from the time He arose, a more copious and general Spirit of sanctification began to be given.

59. It can also mean that two signs of the divine power in Christ are designated here.

First, indeed, from the fact that he says, *according to the Spirit of holiness*, whether it be understood according to the sanctifying Spirit, as has been explained, or in view of the fact that He was conceived in the Virgin’s womb by the Holy Spirit – which, of course, is a sign of the divine power in Him according to the words of Lk (1:25): “The Holy Spirit will come upon you” and further on (1:35): Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.”

The second sign of the divine power is the raising of the dead: “As the Father raises the dead and gives life, so also the Son” (Jn 5:21).

The sense, therefore, is this: that Christ is the Son of God in power is evident from *His resurrection from the dead*, i.e., from the fact that He made the dead rise with Him: “many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised” (Mt 27:52) and will finally make all rise: “All who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth” (Jn 5:28).

Or it can be understood of a spiritual resurrection of the dead, i.e., from sin: “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead” (Eph 5:14). Those who are raised by Him are called Christ’s dead because they are raised by him just as those under a doctor’s care are called his sick.

But these two signs can be referred to two previous clauses in this way, *who was made to him according to the flesh from the seed of David*: and this according to the Spirit of Holiness, from Whom His flesh was conceived. *Who was predestined Son of God in power*, and this is apparent in the resurrection of the dead.

But the first explanation is better.

Lecture 4

(5) [n. 60] By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith in all nations, for his name;

(6) [n. 65] Among whom are you also the called of Jesus Christ:

(7) [n. 66] To all who are in Rome, the beloved of God, called to be saints. Grace to you and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

60. After commending Christ in his origin and power [n. 28], he now commends him in his generosity, which is shown by the gifts he conferred on believers.

And he sets out two gifts [n. 61].

One is common to all believers, namely grace, by which we are restored. We receive this from God through Christ; hence, he says, *through whom we believers have received grace*; “Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (Jn 1:17); and below (5:2): “Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand.”

For it is fitting that just as all things were made by the Word (Jn 1:3), so by the Word as by the art of God Almighty all things should be restored; as an artisan repairs a house by means of the same art as he built it: “God was pleased to reconcile through him all things, whether on earth or in heaven” (Col 1:20).

61. The other spiritual gift was conferred on the apostles. This he touches on when he says, *and apostleship*, which is the chief office in the Church: “God has appointed in the church, first, apostles” (1 Cor 12:28).

Apostle is the same as sent. For they were sent by Christ, bearing, as it were, his authority and office: “As the Father has sent me, even so I send you” (Jn 20:21), i.e., with full authority. Hence Christ himself is called an apostle: “Consider Jesus, the apostle and

high priest of our confession” (Heb 3:1); hence, too, through him as chief apostle or “one sent,” the others secondarily obtained apostleship: “He chose twelve whom he called apostles” (Luke 6:13).

Now he sets out the grace of apostleship as a preface both because they obtained apostleship not through their merits but from grace: “I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle; but by the grace of God I am what I am” (1 Cor 15:9); and because apostleship cannot be worthily obtained unless sanctifying grace precedes it: “Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (Eph 4:7).

62. Then he describes this apostleship: first, from its aim when he adds, *to bring about the obedience of faith*. As if to say: We have been sent with this aim, to induce men to obey the faith.

Obedience finds its scope in things we can do voluntarily; in matter of faith, since they are above reason, we consent voluntarily. For no one believes unless he will to, as Augustine says. Consequently, in matters of faith, the following has a place: “You have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed” (Rom 6:17). Concerning this aim Jn (15:16) says: “I appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide.”

63. Secondly, it is described from its extent when he says, *among all the nations*, because they were directed to instruct not only the Jews but all nations: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations” (Mt 28:19).

Paul in particular had received a mandate to all nations, so that the words of Is (49:6) apply to him: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will give you as a light to the

nations.” Yet the Jews were not excluded from his apostolate, especially those who lived among the Gentiles: “Inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them” (Rom 11:13-14).

64. Thirdly, from the completeness of its power when he says, *for the sake of his name*, i.e., in His place and with His authority.

For as Christ is said to have come in the Father’s name and had the Father’s full authority, so the apostles are said to have come in Christ’s name, as though in Christ’s person : “What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the person of Christ” (2 Cor 2:10).

Or by these words it is described from its end, i.e., to broadcast His came without seeking any earthly reward for himself: “He is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before kings and the Gentiles and the children of Israel” (Ac 9:15). Hence, he urged all believers to do the same: “Do everything in the name of Jesus Christ (Col 3:17).

65. Fourthly, as to his power over those to whom he was writing and who were subject to his apostleship. Hence h says, *including yourselves*, i.e. I number among those subject to my apostolate even you Romans howsoever lofty: “He lays it low, the lofty city,” the foot of the poor, i.e., of Christ, tramples it, “the steps of the needy,” namely, of the apostles Peter and Paul (Is 26:5-6); “We were the first to come all the way to you with the gospel of Christ” (2 Cor 10:14).

He adds, *the called of Jesus Christ*, in accord with Hos 1(:9), “I will call ‘not my people’ mine”; or, you are called that you may be of Jesus Christ, as is said below (8:30), “Those whom he predestined he also called.” Or, you are called of Jesus Christ, i.e., you

are named from Christ, “Christians”: “So that at Antioch the disciples were first named Christians” (Acts 11:21).

66. Then the persons greeted are described: first [n. 67], from their place when he says *to all in Rome*.

To all, indeed, because he sought the salvation of all: “I wish that all were as I myself am” (1 Cor 7:7); also the Lord had said to him: “You must bear witness also at Rome” (Ac 23:10).

67. Secondly, they are described from their gift of grace, *God’s beloved*.

First [n. 68ff.], the primary source of grace is mentioned, namely, God’s love: “He loved his people, all those consecrated to him were in his hand” (Dt 33:3); “Not that we loved God first, but that he first loved us” (1 Jn 4:10). For God’s love is not called forth by any goodness in a creature, as human love is; rather, He causes the creature’s goodness, because to love is to will goodness to the beloved. But God’s love is the cause of things: “Whatever the Lord pleases, he makes” (Ps 135:6).

68. Secondly, their calling when he adds, *called*.

This call is twofold. One is outward, as when He called Peter and Andrew (Mt 4), while the other is inward, when it is according to an interior inspiration: “I called and you refused to listen” (Pr 1:24).

69. Thirdly, he mentions the grace of justification when he says, *to be saints*, i.e., sanctified by grace and the sacrament of grace: “But you were washed, you were sanctified,” to be beloved by God, called to be saints (1 Cor 6:11).

70. Then [cf. n 15] the blessings he wishes them are mentioned. These are *grace and peace*. One of these, namely, grace is the first among God’s gifts, because by it the

sinner is made holy: “They are justified by his grace as a gift” (Rom 3:24). The other, namely, peace, is His last gift, which is completed in happiness: “He makes peace in your borders” (Ps 147:14). For perfect peace will exist when the will is at rest in the fullness of all good, a state that results from being free of all evil: “My people will abide in the beauty of peace” (Is 32:18).

Consequently, in these two blessings all those between are understood.

71. Then he shows from whom these blessings are to be expected when he adds, *from God our Father*: “Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights” (Jas 1:17) “The Lord bestows grace and glory” (Ps 84:11).

He adds, *and from the Lord Jesus Christ*, because, as stated in Jn (1:17): “Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” He Himself says: “My peace I give to you” (Jn 14:27).

72. The phrase, *God the Father*, can be taken for the whole Trinity, which called Father, because names implying a relationship to the creature are common to the whole Trinity, for example, Creator and Lord.

But he adds, *and the Lord Jesus Christ*, not to imply that He is another person distinct from the three, but to stress the human nature by whose mystery the gifts of grace come to us: “Through whom he has granted to us his precious and very great promises” (2 Pt 1:4).

Or it might be said that the phrase, *God the Father*, stands for the person of the Father, Who is called the Father of Christ by propriety, but our Father by appropriation: “I am ascending to my Father and to your Father” (Jn 20:17).

73. Then the person of the Son is meant when he says, *and the Lord Jesus Christ*. The person of the Holy Spirit is not expressly mentioned, because he is understood in his gifts, which are grace and peace, or even because He is understood whenever there is mention of the Father and of the Son, for He is their union and bond.

Lecture 5

(8) [n. 74] First, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is spoken of in the whole world.

(9) [n. 78] For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make a commemoration of you,

(10) [n. 83] Always in my prayers making request, if by any means now at length I may have a prosperous journey, by the will of God, to come unto you.

(11) [n. 87] For I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual grace, to strengthen you;

(12) [n. 88] That is to say, that I may be comforted together in you by that which is common to us both, your faith and mine.

(13) [n. 89] And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that I have often purposed to come unto you, and have been hindered up to now, that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

(14) [n. 92] To the Greeks and to the barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise, I am a debtor.

(15) [n. 95] So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are at Rome.

(16a) [n. 96] For I am not ashamed of the gospel.

74. After the greeting [n. 15], the Apostle begins the message, wherein

First he shows his affection for his readers, in order to render them benevolent hearers;

secondly, he instructs them in the truth about the power of Christ's grace, there [v. 16b; n. 97] at *For it is the power of God*.

He shows his affection for them in three ways:

first, by giving thanks for their blessings;

secondly, by the prayer he directs to God on their behalf, there [v. 9; n. 78] at *For God is my witness*;

thirdly, by his desire to visit them, there [v. 10; n. 85] at *Always in my prayers*.

75. In regard to the first, three things should be noted [n. 76, 77].

First, the order in which he gives thanks, when he says, *first, I thank my God*.

For it is necessary that in all affairs, we begin by giving thanks: "Give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Th 5:18); indeed, a person is not worthy to receive a blessing, if he does not express thanks for past blessings: "The hope of an ungrateful man will melt like wintry frost" (Wis 16:29) and "to the place where the streams flow, there they return" (Ec 1:7), because to the source whence blessings come they return, namely, by giving thanks, to flow again by repeated blessings.

But we need God's blessing in all we seek or do; consequently, before all else thanks should be given.

76. Secondly, he designates three persons, one of whom is the person to whom thanksgiving is made when he says, *my God*, to whom thanks are due for all our

blessings, because they flow from Him: “Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above” (Jas 1:17). And although He is God of all through creation and governance, he is particularly the God of the just for three reasons: first, on account of the special care he shows them: “The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous” (Ps 34:15) and again: “The Lord is my light” (Ps 27:1); on account of their special worship; “This is my God and I will praise him” (Ex 15:2); thirdly, because he is their reward: “I am your reward exceedingly great” (Gen 15:1).

The second person is the mediator, whom he mentions when he says, *through Jesus Christ*. For thanks should be returned to God in the same order in which graces come to us, namely, through Jesus Christ: “Through him we have access to this grace in which we stand” (Rom 5:2).

The third is the person of those for whom he gives thanks, *for all of you*, because he regarded their graces as his on account of the bond of love. As if to say: “I have no greater grace than to hear that my children walk in the truth” (3 Jn 1:4).

He purposely says, *for all*, because he desires to please them all: “Just as I try to please all men in everything I do” (1 Cor 10:33) and wishes the salvation of all: “I wish that all were as I myself am (1 Cor 7:7).

77. Thirdly, he indicates the point about which he is grateful, *because your faith is proclaimed in all the world*.

He gives thanks for their faith, because it is the foundation of all spiritual blessings: “Faith is the substance of things hoped for” (Heb 11:1).

But the reason he commends the Romans on their faith is that they embrace it with ease and continued in it firmly. Hence, even today very many signs of faith are seen

by those who visit the holy places, as Jerome says *On the Epistle to the Galatians*.

However, their faith was not yet perfect, because some of them had been reached by false apostles, who taught that the rites of the Law must be joined to the Gospel.

But he rejoices and gives thanks for their faith not only on their account but on account of the benefits accruing therefrom, namely, because, being the rulers of the world, their example would lead other nations to accept the faith; for, as a Gloss says, the lesser are quick to do what they see done by the greater. On this account prelates are advised to be good examples to the flock (1 Pt 5:3).

78. Then when he says, *God is my witness*, he shows his affection for them from the prayer he offers for them.

And because the business of prayer is carried on in secret in God's presence: "When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father in secret" (Mt 6:6), he calls on God to testify that he prays for them.

First therefore he calls on the witness; secondly he shows on what point he calls the witness [v. 9b; n. 83].

79. He calls on the witness when he says, *God is my witness*, under whose witness all things are done: "I am judge and witness" (Jer 29:23).

Then, to show that he is not mistaken in calling on the just witness, he mentions how is joined to Him. First, in regard to service when he says, *whom I serve*, namely, with the worship of latria: "The Lord your God shall you adore and him alone shall you serve" (Dt 6:13). Secondly, in regard to the way he served when he says, *with my spirit*. As if to say: Not only in outward bodily service, but especially within, according to the spirit: "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn

4:24). Or *in spirit*, i.e., in spiritual observances, not in carnal, as the Jews: “We are the true circumcision who worship God in spirit” (Phil 3:3). Thirdly, in regard to the office in which he serves, namely, *in the gospel of his Son*: “Set apart for the gospel” (Rom 1:1). It is the gospel of the Son in three ways: first, because it is about Him: “I bring you good news of a great joy” (Lk 2:10). Secondly, because it was preached by Him as a special duty: “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose” (Lk 4:43). Thirdly, because it was enjoined by Him: “Preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk 16:15).

80. But since, as Augustine says, it is the same to say “God is my witness” and “I swear by God” the Apostle seems to be acting against the Lord’s command: “I say to you, Do not swear at all” (Mt 5:34); “Above all, my brethren, do not swear” (Jas 5:12).

However, as Augustine also says, the meaning of Sacred Scripture is gathered from the actions of the saints. For it is the same Spirit Who inspired the sacred Scriptures: “Men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (2 Pt 1:21) and Who moves holy men to act: “All who are led by the Spirit are sons of God” (Rom 8:14).

Consequently, if Paul is found to swear, it shows that the Lord’s word and that of the apostle James are not to be understood as indicating that an oath is absolutely unlawful, but that men should strive as far as possible not to use oaths as though they were something good and desirable of their very nature. And this on account of the danger involved in frequent swearing, namely, the possibility of perjury due to a slip of the tongue. Si (23:9) says, “Do not accustom your mouth to oaths for many are tripped by them.” Also because it seems contrary to the reverence we owe God for one to call

God as witness without necessity. For this reason the Apostle never made an oath except in writing, when a man speaks with greater deliberation and caution.

81. Yet an oath is sometimes necessary to lend credence to a speaker, which in turn often benefits the hearer. Consequently, the Apostle makes an oath for the benefit of his hearer, for whom it was beneficial to believe, as though not seeking what was useful to himself but to the majority, namely, their salvation.

Hence, the Lord's statement that "anything more than this," i.e., than simple word, "comes from evil" (Mt 5:37) does not imply that it comes from evil in the one who swears, but in the one who demands the oath: it comes not from the evil of sin, except in the case where a person judges that the one from whom he demands the oath will swear falsely – in which case it is a serious sin, as Augustine says. Rather, it implies that it comes from the evil of punishment, i.e., our ignorance of whether something said to us is true.

82. It should be noted that there are two ways of making an oath: one is by a simple statement, as when it is said, "by God" or "God is my witness." This is the form the Apostle uses here. The other is by an imprecation, namely, when a person calls on God's witness in the form of some punishment to be inflicted on the speaker if he is lying: "if I have requited evil with evil..., let my enemy pursue me..." (Ps 7:3-5). The Apostle also uses this form, as in 2 Cor (1:23): "I call God to witness against my life."

83. Then he mentions the matter concerning which he calls God to witness when he says, *that I mention [remember] you always in my prayers without ceasing*, i.e., because in his prayers he always prayed for them on account of the general benefits that

arose from their conversion: “Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you” (1 Sam 12:23).

The statement, *I remember*, can be understood in two ways: in one way according to the sense of Ps 137 (v.6): “Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you”; in another way, *I remember you*, i.e., I pray to God, Who receives the prayers of the humble. Therefore, when the saints pray for certain people, they are somehow presented to His gaze, just as their other actions are. Hence, the woman said to Elijah: “You have come to bring my sin to remembrance” (1 Kg 17:18), as though whatever is done against the just is in the memory and eyes of God.

84. That he claims to pray *without ceasing* is in agreement with what he tells the Thessalonians: “Pray constantly” (1 Th 5:7) and with Lk (18:1) that “they ought always to pray and not lose heart.”

This can be understood in three ways: in one way, as to the very act of praying, and then one is praying always or without ceasing, if he prays at the appointed times and hours: “peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour” (Ac 3:1). In another way, as to purpose of prayer which is that our mind rise up to God; and so a man prays as long as he directs his entire life to God: “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31). Thirdly, as to the cause; for when a person so acts that others pray for him, he seems to be praying, as in the case of those who give alms to the poor who pray for them: “Store up almsgiving in the heart of the poor: and it shall obtain help for you against all evil” (Si 29:12).

Therefore, *I thank my God for you*, because I regard your blessings as my own. This is obvious from the fact that I pray for you as I do for myself.

85. Then when he says, *asking that somehow ... I may succeed in coming to you*, he proves his affection by his desire to visit them.

First, he mentions the desire;

secondly, his intention of acting on this desire, there [v. 13; n. 89] at *And I would not have you ignorant*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he mentions a sign of this desire;

secondly, the cause of his desire, there [v. 11; n. 87] at *For I long*.

86. The sign of the desire is the prayer he said for them, which implies such a desire.

That the desire itself was intense is shown when he says, *asking [entreating]*, for something very important which is beyond my merits: “The poor use entreaties, but the rich answer roughly” (Pr 18:23); for something intensely desired seems great to the one desiring.

Secondly, it is an anxious desire, for he says, *somehow [by any means]*. For if a person anxiously desires something, he seeks to get it by any means, easy or difficult: “What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I shall rejoice” (Phil 1:18-19).

Thirdly, the desire was of long standing, for he says, *that I may now at last*, i.e., after long desiring it. For the just are concerned not for a short time but continually: “A friend loves at all times” (Pr 17:17).

Fourthly, the desire was correct, because it was in keeping with God’s will. Hence he adds, *that by God’s will I may at last succeed in coming to you*, i.e., in keeping

with His will, in terms of which I judge success: “not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Mt 26:39).

87. Then when he says, *For I long to see you*, he mentions the causes of the desire, and there are two [n. 88].

First, the welfare of those he would visit; hence, *I long to see you*: “I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus” (Phil 1:8), not for a trifling reason as in worldly friendship, but *that I may impart to you some spiritual gift*, not as its author but as its minister: “One should regard us as stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor 4:2); and this *to strengthen you* in the faith you have received: “When you have been converted, strengthen your brethren” (Lk 22:32).

Now a minister imparts grace in a number of ways, one of which is by the administration of the sacraments of grace: “As each has received a gift, administer it to one another as good dispensers of God’s grace” (1 Pt 4:10) and by exhorting in sermons: “Let no evil talk come out of your mouth, but only such as is good for edifying..., that it may impart grace to those who hear” (Eph 4:29).

88. The second cause is the mutual consolation found in friendly communication. Hence he continues, *that we may be mutually encouraged*, i.e., me by seeing you and imparting a grace, and all of us *by each other’s faith, both yours and mine*.

For it is a source of mutual consolation to be one in the faith: “But God who comforts the downcast comforted us by the coming of Titus: not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you.” (2 Cor 6:6).

89. Then when he says, *I would not have you ignorant*, he mentions his intention to fulfill his plan lest it appear to be a vain desire.

First, he mentions his plan;

secondly, its cause, there [v. 13b; n. 92] at *that I might have some fruit*;

thirdly, his eagerness, there [v. 15; n. 95] at *So, as much as in me*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he mentions his plan;

secondly, the obstacle, there [v. 13b; n. 91] at *and have been hindered*.

90. He says, therefore, first: Not only do I desire to see you, but I have decided to fulfill this desire, *and I want you to know, brethren, that I have often intended to come to you* to prove my love “not only in word or speech but in deed and in truth” (1 Jn 3:18).

91. Secondly, he touches on the obstacle preventing him from having fulfilled that intention, saying, *but thus far I have been prevented* either by the devil, who endeavors to prevent the preaching from which man’s salvation results: “the north wind drives away rain” (Pr 25:23), i.e., the doctrines of the preachers; or perhaps by God, according to Whose nod the journeys and words of preachers are arranged: “The clouds,” i.e., preachers, “scatter his lightning. They turn round and round by his guidance to accomplish all that he commands them” (Jb 37: 11-12). Hence in Ac (16:6) it is recorded: “They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia”; and again: “They attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.”

But the Apostle wants them to know both these things for their own benefit, so that seeing his affection, they might receive his words with more reverence, and recognizing their own conduct as the obstacle hitherto preventing his visit, they might

amend their lives. Ro the words of Is (5:6) express a punishment for sin: “I will command the clouds to rain no rain upon it.”

92. Then he gives two reasons for his intention. The first is utility; hence he says, *in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles*, to whom I have preached.

This can be taken in two ways: in one way as though he were saying: that I may reap some harvest among you by my preaching: “You should go and bear fruit” (Jn 15:16). In another way as though from their conversion a harvest would grow for him: “He who reaps, receives wages and gathers fruit for eternal life” (Jn 4:36).

93. The other reason is the responsibility of his office: “Woe to me, if I do not preach the gospel” (1 Cor 9:16).

And because he had undertaken the general apostolate of the Gentiles, he asserts that he under obligation to all: “Although I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all” (1 Cor 9:19).

94. And for this reason he sets out two diversities. One is along the lines of the diversity of nations, when he says, *to Greeks and to barbarians*.

A person is called a barbarian, either because he is cut off from some people in one way or another in the sense of 1 Cor (13:11): “If I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a barbarian to the speaker and the speaker to me”; or because he is cut off from the human race, inasmuch as he is not ruled by reason. Hence, they are properly called barbarians who are not directed by reason. This is implied in 2 Macc (15:2): “Do not act so fiercely and barbarously,” i.e., inhumanly.

Now because the Greeks were the first to establish laws, he calls all the Gentiles ruled by human laws Greeks.

He makes no mention of the Jews who were ruled by divine laws, because he was not appointed apostle to the Jews but to the Gentiles: “We to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised” (Gal 2:9).

95. Both reasons account for his readiness of will, so that he says, *I am eager*, i.e., as far as I am concerned, I am prepared, unless prevented, *to preach the Gospel even to you in Rome*: “Then all the people departed from the presence of Moses. And they came everyone whose heart stirred him” (Ex 35:20).

96. He rejects the obstacle to eagerness, namely, shame, on account of which many fail to do what they would otherwise do readily; hence he says, *I am not ashamed of the gospel*, which, indeed, seemed to be an occasion of shame for some in the presence of unbelievers, as he states in 1 Cor (1:23); “We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and folly to the Gentiles.” But there is really no reason for shame, because he continues (v. 24): “but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks [?] Hence it is said: “Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him the Son of man will be ashamed” (Lk 9:26).

That is why the baptized are anointed with the chrism in the form of a cross on the forehead, where shame has its seat, namely, lest they be ashamed of the gospel.

Lecture 6

(16b) [n. 97] For it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also the Greek.

(17) [n. 102] For the justice of God is revealed in it from faith unto faith, as it is written: The just man lives by faith.

(18) [n. 109] For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and injustice of those men that detain the truth of God in injustice:

(19) [n. 113] Because what is known about God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it unto them.

(20a) [n. 117] For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. His eternal power also and divinity.

97. After eliciting the good will of the Roman believers, to whom he was writing, by showing his affection for them [n. 74], the Apostle now begins to instruct them in matters pertinent to the teachings of the Gospel for which he had been set apart.

First he shows them the power of the gospel grace;
secondly, he urges them to perform the works of this grace, at chapter 12, there [n. 953] at *I beseech you*.

In regard to the first he does to things:
first, he sets forth what he intends;
secondly, he explains it, there [v. 18; n. 109] at *For the wrath of God*.

In regard to the first he does three things:
first, he sets forth the power of the gospel grace;
secondly, he explains, there [v. 17; n. 102] at *For the justice*;
thirdly, he supports his explanation, there [17b; n. 104] at *As it is written*.

98. He says, therefore: I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because, although “the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor :18). *For it is the power of God.*

This can be understood in two ways. In one way, that the power of God is manifested in the Gospel: “He has shown the people the power of his works” (Ps 111:6); in another way, that the Gospel itself contains in itself God’s power, in the sense of Ps 68 (v. 33): “He will give to his voice a voice of power.”

99. In regard to this power three things can be considered.

First, to what it extends. This is answered when he says, *for salvation*: “Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your soul” (James 1:21). This happens in three ways: first, insofar as sins are forgiven by the word of the Gospel: “You are made clean by the word I have spoken to you” (Jn 15:3). Secondly, insofar as a man obtains sanctifying grace through the Gospel: “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth” (Jn 17:17). Thirdly, insofar as it leads to eternal life: “You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

100. The second consideration is how the Gospel confers salvation, namely, through faith, which is indicated when he says, *to everyone who believes*. This happens in three ways. First, through preaching: “Preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mk 16:15). Secondly, by confessing the faith: *with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (Rom 10:10). Thirdly, by the Scripture; hence even the written words of the Gospel have a saving power, as Barnabas cured the sick by placing the Gospel upon them.

Nonetheless, one must beware the superstitions of characters, because this is superstitious.¹⁵ Hence in Ezekiel 9:6, those were saved who had written on their foreheads a Tau, which is the sign of the cross.

101. The third thing to be considered is the people for whom the Gospel works salvation, namely, both the Jews and the Gentiles. For God is God not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, as he says below in 3(:19); hence he adds *to the Jews first and also to the Greeks*.

By *Greek* is meant all the Gentiles, because the Gentiles' wisdom arose from the Greeks.

But since he says below (10:12) *There is no distinction between Jew and Greek*, why does he say here that the Jew is first?

The answer is that there is no distinction as far as the goal of salvation to be obtained is concerned, for both obtain an equal reward, just as in the vineyard the early and the late workers received one coin in Matt 20(:10). But in the order of salvation the Jews are first, because the promises were made to them, as is said below in chapter 3(:2), whereas the Gentiles were included in their grace like a branch grafted into a cultivated olive tree, as is said in chapter 11(:24). Also, our savior was born from the Jews: "Salvation is from the Jews" (Jn 4:22).

102. Then he explains how the Gospel works unto salvation when he says, *For the justice of God is revealed in it from faith unto faith*.

This can be understood in two ways.

¹⁵ In Quodlibet 12, Q. 9, A. 2 corp., Thomas mentions that St. Cecilia carried a bit of the text of the gospel next to her heart, but he points out that she did not add other words or characters to the text. This would have indicated a superstitious belief in magic phrases or signs.

In one way it can refer to the justice by which God is just: “The Lord is just and has loved justice” (Ps 11:7). Taken this way, the sense is that *the justice of God*, by which he is just in keeping his promises, *is revealed in it [in eo]*, namely, in the man who believes the Gospel, because he believes that God has fulfilled what he promised about sending the Christ. And this is *from faith*, namely, [the faithfulness] of God who promised: “The Lord is faithful in all his words (Ps 145:13); *to faith*, namely of the man who believes.

Or it can refer to the justice of God by which God makes men just. For the justice of men is that by which men presume to make themselves just by their own efforts: *Not knowing the justice of God and seeking to establish their own justice, they did not submit to the justice of God* (Rom 10:3). This justice [of God] is revealed in the gospel inasmuch as men are justified by faith in the gospel in every age. Hence he adds, *from faith to faith*, i.e., proceeding from faith in the Old Testament to faith in the New, because in both cases men are made just and are saved by faith in Christ, since they believed in his coming with the same faith as we believe that he has come. Therefore, it is stated in 2Cor 4(13), “We have the same type of faith as he had who wrote, ‘I believed, and so I spoke’.”

103. Or it can mean from the faith of the preachers to the faith of the hearers:

“How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?” (Rom 10:14)

Or from faith in one article to faith in another, because justification requires belief in all the articles: “Blessed is he who reads and hears the words of this prophecy” (Rev 1:3).

It can be taken as from present faith into future faith, i.e., into the full vision of God, which is called faith by reason of the certainty and solidity of the knowledge, [while] this [present faith is called faith] by reason of the knowledge of the Gospel: “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face” (1Cor 13:12).

104. He supports this explanation when he adds, *As it is written: My just man lives by faith* (Hab 2:4). This follows the Septuagint text, for in our text, which follows the Hebrew truth, it says “The just man lives by his faith.”

It says *My just man*, i.e. justified by me and reputed just before me, as is said below in chapter 4(:2), *But if Abraham was justified by works of the Law, he has glory, but not before God. For what do the Scriptures say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reputed to him unto justice.”* Hence it adds, *lives by faith*, i.e. by the life of grace: “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God” (Gal 2:20).

105. Four things must be considered here concerning faith [n. 106-108].

First, what faith is. For it involves willed assent, with certitude, to that which is not seen: because, as Augustine says, no one believes unless he is willing. According to this definition a believer differs from a doubter, who assents to neither side; he also differs from one holding an opinion, who assents to one side not with certitude but with fear concerning the other side; he differs also from one who knows scientifically, who through certitude assents by the necessity of reason. Accordingly, faith is midway between scientific knowledge and opinion.

106. The second consideration is whether faith is a virtue. Clearly it is not, if faith is taken for that which is believed, as in the statement: “This is the Catholic faith,

that we venerate one God in Trinity.” But if it is taken for the habit by which we believe, then sometimes it is a virtue and sometimes not.

For a virtue is a principle of a perfect act. But an act depending on two principles cannot be perfect, if either of the principles lacks its perfection, just as riding cannot be perfect, if the horse does not run well or the rider does not know how to guide the horse. Now the act of faith, which is to believe, depends on the intellect and on the will moving the intellect to assent. Hence, the act of faith will be perfect, if the will is perfected by the habit of charity and the intellect by the habit of faith, but not if the habit of charity is lacking. Consequently, faith formed by charity is a virtue; but not unformed faith.

107. The third point to be considered is that the same numerical habit of faith which was not formed by charity becomes a virtue with the advent of charity, because, since charity is outside the essence of faith, the substance of faith is not changed by the coming or going of charity.

108. Fourthly, we must consider that just as the body lives its natural life through the soul, so the soul lives the life of grace through God. First of all, God dwells in the soul through faith: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Eph 3:17); but this indwelling is not perfect, unless faith is formed by charity, which by the bond of perfection unites us to God, as Col 3(:14) says. Consequently, the phrase, *lives by faith*, must be understood of formed faith.

109. Then when he says, *the wrath of God is revealed*, he proves what he had said, namely, that the power of the gospel’s grace exists for all men unto salvation.

First, he shows that it is necessary for salvation;

secondly, that it is efficacious or sufficient, at chapter 5, there [n. 381] at *Being justified therefore by faith*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he shows that the power of gospel grace was necessary for the Gentiles' salvation, because the wisdom in which they trusted could not save them;

secondly, he shows that it was necessary for the Jews, because circumcision, the Law and other things in which they trusted, did not bring them salvation. Chapter 2, there [n. 169] at *Therefore you have no excuse*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he states his intention;

secondly, he manifests it, there [v. 19; n. 113] at *Because what is known about God*.

110. And he sets forth three things. First, punishment, when he says: Rightly do I say that the justice of God is revealed in it, *for in it the wrath of God is revealed*, i.e., God's vengeance, which is called wrath in comparison to angry men who seek vengeance exteriorly; although God takes vengeance with a tranquil spirit: "You, our Lord, judge with tranquility" (Wis 12:18).

Of this anger of God, John says: "He that does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him" (John 3:36).

This is stated, because some philosophers said that punishments for sin are not from God, contrary to what is said in Psalm 94(:19), "He that chastises the nations, does he not chastise us?"

That is why he adds, *from heaven*, because they believed that God's providence was so occupied with the heavens that it did not extend to earthly affairs: "He walks among the poles of the clouds, nor does he consider us" (Job 22:14). But as it says in Ps 102(:19), "From heaven the Lord looked at the earth."

Or he is said to prove their iniquity *from heaven*, because they should have recognized the power of the Creator above all from the greatness of the heavens: "The heavens will reveal his iniquity" (Job 20:27).

Or *from heaven* he will come to judge: "Jesus will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

111. Secondly, he mentions the sin for which the punishment is inflicted.

First, the sin against God, when he says: *against all ungodliness*. For just as godliness refers to worship paid to God, as to the highest parent, so ungodliness is a sin against divine worship: "The wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself" (Ezek 18:20).

Secondly, he sets forth the sin committed against man, when he says: *and injustice*. For justice is that through which men come together and engage one another reasonably: "Your justice will help a son of man" (Jb 35:8).

112. Thirdly, he sets out the knowledge they had of him, when he says: *of men who suppress the truth of God*, i.e., true knowledge of God, *by their wickedness*. For true knowledge of God, by its very nature, leads men to good, but it is bound, as though held captive, by a love of wickedness through which, as Ps 11(:1) says, "truths have vanished from among the sons of men."

113. Then when he says: *For what can be known about God*, he manifests what he has said, but in reverse order.

For he first admits that wise men among the Gentiles knew the truth about God; secondly, he shows that there was ungodliness and injustice among them, there [v.20b; n. 123] at *So that they are without excuse*;

thirdly, that they have incurred God's wrath, there [v. 32; n. 166] at *Who, knowing the justice of God*.

In regard to the first he does three things.

First, he shows what they knew about God;

secondly, from whom they obtained this knowledge, there [v.19b; n. 116] at *For God has made it clear*;

thirdly, how they obtained it, there [v.20; n. 117] at *For the invisible things*.

114. First, therefore, he says: Rightly do I say that they have suppressed the truth about God. For they did possess some true knowledge of God, because *what is known about God*, i.e., what can be known about God by men through reason, *is manifest in them*, i.e., is manifest to them from something in them, i.e. from an inner light.

Therefore, it should be noted that some things about God are entirely unknown to man in this life, namely, what God is. Hence Paul found in Athens an altar inscribed "To the unknown God" (Acts 17:23). The reason for this is that man's knowledge begins with things connatural to him, namely, sensible creatures, which are not proportioned representing the divine essence.

115. But man is capable of knowing God from such creatures in three ways, as Denis says in *The Divine Names*.¹⁶

He knows him, first of all, through causality. For since these creatures are subject to change and decay, it is necessary to trace them back to some unchangeable and unfailing principle. In this way, it can be known that God exists.

Secondly, he can be known by the way of excellence. For all things are not traced back to the first principle as to a proper and univocal cause, as when man produces man, but to a common and exceeding cause. From this it is known that God is above all things.

Thirdly, he can be known by the way of negation. For if [God] is a cause exceeding [his effects], nothing in creatures can belong to him, just as a heavenly body is not properly called heavy or light or hot or cold. And in this way, we say that God is unchangeable and infinite; and we use other negative expressions to describe him.

Men had such knowledge through the light of reason bestowed on them: “Many say, ‘O, that we might see some good!’ Lift up the light of your countenance upon us, O Lord” (Ps 4:6).

116. Then when he says *God has manifested it to them*, he shows by what author such knowledge was manifested to them and says that it was God: “He teaches us more than the beasts of the earth” (Jb 35:11).

Here it should be noted that one man manifests something to another by unfolding his own thought by means of such external signs as vocal sounds or writing. But God manifests something to man in two ways: first, by endowing him with an inner light through which he knows: “Send out your light and you truth” (Ps 43:3); secondly, by

¹⁶ *De Divinis Nominibus* chapter 7, lecture 4.

proposing external signs of his wisdom, namely, sensible creatures: “He poured her out,” namely, wisdom, “over all his works” (Sir 1:9).

Thus God manifested it to them either from within by endowing them with a light or from without by presenting visible creatures, in which, as in a book, the knowledge of God may be read.

117. Then when he says, *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world*, he shows the manner in which they received such knowledge.

Here the first points to be considered are the things they have known about God. He mentions three.

First, *the invisible things of him*, through which one understands God’s essence, which, as was said [n. 114], cannot be seen by us: “No one has ever seen God” (Jn 1:18), i.e., in his essence, no one living in this mortal life: “To the king of ages, immortal, invisible” (1 Tim 1:17).

He says, *invisible things*, using the plural, because God’s essence is not known to us in regard to what it is, i.e., as it is in itself one. That is the way it will be known in heaven: “On that day the Lord will be one and his name one” (Zech 14:9). But it is now manifested to us through certain likenesses found in creatures, which participate in manifold ways that which is one in God. Accordingly, our intellect considers the one divine essence under the aspects of goodness, wisdom, power and so on, all of which are one in God.

Therefore he calls these *the invisible things* of God, because the one reality in God which corresponds to these names or notions is not seen by us: “So that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear” (Heb 11:3).

Another thing known about God is his *power*, in virtue of which all things proceed from him as from a principle: “Great is the Lord and abundant in power” (Ps 147:5). This power the philosophers knew to be eternal; hence it is called *his eternal power*.

The third thing known is what he calls *divinity*, namely, they knew God as the ultimate end unto which all things tend.

For the divine good is called the common good in which all things participate; on this account he says, *divinity*, which signifies participation, rather than “deity,” which signifies God’s essence: “For in him the whole fullness of divinity dwells bodily” (Col 2:9).

These three things are referred to the above-mentioned three ways of knowing. For the invisible things of God are known by the method of negation; the eternal power by the method of causality; the divinity by way of excellence.

118. Secondly, one must consider the medium through which they knew those things. This is designated when he says, *by the things that are made*.

For just as an art is shown by an artist’s works, so God’s wisdom is shown by his creatures: “From the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their creator” (Wis 13:5).

119. Thirdly he shows how God is known through them when he says, *clearly seen, being understood*. For it is by the intellect that God is known, not by the senses or imagination, which do not extend beyond bodily things: “But God is spirit” (John 4:24); “Behold my servant understands [*intelligit*]” (Is 52:13).

120. Fourthly, he designates the things from which God is known by this medium when he says, *from the creature of the world*. In one way, this can be understood as referring to man: “Preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15), either on account of the excellence of man, who in the order of nature is less than the angels’ but greater than lower creatures: “Yet you have made him less than the angels; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen” (Ps 8:5), or because he has something in common with every creature. For he has existence in common with stones, life in common with trees, sense in common with animals, and intelligence in common with angels, as Gregory says.¹⁷

In another way it can be understood of all creation. For no creature by its own natural power can see God’s essence in itself. Hence it is said even of the Seraphim, “with two wings they covered their head” (Is 6:2). But just as man understands God through visible creatures, so an angel understands God by understanding its own essence.

121. Or, *creature of the world* can be taken to mean not created things but the creation of things, as though it were said: from the creation of the world. In this case, one interpretation would be that the invisible things of God are understood by means of things made since the creation of the world and not only since the time of grace. Another interpretation would be that from the creation of the world men began to know God through the things that were made: “All men have looked on it” (Jb 36:25).

122. But a gloss says that by the *invisible things* of God is meant the person of the Father: “Whom no man has ever seen or can see” (1 Tim 6:16); by the *eternal power* the person of the Son: “Christ the power of God” (1 Cor 1:24); by *divinity* the person of the Holy Spirit, to whom goodness is appropriated. Not that philosophers under the lead of

¹⁷ Gregory the Great, *Expositio in librum Iob*, book 8.

reason could arrive by means of created things to a knowledge of the persons, so as to know what are proper to each, which do not signify any causal connection with creatures; but [this is said] by way of appropriation. Yet they are said to have failed in the third sign, i.e., in the Holy Spirit, because they did not mention anything corresponding to the Holy Spirit, as they did for the Father, namely the very first principle, and for the Son, namely the first mind created, which they called the Father's understanding [*paternum intellectum*], as Macrobius says in his book on *The Dream of Scipio*.

Lecture 7

(20b) [n. 123] So they are without excuse.

(21) [n. 126] For, although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or give thanks, but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened.

(22) [n. 131] For, claiming to be wise, they became fools,

(23) [n. 132] And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man and of birds, and of four-footed beasts and of creeping things.

(24) [n. 137] Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, to uncleanness, to dishonor their own bodies among themselves,

(25) [n. 141] They who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

123. After showing that truth about God was known by the Gentiles [n. 113], he now states that they were guilty of the sins of ungodliness.

First, he shows this with regard to the sin of impiety;
secondly, in regard to injustice, there [v. 28; n. 152] at *And since they did not see fit*.

But someone might believe that they would be excluded from the sin of ungodliness on account of ignorance, as the Apostle says of himself in 1 Tim (1:13): “I received mercy, because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief.”

First, therefore, he shows that they are without excuse;
secondly, he states their sin, there [v.23; n. 132] at *And they changed the glory*.

124. In regard to the first it should be noted that ignorance excuses from guilt, when it precedes and causes guilt in such a way that the ignorance itself is not the result of guilt; for example, when a person, after exercising due caution, thinks he is striking a foe, when he is really striking his father. But if the ignorance is caused by guilt, it cannot excuse one from a fault that follows. Thus, if a person commits murder, because he is drunk, he is not excused from the guilt, because he sinned by intoxicating himself; indeed, according to the Philosopher, he deserves a double penalty.

125. First, therefore, he states his intention, saying: *So*, i.e., things about god are so well known to them, *that they are without excuse*, i.e., they cannot be excused on the plea of ignorance: “Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin” (Jas 4:17); “Therefore, you have no excuse” (Rom 2:1).

126. Secondly, he proves his statement at *For, although they knew* (v. 21).

First, he shows that their first guilt did not proceed from ignorance;
secondly, their ignorance proceeded from this guilt, there [v. 21b; n. 128] at *but became vain*.

127. That their basic guilt was not due to ignorance is shown by the fact that, although they possessed knowledge of God, they failed to use it unto good. For they knew God in two ways: first, as the supereminent being, to Whom glory and honor were due. They are said to be without excuse, therefore, because, *although they knew god, they did not honor him as God*; either because they failed to pay Him due worship or because they put a limit to His power and knowledge by denying certain aspects of His power and knowledge, contrary to Si (43:30): “when you exalt him, put forth all your strength.”

Secondly, they knew Him as the cause of all good things. Hence, in all things he was deserving of thanks, which they did not render; rather, they attributed their blessings to their own talent and power. Hence, he adds: *nor did they give thanks*, namely, to the Lord: “Give thanks to Him in all circumstances” (1 Th 5:18).

128. Then when he says *did not give thanks* (v.21b) he shows that in their case, ignorance was the result of their guilt.

First, he states his charge;

secondly, he explains it, there [v. 22; n. 131] *Claiming*.

129. First, then, he mentions the guilt which caused their ignorance, when he says, *they became futile*.

For something is futile, when it lacks stability or firmness. But God alone is changeless: “I, the Lord, do not change” (Mal 3:6). Consequently, the human mind is free of futility, only when it leans on god. But when God is rejected and the mind rests in creatures, it incurs futility: “For all men who were ignorant of god were foolish and could not know God from the good things which are seen” (Wis 13:1); “The Lord knows the

thoughts of man, that they are vain” (Ps 94:11). *In their thinking they were futile*, because they put their trust in themselves and not in God, ascribing their blessings not to God but to themselves, as the Psalmist says: “Our lips are with us; who is our master?” (Ps 11:4).

130. Secondly, he mentions the ignorance which followed, when he says, *were darkened*, i.e., by the fact that it was darkened *their mind became senseless*, i.e., deprived of the light of wisdom, through which man truly knows God. For just as a person who turns his bodily eyes from the sun is put in darkness, so one who turns from God, presuming on himself and not on God, is put in spiritual darkness: “Where there is humility,” which subjects a man to God “there is wisdom; where there is pride, there is a disgrace” (Pr 11:2); “Thou hast hidden these things from the wise,” as they seemed to themselves, “and revealed them to babes,” i.e., to the humble (Mt 11:25); “The gentiles live in the futility of their mind; they are darkened in their understanding” (Eph 4:17).

131. Then when he says, *claiming*, he explains his statement.

And first, how they became futile in their thinking, when he says, *claiming to be wise, they became fools*. *Claiming*, i.e. ascribing wisdom to themselves as of themselves: “Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes” (Is 5:21); “How can you say to Pharaoh, ‘I am the son of the wise, a son of ancient kings? Where now are your wise men?’” (Jb 19:11)

Secondly, he explains his statement that their senseless minds were darkened, when he says, *they became fools* to the point of acting contrary to divine wisdom: “Every man is stupid and without knowledge” of his own on which he presumed (Jer 10:14).

132. Then when he says, *and exchanged the glory*, he mentions the punishment for the Gentiles' sin of ungodliness.

First, in regard to sinning against God's glory;

secondly, how they sinned against the truth of nature itself, there [v.25; n. 141] at *They who changed the truth*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he sets forth the sin of ungodliness;

secondly, the punishment, there [v. 24; n. 137] at *Wherefore God gave them up*.

133. Their sin, indeed, was that, so far as in them lay, they transferred divine honor to something else: "My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit" (Jer 2:11).

First, therefore, he mentions what they changed;

secondly, that into which they changed it, there [v. 23; n. 135] at *into the likeness*.

134. In regard to the first, three things should be noted on the part of God.

First, his glory, which he mentions when he says, *they exchanged the glory*. This can be interpreted in two ways: first, as referring to the glory with which man gives glory to God by rendering Him the worship of latria: "To the only God be honor and glory" (1 Tim 1:17). They exchanged this, when they paid to others the worship due to God. Secondly, as referring to the glory with which god is glorious, which is incomprehensible and infinite: "He that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory" (Pr 25:27). This glory, of course, is nothing less than the brilliance of the divine nature; for "he dwells in unapproachable light" (1 Tim 6:16).

This glory they exchanged, when they attributed it to other things, for “men bestowed on objects of stone and wood the name that ought not to be named” (Wis 14:21).

Secondly, his immortality is noted when he says, *immortal*. For He alone is perfectly immortal Who is entirely unchangeable; for every change is a form of ceasing to be. Hence, it is stated in 1 Tim (6:16): “He alone has immortality.”

Thirdly, he notes the sublimity of His nature, when he says, *God*, for it is stated in Ps 48 (v.1): “Great is the Lord.”

135. On the part of that into which they exchanged it, three corresponding things are mentioned. For in contrast to glory he says, *for images resembling*, i.e., for a likeness of something produced in the form of an image. For it is plain that the likeness in an image is subsequent to the thing whose image it is. But God’s glory or brilliance is prior to and the source of every nature and form; consequently, when they exchanged God’s glory for images, they put the first being in last place: “For a father consumed with grief, made an image of his child, who had been suddenly taken from him” (Wis 14:15).

In contrast to immortal he says, *mortal*: “What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to the Pit?” (Ps 30:9), i.e., what good is a dead thing? “He is mortal, and what he makes with lawless hands is dead” (Wis 15:17).

In contrast to God he says, *man*: “I will not show partiality to any man and I will not equate God with man” (Jb 32:21).

But what is more abominable, man exchanged God’s glory not only for man, who is made to the image of God, but even for things inferior to man. Hence, he adds, *of birds*, things that fly, *or animals*, things that walk, *or reptiles*, things that crawl. He omits

fish as being less familiar to ordinary human life. Now all these things were put under man by God: “Thou hast put all things under his feet” (Ps 8:8); “Go in and see the vile abominations that they are committing here. So I went in and saw; and there, portrayed upon the wall round about were all kinds of creeping things and loathsome beasts...” (Ez 8:9)

136. It might be mentioned, as a gloss says, that from the time of Aeneas’ arrival in Italy, images of men were cultivated, e.g., Jupiter, Hercules and so on. But after the conquest of Egypt during the reign of Caesar Augustus, the Romans took up the worship of animal images (on account of the figures of animals discovered in the sky), to which the Egyptians, given to astrology, rendered divine worship. Hence, the Lord himself instructed the children of Israel raised in Egypt against such worship, when He said: “Beware lest you lift up your eyes to heaven and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, you be drawn away and worship them” (Dt 4:19).

137. Then when he says *Wherefore God gave them up* (v.24) he mentions the punishment for such a sin.

Here it should be noted that man holds a place midway between God and the beasts and has something in common with both: with God, intellectuality; with animals, sensibility. Therefore, just as man exchanged that which was of God for what is bestial, so God subjected the divine in man, namely, reason, to what is of the beast in him, his sensual desire, as it is stated in Ps 49 (v.20): “Man cannot abide in his pomp,” i.e., understand the likeness of the divine image in him through reason, “he is like the beasts that perish.” This, therefore, is why he says, *therefore, God gave them up to the lusts of their hearts*, so that their reason would be ruled by the desires of the heart, namely,

lustful affections, about which he says below: “Make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.” But this is contrary to man’s natural order, in which reason dominates the sense appetites: “Its desire is under you and you must master it” (Gen 4:7).

Consequently, he releases men to the desires of the heart as to cruel masters: “I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a hard master” (Is 19:4).

138. It is chiefly with respect to the sense appetite that a certain bestial derangement is present in carnal sins. For the pleasures of touch, which delight gluttony and lust, are common to us and to beasts. Hence, they are more detestable, being more brutish, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* III.

This is designated when he says, *to impurity*, which refers to sins of the flesh, as is clear from Eph (5:5): “Every fornicator or impure man”; because it is especially through such sins that man turns to and is drawn to what is beneath him. For a thing is said to be impure or tainted from being mixed with something base, as silver mixed with lead. Hence, in explanation he continues: *to the dishonoring*, by base and unclean acts, *of their bodies among themselves*, i.e., not as though compelled by other, for example, by savages, but they do this among themselves spontaneously. Below, 9(21), “Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vase for honor and another for dishonor?”, namely, for menial use.

139. But since impurity of this kind is a sin, it seems that God would not give men over to it: “God himself tempts no one to evil” (Jas 1:13).

The answer is that God does not give men over to impurity directly, as though inclining a man’s affection toward evil, because God ordains all things to Himself: “The Lord has made everything for himself” (Pr 16:4), whereas something is sinful through its

turning from Him. But he gives men over to sin indirectly, inasmuch as He justly withdraws the grace through which men are kept from sinning, just as a person would be said to cause another to fall, if he removed the ladder supporting him. In this way, one's first sin is a cause of the next, which is that the same time a punishment for the first one.

To understand this it should be noted that one sin can be the cause of another directly or indirectly: directly, inasmuch as from one sin he is inclined to another in any of three ways. In one way, when it acts as a final cause; for example, when someone from greed or envy is incited to commit murder. Secondly, when it acts as a material cause, as gluttony leads to lust by administering the material. Thirdly, when it acts as a movent cause, as when many repetitions of the same sin produce a habit inclining a person to repeat the sin.

Indirectly, when the first sin merits the exclusion of grace, so that once it is removed, a man falls into another sin. In this way the first sin is the cause of the second indirectly or incidentally, inasmuch as it removes the preventative.

140. It should be borne in mind, however, that sin as such cannot be a punishment, because we suffer punishment against our will, whereas sin is voluntary, as Augustine says. But because sin has certain features contrary to the will of the sinner, it is by reason of them that a sin is called a punishment of a previous sin. One of these features is something preceding the sin, as the withdrawal of grace, from which it follows that a man sins. Another is something that accompanies the sin either interiorly, as that the mid is disarranged; hence Augustine says in *Confessions* I: "You have commanded it, O Lord, and so it comes to pass that every disarranged mid is a punishment to itself"; or in regard to its outward acts, which involve difficulties and labors, as sinners aver in Wis

(5:7): “We journeyed through trackless deserts.” The third feature is something that follows the sin, such as remorse of conscience, bad reputation and so on.

141. Then, when he says, *because they exchanged the truth*, he mentions the sin of ungodliness committed against the truth of the divine nature.

First he mentions the sin;

secondly, the punishment, there [v. 26; n. 146] at *Wherefore God gave them up*

142. The divine nature can be considered in two ways: in one way, as being the first truth. In this respect he says that *they exchanged the truth about God for a lie*.

This can be taken in two ways: first, that they changed the true knowledge they received from God into false dogmas with their perverse reasoning; for example when they claimed that certain idols are gods or that God is not all-powerful or all-knowing: “They have taught their tongue to speak lies” (Jer 9:5). In another way, they exchanged the truth about God for a lie, because they attributed the nature of divinity, which is truth itself, to an idol, which is a lie, inasmuch as it is not God: “Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies; worthless things in which there is no profit. Can man make for himself gods? Such are no gods!” (Jer 16:19).

The divine nature can be considered in another way as being the source of existence for all things through creation. Consequently, men owed Him worship: inwardly, the worship of a pious love: “If anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will him he hears” (Jn 9:31); outwardly, the service of latria: “The Lord, your God, shall you adore and him alone shall you serve” (Dt 9:13).

143. Hence, he continues, charging them that *they worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator*. For they worshipped heavenly bodies and air and water

and other such things: “They supposed that fire or wind or swift air or circle of the stars ... were the gods that rule the world” (Wis 13:2).

With these words he censures the wise men of the Gentiles who, although they never believed that anything divine was present in images, as the followers of Hermes believed, or that the fables created by poets concerning the gods were true, nevertheless paid divine worship to certain creatures, thus lending support to the fables. Thus, Varro supposed that the universe was God on account of its soul and taught that divine worship can be paid to the whole universe, namely, to the air, which they called Juno, to the water, which they called Liaeus, and to other things. Even the Platonists taught that divine worship was owed to all the rational substances above us; for example, to demons, to the souls of the heavenly bodies and to the intelligences, i.e., the separated substances.

Now, although we should show some reverence to those above us, it should never be the worship of latria, which consists chiefly in sacrifices and oblations, through which man professes God to be the author of all good things. Similarly, in any kingdom certain honors are due the supreme ruler and it is not lawful to transfer them to anyone else.

144. And for this reason he adds, *who is blessed*, i.e., Whose goodness is evident, just as we are said to bless God, when we admit His goodness with our heart and express it orally: “When you exalt [bless] him, put forth all your strength” (Si 43:30).

He adds, *for ever*, because His goodness is everlasting; it depends on no one else, but is the source of all good. For this reason the worship of latria is due Him.

He ends with *Amen* to indicate absolute certainty: “He that blesses himself in the land shall be blessed by the God of truth” (Is 65:16). *Amen*, i.e., it is true, or “so be it.”

145. It seems that the Apostle touches on the three theologies of the Gentiles.

First, the civil, which was observed by their priests adoring idols in the temple; in regard to this he says: *they exchanged the glory of the immortal God.*

Secondly, the theology of fables, which their poets presented in the theatre. In regard to this he says, *they exchanged the truth about God for a lie.*

Thirdly, their natural theology, which the philosophers observed in the world, when they worshipped the parts of the world. In regard to this he says, *they worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator.*

Lecture 8

(26) [n. 146] For this reason God gave them up to shameful affections. For their women changed the natural use into that use which is against nature.

(27) [n. 150] And, in like manner, the men also, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lusts for one another, men committing shameful deeds with men and receiving in themselves the recompense which was due to their error.

(28) [n. 152] And as they did not see fit to have God in their knowledge, God delivered them up to a reprobate sense, to do those things which are not fitting.

(29) [n. 156] Being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice, wickedness; full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

(30) [n. 162] Detractors, hateful to God, contumelious, proud, haughty, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

(31) [n. 166] Foolish, dissolute; without affection, without fidelity, without mercy. 32 Who, having known the justice of God, did not understand that they who do such

things, are worthy of death; and not only those who do them, but those also who consent to those who do them.

146. Having set forth the sin of ungodliness [n. 141], according to which they have sinned against the divine nature, he now sets forth the punishment whereby they have been reduced to sinning against their own nature.

First, he mentions the punishment;

secondly, he explains it, there [26b; n. 148] at *For their women*;

thirdly, its fittingness, there [27b; n. 151] at *the recompense*.

147. Therefore, he says, *for this reason*, i.e., because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie, *God gave them up* not, of course, by impelling them to evil but by abandoning them, *to dishonorable passions*, i.e., sins against nature, which are called passions in the sense that a passion implies that a thing is drawn outside the order of its own nature, as when water becomes hot or when a man becomes sick. Hence, because man departs from the natural order, when he commits such sins, they are fittingly called passions, as in Rom (7:5): “The passions of sins.”

They are called *dishonorable passions*, because their acts are not worthy of man: “It is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret” (Eph 5:12). For if sins of the flesh are shameful, because through them man is lowered to what is bestial in him, much more so are sins against nature, through which man sinks below the bestial: “I will change his glory into shame” (Hos 4:7).

148. Then when he says *For their women* (v.26b) he explains his statement.

First, in regard to women;

secondly, in regard to men, there [v. 27; n. 150] at *And, in like manner, the men also*.

149. He says therefore first: the reason why I say that they have been given up to dishonorable passions is that *their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural*: “Does not nature itself teach you?” (1 Cor 11:14); “They have transgressed the laws, broken the everlasting covenant,” i.e., the natural law (Is 24:5).

It should be noted that something is against man’s nature in two ways: in one way, against the nature of what constitutes man, i.e., rationality. In this way, every sin is said to be against man’s nature, inasmuch as it is against right reason. Hence, Damascene says that an angel in sinning was turned from what is according to nature into what is contrary to nature. In another way, something is said to be against man’s nature by reason of his general class, which is animal. Now it is obvious that according to the intent of nature, sexual union in animals is ordained to the act of generation; hence, every form of union from which generation cannot follow is against the nature of animal as animal. In line with this it is stated in a gloss that “the natural use is that a man and a woman come together in one copulation, but it is against nature that a man pollute a man and a woman a woman.” The same is true of every act of intercourse from which generation cannot follow.

150. Then when he says, *And, in like manner, the men also*, he explains in regard to males, who *gave up natural relations with women and were consumed*, i.e., lusted for something beyond the intent of nature: “They blazed like a fire of thorns” (Ps 118:12); and this *in their desires*, i.e., carnal desires, *men committing shameful acts with men*: “I will uncover your shame before them and they will see all your baseness” (Ez 16:37).

151. Then he shows that this punishment suited their guilt, when he says, *and receiving in their own person*, i.e., in the deformation of their nature, *the due reward of their error*, i.e., the error of exchanging the truth of God for a lie; *the due reward*, i.e., the retribution they deserved to receive according to the order of justice which required that those who insulted God's nature by attributing to creatures what is his alone, should be affronts to their own nature.

Although "reward" seems to imply something good, it is taken here for any retribution, even evil: "Wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23); "All their wages shall be burned with fire" (Mic 1:7).

It should be noted that the Apostle very reasonably considers vices against nature, which are the worst carnal sins, as punishments for idolatry, because they seem to have begun as idolatry, namely, at the time of Abraham, when idolatry is believed to have begun. That seems to be the reason why they are first recorded to have been punished among the people of Sodom (Gen 19). Furthermore, as idolatry became more widespread, these vices grew. Hence it is written in 2 Macc (4:12) that Jason "founded a gymnasium right under the citadel, and he induced the noblest of the young men to wear the Greek hat," i.e., put them in brothel houses. Now this was not the beginning, but an increase and progression of the heathenish and foreign manners.

152. Then when he says *And as they did not see fit* (v. 28) he shows that they fell under a penalty of justice.

First, he shows that previous sin brought them to these sins;

secondly, he enumerates the differences among these sins, there [n. 156] at *Filled with all iniquity*.

153. He mentions the preceding sin when he says, *and since they did not see first to acknowledge God*. This can be interpreted in two ways: in one way, that although they could have had true knowledge about God by the light of reason considering visible things, nevertheless, to sin more freely, they did not acknowledge God, i.e., they did not approve having God in their knowledge: “They said to God: ‘Depart from us. We do not desire knowledge of your ways.’” (Jb 21:14).

In another way it can mean that they did not acknowledge that God knows about human behavior: “The Lord does not see: the God of Jacob does not perceive” (Ps 94:7). According to this interpretation the punishment is shown to fit this sin, when he says, *God gave them up to a base mind [sense]*.

154. “Sense” here does not mean man’s external sense, by which sense-perceptible things are known, but the interior sense, according to which he judges his behavior: “To fix one thoughts on her,” i.e., wisdom, “is to have perfect understanding [sense]” (Wis 6:12).

It is called a base sense, because it reached discommendable judgments about behavior: “Men of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith” (2 Tim 3:8); “Refuse silver they are called” (Jer 6:30).

155. Therefore, he continues: *and to improper conduct*, i.e., behavior not in accord with right reason: “Their works are useless” (Wis 3:11).

Yet it is fitting that those who sinned against knowing God either by refusing to acknowledge Him or by thinking that they do not know Him, should be given up to a perverse sense. That is why it is written in Wis (14:31): “A just penalty always pursues the transgression of the unrighteous.”

156. Then when he says, *they were filled with all manner of wickedness*, he enumerates these unbecoming actions. First, he describes their general state, saying that *they were filled with all manner of wickedness*, because, as stated in 1 Jn (3:4): “All sin is wickedness.”

For just as every virtue, inasmuch as it carries out a precept of the Law qualifies as righteousness, so every sin, inasmuch as it is at variance with the rule of the divine law, qualifies as wickedness. And so sins are particularly reprehended in the sacred scripture.

He stresses their guilt in two ways: first, in its enormity, when he says, *filled*. For that person seems to be filled with wickedness whose affections are totally dedicated to sinning: “Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness” (Ps 13:3). Secondly, in its extent, because they sin not in one matter only but in all: “The worship of idols is the beginning and cause and end of every evil” (Wis 14:27).

157. Then when he says, *evil*, he enumerates their sins in detail.

First, their transgressions which disobey negative precepts;
secondly, their omission, which disregard affirmative precepts, there [v. 30b; n. 163] at *proud*.

Regarding the first he does two things:

first, he mentions the sins by which a person deteriorates within himself;
secondly, those by which he becomes harmful to his neighbor, there [n. 159] at *wickedness*.

158. In regard to the first he describes the source of deterioration in general terms, when he says, *evil*, i.e., malice, which is a habit of vice opposed to virtue. Hence it is that

a person who sins from habit is said to sin from malice: “Why do you boast of malice?” (Ps 51:1).

Getting down to particulars, he mentions first the sin by which a person is disarranged in regard to the desire for bodily pleasures, when he says, *fornication*. For although fornication, strictly speaking, is with prostitutes who offered themselves publicly near the “fornices,” i.e., the triumphal arches, yet here it is taken for any unlawful concubinage: “Beware, my son, of all immorality” (Tb 4:12).

Secondly, the vice through which a person is misaligned in his desire for external things, when he says, *covetousness*, which is the untamed desire for possessing: “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have” (Heb 13:5).

159. Then the sins which tend to harm one’s neighbor are mentioned: first, *malice*, i.e. villainy, which inclines a person to attempt what he cannot accomplish.¹⁸ This happens especially in regard to harming one’s neighbor, whom one does not always succeed in harming as planned: “let the evils of the wicked come to an end” (Ps 7:9).

Secondly, he mentions the root of these sins, when he says, *full of envy*, which consists in being grieved at another’s good; as a result one is incited to harm the other: “Through the devil’s envy death entered the world” (Wis 2:24).

160. Then are mentioned the wrongs: first, the obvious ones that are deeds, when he says, *murders*, which are the chief wrongs: “There is swearing, lying, killing, stealing and committing of adultery” (Hos 4:2). He says *murders* in the plural because murder is present not only in the action but also in the will: “Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer” (1 Jn 3:15), i.e., who hates him to kill him.

¹⁸ The Latin has *nequitia* derived from *nequire*, meaning “to be unable.”

Secondly, the obvious ones that are words, when he says, *strife [contention]*, which is an attack on the truth launched with the self-assurance of shouting: “It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife” (Pr 20:3).

161. Then he mentions the covert injuries: first, one that is general, when he says, *deceit*, i.e., when one thing is pretended and something else is done: “Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks deceitfully; with his mouth each speaks peaceably to his neighbor, but in his heart he plans an ambush for him” (Jer 9:8).

After these he mentions the inner root of these harmful deeds, when he says, *malignity*, which implies an evil fire, i.e., ill will in the heart: “They speak peace with their neighbors, while mischief is in their hearts” (Ps 28:3); “The Lord abhors deceitful men” (Ps 5:6).

162. Then he mentions the covert wrongs that are perpetrated by words, when he says, *gossips [whisperers]*, i.e., those who secretly whisper in men’s ears to sow discord among them: “Curse the whisperer and deceiver, for he has destroyed many who were at peace” (Si 28:15); *slanderers*, i.e., persons who detract from another’s reputation secretly, i.e., saying evil things about another without his knowing it: “If a serpent bites before it is charmed, there is no advantage in a charmer” (Ec 10:11).

But lest these sins be regarded as trivial, because they are committed only by words, he adds, *hateful to God*; for they mainly attack something that God loves in men, namely, mutual love: “This is my commandment, that you love one another” (Jn 15:12); hence it is stated in Pr (6:16): “There are six things which the Lord hates, and a seventh is an abomination to him, namely, a person who sows discord among brothers.”

He adds, *insolent*, namely, those who insult another to his face: “Though I formerly blasphemed and persecuted and insulted him” (1 Tim 1:13).

Thus he mentioned three vices that agree on one point, namely, they say something evil about one’s neighbor.

But they differ in their aim, for the whisperer intends discord, the slanderer ill repute, and the insolent injury.

163. Then he mentions the sins that involve omission: first, the root of these sins, when he says, *haughty*.

They are called haughty, as though moving on a higher plane than they ought. On account of an unregulated desire for excellence, they wish to be first, refuse any rule outside themselves and, therefore, ignore commands: “The beginning of all sin is pride” (Si 10:13), which is true, insofar as sin is a turning from God, but not insofar as sin is a turning to a perishable good. For it is stated in 1 Tim (6:10): “The love of money is the root of all evils.”

164. Secondly, he describes the progress of pride. First, from it is born in the heart a *boastful* attitude, so that a person esteems himself above others: “I am not like other men” (Lk 18:11). Against those who over esteem themselves Ps 131 (v.1) says: “My eyes are not raised too high.”

Secondly, from pride arises presumption to be new and different in behavior, to which he alludes, when he says, *inventors of evil*. For since good things have already been established by God and men, the result is that they devise new evils: “Their devising are against the Lord” (Is 3:8).

165. Then the omissions are mentioned: first, in regard to authority; hence, in regard to parents he says, *disobedient to parents*, contrary to what is commanded in Eph (6:1): “Children, obey your parents in the Lord.” In regard to God’s authority he says, *foolish*, i.e., acting contrary to God’s wisdom: “The fear of the Lord is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding” (Jb 28:28).

Secondly, he mentions a sin of omission relating to oneself, when he says, *faithless [slovenly]* in appearance and in gait: “A man’s attire and open-mouthed laughter and a man’s manner of walking show what he is” (Si 19:30). Some fall under this indictment, when their manner conflicts with the common customs of the people among whom they live.

Thirdly, he mentions omission touching one’s equals, toward whom we ought to have, first of all, affection in the heart; hence, he says, *heartless*: “The heart of the wicked is cruel” (Pr 12:10); “Men will be lovers of self” and not of others (2 Tim 3:2). Secondly, a man should live in social life with his equals, in contrast to which he says, *without fidelity*; consequently, they do not live in society with others: “They smote them with the edge of the sword ... and there was no deliverer, ... because they had no dealings with anyone” (Jg 18:27); “Woe to him that is alone when he falls and has no one to lift him up” (Ec 4:10).

Fourthly, he mentions an omission affecting one’s inferiors, when he says, *ruthless [without mercy]*, which we ought to show to the desolate: “Judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy” (Jas 2:13).

166. Then (v. 32) he shows that they are deserving of God’s anger or vengeance.

In this regard there are three points to consider [n. 167ff.].

First, their naturalistic attitude, because although they knew that God is just and possessed of all other perfections, they did not believe that He would punish their sins: “They say in their hearts, ‘The Lord will not do well, and will not do ill’” (Zeph 1:12). This is why he says, *although they knew God’s decree, they do these things*.

167. Secondly, the punishment due to their sins, when he says, *they deserve to die*: “The wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23). For it is fitting that the soul which deserts God should be deserted by its own body through bodily death and in the end be deserted by God through eternal death: “The death of the wicked is very evil” (Ps 34:22); “Over such the second death has no power” (Rev 20:6).

168. Thirdly, he considers those who deserve this punishment: first, *those who do these things*, i.e., the above mentioned sins: “Thou hatest all evildoers. Thou destroyest those who speak lies” (Ps 5:5-6).

But *not only they who do them but also who approve those who practice them*. And this in two ways: in one way directly, by applauding sin: “The wicked is praised in the desires of his heart” (Ps 10:3), or even by offering advice and help: “Should you help the wicked” (2 Chr 19:2). In another way, indirectly, by not objecting or opposing in any way, and especially when one is obliged by his office. Thus, the sins of his sons were imputed to Eli (1 Sam 3:13). In particular, this is directed against those Gentile wise men who, even though they did not worship idols, did nothing to oppose those who did.

Chapter 2

Lecture 1

(1) [n. 169] Therefore you have no excuse, O man, whoever you are, when you judge another; for in passing judgment upon him you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things.

(2) [n. 178] We know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who do such things.

(3) [n. 180] Do you suppose, O man, that when you judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself, you will escape the judgment of God?

(4) Or do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience? [n. 183] Do you not know that God's leads you to penance?

(5) [n. 186] But by your hardness and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath and revelation of the just judgment of God.

169. After showing that the Gentiles did not become just from the knowledge of the truth they had, the Apostle now shows that neither were the Jews made just by the things in which they gloried. Consequently, both of them need the power of the gospel's grace for salvation.

First, therefore, he says that the Jews were not made just by the Law;

secondly, that they were not made just by the race in which they gloried, in

chapter 3 [n. 246] at *Then what advantage has the Jew?*;

thirdly, that they were not made just by circumcision, in chapter 4 [n. 322] at *What therefore shall we say?*

170. In regard to the first point it should be noted that Jews and Gentiles converted to the faith judged each other on their previous life. For the Jews objected to the Gentiles that when they lived without God's law, they sacrificed to idols. The Gentiles on their part objected to the Jews that even though they received God's law, they did not keep it.

First, therefore, he rebukes both sides and their extravagant judgment;
secondly, he shows that the Jews were not worthy of a reward, because the things they glory in were not sufficient for salvation, there [v. 13; n. 210] at *For it is not the hearers of the Law*.

In regard to the first he does two things.
First, he confutes human judgment;
secondly, he discloses and commends the divine judgment, there [v. 2; n. 178] at *For we know*.

In regard to the first he does two things:
first, he proposes that although they judge one another, neither has an excuse;
secondly, he gives the reason, there [v. 1b; n. 172] at *for in passing judgment*.

171. First, therefore, he concludes from what he stated in the first chapter that even though the Gentiles by their wickedness suppressed the truth they knew about God, *you have no excuse, O man, whoever you are, when you judge another*, just as he said earlier: "So they are without excuse" (Rom 1:20).

He says, *whoever you are*, as if to say: Whether Jew or Gentile, because even the Gentiles, who might seem to have an excuse, cannot be excused on the plea of ignorance, as he stated above in 1:20 ff; “Do not pronounce judgment before the time” (1 Cor 4:5).

172. Then when he says *For in passing judgment* he gives the reason by rejecting the causes for excuse:

first, ignorance;

secondly, innocence, there [v. 1c; n. 176] at *because you, the judge*.

173. Ignorance is excluded by the very act of judging. For whoever judges another an evildoer shows that he knows that the conduct is evil and, therefore, that he is himself worthy of condemnation. And this is what he says: You have no excuse, for in passing judgment upon him as an evildoer you condemn yourself, i.e., you show that you are worthy of being condemned: “Judge not, that you may not be judged” (Mt 7:1).

174. This does not mean that every judgment is a cause of condemnation.

For there are three kinds of judgment: one is just, i.e., made according to the rule of justice: “Love justice, you rulers of the earth” (Wis 1:1); another is not just, i.e., made contrary to the rule of justice: “Although servants of his kingdom, you did not rule rightly” (Wis 6:4); the third is rash judgment against which Ec (5:2) says: “Be not rash with your mouth.”

A rash judgment is made in two ways: in one way, when a person passes judgment on a matter committed to him without due knowledge of the truth, contrary to what is stated in Jb (29:16): “I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know.” In another way, when a person presumes to judge about hidden matters, of which God alone has the power to judge, contrary to what is stated in 1 Cor (4:5): “Do not pronounce

judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness.”

175. But some things are hidden not only in relation to us but of their very nature and so belong solely to God’s knowledge: first, the thoughts of the heart: “Man’s heart is deceitful and unsearchable. Who can understand it? I, the Lord, search the mind and try the heart” (Jer 17:9); secondly, the contingent future: “Tell us what is to come hereafter that we may know you are gods” (Is 41:23). Hence, as Augustine says: “There are two cases in which we must beware of rash judgment: when it is not certain in what spirit something was done, or when it is not certain how a person will turn out, who now appears to be good or to be wicked.”

The first judgment is not a cause for condemnation, but the second and third are.

176. Then when he says *for you, the judge*, he rejects the other excuse, namely, innocence. As if to say: The reason why you, the judge of others, condemn yourself is that *you are doing the very same things* for which you condemn them; consequently, it seems that you are acting against your conscience: “Why do you see the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?” (Mt 7:3).

177. However, it should be noted that it is not always true, when someone judges another concerning a sin which he himself commits, that he automatically draws a condemnation upon himself, because he does not always sin mortally by so judging; yet he always reveals his own damnation.

For if he is publicly guilty of the sin concerning which he judges another, he seems to be giving scandal by judging, unless perhaps he humbly reproves himself along with the other and laments his sin.

But if he is secretly guilty of the same sin, he does not sin by judging another about the same sin, especially when he does so with humility and with an effort to rise again, as Augustine says in *The Lord's Sermon on the Mount*: "When necessity compels us to correct someone, let us first examine whether it is a vice, such as we never had; and then let us reflect that we could have had it or that we once had it and no longer have it; and then our common weakness will prod the memory, so that mercy and not hatred will guide that correction. But if we discover that we are presently guilty of the same vice, we should not scold but lament together and invite the other to join you in grieving."

178. Then when he says *For we know* (v. 2), he discloses and commends God's judgment. And concerning this he does three things.

First, he declares the truth of God's judgment;

secondly, he rejects a contrary opinion, there [v. 3; n. 180] at *Do you suppose*;

thirdly, he manifests the truth, there [v. 6; n. 189] at *Who will render*.

179. First, therefore, he says: The reason I say that you condemn yourself, when you do the same things that you judge, is that we know, i.e., we hold it as certain, *that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who do such things* i.e. God's judgment threatens them: "The avenger of sin is the sword, that you may know there is a judgment" (Jb 19:29); "God will bring every deed into judgment" (Ec 12:14).

We also know that this judgment will be based on the truth: "He will judge the earth with righteousness" (Ps 96:13).

But man's judgment, even though it be formed justly, is not always based on the truth of the affair, but on the words of witnesses, which sometimes clash with the truth. But this cannot happen in the divine judgment, because, as is said in Jer (21:23): "I am

the judge and witness.” Nor is He deceived by false allegations: “I will not spare him, nor his mighty words, and framed to make supplication” (Jb 41:12).

180. Then when he says *Do you suppose* (v. 3) he rejects a contrary opinion.

First, he states it;

secondly, the cause of it, there [v. 4a; n. 182] at *Or do you despise*;

thirdly, he disproves it, there [v. 4b; n. 183] at *Do you not know*.

181. First, therefore, he says: I have said that God’s judgment is in accordance with the truth, against those who do such things. *But do you not, O man*, whoever you are, *who judges those who do such things and yet do them yourself*, do you not fear a higher judgment? *Do you suppose that you will escape the judgment of God?* As if to say: If you suppose this, you are wrong: “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from your presence? (Ps 139:7); “All way of escape will be lost to them” (Jb 11:20).

182. Then when he says, *Or do you presume*, he shows the cause of this false supposition. For since man is not punished at once by God for sin, he supposes that he will not be punished, which is contrary to Si (4:5): “Do not say, ‘I sinned, and what happened to me? For the Lord is slow to anger’”; “because sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the heart of the sons of men is fully set to do evil” (Ec 8:11)

Yet the fact that the sinner does evil a hundred times and is patiently endured should not lead him to presume on God, but to conclude that it is good to fear Him. Therefore, he says here, *do you presume upon*: “When wickedness comes, contempt comes also” (Pr 18:3); *the riches*, i.e., the abundance: “God who is rich in mercy” (Eph 2:3); *of his kindness*, through which He diffuses His blessings on us: Thou openest thy

hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing” (Psl45:l6). For according to Denis the good involves the notion of diffusing itself: “The Lord is good to those who wait on him.” (Lam 3:25); *and longsuffering*, through which He endures for a long time those who sin from weakness and continue in their sin for a long time: “And count the forbearance of our Lord as salvation” (2 Pt 3:15); *and patience*, through which He endures those who sin grievously and from malice: “God is a righteous and patient judge. Is he indignant every day?” (Ps 7:11).

183. Then when he says *Do you not know* (v.4b) he disproves the aforementioned cause, namely the cause of contempt of the divine patience.

First, he discloses the purpose of God’s patience;

secondly, the danger of contempt, there [v. 5; n. 186] at *But by your hardness*.

184. First, therefore, he says it is hard to understand your scorn; *do you not know that God’s kindness* in postponing punishment *is meant to lead you to repentance*? “The Lord is not slow about his promise as some count slowness, but forbearing toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance” (2 Pt 3:9); “The Lord waits to be gracious to you” (Is 30:l8).

185. As is said in the gloss [of Lombard], the Apostle seems to touch upon three groups of sinners: those who promise themselves impunity; those who scorn God’s goodness; and the ignorant. Hence, the Gloss says: “You sin, O man, as long as you promise yourself that you will escape punishment; you sin more gravely, because you scorn; you sin most gravely, because you are ignorant.

But this seems to be false, for ignorance makes a sin less serious, rather than more serious.

The answer, as is held by some, is that it is more serious, i.e., more dangerous for some, because those who are ignorant of sin do not seek a remedy. Or it is most serious, if it is the form of ignorance that pertains to unbelief, which is the gravest sin: “If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized” (1 Cor 14:38). Or it is most serious in ingratitude, as Augustine says: “One who does not recognize a blessing is more ungrateful than one who belittles, i.e., scorns it.”

186. Then when he says *But by your hardness* (v. 5) he shows the danger of contempt, because it is not softened by the blessings of God’s goodness: “A hard heart will be afflicted at the end” (Si 4:26); *and impenitent heart*, which is not moved to repent by God’s forbearance and patience: “No man repents of his wickedness” (Is 8:6), *you are storing up wrath for yourself*, i.e., you are multiplying the debt of punishment: “You have laid up a treasure of wrath for the last days” (Jas 5:3).

Hence there follows *on the day of wrath*, i.e., on the day of judgment: “A day of wrath is that day” (Zeph 1:15), namely, because God does not now inflict the punishment He will inflict then, as is stated in Ps 75 (v.2): “At the set time I will judge with equity”; *when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed*, because the justice of God’s judgment will be revealed then, whereas now it is not believed or does not seem just: “Soon my salvation will come and my justice revealed” (Is 56:1).

187. Because the gloss [of Lombard, col. 1340] says that by *hardness and impenitent heart* is meant a sin against the Holy Spirit, which is unforgivable, it is important to see what a sin against the Holy Spirit is and why it is unforgivable.

Accordingly, it should be noted that in the opinion of the earlier Fathers of the Church who preceded Augustine, namely, Athanasius, Hilary, Ambrose, Jerome and Chrysostom, the sin against the Holy Spirit was the blasphemy whereby the works of the Holy Spirit are attributed to an unclean spirit, as in Matthew (12:31). It is considered unforgivable both in this life and in the future, because the Jews were punished for this sin even in this life by the Romans and in the life to come by devils; or because it has no basis for being excused, unlike the blasphemy they spoke against Christ, inasmuch as He was a son of man: “Behold a glutton and a drunkard” (Mt 11:19). They could have been led to say this on account of the weakness of the flesh, as occurred even in the Old Testament, when the children of Israel complained about the lack of bread and water, as we read in Ex (16:2 ff). This could be considered a human failing and easy to forgive. But later on when they declared before an idol: “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt” (Ex 32:4), they sinned against the Holy Spirit, for they attributed God’s work to demons. Hence their sin is called unforgivable, when the Lord answers: “Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them” (Ex 32:34).

Augustine, on the other hand, calls a sin against the Holy Spirit any word or blasphemy a person speaks against the Holy Spirit, through Whom sins are forgiven, as is stated in Jn (20:22): “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven.” Indeed, this sin is committed in the heart, in word and in deed, as long as one continues in sin to the end. Consequently, final impenitence is a sin against the Spirit and of its very nature unforgivable.

Later teachers call a sin against the Holy Spirit one that is committed with deliberate malice, which is opposed to the goodness appropriated to the Holy Spirit, just as a sin against the Son of God is one committed from ignorance, which is opposed to the wisdom appropriated to the Son. Similarly, a sin against the Father is one committed through weakness, which is opposed to the power appropriated to the Father.

Consequently, a sin against the Father and against the Son is deemed forgivable, because the very fact that it is committed from ignorance or from weakness seems to be a ground for excuse. But one committed from deliberate malice has no ground for excuse; hence, it is deemed unforgivable, because it has nothing in it to plead forgiveness; although God does forgive it sometimes, because He is good, just as He sometimes used His power to cure a naturally incurable disease.

188. In light of the foregoing, six kinds of sin against the Holy Spirit are listed, each excluding something by which sin is forgiven. The first two are taken on the part of God, namely, hope in His mercy, to which is opposed despair, and fear of God's justice, to which is opposed presumption.

Two others are taken on the part of man, namely, contempt for the changeable good, to which is opposed obstinacy, which is here called hardness, through which a person hardens his soul to sin; and abandonment of the state of being turned away from God, to which is opposed an impenitent heart, which never intends to repent and return to God.

The last two are taken on the part of God's gifts, one of which is faith "by faith sins are cleansed," to which is opposed resistance to the acknowledged truth. The other is

charity: “Charity covers all offenses” (Pr 10:12), to which is opposed envy of a brother’s grace.

Lecture 2

(6) [n. 189] Who will render to every man according to his works:

(7) [n. 195] to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;

(8) [n. 198] but for those who are factious and do not obey the truth, but believe in wickedness, there will be wrath and fury.

(9) There will be tribulation and distress [n. 201] on every soul of man who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek,

(10) [n. 204] but glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek.

(11) [n. 205] For there is no respect of persons with God.

(12) [n. 207] All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

189. After suggesting that God’s judgment is true and refuting the contrary opinion [n. 178], the Apostle here unfolds the truth of God’s judgment.

First, he presents his intention;

secondly, he manifests it, there [v. 7; n. 195] at *To those who by patience.*

190. First, he states facts about God’s judgment in regard to two things, namely, persons and their works.

In regard to works, God does not repay in the present life according to one's works, for sometimes He gives grace to evil-doers, as to the apostle Paul, who obtained mercy after being a blasphemer and persecutor. But this will not be so on the day of judgment, when the time comes to judge according to justice: "At the set time which I appoint, I will judge with equity" (Ps 75:2); hence, another passage says: "Requite them according to their works" (Ps 28:4).

With regard to persons, equality of retribution will be observed toward all: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor 5:10).

191. However, it seems that retribution will not be made according to one's works, because an eternal punishment will be paid for a temporal sin.

The answer, as Augustine says in the *City of God*, is that in justice's repayment equality in time between sin and punishment is not a consideration, because even in human judgment for a sin of adultery committed in a short time the death penalty is inflicted. Here the legislator is not interested in the time it takes to punish, but rather that the adulterer's death will forever separate him from the society of the living. Thus, in his way man, too, punishes a temporal sin with an eternal punishment.

Consequently, it is not strange if sins committed against charity, through which is formed a society between God and men, are punished eternally by the divine judgment.

192. The justice of this is clear on three counts.

First, on account of the infinite dignity of God Who is sinned against. For a sin is graver, the greater the dignity of the person sinned against, just as it is a greater crime to strike a prince than to strike a private citizen. Consequently, since the guilt of mortal sin

is in a sense infinite, an infinite punishment should balance it. Therefore, since it cannot be infinite in intensity, it must be infinite in duration.

193. Secondly, on account of the will of the sinner.

For whoever sins mortally turns from the unchangeable good and fixes his end in a changeable good, as a fornicator in a pleasure of the flesh and a covetous person in money. And because the end is sought for itself, whoever seeks the end is borne toward it and wills to possess it always, if something else does not hinder. Hence, one who sins mortally has the will to remain in sin forever, unless something changes him accidentally, as when he fears punishment. Consequently, it is fitting that if a man through his will seeks sin to be enjoyed forever, he should be punished for it eternally. For God, Who sees the heart, directs His special attention to the will of the sinner.

194. Thirdly, on account of the effect of sin, namely, the withdrawal of grace, from which it follows that a man left to himself would remain forever in sin, from which he cannot be extricated except by the help of grace. But it is not fitting that, the sin remaining, the penalty should cease; consequently, the penalty lasts forever.

The statement, *to render to every man according to his works*, does not mean according to equality of works because the reward exceeds the merit, but according to proportion, because He will render good to the good and better to the better. The same applies to evil.

195. Then when he says *to those who by patience* (v. 7) he clarifies his statement:

first, in regard to works;

secondly, in regard to persons, there [v. 9b; n. 201] at *on every soul*.

In regard to works he shows the truth of God's judgment:

first, to the good;

secondly, to the wicked, there [v. 8; n. 198] at *but for those who are factious*.

196. In regard to the first there are two things to consider, namely, merit and reward [n. 197].

Three things combine or merit: first, patience, which can mean God's patience as referred above: "Do you presume upon the riches of his goodness and patience?" (v.4). Then *those who by patience in well-doing* would be those who make good use of God's patience by doing good.

Or it can mean man's patience, and this in two ways: in one way, so that patience implies tolerating adversity with equanimity of heart. For it is necessary that one not give up good works on account of the evils he suffers, and this is what he says: *by patience in well-doing*. "Patience has a perfect work" (Jas 1:4); "By your patience you will gain your lives" (Lk 21:19). In another way, patience can be taken for long-suffering or for perseverance, which keeps a person from abandoning a good work on account of tedium: "You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand" (Jas 5:8); "you have need of patience" (Heb 10:36).

The second feature of merit is the goodness of a work, which is good, if it is directed to its proper end and if it conforms to its proper rule, which is God's law and human reason: "Let us not grow weary in well-doing" (Gal 6:9).

The third feature is a right intention, i.e., to seek eternal life, so that in the evils a man suffers or in the good he does he is not seeking something temporal, but eternal: "Seek first the kingdom of God" (Mt 6:33).

197. In regard to the reward he touches on three things: the first is *glory*, which signifies the splendor of the saints: either intrinsic glory, with which the mind will be filled: “The Lord will fill your soul with brightness” (Is 58:11), or external glory, with which their body will shine: “The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father” (Mt 13:43); “Let the faithful exult in glory” (Ps 149:5).

The second is *honor*, through which is signified the dignity of the saints and the reverence paid to them by every creature. For they will be kings and priests: “Thou hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God” (Rev 5:10) and will be numbered among the sons of God: “Why has he been numbered among the sons of God?” (Wis 5:5); “Thy friends are made exceedingly honorable, O God” (Ps 139:17).

The third is *immortality*, because that glory and honor will not pass, as they do in this world: “They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable” (1 Cor 9:25).

198. Then when he says, *but for those who are factious*, he shows the truth of a God’s judgment on the wicked and touches on sin and punishment.

In regard to sin three things are mentioned. The first is the obstinacy of the factious, which can be understood of man toward God calling him to Himself by His blessings, against which a man seems to struggle by resisting them: “Behold, while I am yet alive with you, you have always been rebellious against the Lord” (Dt 31:27). Secondly, it is understood of man’s struggle against faith: “Avoid disputing with words” (2 Ti 2:14). Thirdly, it can be understood of men struggling with one another, which is contrary to charity, the mother of the virtues: “Where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice” (Jas 3:16).

The second is the hardness of those *who do not obey the truth*. This can be understood in one way of the truth of faith: “If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?” (Jn 9:46); in another way, of the truth of God’s justice, to which they do not acquiesce, not believing the truth of His justice: “You say: ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’” (Ez 18:29). In a third way, it can be understood of the truth of life, in which they do not acquiesce who live perversely: “He who does what is true comes to the light” (Jn 3:21).

The third is malice; hence, he says: *but obey [believe] wickedness*, either because they consent to those who urge wickedness: “An evil-doer listens to wicked lips” (Pr 17:4); or because they believe that sins will not be punished, which would make God wicked: “Do not say: ‘I have sinned and what happened to me’?” (Si 5:4); or *they believe wickedness*, i.e., unbelief, namely, teachings against the faith: “So that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Th 2:12).

199. In regard to punishment four things are mentioned, which can be distinguished in two ways.

In one way, so that *wrath*, i.e., punishment and corporal vengeance is understood to come after the judgment: “A day of wrath is that day” (Zeph 1:15); *fury* during the judgment, when the wicked will be angry at themselves for the sins they committed: “It was we who strayed from the way of truth” (Wis 5:6). *Tribulation* and *distress* pertain to the soul separated from the body before the resurrection: “When distress and anguish come upon you” (Pr 1:27).

200. Or they can be distinguished in another way, so that the first two are taken on the part of God, Whose *wrath* is His disposition to punish, which is horrible for the wicked: “They will call to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the force [?] of the one sitting on the throne and from the fury of the Lamb” (Rev 6:16). His *fury* refers to the fact that He will consider sinners unworthy of eternal life: “I swore in my anger that they should not enter into my rest” (Ps 95:11).

But the other two are taken on the part of man. The word, *tribulation*, comes from *tribulus*, a prickly plant; hence, anything that causes pain can pertain to tribulation: “The sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the mighty man meets tribulation there” (Zeph 1:14). But *distress* is so called from the fact that a man’s spirit is in anguish, being unable to find a remedy against the evils he fears or already suffers: “I am hemmed in on every side and know not what to choose” (Sus 1:22); “Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him?” (Jb 27:9).

201. Then when he says *on every soul* (9b) he shows the truth of God’s judgment in regard to persons.

First, he proposes its equity;

secondly, he assigns the reason for this, there [v. 11; n. 205] at *For there is no respect of persons*;

thirdly, he explains the reason, there [v. 12; n. 207] *All who have sinned*.

202. The truth of the divine judgment in regard to persons is shown, first, as it affects the wicked, when he says, for *every human being who does evil*, i.e., against every soul, because just as the glory of the saints passes from the soul to the body, so the punishment of the wicked is first and chiefly in the soul and secondly in the body which,

on account of defect or sin, will rise capable of suffering: “The soul that sins shall die” (Ez 18:4).

203. But he says, *the Jew first and also the Greek*, because a greater punishment was due the Jews as knowing God’s will through the Law: “That servant who knew his master’s will but did not make ready or act according to his will shall receive a severe beating” (Lk 12:47). Similarly, Christians are punished more severely than unbelievers for the same sin, e.g., adultery or theft: “How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the son of God and profaned the blood of the covenant in which he was sanctified?” (Heb 10:29).

But as to total punishment, that of unbelievers is more severe on account of the sin of unbelief, which is the gravest. Hence, it says in 2 Pt (2:2) that “God’s wrath rests upon unbelievers.”

204. Secondly, he shows this in regard to the good: first, he repeats the two things mentioned above, namely, *glory and honor*, but the third, namely, *peace*, he mentions instead of immortality, which includes peace among many other things.

For a man’s peace cannot be complete as long as he fears he might lose the good things he has; rather, one has true peace of heart when he has everything he desires and no fear of losing then: “My people will abide in a peaceful habitation” (Is 32:18).

In these things, too, he gives primacy to the Jews, because they were first promised to them, and the Gentiles entered into their promises: “Others have labored and you have entered into their labors” (Jn 4:38).

205. Then when he says, *God shows no partiality*, he assigns the reason for his statement, namely, because there is no respect of persons with God: “Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality” (Ac 10:34).

Respect of persons is opposed to distributive justice, through which one distributes to each according to the person’s worth; therefore, there is respect of persons, when more is given or less is given without regard to worth. This happens when the person rather than his qualifications is accepted as a cause. In this case there is a cause, i.e., a rule of action, but the person is taken as the cause of doing something. Thus, if one gives more inheritance to another on account of a blood relationship, it is not respect of persons, because this relationship is a fitting cause why he should receive such benefits. But if a prelate gives more ecclesiastical goods to someone on account of a blood relationship, it would be respect of persons, if some other qualification were not present. For blood relationship is not a suitable reason for receiving spiritual goods.

Therefore, because God does everything for the best of reasons, respect of persons does not enter into His actions: “Wisdom orders all things well” (Wis 8:1).

206. Yet He seems to be a respecter of persons, because He abandons some sinners and calls others to Himself.

The answer is that respect of persons is opposed to justice; hence, it finds its sphere in the payment of debts, with which justice is concerned. But God calls sinners to repentance not from debt but as a favor: “But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works” (Rom 11:6); “Not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy he saved us” (Tit 3:5).

In such gifts not only God, but man too, is free to give to whom he will: “Am I not allowed to give what I choose with what belongs to me?” (Mt 20:15).

207. Then when he says *All who have sinned* (v.12) he explains the reason.

For if all who sinned are punished, it is clear that there is no respect of persons with God. Hence, he speaks first of those who have not received the Law, saying that *all who have sinned without the Law* received from God by Moses, *will perish without the law*, i.e., will be condemned, but not for transgression of the Law: “Because no one understands, they will perish forever” (Job 4:20 Vul.).

Secondly, he speaks of those who received the written law, and he says that *all who have sinned under the Law*, i.e. after the written Law, *will be judged by the Law*, i.e., precisely for having transgressed a precept of the Law: “The word which I have spoken will be his judge on the last day” (Jn 12:48).

208. The Apostle’s manner of speaking here has been taken as an occasion of error by some. Because the Apostle does not say that all who sinned under the Law will perish by the Law, as he had said of those who are without the Law that they will perish without the law, some believed that those who sin after receiving the law will be judged by some means, i.e., in the present, but will not perish.

But as the Gloss [of Lombard, col. 1344] says: “What Christian would say that the Jew will not perish for not believing in Christ, when the Lord says that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for them” (Mt 10:15). Hence Ez (18:32) says: “I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner.”

209. But the Apostle uses these different expressions because, as Gregory says on Jb (36:6): “He gives judgment to the poor,” some will perish in the future judgment without being judged, i.e., the wicked who are without faith and the Law: “The wicked will not stand in the judgment” (Ps 1:5), namely, because there is no basis for discussion with one entirely estranged from God: “He who does not believe is condemned” (Jn 3:18).

But others who sin in spite of having received the Law and faith will perish in such a way as also to be judged through a discussion held with them; hence, Ez (34:17): “I judge between sheep and sheep, rams and he-goats,” just as a king condemns enemies without a hearing, but citizens with a careful examination, as Gregory says.

Lecture 3

(13) [n. 210] For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.

(14) [n. 213] For when Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, these, although they have not the law, are a law to themselves.

(15) [n. 218] They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, [n. 219] while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them

(16) [n. 222] on that day when God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus, according to my gospel.

210. After confuting the human judgment with which the Gentiles and Jews judged one another and commending God's judgment [n. 169], the Apostle now undertakes to show that the things in which the Jews gloried do not suffice for their salvation.

First, he states his position;

secondly, he answers arguments against his position, in chapter 3, there [n. 246] at

Then what advantage has the Jew?

The Jews gloried in two things, namely, the Law and circumcision, which stemmed not from the Law but from the patriarchs, as stated in John 7(:22).

First, therefore, he shows that the Jewish Law heard or accepted was not enough for salvation;

secondly, he shows the same about circumcision, there [v. 25; n. 237] at

Circumcision indeed.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he sets forth his position;

secondly, he clarifies it, there [v. 14; n. 213] at *For when Gentiles.*

211. In regard to the first he sets forth two things: one by rejecting; the other by asserting.

For he rejects the Jewish opinion that they were made righteous by merely hearing the Law. Hence he says: I have said that all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law, *for it is not the hearers of the law*, i.e., in virtue of having heard the Law, *who are righteous before God*, even if they are deemed righteous before men: "Every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them is like a foolish man"

(Mt 7:26); “If anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror...” (Jas 1:23).

Secondly, he declares that the doers of the Law are righteous, when he says, *but the doers of the law will be justified*: “Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man” (Mt 7:24); “Be doers of the word and not hearers only” (Jas 1:22); “A good understanding have all those who practice it” (Ps 111:10).

212. But this point seems to conflict with his own statement below (3:20) that “no human being will be justified in his sight by the works of the law.” Consequently, no one is justified precisely for doing the works of the Law.

The answer is that justification can be taken in three ways: in one way, in regard to reputation; then one is said to be justified, when he is regarded as just: “You have made your sisters appear justified,” i.e., by reputation (Ez 16:51). In this sense, *the doers of the law are justified*, i.e., are considered just before God and men.

Secondly, by doing what is just: “This man went down to his home justified” (Lk 18:14), because the publican performed a work of justice by confessing his sin. In this way is verified the statement that *the doers of the law will be justified*, i.e., by performing the justices of the Law.

In a third way justification can be considered in regard to the cause of justice, so that a person is said to be justified, when he newly receives justice, as in (5:1): “Since we are justified by faith, we are at peace with God.” It must not be supposed, however, that the doers of the Law are justified as though acquiring justice through the works of the Law. This cannot be accomplished either by the ceremonial works, which confer no

justifying grace, or by the moral works, from which the habit of justice is not acquired; rather, we do such works in virtue of an infused habit of justice.

213. Then when he says *For when Gentiles who* (v.14) he clarifies his position.

First, he shows that doers of the Law are justified even without being hearers;

secondly, that hearers of the Law are not justified without observing the Law,

there [v. 17; n. 224] at *But if you are called a Jew*.

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he mentions the worthiness of those who observe the Law without having heard it;

secondly, he clarifies what he had said, there [v. 15; n. 218] at *They show that what the law requires*;

thirdly, he proves it, there [v. 15b; n. 219] at *while their conscience also bears witness*.

214. In regard to the first he touches on three things relating to the Gentiles [nn. 215, 217].

First, their lack of the Law, saying, when *Gentiles who do not have the law*, namely, the divine, which they have not received. For the Law was not delivered to the Gentiles but to the Jews: “The law which Moses commanded us as an inheritance for the congregations of Jacob” (Si 24:24); “He has not dealt thus with any other nation” (Ps 147:20); “When Moses commanded us a law, as a possession for the assembly of Jacob” (Dt 33:4).

From this it is clear that the Gentiles did not sin by not observing the ceremonies of the Law.

215. Secondly, he commends their observance of law, when he says, *they do by nature what the law requires*, i.e., the moral precepts, which flow from a dictate of natural reason. Thus Job (1:1) was blameless and upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. Hence he himself says: “My foot has held fast to his steps; I have kept his ways” (Jb 23:11).

216. But the expression, *by nature*, causes some difficulty.

For it seems to favor the Pelagians, who taught that man could observe all the precepts of the Law by his own natural powers.

Hence, *by nature* should mean nature reformed by grace. For he is speaking of Gentiles converted to the faith, who began to obey the moral precepts of the Law by the help of Christ’s grace. Or *by nature* can mean by the natural law showing them what should be done, as in Ps 4 (v.6): “There are many who say, ‘Who shows us good things!’ The light of thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us,” i.e., the light of natural reason, in which is God’s image. All this does not rule out the need of grace to move the affections any more than the knowledge of sin through the Law (Rom 3:20) exempts from the need of grace to move the affections.

217. Thirdly, he shows their worth in that *they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law*, inasmuch as they function as a law to themselves by instructing and inducing themselves to the good, because the Philosopher says: Law is a statement laying down an obligation and proceeding from prudence and understanding (*Eth.* 11). Therefore, it says in 1 Tim (1:9) that “the law is not laid down for the just,” who is not compelled by a law outside of him, “but for the lawless,” who need to be compelled from without.

It is, of course, the highest level of greatness among men, when they are induced toward the good not by others but by themselves. The second level belongs to those who are induced by others but without force. The third belongs to those who need to be forced to do good. The fourth belongs to those who cannot be directed to the good even by force: “In vain have I smitten your children; they took no correction” (Jer 2:30).

218. Then when he says *They show* (v. 15) he explains how they are a law to themselves. This can be likened to a law presented to man from without and which it is customary to deliver in writing on account of the memory’s weakness; whereas, those who observe the law without externally hearing the law show *that what the law requires is written* “not with ink, but” first and chiefly “with the Spirit of the living God” (2 Cor 3:3), and secondly through study: “Write them on the tablet of your heart” (Pr 3:3), i.e., the precepts of wisdom. Hence, here, too, he continues, *on their hearts*, not on parchment or on stone or copper tablets: “I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts” (Jer 31:33).

219. Then when he says *their conscience also bearing witness* (v.15) he proves his statement that the work of the Law is written in their hearts by citing actions which announce its presence.

First [cf. n. 222], he mentions those actions, one of which is the witness of conscience. He touches on this when he says, *while their conscience also bears witness*, conscience being the application of one’s knowledge in judging whether some action was good or bad to do.

Hence, this conscience sometimes gives testimony of good: “Our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience” (2 Cor 1:12); and sometimes of evil: “Your conscience knows that many times you have yourself cursed others” (Ec 7:23).

However, no one can testify that an action is good or bad, unless he has knowledge of the Law. Hence, if conscience bears witness about good or evil, this is a clear sign that the work of the Law has been written in the man’s heart.

220. Another function is to accuse and defend. Here, too, knowledge of the Law is required.

In regard to this he says, *and their conflicting thoughts accuse [accusantium] or perhaps excuse [defendentium]*, i.e., *accusantibus* or *defendentibus*, following the Greek practice whereby a genitive is used in place of an ablative. And these are *conflicting*.

For an accusing thought in regard to some action arises in a man, when he has reason to suppose that he has acted evilly: “Mow I rebuke you and lay the charge before you” (Ps 50:21); “The show of their countenance witnesses against them” (Is 3:9).

But sometimes a defending thought arises, when he has reason to suppose that he has acted well: “My heart does not reproach me for any of my days” (Jb 27:6). Between this accusation and defense the testimony of conscience has the final say.

221. This passage, *their conscience bears witness*, can be interpreted in another way, so that there is consciousness not only of one’s deeds but also of thoughts; but the first is better.

222. But because testimony, accusation, and defense occur during a trial, he mentions the time, when he says, *on that day*. He says this not to designate the quality of

the time but the disclosure of things hidden: “I will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness” (1 Cor 4:5).

Yet it is sometimes called night on account of the uncertainty of that hour: “At midnight there was a cry” (Mt 25:6).

The accusing or defending thoughts are not those which will arise on the day of judgment, because on that day each one’s salvation or damnation will be clear to him; rather, such thoughts as exist now and the testimony of conscience that exists now will be represented to a man on that day by divine power, as Augustine says in book 2 of *The City of God*.

Indeed, the recognition of those thoughts that remain in the soul seems to be nothing less, as a Gloss says, than the debt of punishment or the reward, which follow them.

223. Then he shows the author of the judgment, when he says, *when God judges*: “He will judge the world with righteousness” (Ps 96:13).

He also describes what the judgment will concern, when he says, *the secrets of men*, matters about which men cannot now judge. “He will bring to light the thing now hidden in darkness” (1 Cor 4:5).

He also shows the teaching from which faith in this judgment is had when he says, *according to my gospel*, i.e., preaching by me: “On the day of judgment men will render account for every careless word” (Mt 12:36).

He says, *according to my gospel*, although he could not say, “my baptism,” and be a minister of both, because in baptism a man’s diligence effects nothing, but in preaching

the Gospel the preacher's industry achieves something: "When you read this you can perceive my insight in the mystery of Christ" (Eph 3:4)

Then he mentions the judge, when he says, *by Christ Jesus*, Who has been appointed by God to be "judge of the living and the dead" (Ac 10:42); "The Father has given all judgment to the Son" (Jn 5:20), Who will appear to the good and the wicked during the judgment: to the good in the glory of the godhead: "Your eyes will see the king in his beauty" (Is 33:17), but to the wicked in His human form: "Every eye will see him" (Rev 1:7).

Lecture 4

(17) [n. 224] But if you are called a Jew and rest on the law and make your boast of God

(18) [n. 227] and know his will and approve what is the more profitable things, because you are instructed in the law,

(19) and if you are sure that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,

(20) a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of infants, having the form of knowledge and of truth in the law –

(21) [n. 232] you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal?

(22) You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you commit sacrilege?

(23) You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?

(24) For “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,” as it is written.

(25) [n. 237] Circumcision indeed profits if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.

(26) [n. 240] So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the justices of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?

(27) Then those who are physically uncircumcised but keep the law will judge you who by the letter and circumcision are a transgressor of the law.

(28) [n. 242] For not it is not the one who is so outwardly who is not a Jew, and it is not what is so outwardly, in the flesh, that is circumcision.

(29) But he who is so in a hidden way is a Jew, and circumcision is of the heart in the spirit, not in the letter. His praise is not from men but from God.

224. After showing that the doers of the Law are justified even without being hearers, which pertained to the Gentiles, the Apostle now shows that hearers are not justified, unless they are doers, which pertains to the Jews.

First, therefore, he shows the Jews’ privileged state in receiving the Law;

secondly, their shortcomings in transgressing the Law, there [v. 21; n. 232] at *You then who teach others*.

He shows their privileged state on three counts:

first, in being the race to whom the Law was given;

secondly, as regards the Law itself, there [v. 17b; n. 226] at *and rely upon the law*;

thirdly, as regards the effect or work of the Law, there [v. 18; n. 227] at *and know his will*.

225. In regard to race he says, *But if you call yourself a Jew*, which is an honorable name: “Judah became his sanctuary” (Ps 114:2); “Salvation is from the Jews” (Jn14:22).

They are called Jews not after Judas Maccabeus as some say, probably on the ground that he united and protected that people, when they were scattered: “He gladly fought for Israel” (1 Macc 3:2); for the name, “Jews,” was in use before his time, as in Est (8:16): “The Jews had light and gladness...”

Rather, it seems that the Jews were named after the patriarch Judah: “Judah, your brothers shall praise you” (Gen 49:8); for in the time of Roboam, when ten tribes seceded from his kingdom and adored a golden calf, they were led away captive by the Assyrians (1 Sam 17). Scripture makes no mention of their return; rather, the land remained occupied by strangers later called Samaritans. But two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remained in the kingdom of Roboam and persevered in the word of God. Although they were led away captive to Babylon, they were permitted to return to their native land by Cyrus, the Persian king (1 Ezra 1). Then, because the tribe of Judah was the greater, the entire group was named after him: not only those from the tribe of Benjamin but those from the other tribes who joined them.

226. Then when he says *and rest on the law* (17b) he mentions their prerogative in regard to the Law.

First, in regard to the Law itself, when he says, *and rest on the law*, as certifying what they believed and did. For an intellect in doubt is not at rest but is solicited by both

sides; but once it has the certainty of wisdom it rests: “When I enter my house, I shall find rest with her” (Wis 8:16).

Secondly, in regard to the lawgiver, when he adds, *and boast of your relation to God*, i.e., in their worship and knowledge of one God: “Let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me” (Jer 9:24); “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord” (1 Cor 1:31).

227. Then when he adds *and know his will* (v. 18) he mentions their prerogative in regard to the fruit of the Law:

first, with respect to the person himself;

secondly, with respect to others, there [v. 19; n. 229] at *and if you are sure*.

228. In regard to the first he mentions two fruits.

The first corresponds to boasting of their relation to God, when he says, *and know his will*, i.e., what God wants us to do: “That you may prove what is the will of God” (Rom 12:2).

The second corresponds to their resting in the law, when he says, *and approve what is excellent*, i.e., able to select not only good from bad things but better from less good. Hence someone asked: “Which is the great commandment?” (Mt 22:36).

And this, *because you are instructed in the law*: “Happy the man whom you teach your law and teach him about your law” (Ps 94:12)

229. Then he mentions its fruit with respect to others who find themselves in three different situations, so far as knowledge of the Law is concerned [n. 230ff].

For some are entirely ignorant of the Law, because they lack natural talent, just as a man is physically blind, because he lacks visual power: “We grope for the wall like the

blind” (Is 59:10). To such persons cannot be given the light of knowledge enabling them to see by themselves what to do; rather, they must be led, as the blind are, by commanding them to do this or that, even though they do not understand the reason for the command: “I became an eye to the blind” (Jb 29:15); “They are blind and leaders of the blind” (Mt 15:14).

Others are ignorant through lack of training, being as it were in the exterior darkness and not enlightened by teaching. To such persons a wise man can offer the light of training, so that they will understand what is commanded. This is why he says, *a light to those who are in darkness*: “To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death” (Lk 1:79).

230. Secondly, he touches on those who are on the way to knowledge they have not yet attained either through lack of full instruction; hence he says, *a corrector of the foolish*, i.e., of those who have not yet received wisdom who are said to be instructed, i.e., free from ignorance which is present in everyone from the beginning when they are first instructed: “Do you have children? Discipline them” (Si 7:23).

In another way, through lack of age, as children. Hence he says, *a teacher of children*: “Where is the teacher of little ones?” (Is 33:18).

231. A third group are already advanced in knowledge, but they need instruction from the wise in order to possess the authoritative sayings of wisdom as their rule or pattern. In regard to this he says, *having in the law the embodiment [pattern] of knowledge*: “Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me” (2 Tim 1:13); “Mark those who so live as you have an example in us” (Phil 3:17).

However, people so patterned must be instructed by the authority of their forbears, if they are to know what has been handed down in the Law. Therefore, he says, of knowledge: “Wisdom gave him knowledge of holy things” (Wis 10:10).

This is also necessary if they are to know the true understanding of what has been handed down. That is why he says, *and truth*: “Send out thy light and thy truth” (Ps 43:3).

232. Then when he says *you then who teach others* (v.21) he indicates some of their failings.

First, failings toward themselves, when he says, *You then who teach others* by directing them to the good, *will you not teach yourself?* This can be taken as a question asked with an overtone of indignation or with an overtone of mildness which, nevertheless, suggests wickedness on their part, as it does in Job (4:3): “Behold, you have instructed many” and (4:5): “The scourge has now touched you and you are dismayed.”

Secondly, their failings toward their neighbor: first, in regard to things taken furtively, when he says: *While you preach against stealing, do you steal?*: “Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves” (Is 1:23); then in regard to defiling another person through adultery, when he says: *You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?*: “They are all adulterers, like a heated oven” (Hos 7:4); “Each neighing for his neighbor’s wife” (Jer 5:8).

234. Thirdly, he indicates their failings with respect to God: first, that they sin against His worship, when he says: *You who abhor idols*, since you know from the Law that they are not to be adored, *do you commit sacrilege* by abusing the things of divine worship.

This they did during the Old Law: “You profane it when you say that the Lord’s table is polluted” (Mal 1:12) and later, when they blasphemed Christ: “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons” (Mt 12:24).

235. Secondly, that they sin against His glory, when he says: *You who glory in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?*

For as observance of the Law by good works is an occasion for others to honor God, so its transgression by evil works is an occasion for others to blaspheme: “That they may see your good deeds and glorify God” (1 Pt 2:12).

Hence, he says in 1 Tim (6:1): “Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be defamed” and in Ps 119 (v.158) it is said: “I look at the faithless with disgust, because they do not keep thy commands.”

236. In support of this he quotes an authority, when he says *The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you*, i.e., because the Gentiles, noting the evil practices of the Jews, laid it to evil training dictated by the Law.

He says: *it is written*, namely, in Is 52(:5), “Their rulers wail, and continually all the day my name is despised” and in Ez 36(:22), “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, but for the sake of my holy name which you have profaned among the nations.”

237. Then when he says *Circumcision* (v.25) he shows that circumcision is not sufficient for salvation any more than the Law is, and for the same reason, namely, that without circumcision there is value in the Law’s observance, without which circumcision has no benefit, as was said above.

In regard to this he does three things.

First, he compares circumcision to the circumcised Jews;
secondly, to the uncircumcised Gentiles, there [v. 26; n. 240] at *So, if a man who is uncircumcised*;

thirdly, he explains what he had said, there [v. 28; n. 242] at *For it is not the one who is so outwardly*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows how circumcision is of value;

secondly, how not, there [v. 25b; n. 239] at *but if you break the law*.

238. First, therefore, he says: *Circumcision indeed is of value*, inasmuch as it remits original sin; hence, it is written in Gen (17:14): “Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people.” But it will benefit you as an adult, *if you obey the law*, just as profession benefits a religious, if he keeps the rule. For circumcision is a form of profession obliging men to observe the Law: “I testify again to every man who receives circumcision that he is bound to keep the whole law” (Gal 5:3).

However, the Apostle’s statement in Gal (5:2) that “if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you,” refers to the era after grace; but now he is referring to the time before the passion of Christ, when circumcision had status.

239. Secondly, there at *but if you break the law* (v. 25b), he shows how circumcision has no value, when he says: *If you, a Jewish adult, break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision*, i.e., has no more value than your previous condition, because you do not observe what you profess by circumcision: “All these nations are uncircumcised and all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart” (Jer

9:26). In fact they are more guilty for not observing what they promised: “A foolish and faithless promise displeases him” (Ec 5:3).

240. Then when he says, *so, if a man who is uncircumcised* (v. 26), he considers circumcision in relation to the Gentiles in two ways.

First, from the aspect that the Gentiles obtain the benefits of circumcision by observing the Law. Hence he says: Since circumcision profits, if the Law is observed, but not, if it is not; then, *if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the law*, i.e., the moral precepts of the Law: “All your commandments are true” (Ps 119:86), *will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?* As if to say: He will enjoy the fruit of true circumcision.

For a man is circumcised outwardly in the flesh in order to circumcise himself in the heart: “Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, remove the foreskin of your hearts” (Jer 4:4).

241. Secondly, at *then those who are physically uncircumcised*, he shows that on account of observing the Law the Gentile is preferred to the Jew. Hence he says, *Then those who are physically uncircumcised, but keep the law* through natural reason *will condemn you*, the circumcised Jew, *who have the written law but break it* by transgressing the precepts of the *written law and have circumcision*, i.e., of the flesh. Hence on the basis of this comparison it is written in Mt (12:4): “The men of Nineveh will arise with this generation...and condemn it.”

242. Then when he says *For it is not the one who is so outwardly* (v. 28) he assigns the reason for his statements.

First, he gives the reason;

secondly, he proves it, there [v. 29b; n. 245] at *His praise*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he assigns the reason why circumcision or Judaism without observance of the Law is fruitless;

secondly, why observance of the Law without Judaism and circumcision has value, there [v. 29; n. 244] *But he who is so in a hidden way*.

243. He says, therefore, that circumcision in one who breaks the Law is uncircumcision and will be judged by the uncircumcised who obey the law, *because he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly* according to carnal birth: “Not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel..., but the children of the promise are reckoned as descendants” (Rom 9:6-9). Similarly, true circumcision is not that which appears in the flesh, for it is a sign: “It shall be a sign of the covenant between you and me” (Gen 17:11). But it is not a true sign, unless the reality signified corresponds to it. Hence, if a Jew transgressed the covenant, his circumcision would not be true; consequently, it would be regarded as uncircumcision.

244. Then when he says *but he who is so in a hidden way* (v. 29) he assigns the reason why the uncircumcision of one who keeps the Law is regarded as circumcision and will judge bodily circumcision. The reason is that *he is truly a Jew who is one inwardly*, i.e., whose heart is possessed by the precepts of the Law, which the Jews professed: “Your father who sees in secret will repay you” (Mt 6:6).

Again, true circumcision *is of the heart in the spirit*, i.e., made by one’s spirit, which expels superfluous thoughts from the heart. Or *in the spirit*, i.e., effected by a

spiritual and *not a literal* understanding of the Law: “For we are the true circumcision who worship God in spirit” (Phil 3:3).

245. Then when he says *His praise* (v29b) he proves this reason.

For it is obvious that in all matters the divine judgment must prevail over the human. Now things that appear outwardly, such as Judaism or circumcision, are praised by men, but things that exist within are judged according to God’s judgment, because “man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart” (1 Sam 16:7).

Hence, inward Judaism and circumcision prevail over the outward. And this is what he says: *His [whose] praise*, i.e., of inward circumcision, is not *from men but from God*: “It is not the man who commends himself that is accepted, but the man whom the Lord commends” (2 Cor 10:18).

Chapter 3

Lecture 1

- (1) [n. 247] Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the profit of circumcision?**
- (2) [n. 248] Much in every way. First indeed, because to them are entrusted the oracles of God.**
- (3) [n. 251] What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? [n. 254] Let it not be!**
- (4) But God is true though every man be false, as it is written, "That thou mayest be justified in thy words, and prevail when thou art judged."**
- (5) [n. 262] But if our injustice serves to show the justice of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust to inflict wrath on us? (I speak according to man.)**
- (6) Let it not be! Otherwise how could God judge the world?**
- (7) [n. 267] But if the truth of God has abounded in my lie to his glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner?**
- (8) And why not—as we are slandered and as some claim we say—do evil that good may come? Their condemnation is just.**

246. After showing that Judaism, which involved receiving the Law and circumcision, is not sufficient for salvation without the Law's observance, through which the Gentile without external Judaism and circumcision obtains the fruit of each [n. 163 and 210], he now objects to his own doctrine:

first, he presents the objection;

secondly, he answers it, there [v. 2; n. 248] at *Much in every way*.

247. First, he objects: If what I say is so, i.e., that the true Jew and true circumcision are not something outward but inward in the heart, *then what advantage has the Jew*, i.e., what has been given to him more than to others? It seems to be nothing. But this is not fitting, since the Lord had said: “The Lord, your God, has chosen you to be a people for his own possession” (Dt 7:6). *Or what is the value of circumcision*, i.e., outward? It seems from his previous teaching that there is no value. But this is not fitting, since it was imposed by God, Who says: “I am the Lord, your God, who teaches you unto profit” (Is 48:17).

248. Then when he says *Much in every way* (v. 2) he answers the objection:

first, in regard to Judaism’s prerogative;

secondly, in regard to the value of circumcision, in chapter 4, there [n. 322] at

What therefore shall we say?

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows Judaism’s prerogative;

secondly, he rejects their boasting over the Gentiles, there [v. 9; n. 271] at *What then?*.

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he states his position;

secondly, he explains it, there [v. 2b; n. 250] at *First indeed*;

thirdly, he excludes an objection, there [v. 3; n. 251] at *What if some*.

249. First, therefore, he says: the question is raised what advantage has the Jew. The advantage is both quantitative, which is indicated when he says, *much*, and numerical, which is indicated when he says, *in every way*.

For they have an advantage both in contemplating divine matters: “In Judah God is known” (Ps 76:1) and in the provision of temporal things: “He has not dealt thus with any other nation” (Ps 147:20). They have further advantages relating to their ancestors, to the promises and to their offspring: “They are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenant” (Rom 9:4).

In each of these there is no small advantage, but great and important ones, which are summed up when he says, *much*.

For man’s greatest good lies in knowing God, in clinging to God and in being instructed by God: “Blessed is the man whom thou dost teach out of thy law” (Ps 93:12).

250. Then when he says *First indeed* he explains his statement, saying: *First indeed*, i.e., the chief advantage is that *to them are entrusted the oracles of God*, being His friends: “I have called you friends” (Jn 15:15). This is important, because the oracles of God are trustworthy: “The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether” (Ps 19:9) and pleasant: “How sweet are thy words to my taste” (Ps 119:103) and useful for avoiding sin: “I have laid up thy word in my heart, that I may not sin against thee” (Ps 119:11).

251. Then when he says *What if some were unfaithful* (v.3) he excludes an objection:

first, he presents it;

secondly, he rejects it by showing its consequences, there [v. 3b; n. 253] at *Does their faithlessness*;

thirdly, by showing that the consequence is unfitting, there [v. 4b; n. 254] at *But God is true*.

252. Someone could belittle the Jews' prerogative by citing their ingratitude, through which they would seem to have set aside the value of God's message. Hence he says, *what if some were unfaithful?* Does this show that the Jew has no advantage, especially in the light of 2 Pt (2:21): "It would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandments delivered to them."

For they did not believe the Lawgiver: "They had no faith in his promises" (Ps 106:24) or the prophets: "They are a rebellious house" (Ez 2:6) or the Son of God: "If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?" (Jn 8:46).

253. Then when he says *Does their faithlessness* (v3b) he excludes this objection by showing the unsuitable conclusion it engenders. For if the Jews' prerogative were taken away on account of the unbelief of some, it would follow that man's unbelief would nullify God's faithfulness -- which is an unacceptable conclusion.

This is what he says: *Does their unfaithfulness*, namely, of those who have not believed, *nullify the faithfulness of God?*

This can be understood in two ways: in one way, as referring to the faith by which one believes in God. For the faith of believers is not nullified by those who have not believed, because the evil in some members of society does not nullify the good in other members: "Some of them he blessed and exalted and some of them he made holy and

brought near to himself; some he cursed and brought low, and he turned them out of their place” (Si 33:12). This is against those of whom Augustine says in *The Letter to the People of Hippo*: “What other motive inspires them and what else do they discuss save that when a bishop or cleric or monk or nun falls, they believe that all are such, but not all can be exposed?”

In another way, it can be understood as referring to the faith with which God is faithful in keeping His promises: “He who promised is faithful” (Heb 10:23). This faithfulness would be nullified, if it happened that the Jews had no advantage, just because some have not believed. For God promised to multiply that people and make it great: “I will multiply your descendants” (Gen 22:16).

254. Then when he says, *Let it not be!*, he shows that it is unfitting for God’s faithfulness to be nullified on account of men’s unbelief.

First, he gives a reason for this;

secondly, he cites a text, there [4b; n. 256] at *As it is written*;

thirdly, he excludes a false understanding of this text, there [v. 5; n. 262] at *But if our injustice*.

255. The reason is based on the fact that *God* in Himself *is true*: “The Lord is the true God” (Jer 10:10); “This is the true God and life eternal” (1 Jn 5:20); *though every man be false*: “I said in my consternation, ‘Men are all a vain hope’” (Ps 116:11). Hence, it is plain that man’s mendacity or unbelief in not adhering to the truth does not nullify God’s truth or faithfulness.

This is easier to understand, if we consider that truth implies agreement between thing and understanding. But things are in agreement with our understanding in one way

and with God's in another way. For our intellect derives its knowledge from things; consequently, the cause and measure of our truth stems from the thing's being. For an opinion is called true or false depending on whether the thing is as stated or is not. Hence, our understanding can be true or it can be false, for it can be in agreement or disagreement. But whatever is open to being or not being needs someone acting to make it be; otherwise, it continues not to be. For as air without something illuminating it remains dark, so our intellect by itself, unless it is enlightened by the first truth, continues in falseness. Hence, of himself every man is false in his intellect and is true only in virtue of participating in the divine truth: "Send out thy light and thy truth" (Ps 43:3).

The divine intellect, on the other hand, is the cause and measure of things. For this reason it is of itself unfailingly true, and everything else is true inasmuch as it conforms to that intellect.

Similarly, considering truth on the part of the thing, man of himself does not have truth, because his nature is convertible into nothing. Only the divine nature, which is not produced from nothing or convertible into nothing, has of itself truth.

256. Then when he says, *As it is written*, he proves his statement on the authority of a text in Ps 51 (v.4): That *thou mayest be justified in thy words and prevail when thou art judged*. How this is to the point can be gathered from considering what the Psalmist had said just ahead of it

For he says just before this, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned," and then: "So that thou art justified in thy sentence and blameless in thy judgment." For God through the prophet Nathan had promised David that He would establish his kingdom forever in his seed, as is gathered from 2 Sam (7:16). But later, when he fell into serious

sin, namely, adultery and murder (2 Sam 11:2 ff), some said that on account of these sins God would not keep the promises made to him.

257. Hence, the Psalmist's intention bears on two things.

First, that God's justice, which involves keeping His promises, is not changed on account of sin. Touching on this he says, *that thou mayest be justified in thy words*, i.e., that You may be shown just in your words, since You do not disregard them because of my sins: "All the words of my mouth are righteous" (Pr 8:8); "The Lord is faithful in all his words" (Ps 145:13).

Secondly, that God's promise imitates men's judgment. And this is what he says, *and prevail*, namely, by keeping Your promise, *when thou art judged*, namely, by men, that on account of my sins You did not keep Your promises: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom 12:21), which is said to men. Accordingly, it is truer of God.

258. It should be noted that God's promise to David was to be fulfilled in Christ's incarnation. Hence it was a predestinative prophecy, in which something is promised as destined to be fulfilled in every way; whereas something promised or foretold by a prophecy of warning is not predicted as destined to be fulfilled in every way but according to men's merits, which can change.

Therefore, if the promise made to David had not been fulfilled, it would have been prejudicial to God's justice; whereas the non-fulfillment of a promise made through a prophecy of warning is not prejudicial to God's justice, but indicates a change in deserts. Hence it is written in Jer (18:7): "If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a

kingdom that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation turns from its evil, I will repent of the evil that I intended to do to it.”

Therefore, it is plain, according to this sense, that man’s sin does not exclude God’s faithfulness.

259. Other senses of this text are presented in the Gloss [of Lombard, col. 1352], but they are not closely related to the Apostle’s intention. The first is that these words are linked with the words, “Wash me more thoroughly from my iniquity” (v. 4) to the end “that you may be justified,” i.e., appear just, “in thy words,” in which You promised pardon to sinners not only in Ezekiel, because these words antedated that, but also in Lev (26:41): “If they make amends for their iniquity, then I will remember my covenant,” and Dt (30:1): “If, lead by repentance of heart, you turn to God, the Lord your God will bring you back, and have compassion on you.” Thus “may you prevail when you are judged” by men that you ought not pardon me.

260. Secondly these words are connected with the verse, “Against you only have I sinned,” i.e., in comparison with you who alone are just. And this is what he means when he says “that you may be justified,” i.e., by you may appear just in comparison to me and other sinners: “The Lord is just, and loves justice” (Ps 10:8), and this not only in deeds but also *in your words*, which is the greatest of all according to Jam 3(:2), “If anyone does not offend in word.” “And that you may overcome when you are judged,” i.e., when you are compared to anyone else in judgment: “Judge between me and my vineyard” (Is 5:3).

261. Third, these words are referred to Christ, Who alone is without sin: “He committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips” (2 Pt 2:22) and is, therefore, justified in

His words as compared to all men. And you prevail over sin, death and the devil: “The Lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered” (Rev 5:5), when you are judged unjustly by Pilate: “Thy cause has been judged as that of the wicked” (Jb 36:17).

262. Then when he says, *But if our wickedness*, he excludes a false understanding of the text he cited.

For someone might understand these words according to the sense that “*that*” [ut] would be taken in a causal, not a consecutive, sense. Then it would follow that man’s sin would be directly ordained to commend God’s justice.

But the Apostle shows that this is false. Hence he says that “*that*” is used consecutively, on the ground that David sinned and then the manifestation of divine justice followed, but not causally, as if a man’s sin commended God’s justice.

He proves this by showing that it leads to something unfitting in two ways:

first, on the part of divine judgment;

secondly, on the part of human judgment [v. 7; n. 267].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he presents the false sense;

secondly, he shows that something unfitting follows from this, there [v. 5b; n. 264] at *What then shall we say? Is God unjust;*

thirdly, he shows that it is unfitting, there [v. 6; n. 265] at *Let it not be!*

263. It should be noted that above (v.4) the Apostle had made two comparisons; in the first he compared divine truth to human falsity when he said: “Let God be true, though every man be false”; in the second, God’s justice to human sin, in the words of Ps

51 (v.4), where it is said: “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.... That thou mayest be justified.”

In regard to the first comparison he says: If these words are taken to mean that our iniquity directly commends God’s justice, *what shall we say?* In other words, we could not accept the inconvenience that follows. For sin is not necessary for God to have His justice commended: “He does not desire a multitude of faithless and useless children” (Si 16:1).

264. He expresses the inconvenience that follows, when he says: *Is God who inflicts wrath on us*, i.e., vengeance for sin, *unjust?* For this follows from the supposition.

For if sin were directly ordained to commending justice, it would not be deserving of punishment but of reward. Consequently, God would be unjust in punishing men for sin, contrary to what is stated in Dt (32:4): “God is faithful and without iniquity.”

265. He rejects this inconvenience, when he says, *Let it not be* that is God unjust. *I speak according to man*, i.e., I say these words not from my understanding but from that of a man in error, as is stated in 1 Cor (3:3): “For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh?”

266. He shows that this must not be admitted, adding: *For then*, namely, if God is unjust, *how could God judge the world*, i.e., how could He be the universal and supreme judge of the world?

For it is necessary that the first and highest item in every class be unerring, just as the first mover is unchangeable. Hence it is written in Ps 96 (v.13): “I will judge the world with righteousness.”

A like argument is presented in Jb (34:12): “Of a truth God will not do wickedly, and the Almighty will not pervert justice. Who gave him charge over the earth and who laid on him the whole world?” In other words: If He were not to judge justly, it would be necessary to suppose that someone else is judge of the world.

267. Then when he says *For if the truth* (v.7) he shows the same on the part of human judgment.

He does three things:

first, he presents the false understanding of the above words;

secondly, he shows the inconvenience that follows, there [v. 7b; n. 269] at *Why am I still*;

thirdly, he shows that it is inconvenient, there [v. 8b; n. 270] at *Their condemnation*.

268. He expresses the false understanding according to the comparison of divine truth to human falsity, when he says: *But if through my falsehood*, i.e., on account of my falsity, *God’s truthfulness*, being manifested, *abounds to his glory*, man’s falsity directly obtains an increase of glory. This is contrary to what is stated in Jb (13:7): “Does God need you to speak deceitfully for him?”

269. Then he adds two inconveniences that follow: one is that man should not be regarded a sinner for lying, on the ground that it is directly ordained to God’s glory. And this is what he says: *Why am I still*, i.e., even now, *being condemned* by men as a sinner for being false: “Whereas wickedness is fearful, it bears witness of its condemnation” (Wis 17:8), because sinners are condemned by the judgment of all.

The other inconvenience is that it lends support to the false accusation leveled against the apostles. For they preached that through the abounding grace of Christ the debt for an abundance of sins was paid, as is stated below: (5:20): “Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.” For this the apostles were blasphemed, as if preaching that men should do evil in order that good be obtained. This would follow, if man’s falsehood directly commended God’s grace and truth. Therefore, he says: *and why not do evil by sinning and teaching falsehood, that good may come*, i.e., that God’s truth and justice be commended, *as some people slanderously charge us*: “When slandered, we try to conciliate” (1 Cor 4:13) *with saying* by twisting our words: “Which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction” (2 Pt 3:16).

270. He rejects these inconveniences when he says, *Their condemnation is just*, i.e., those who do evil that good may come.

For just as it is not correct to deduce truth from falsity, so it is wrong to reach a good end through evil means: “Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all who are treacherous thrive?” (Jer 12:1).

Or *their*, namely, those who accuse us of this falsely, *condemnation is just*. For perverters of sacred doctrine are justly condemned: “If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book” (Rev 22:18).

Lecture 2

(9) [n. 271] What then? Do we excel them? No, not so. For we have charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin,

(10) [n. 276] as it is written: “No one is just,

(11) no one understands, no one seeks for God.

(12) All have turned aside, together they have become unprofitable, no one does good, not even one.”

(13) [n. 282] “Their throat is an open grave, they use their tongues to deceive.” “The venom of asps is under their lips.”

(14) “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”

(15) “Their feet are swift to shed blood,

(16) in their paths are ruin and misery,

(17) and the way of peace they do not know.”

(18) “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

(19) [n. 290] Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be subjected to God.

(20) [n. 295] For by the works of the law no flesh will be justified before him, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

271. After showing the Jews’ advantage over the Gentiles so far as God’s blessings are concerned [n. 248], the Apostle now rejects their vainglory, by which they preferred themselves to Gentiles converted to the faith.

First, he states his point;

secondly, he proves it, there [v. 9b; n. 274] at *For we have charged*.

272. First, therefore, he says: I have asked what advantage has the Jew. The first is that God’s words were delivered to them. *What then* shall we Jews say to converts to

the faith? *Are we Jews any better off* than Gentiles converted to the faith? For this was a matter discussed among them: “A dispute also rose among them, which of them was to be regarded as the greatest” (Lk 23:24). He answers this when he says, *No, not at all*.

273. But this seems to be at variance with an earlier statement (v. 2), which said that their advantage was much in every way.

The gloss [of Lombard, col. 1356] explains that in the first statement the Apostle was thinking of the Jews in the time of the Law, but now he is speaking of the time of grace because, as is written in Col (3:11): “In Christ there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised,” since these make no difference so far as the state of grace is concerned.

But this explanation does not seem to be altogether in keeping with the Apostle’s intention, because later he will show that even while they were under the Law, they were under the power of sin, just as the Gentiles were, and even more so: “This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries round about her. And she has wickedly rebelled against my ordinances and become more wicked than these countries” (Ez 5:5).

Hence, it seems that above he was showing the excellence of God’s blessings; consequently, he did not say that the Jew was more excellent, but that something greater had been conferred on the Jew. Here he is rejecting the notion that they are excellent persons, because in spite of receiving God’s blessings they did not use them properly.

274. Then when he says *For we have charged* (v. 9b) he establishes his points:

first, that the Jews do not excel the Gentiles so far as the state of sin is concerned;

secondly, so far as the state of justice is concerned, there [v. 2; n. 299] at *But now apart from the law*.

He establishes the first in two ways:

first, from what has been stated above;

secondly, from an authority, there [v. 10; n. 176] at *As it is written*.

275. First, therefore, he says: *We have already charged*, i.e., we have supported with reasons, *that Jews and Greeks*, i.e., Gentiles, *are all under the power of sin*: “From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in him” (Is 1:6).

For he showed, first of all, that the Gentiles suppressed the truth they knew by their wickedness and unrighteousness; secondly, that the Jews, after receiving the Law, dishonored God by transgressing it.

276. Then when he says, *As it is written*, he establishes his point by the authority of the Psalmist:

first, he quotes him;

secondly, he explains, there [v. 19; n. 290] at *Now we know*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he mentions sins of omission;

secondly, sins of commission, there [v. 13; n. 282] at *Their throat*.

He touches on the sins of omission in two ways:

first, by removing the sources of good works;

secondly, by removing the good works themselves, there [v. 12; n. 280] at *All have turned aside*.

277. Now there are three sources or principles that make a work good: one of these pertains to the righteousness of the work, namely, justice, which he says is lacking: *no one is just*: “The godly man has perished from the earth; and there is none upright among men” (Mic 7:2).

No one is just can be interpreted in three ways: in one way as meaning that no one is just within himself and of himself, but of himself everyone is a sinner and it is owing to God that he is righteous: “The Lord, a God merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty” (Ex 34:6).

In another way it means that no one is just in every way but has some sin according to Pr (20:9): “Who can say, ‘I have made my heart clean’?” and Ec (7:20): “Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.”

In a third way it can be understood as referring to the wicked members of a populace, among which no one is just. For it is the custom of Scripture sometimes to speak of an entire populace in terms of its evil members and sometimes of its good members as in Jer (26:8 ff) where it is stated that when Jeremiah finished saying everything the Lord had commanded him to say to the entire populace, the priests and prophets and the entire people took hold of him and said that he would die the death. Then it is added: “Then the princes and all the people said to the priests and prophets: ‘This man does not deserve the sentence of death.’” (Jer 26:16).

However, the first two meanings seem to be more in keeping with the Apostle’s intent; and the same must be said for the following.

278. The second element that makes a work good is intellectual discernment, whose absence is declared when he says, *no one understands*: “They have neither knowledge nor understanding” (Ps 82:5); “He would not understand” (Ps 36:3).

279. The third element is a right intention, whose absence is described when he says, *no one seeks after God*, namely, by directing his intention toward Him: “It is time to seek the Lord that he may come and rain salvation upon you” (Hos 10:12).

280. Then he removes the good works themselves.

First, he cites offenses against the divine Law when he says, *all have turned aside*, namely, from regulation by divine Law: “They have all turned to their own way” (Is 56:11).

Secondly, failure to pursue the end; hence he adds, *together they have become unprofitable*. For we call unprofitable whatever does not attain its end. Therefore, when men turn from God for Whom they were made, they are rendered unprofitable: “The brood of the ungodly will be of no use” (Wis 4:3).

Thirdly, he excludes the good works themselves, when he adds, *no one does good*: “They are skilled in doing evil, but how to do good they know not” (Jer 4:22).

281. He adds, *not even one*. This can be taken exclusively, to mean: except the one who alone did good by redeeming the human race: “One man among a thousand I found, but a woman among all these I have not found” (Ec 7:28).

Or it can be taken inclusively, to mean: there is not even one pure man doing good, i.e., what is perfect: “Search the squares [of Jerusalem] to see if you can find a man, one who does justice and seeks truth” (Jer 5:1).

282. Then when he says *Their throats* (v. 13) he mentions the sins of commission:

first, sins of speech;

secondly, sinful deeds, there [v. 15; n. 287] at *their feet are swift*. The sins of the heart can be gathered from these.

283. In regard to sins of speech he mentions four things.

First, readiness and foulness, when he says: *their throat is an open grave*.

For an open grave has two features. For it is ready to receive the dead.

According to this, a man's throat is said to be an open grave, when it is prepared to utter deadly remarks in the manner described by Jer (5:16): "Their quiver is like an open tomb." Secondly, it exudes a foul odor: "You are like white-washed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness" (Mt 23:27). Therefore, a person from whose mouth proceeds the foul odor of filthy remarks has a throat which is an open grave: "Fire and smoke and sulphur issued from their mouths" (Rev 19:17).

284. Secondly, in regard to sins of speech, he touches on deception when he says, *they use their tongues to deceive*, having one thing in their heart and another in their words: "Their tongues is a deadly arrow; it speaks deceitfully" (Jer 9:8).

285. Thirdly, he mentions the havoc wrought by their words, when he says: *The venom of asps is under their lips*, because they utter words which kill their neighbor either spiritually or bodily: "Their wine is the poison of serpents and the cruel venom of asps" (Dt 32:33).

286. Fourthly, he designates the abundance of these sins when he says: *Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness*, because they have a plentiful supply of curses, for

they curse in slandering others, contrary to what he says below (12:14): “Bless and do not curse them”.

And bitterness, inasmuch as they do not hesitate to say insulting words to their neighbor’s face, being provoked by bitterness, contrary to what is written in Eph (4:31): “Let all bitterness be put away from you.”

287. Then when he says *their feet are swift* (v.15) he touches on sinful deeds, in regard to which he mentions three things.

First, readiness to do wickedly. Hence he says, *Their feet are swift*, i.e., their feelings, *to shed blood*, i.e., to commit any serious sin, because among the sins committed against our neighbor, murder is the most grievous: “Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood” (Pr 1:16).

288. Secondly, he touches on the number of injuries they inflict on others when he adds: *in their paths*, i.e., in their deeds, *are ruin*; because they crush others by oppressing them: “It is in his mind to destroy” (Is 10:7); *and misery*, inasmuch as they deprive men of their goods and reduce them to wretchedness: “They send men away naked, taking away their clothes” (Jb 24:7).

Yet these two, ruin and misery, can be taken as designating the punishment rather than the sin. Then the sense is: In their paths are ruin and misery, i.e., their deeds, which are signified as paths, lead them to misery. In this case, *ruin* would refer to the oppressive punishment they suffer for their sins: “They shall be broken as a potter’s vessel” (Is 30:14) and *misery*, to the punishment of damnation, because they will be refused eternal happiness: “They are miserable, with their hopes set on dead things” (Wis 14:10).

289. Thirdly, he shows their persistence in evil, from which men are returned in two ways.

In one way by a desire to be at peace with others. Against this he says, *the way of peace they have not known*, i.e., have not accepted: “Among those who hate peace I was peaceful” (Ps 120:6). In another way by the fear of God; but they neither fear God nor regard man (Lk 18:2). Hence he adds, *there is no fear of God before their eyes*, i.e., in their plans: “The fear of the Lord casts out sin; for without fear a person cannot be justified” (Si 1:27).

This could also refer in a particular way to the Jews who did not believe Christ, i.e., that they have not known the way of peace, namely, Christ, of Whom it is written: “He is our peace” (Eph 2:14).

290. Then when he says *Now we know* (v. 19) he explains the text he quoted in three ways:

first, by expounding its sense;

secondly, its intention, there [v. 19b; n. 294] at *that every mouth*;

thirdly, he gives the reason for his words, there [v. 20; n. 295] at *For by the works of the law*.

291. It should be noted that the Jews, against whom the Apostle was speaking, could, to excuse themselves, pervert the sense of the text he cited and claim that it referred to the Gentiles, not to the Jews.

But the Apostle rejects this, saying: *Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law*, i.e., to whom the Law is given and who profess

the Law: “When Moses commanded us a law” (Dt 33:4). But the Gentiles were not under the law; accordingly, the above words pertain to the Jews.

292. Two objections are raised here.

The first is that the above words were not taken from the Law but from a psalm.

The answer is that the word “Law” is sometimes taken for the entire Old Testament, not for the five books of Moses alone, as in Jn (15:25): “It is to fulfill the word that is written in their law, ‘They hated me without cause,’” which was written in the Old Testament, not in the five books of Moses. This is the way, “Law” is taken here.

Again, the Old Testament is sometimes divided into three parts, namely, the Law, the psalms and the prophets, as in Lk (24:44): “That everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.”

Finally, the entire Old Testament is sometimes divided into two, namely, the Law and the prophets, as in Mt (22:40): “On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.” In this sense the Psalter is included under the prophets.

293. The second objection is that in the Law, i.e., in the Old Testament, many things are said that pertain to other nations, as is clear in many passages of Isaiah and Jeremiah, where many statements are directed against Babylon and other nations. Therefore, not everything that the Law says speaks to those and about those who are under the Law.

The answer is that whatever it says indeterminately seems to be directed to those to whom the Law has been given; but when the Scripture speaks of others it mentions them by name, as when it is written: “The burden of Babylon,” “The burden of Tyre,” etc. Furthermore, whatever was said against other nations in the Old Testament was

somehow directed to the Jews, inasmuch as ill fortune was foretold for their consolation or fear, just as any preacher should say what pertains to his audience, not what pertains to others: “Declare to my people their transgressions” (Is 58:1), as if to say: “not others’ transgressions.”

294. Then when he says *that every mouth* (v. 19b) he states the intent of the text cited, for Sacred Scripture accuses all of injustice for two reasons.

First, to suppress their boasting, by which they considered themselves just, as in Lk (18:12): “I fast twice a week.” In regard to this he says, *that every mouth may be stopped*, which presumptuously ascribes justice to itself: “For the mouths of liars will be stopped” (Ps 63:11); “Talk no more so very proudly” (1 Sam 2:3).

Secondly, so that recognizing their guilt, they might subject themselves to God as the sick to a physician. Hence he continues: *and the whole world may be held accountable [made subject] to God*, i.e., not only the Gentiles but the Jews also, after recognizing their guilt: “Shall not my soul be subject to God?” (Ps 62:1).

295. Then when he says *For by the works of the law* (v. 20) he assigns the reason for these words:

first, he assigns the reason;

secondly, he explains it, there [v. 20b; n. 298] at *Since through the law*.

296. First, therefore, he says: The reason no one is just is that *no human being will be justified in his sight*, i.e., according to His judgment, *by works of the law*; because, as is stated in Gal (2:21): “If justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose,” and in Tit (3:5): “Not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy he saved us.”

297. However, a work of the Law is of two kinds: one is peculiar to the Mosaic Law, as the observance of ceremonial precepts; the other is a work of the Law of nature, because it pertains to the natural law, as “Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal,” etc.

Now some take the Apostle’s words as referring to the first works, namely, that the ceremonials did not confer the grace through which men are made just.

But this does not seem to be the Apostle’s intent, for he immediately adds: “since through the law comes knowledge of sin.” But it is clear that sins are made known through prohibitions contained in the moral precepts. Consequently, the Apostle intends to say that by no works of the Law, even those commanded by the moral precepts, is man justified in the sense that justice would be caused in him by works, because, as he states below (11:6): “But if it is by grace it is no longer on the basis of works.”

298. Then when he says, *since through the law*, he proves his statement, namely, that the works of the Law do not justify.

For the Law is given that man might know what to do and what to avoid: “He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his ordinances” (Ps 147:20); “The commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light and the way of life” (Pr 6:23). But from the fact that man knows a sin he should avoid as being forbidden, it does not at once follow that he avoids it (because this pertains to the nature of righteousness), because concupiscence subverts the judgment of reason, when it bears on a particular moral action as performable. Consequently, the Law is not enough to make one just; another remedy is needed to suppress concupiscence.

Lecture 3

(21) [n. 299] But the justice of God now is made manifest without the law, being witnessed by the law and the prophets,

(22) the justice of God through the faith of Jesus Christ in all and above all who believe in him; [n. 304] for there is no distinction.

(23) For all have sinned and lack the glory of God,

(24) being justified freely by his grace, [n. 307] through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,

(25) Whom God has set forth as a propitiation by faith in his blood, [n. 310] for the manifestation of his justice for the remission of preceding sins,

(26) [n. 311] in the forbearance of God, for the manifestation of his justice in this time; that he himself may be just and the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus Christ.

299. After showing that Jews and gentiles are equal as far as the state of previous guilt is concerned [n. 274], the Apostle now shows that they are also equal as far as the state of subsequent grace is concerned.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he states his teaching;

secondly, he explains something he had presupposed, there [v. 29; n. 318] at *Or is God the God of the Jews only?*;

thirdly, he answers an objection, there [v. 31; n. 321] at *Do we therefore destroy the law?*

In regard to the first he does three things:
first, he states his teaching;
secondly, he manifests it, there [v. 22c; n. 304] at *There is no distinction*;
thirdly, he draws the intended conclusion, there [v. 27; n. 313] at *Where therefore is your glorying?*

In regard to the first he does three things:
first, he states the relation between justice and the law;
secondly, he gives the cause of justice, there [v. 22; n. 302] at *the justice of God*;
thirdly, he shows that such justice is available to all, there [v. 22b; n. 303] at *in all*.

300. First, he sets down a twofold comparison or relation of justice to the Law [n. 301].

The first is that it is not caused by the Law. This is what he says: It has been stated that in times past God's justice could not exist in virtue of the works of the Law, either because the just one himself fulfills the promises about men's justification: "For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs" (Rom 15:8). Or, rather, God's justice, by which a person is justified by God, of which it says below: "not knowing the justice of God" (Rom 10:3).

This *justice of God*, I say, *has been manifested now*, i.e., in the time of grace, by the teachings of Christ, by his miracles, as well as by the evidence of the fact, inasmuch as it is evident that many have been divinely made just. And this *apart from the Law*, i.e., without the Law causing righteousness: "You are severed from Christ, you who had

been justified by the Law; you have fallen away from grace” (Gal 5:4); “Soon my salvation will come, and my justice will be revealed” (Is 56:1).

301. But lest anyone suppose that this justice is contrary to the Law, secondly, he sets down another relation of justice to the Law when he says: *although the law and the prophets bear witness* to it.

The Law bears witness to Christ’s justice by foretelling and prefiguring it: “If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me” (Jn 5:46); and also by its effect, for, since it could not justify, it bore witness that justice was to be sought elsewhere.

The prophets bore witness by foretelling it: “To him all the prophets bear witness” (Ac 10:43).

302. Then he assigns the cause of this justice, and says *the justice of God through the faith of Christ Jesus*, i.e., which he delivered: “Looking to Jesus the perfecter of our faith” (Heb 12:2); or which is held concerning Him: “Because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9).

God’s justice is said to exist through faith in Christ Jesus, not as though by faith we merit being justified, as if faith exists from ourselves and through it we merit God’s justice, as the Pelagians assert; but because in the very justification, by which we are made just by God, the first motion of the mind toward God is through faith: “Whoever would draw near to God must believe” (Heb 11:6). Hence faith, as the first part of justice, is given to us by God: “By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing; for it is the gift of God” (Eph 2:8).

But this faith, out of which justice exists, is not the unformed faith about which James 2(:26) says, “Faith without works is dead,” but it is faith formed by charity, about which Gal 5(:6) says, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith [working through love],” through which Christ dwells in us; “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Eph 3:17), which does not happen without charity: “He who abides in love abides in God and God in him” (1 Jn 4:16). This is the faith about which Acts 15(:9) says, “He cleansed their hearts by faith,” a cleansing that does not occur without charity: “Love covers all offenses” (Pr 10:12).

303. And lest anyone suppose that only the Jews are made just through this faith, third, he shows that this justice is common, when he adds *in all*. In other words this justice is in the heart, not in fleshly observances, about which Hebrews 9(:10) says that carnal observances were directed to the justification of the flesh, being regulations for the body and imposed until the time of reformation. *And over all*, because it transcends human power and merit: “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us” (2Cor 3:5).

He adds, *who believe in him*, which refers to the living faith, by which man is justified, as has been said.

304. Then when he says *for there is no distinction*, he manifests what he had said: first, in regard to the common availability of justice; secondly, as to its cause, there [v. 24; n. 306] at *justified by grace*; thirdly, as to its manifestation, there [v. 25b; n. 310] at *for the manifestation*.

305. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that the righteousness of God is in all and above all who believe in Christ. *For* in this matter *there is no distinction* between

Jew and Gentile: “In Christ Jesus there is not Gentile and Jew” (Col 3:11), namely [a Jew] who has some distinction, as though the Jew does not need to be made just by God as the Gentile does. *Since all have sinned*, as has been shown above: “All we like sheep have gone astray” (Is 53:6) and for this reason *need the glory of God*, i.e., the justification that redounds to God’s glory. Furthermore, man should not ascribe this glory to himself: “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give glory” (Ps 115:1); “Give glory to God” (Ps 66:2).

306. Consequently, because all have sinned and cannot of themselves be justified, they need some other cause to make them just. This cause he indicates when he continues, *being justified*.

First [cf. n. 307], he shows that such justification exists without the Law, i.e., that it does not come from the works of the Law, when he says *being justified freely* [*gratis*], i.e., without the merit of previous works: “You were sold for nothing and you shall be redeemed without money” (Is 52:3). And this is *by his grace*, namely, God’s, to whom glory is due on this account: “By the grace of God I am what I am” (1 Cor 15:10).

307. Secondly, he shows what is the cause of justification. First [cf. n. 308ff.], he discloses the cause itself, when he says, *through redemption*.

For as is stated in John 8(:34), “Everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.” From this slavery a man is redeemed, if he makes satisfaction for sin. For example, if a man owes a king a fine for some guilty action, the one who paid the fine would be said to have redeemed him from the debt. Now, this debt involved the whole human race, which was infected by the sin of the first parent. Hence no other person could satisfy for the sin of the entire human race except Christ alone, who was immune from all sin.

Hence he adds, *which is in Christ Jesus*. As if to say: in no other could there be redemption: “Not with perishable things, such as silver and gold” (1 Pt 1:18).

308. Secondly, he shows whence this redemption has efficacy, when he says *whom God put forward as an expiation*.

For Christ’s satisfaction was efficacious for justifying and redeeming by the fact that God had assigned him to this in his plan, which he designates when he says *whom God put forward as an expiation*: “According to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will” (Eph 1:11).

Or *put forward*, that is, he put [him] forward for all, because the human race had no way of making satisfaction unless God himself gave them a redeemer and satisfier: “He sent redemption to his people” (Ps 111:9).

And so, while making satisfaction, he redeems us from the debt of sin and obtains pardon for our sins, which the Psalmist begged: “Be propitious to our sins” (Ps 79:9); and this is why he calls him a propitiation. *Propitiation*. As a figure of this it was commanded in Exodus (25:17) that a propitiatory [seat], i.e., Christ, be placed on the ark, i.e., the Church.

369. Thirdly, he indicates how the effect of redemption reached us, when he says, *by faith in his blood*, i.e., faith concerning his blood poured out for us.

For in order to satisfy for us, it was fitting that he undergo the penalty of death for us, a penalty man had incurred by sin, as indicated in Genesis 2(:17), “In the day that you eat of it you shall die.” Hence 1Peter 3(:18) states, “For Christ also died for sins once for all.” This death of Christ is applied to us through faith, by which we believe that the world has been redeemed by His death: “I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me

and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20). For even among men payment made by one man does not benefit another, unless [that other] considers it valid.

And so it is clear how there is justification through faith in Jesus Christ, as has been stated above.

310. But because he had stated above [n. 300] that God’s justice is manifested now, he considers this manifestation [n. 311ff]. First, he touches on the manner of this manifestation, saying *for the manifestation*. As if to say: I say that we are justified by the redemption of Christ and by faith in his blood, *for the manifestation of his justice*, i.e., to the end that God might show his justice, and this *because of the remission of former sins*.

For in remitting former sins, which the Law could not remit or men by their own power sufficiently guard against, God showed that the justice by which they are made just by God is necessary for men. But only through the blood of Christ could sins both present and past be remitted, because the power of Christ’s blood works through man’s faith, which the men who lived before his passion had, just as we have: “Since we have the same spirit of faith . . . we too believe” (2 Cor 14:13).

Hence another way of reading it is: for the remission of the sins of those men who preceded the passion of Christ: “He will tread our iniquities under foot and he will cast all our sins into the depth of the sea” (Mic 7:19).

311. Secondly, he shows the time of its manifestation, when he adds: *in the forbearance of God, for the manifestation of his justice in this time*. As if to say: former sins before the passion of Christ were *in the forbearance of God* as, so to speak, under a certain divine support [*sustinentia*], because he neither damned believers and penitents

for them nor completely absolved them, in the sense that, the sins notwithstanding, they might enter into glory.

Or, according to another reading, it can mean that the saintly fathers themselves were in God's forbearance, because they were detained in limbo, not suffering sensible pain but waiting to enter into glory through the passion of Christ: "Wait for the forbearance of God" (Sir 2:3). For this purpose, I say, previous sins and the ancient fathers were *in the forbearance of God*, namely *to for the manifestation of his justice in this time*, i.e., that in this time of grace he might manifest his justice perfectly by granting full remission of sins: "Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2). And this is what he had said above, namely that God's justice is now manifest.

Up to this present *time* former sins had be *in the forbearance of God*, in order to convince man of his lack of knowledge, since in the time of the law of nature man fell into errors and base sins; and of his lack of power, since after the written law, which gave knowledge of sin, man still sinned through weakness.

312. Thirdly, he shows that by remitting sins God's justice is shown, whether it be taken as the justice of God by which he himself is just or as the justice by which he justifies others.

Hence he continues: *that he himself may be just*, i.e., that by remitting sins God may appear to be just in himself, both because he remitted sins as he had promised and because it belongs to God's justice to destroy sins by leading men back to his justice: "The Lord is righteous, he loves righteous deeds" (Ps 11:7).

And also *the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus Christ*, i.e., who approaches God through faith in Jesus Christ: “Whoever would draw near to God must believe” (Heb 11:6).

Lecture 4

(27) [n. 313] Where therefore is your glorifying? It is excluded. By what law? The law of works? No, but by the law of faith.

(28) [n. 317] For we judge that man is justified through faith without the works of the law.

(29) [n. 318] Or is God the God of the Jews only? is He not also the God of the gentiles? Yes, of the gentiles also.

(30) For God indeed is one, who justifies the circumcision from faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.

(31) [n. 321] Do we therefore overthrow the law through faith? By no means. On the contrary, we uphold the law.

After showing that Jews have no advantage over the Gentiles either in regard to sin or to righteousness,¹⁹ he now presents the intended conclusion, by rejecting the boasts whereby they preferred themselves to the Gentiles.

He does three things.

First, he proposes that this boasting be excluded;

secondly, the reason for this exclusion, there [v. 27b; n. 315] at *by what law?*;

thirdly, the way it is excluded, there [v. 28; n. 317] at *For we judge*.

¹⁹ Cf. n. 274, 299, and 304.

314. In regard to the first he does two things. First, he raises a question: Inasmuch as you, O Jew, are under sin just as the Gentile, and the Gentile is made just by faith just as you are, *then what becomes of your boasting*, whereby you take glory in the Law, as stated above, and on this ground wish to prefer yourself to the Gentile? “Your boasting is not good” (1 Cor 5:6); “Let us have no self-conceit, envying one another,” (Gal 5:26).

Secondly, he answers this, saying, *it is excluded*, i.e., is taken away: “The glory has been taken away from Israel” (1 Sam 4:21); “I will change their glory into shame” (Hos 4:7).

Or *excluded*, i.e., expressly manifested.

For the Jews gloried in the glory and worship of the one God, and he says that their glory was excluded, i.e., pressed out [*expressam*] by Christ, as artists who press out an image in silver are called “excludors,” in accord with Ps 67:31, “That they might exclude those who were tried by silver.”²⁰

But the first meaning is more literal.

315. Then when he says *by what law*, he states the cause of this exclusion.

Since the Jews’ boasting was about the Law, as has been stated above, it seemed that their boasting had to be excluded by something of the same genre, i.e., by some law. Therefore, he asks *on what* is their boasting to be excluded?

For someone might suppose that the Apostle means their boasting was excluded by certain legal precepts which commanded greater works. That is why he asks, *on the principle of works?* As if to say: Do I say that their boasting has been excluded by some law of works? But he answers: *No, but by the law of faith.*

²⁰ RSV Ps 68:30. The Hebrew text of this verse is obscure.

So it is plain that the Apostle alludes here to two laws, that of works and that of faith. At first glance it would seem that by the law of works is meant the Old Law and by the law of faith the New Law, through which the Gentile is made equal to the Jew.

316. But there is some doubt about this distinction.

For even in the Old Law faith was necessary, just as it is in the New: “You who fear the Lord believe him” (Sir 2:8); “I believed; therefore I have spoken” (Ps 116:10). And indeed, works are required in the New Law, namely, the works of certain sacraments, as commanded in Luke 22(19), “Do this in memory of me” and of moral observances: “Be doers of the word and not hearers only” (Jas 1:22).

Consequently, it should be said that what he calls the law of works is the law outwardly presented and written, through which men’s external works are directed, when it prescribes what he ought to do and forbids what ought to be avoided. But what he calls the law of faith is the law inwardly written, through which are directed not only external works but even the very motions of the heart, among which the act of faith is first: “Man believes with his heart” (Rom 10:10). Of this second law he speaks below (8:2): “The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.”

317. Then when he says, *For we hold*, he shows how the Jews’ boasting is excluded by the law of faith, saying: *For we* apostles, being taught the truth by Christ, *hold that a man*, whomsoever he be, whether Jew or Gentile, *is justified by faith*: “He cleansed their hearts by faith” (Ac 15:9). And this *apart from the works of the law*.

Not only without the ceremonial works, which did not confer grace but only signified it, but also without the works of the moral precepts, as stated in Titus 3(5), “Not because of deeds done by us in righteousness.” This, of course, means without

works prior to becoming just, but not without works following it, because, as is stated in Jas (2:26): “Faith without works,” i.e., subsequent works, “is dead,” and, consequently, cannot justify.

318. Then when he says *Or is God the God of the Jews only?*, he manifests something he had presupposed, namely, that the righteousness of faith stands in the same common relation to all.

He had previously explained this with a reason based on the material cause, when he stated above (v. 23) that “all have sinned and need the glory of God,” i.e., they are sinners, who need to be made just by the grace of God. But a proof based solely on the material cause is not enough, because matter is not moved to a form by itself without an agent cause. Accordingly, he now presents a proof based on the agent cause, i.e., the justifier, who is God: “It is God who justifies” (Rom 8:33).

Now it is manifest that our God by justifying saves those whose God he is, according to Ps 68(:20), “Our God is a God of salvation.” But he is the God not of the Jews only but of the Gentiles also; therefore, he justifies both.

319. On this point he does three things.

First, he raises a question concerning the Jews, when he says, *Is God the God of Jews only?* It might seem that he is, because it says in Exodus 5(:3), “The God of the Hebrews called us.”

Hence it must be said that he was the God of the Jews only by the special worship paid to God by them; hence it is stated in Ps 76 (v.1): “In Judah God is known”; yet he was the God of all by his common reign over all things, as is stated in Ps 47(:8), “God is king of all the earth.”

Secondly, he raises the question on the side of the Gentiles, saying: *Is he not God of the Gentiles also?* and he answers: *Yes, of Gentiles also*, whom he governs and rules: “Who would not fear thee, O king of the nations?” (Jer 10:7).

Thirdly, there at *for God indeed is one*, he manifests what he had said with a sign, as if to say: It is clear that he is the God not only of the Jews but also of the Gentiles, *for God indeed is one and he will justify the circumcised*, i.e., the Jews, *from faith*, as is said in Galatians 5(:6), “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail.”

320. According to the Gloss, “from faith” [*ex fide*] and “by faith” [*per fidem*] are exactly the same. However, a slight difference can be noted.

For the preposition “from” [*ex*] sometimes designates a remote cause, while the preposition “through” [*per*] designates a nearer cause. Therefore, the Jews are said to be justified “from” faith because faith was the first cause from which circumcision and the other sacraments of the Law proceeded; thus, faith justified the Jews as a primary cause through intermediate causes. But the Gentiles are justified by faith itself immediately.

321. Then when he says *Do we therefore overthrow* he excludes an objection.

For someone might claim that he is overthrowing the aforementioned Law; therefore, he asks: *Do we therefore overthrow the law by faith*, inasmuch as we say that men are justified without the works of the Law?

He answers: *By no means!* in keeping with Matt 5(:18), “Not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law.” Rather, he adds: *On the contrary, we uphold the law*, i.e., by faith we complete and fulfill the Law, as Matt 5(:17) says, “I have come not to abolish the law but to fulfill it.”

This is true as regards the ceremonial precepts because, being figures, they were upheld and fulfilled by the fact that the truth signified by them is shown forth in the faith of Christ. This is also true as regards the moral precepts, because the faith of Christ confers the help of grace to fulfill the moral precepts of the Law and even adds special counsels, through which the moral precepts are more safely and securely kept.

Chapter 4

Lecture 1

(1) [n. 322] What therefore shall we say Abraham to have found, who is our father according to the flesh?

(2) [n. 323] For if Abraham was justified by works of law, he has glory, but not before God.

(3) [326] For what do the Scriptures say? “Abraham believed God [*credidit Deo*], and it was reputed to him as justice.”

(4) [n.328] Now, to him who works the reward is not reckoned as a gift, but as his due.

(5) But to him who does not work, but believes unto him [*credenti in eum*] who justifies the impious, his faith is faith is reputed as justice according to the purpose of the grace of God.

(6) [n. 332] As David also speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God reposes justice without works:

(7) “Blessed they whose iniquities are remitted, and whose sins are covered.

(8) “Blessed the man to whom the Lord has not reckoned sin.”

(9) [n. 339] So does this blessedness reside only in circumcision, or also in uncircumcision? For we say that faith was reputed to Abraham as justice.

(10) How therefore was it reputed? In circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

322. After excluding the glory which the Jews took in the Law, on the basis of which they preferred themselves to the Gentiles [n. 169 and 248], the Apostle now excludes their glory in regard to circumcision.

About which he does two things.

First, he takes up the question he had raised earlier [n. 247], when he asked: “What is the usefulness of circumcision?” And because Abraham was the first to receive the command about circumcision, as stated in Genesis 17(:10), he repeats the question in the person of Abraham himself, saying: If it is true that God justifies the uncircumcised as well as the circumcised, *What usefulness then shall we say Abraham to have found, who is our father according to the flesh?* That is, according to circumcision and other bodily observances. For it does not seem fitting to say that he found no usefulness, since it is stated in Isaiah 48(:17), “I am the Lord, your God, who teaches you useful things.”

323. Secondly, when he says, *For if Abraham*, he answers the question he had raised.

He does two things.

First, he shows that Abraham did not obtain justification through circumcision and the other works of the Law, but rather through faith;

secondly, he commends his faith, there [v.18; n. 367] at *who against hope*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he explains his position with a reason based on divine acceptance;

secondly, by reason of God’s promise, there [v. 13; n. 351] at *For not through the Law*.

In regard to the first he does three things.

First, he proposes a conditional statement;
secondly, disproves the consequent, there [v.3; n. 326] at *For what do the Scriptures say?*;
thirdly, he proves the conditional statement, there [v. 6; n. 332] at *As David also*.

324. In regard to the first the Apostle intends to argue in the following manner: If Abraham were justified from works of the Law, he would have no glory with God; therefore, he was not justified from works.

Hence, he presents the conditional [statement, saying]: It has been asked what Abraham found in virtue of bodily circumcision, and it is obvious that he did not find himself justified *from works of the law*, such that his justice consisted in the works of the Law. For *he has glory*, namely, before men, who see the outward works, *but not before God*, who sees in secret: “The Lord looks on the heart” (1 Sam 16:7); “So let no one boast of men” (1 Cor 3:21). Hence it is written against some that “they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:43).

325. Against this one might object that becoming accustomed to outward works generates an inward habit, according to which a man’s heart is also well disposed and so made ready to perform well and take pleasure in good works, as the Philosopher teaches in *Ethics* II.

The answer is that this takes place in human justice, through which man is ordained to the human good. For the habit of this justice can be acquired through human works, but the justice which obtains glory before God is ordained to the divine good, namely future glory, which exceeds human ability, as is stated in 1 Cor 2(:9), “It has not arisen in the heart of man what God has prepared for those who love him.”

Consequently, a man's works are not proportioned to causing the habit of this justice; rather, a man's heart needs first to be justified inwardly by God, so that he can perform works proportioned to divine glory.

326. Then when he says *For what do the Scriptures say*, he disproves the consequent, which was negative, by proving the opposite affirmative, namely, that Abraham did have glory before God.

He proves this on the authority of Scripture:

first, he cites the authority;

secondly, he explains, there [v. 4; n. 328] at *Now, to him*.

327. First, therefore, he says: I say that Abraham was justified in a way that gave him glory before God. *For what do the Scriptures say (Gen 15:6): Abraham believed God* who promised that his seed would be multiplied. "Believe God and he will help you" (Sir 2:6). *And it was reputed to him*, i.e., by God, *as justice*: "Was not Abraham found faithful when tested?" (1 Macc 2:52). Consequently, it is clear that before God, by whom that he believed was reckoned to him as justice, he has glory.

But it should be noted that Abraham expressed the justice described, which God regards, not in some outward work but in the inward faith of the heart, which God alone sees. Indeed, since the act of faith is said to be threefold, namely, to believe God [*Deum*], to believe God [*Deo*] and to believe unto God [*in Deum*], he mentions this act, namely to believe God [*Deo*], which is the proper act of faith and indicates its nature [*species*]. For to believe unto God shows the ordering of faith to its end, which is through charity; for to believe unto God is to go to God by believing, which charity does. Consequently, it follows upon the nature of faith.

But to believe God [*Deum*] indicates the matter of faith taken as a theological virtue, having God for its object. Consequently, this act does not yet attain the nature of faith, because if one believes in God in virtue of certain human reasons and natural signs, he is not yet said to have the faith of which we now speak, but only when he believes something for the reason that it was said by God—which is indicated by the phrase, “to believe God [*Deo*].” It is from this that faith takes its nature [*specificatur*], just as any cognitive habit takes its nature from the reason in virtue of which it assents to something. For a person possessing scientific philosophical knowledge is inclined to assent to its statements for one reason, namely, through demonstration, but one having the habit of opinion is inclined to assent for a different reason, namely, through a dialectical syllogism.

328. Then, when he says *Now, to him who works*, he explains the aforementioned biblical citation as regards the words *it was reputed to him as justice*.

Two explanations of these words are given in the Gloss. In the first explanation they are linked to the final reward, concerning which

first, he shows how it is related to works;

secondly, how it is related to faith, there [v. 5; n. 330] at *But to him who does not work*.

329. First, therefore, he says that *to him who works* the works of justice, *the reward* of eternal recompense—concerning which Isaiah 40(10) says, “Behold his reward is with him”—*are not reckoned as a gift* [*secundum gratiam*] *only but as his due*: “Did you not agree with me for a denarius?” (Mt 20:2).

But on the contrary it is stated below (6:23), “The free gift [*gratia*] of God is eternal life,” and again: “The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Rom 8:18). Therefore, that reward is not made as due, but as a gift.

The answer is that human works can be considered in two ways. In one way, according to the substance of the works, and considered this way they do not have anything deserving [*condignum*] that the award of eternal glory should be given.

In another way, they can be considered according to their source, namely, insofar as they are performed under God’s impulse in accord with the intention of God who predestines. And in this respect the aforesaid reward is due them by debt, because, as is stated below (8:14): “All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God”; “and if sons, then heirs” (8:17).

330. Then (v. 5) he shows how the eternal award is related to faith, saying, *but to one who does not work* outward works, for example, because he does not have time to work, as in the case of one who dies immediately after baptism, *but believes in him who justifies the ungodly*, namely, in God, of whom he says below (8:33): “It is God who justifies,” *his faith is reckoned*, i.e., faith alone without outward works, *as righteousness*, so that in virtue of it he is called just and receives the reward of justice, just as if he had done the works of justice, as he says below (10:10): “Man believes with his heart and so is justified,” *according the purpose of the grace of God*, i.e., accordingly as God proposes to save men gratuitously: “Who are called according to his purpose (Rom 8:28); “He accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will” (Eph 1:11).

331. Another explanation refers those words to man’s justification.

Then *to the one who works*, i.e., if anyone be justified by works, the justice would be reckoned *not as a gift but as his due*: “If it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace” (Rom 11:6). But *to him who does not work*, so as to be justified by his works, *but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith will be reckoned as justice according to the purpose of God’s grace*, not that he merits justice through faith, but because the believing itself is the first act of the justice God works in him. For from the fact that he believes in God justifying, he submits himself to his justification and thus receives its effect.

This is the literal explanation and accords with the intention of the Apostle, who lays special stress on the words, “it was reckoned to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6)” a saying which is used when that which is lacking on someone’s part is reckoned to him gratis, as if he had accomplished the whole.

That is why the Apostle says that such reckoning would have no place, if righteousness were from works, but only as it is from faith.

332. Then when he says *As also David* (v. 6) he proves the conditional statement by a quotation from a psalm.

First, he gives its sense;

secondly, he presents its words, there [v. 7; n. 334] at *Blessed they whose*;

thirdly, he excludes a false interpretation, there [v. 9; n. 339] at *So does this blessedness?*

333. He says: *So also David pronounces a blessing [happiness] upon the man to whom God reckons*, i.e., confers, *justice apart from works*, i.e., gratis, without preceding works: “Not because of deeds done by us in righteousness” (Tit 3:5).

But man's happiness is from God, as Ps 40 (v.5) says: "Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his hope." Hence, it is plain that he has glory before God who is justified not by the works of the Law, as has been said.

334. Then when he says *Blessed they* (v. 7) he presents David's words containing the previous judgment and says that those whose sins are forgiven are blessed; consequently, they did not previously have good works, from which they obtained righteousness or happiness.

335. But sin is divided into three classes: original, actual mortal and actual venial.

First, in regard to original sin he says: *Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven.*

Here it should be noted that original sin is called *iniquity*, because it is the lack of that original justice, by which *in equity* man's reason was subject to God, the lower powers to reason, and the body to the soul. This equity is removed by original sin, because after reason ceased to be subject to God, the lower powers rebel against reason and the body is withdrawn from obedience to the soul and subjected to decay and death. Hence Ps 51 (v.5) says: "I was brought forth in iniquities."

In both texts original sin is presented in the plural, either because of the *multitude* of men in whom original sin is multiplied or better because it *virtually* contains within itself all sins in some way.

Such original sin is said to be forgiven, because the *reatus* passes with the coming of grace, but the effect remains in the form of *fomes* or concupiscence, which is not entirely taken away in this life, but is remitted or mitigated.

336. Secondly, in regard to actual mortal sin he says, *and whose sins are covered.*

For sins are said to be covered from the divine gaze, inasmuch as he does not look upon them to be punished: “Thou didst cover all their sin” (Ps 85:2).

337. Thirdly, in regard to venial sin he says, *blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not reckon his sin*, where sin refers to venial sins which, although light, if they be many, man is separated and distant from God: “The good Lord will pardon everyone who sets his heart to seek God, even though not according to the sanctuary’s rules of cleanness” (2 Ch 30:18).

338. These three can be distinguished in another way.

For in sin are three things, one of which is offense against God. In regard to this he says, *blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven*, the way man is said to remit an offense committed against him: “Her iniquity is pardoned” (Is 40:2).

The second thing is the fact that the disordered deed has been done and cannot be said not to have occurred, once it has been perpetrated; but it is covered over by the hand of God’s mercy and is held as if not committed.

The third is the debt of punishment, in regard to which he says: *Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not reckon his sin*, i.e., to punish.

339. Then when he says *So does this blessedness* (v. 9) he excludes a false interpretation of the text.

For a Jew could interpret it as meaning that the grace of forgiveness of sins is conferred only on the circumcised.

Therefore, to exclude this the Apostle first raises the question, *Is this blessing* by which God confers righteousness without works, *pronounced only upon the circumcised*, i.e., affects only the circumcised, *or also upon the uncircumcised*, i.e. on the Gentiles?

Plainly it is for both, according to what he says below (10:12): “The same Lord bestows his riches upon all who call upon him.”

Secondly, there at *For we say*, to show this he appeals to the authority of Scripture (Gen 15:6), as if to say: I ask this, *because we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness*.

Thirdly, from this text he concludes to the answer, although he states it in the form of a question: *How then was it reckoned to him*, namely, Abraham’s faith as justice, i.e., *was it before*, i.e., when still uncircumcised, *or after he had been circumcised?*

He answers: *It was not after, but before he was circumcised*. This is obvious from the reported sequence of events. For Gen (15:6) reports that faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness, but the fact of receiving circumcision is not recorded until Gen (17:23 ff). Therefore, if Abraham, still uncircumcised, was justified by faith, it is plain that the justice of faith, through which sins are forgiven gratis, occurs not only in circumcision but also in uncircumcision, i.e., in Gentiles.

Lecture 2

(11) [n. 341] He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the justice of faith which is in uncircumcision, that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised so that to them also it may be reckoned as justice,

(12) and that he might be the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but also follow the steps of the faith that is in the uncircumcision of our father Abraham.

(13) [n. 351] For not through the law was the promise to Abraham or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world, but through the justice of faith.

(14) [n. 354] If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is made void and the promise is abolished.

(15) [n. 356] For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

341. Having showed that the blessing of forgiveness of sins is obtained not only in circumcision but also in uncircumcision on the ground that Abraham was justified when he was still uncircumcised [n. 339], the Apostle now responds to an objection.

For someone could say: If Abraham was justified before circumcision, then he was circumcised without reason and for no purpose.

To exclude this objection,
he first states that circumcision was not the cause but the sign of righteousness;
secondly, he shows what he obtains from this sign, there [v. 11b; n. 344] at *that he might be the father*;
thirdly, how he obtains it, there [v. 12b; n. 345] at *who are not merely*.

342. In regard to the first he does two things. First, he states that circumcision is a sign: “You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin and it shall be a sign of the covenant between you and me” (Gen 17:10).

Secondly, he shows what it is a sign of, saying: *a seal of the justice of faith*, i.e., the justice that comes through faith, *which faith is in uncircumcision*, i.e., which Abraham had while he was still uncircumcised.

343. “Seal” is said in two ways. In one way, a seal [or signet] is a visible sign possessing a likeness to the thing signified, as in Ez (28:12): “You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom.” Circumcision had this visible likeness to Abraham’s faith. First, in regard to what he believed. For Abraham believed that his seed would be multiplied; hence, it was fitting to receive its sign in the organ of reproduction. Secondly, in regard to the effect of his faith, namely, the removal of fault, and this is signified by the removal of superfluous skin.

In another way, “seal” [*signaculum*] means a sign hiding something which is to be revealed to friends, as is clear in the case of a *sigillo*:²¹ “Worthy art thou, who wast slain, to take the scroll and to open its seals” (Rev 6:9). Hence, the secret of the incarnation of Christ from the seed of Abraham was enclosed under the seal of circumcision.

344. Then he shows what follows from what has been said.

For Abraham, still uncircumcised, was justified by faith and later received circumcision. From this he obtains the honor of being the father not only of the circumcised but also of uncircumcised believers. And this is what he says: *The purpose was to make him father*, i.e., from the foregoing it comes about that Abraham *is the father, of all who believe without being circumcised*, i.e., who are in the state of uncircumcision. Or Abraham is the father through uncircumcision, i.e., in virtue of what he had in uncircumcision, namely, that it be reckoned to them also as righteousness, namely, the fact that they believe, just as it was reckoned to Abraham. The power of this fatherhood is indicated in Mt (3:9): “God is able from these stones to raise up children to

²¹ Aquinas elucidates the meaning of *signaculum*, which can mean the signet impressing a seal, by pointing to a *sigillo*, the seal impressed by a signet. As in Latin, however, but the signet and the impression made by the signet can be called the “seal.” This makes translation difficult.

Abraham.” *And likewise the father of the circumcised*, who derive their origin from him: “Abraham is our father” (Jn 8:39).

345. Then he shows the manner in which he is the father even of the uncircumcised, namely, by imitation. And this is what he says: That he might be the father *not merely of the circumcised but also of those who follow the example of the faith which our father Abraham had before he was circumcised*, i.e., which Abraham had, while he was still uncircumcised: “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do what Abraham did” (Jn 8:39).

346. Since we are speaking of circumcision, it is fitting to consider three things about it, namely, why it was instituted [n. 347], what power it had [n. 349] and why it was changed [n. 350].

347. In regard to the first it should be noted that circumcision, just as the other ceremonies of the Law, was instituted for two purposes.

First, for divine worship, for which men were disposed in accordance with these ceremonies.

In keeping with this, circumcision had three reasons for being instituted, the first of which was to signify the faith and obedience by which Abraham submitted to God, so that those who accepted the circumcision of Abraham should observe his faith and obedience. For it is stated in Heb 11: “By faith Abraham was circumcised.” Hence, circumcision was instituted to signify his faith in future descendants, as has been stated.

The second reason was to express in a bodily sign something that was to occur spiritually, namely, just as superfluous skin was removed from the organ of reproduction, which is the chief servant of concupiscence, so every superfluous desire should be

removed from man's heart, as Jer (4:4) says: "Circumcise yourself to the Lord, remove the foreskin of your hearts."

The third reason was to distinguish the people worshiping God from all other people. This is why God commanded circumcision for the children of Israel, who were to dwell among the other nations after first living alone and uncircumcised in the desert.

348. The other purpose of circumcision and all the ceremonies is based on a relation to Christ, to whom they are compared as the figure to the reality and as the members to the body: "These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the body belongs to Christ" (Col 2:17).

Accordingly, by bodily circumcision is signified the spiritual circumcision to be accomplished by Christ: first in the soul, inasmuch as it is through him that concupiscence and the effects [*reatus*] of sin are removed by Christ: "In him," namely, Christ, "also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ" (Col 2:11).

Secondly, in regard to the body, namely, when in the resurrection all possibility of suffering and death is removed from the bodies of the elect. Hence, circumcision took place on the eighth day, because it signified the eighth era. For the seventh is the era of those who are at rest in Christ, while the other six are the eras during which the world runs its course. Again, circumcision was done with knives of stone (Jos 5:2) to signify that spiritual circumcision was to be effected by the Rock, who is Christ, as stated in 1 Cor (10:4). However, it was not the general practice to use a knife made of stone.

349. In regard to the second question, namely, what power circumcision had, it should be noted that, as the Gloss [of Lombard, col. 1372] says here—the quotation is

taken from Bede—“During the Law, circumcision offered the same curative help against the wound of original sin as baptism is wont to give in the era of revealed grace.” This shows that the power of circumcision extended to the removal of original sin.

However, some say that grace was not conferred in circumcision; for without righteousness God’s grace cannot be present. But the Apostle says in Gal (2:21): “If justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.”

And we can argue in the same way: If justifying grace were through circumcision, Christ died to no purpose. But this cannot be, for sin is never forgiven without grace: “Justified by his grace we have peace with God (Rom 5:1).

Therefore, others say that grace was conferred in circumcision to produce privative effects, namely, to remove guilt, but not positive effects, namely, the work of righteousness.

But this does not seem fitting either, for the positive effects of any form precede in the order of nature the privative effects; for example, light does not expel darkness except by illuminating. Similarly, grace expels guilt by producing righteousness. But if the prior is removed, the subsequent is removed.

Therefore, it is better to say that *ex opere operato* circumcision did not have effective power either to remove guilt or to produce righteousness. It was merely a sign of righteousness, as the Apostle says here. But through faith in Christ, of which circumcision was a sign, it removed original sin and conferred the help of grace to act righteously.

350. In regard to the third question, it is clear from what has been said, why circumcision had to be changed. For it was a sign of something to come. But the same

sign does not suit the present, past and future. Therefore, baptism, as the sign of present grace, produces a more copious and more beneficial effect of grace, because the closer the agent is in time and place, the more effectively it works.

351. Then [n. 323] when he says, *For not through the law*, he explains his statement that circumcision or any work of the Law did not justify in virtue of a divine promise.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it, there [v. 14; n. 354] at *If it is the adherents of the law*.

352. First, therefore, the Apostle accepts on the authority of Genesis the promise made to Abraham and his seed *that they should inherit the world*, i.e., that all the nations of the world would be blessed in him: “By you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen 12:3).

He says, and *to his seed*, because even though this promise was not to be fulfilled in him, it was to be fulfilled in his descendants: “By your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen 23:18).

But this seed is principally understood as Christ: “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his seed. It does not say, ‘and to seeds,’ referring to many, but referring to one” (Ga1 3:16), because in the one in whom it is to be fulfilled Ps 2 (v.8) it is shown that he would inherit the world: “Ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage.” Secondly, it is fulfilled in those who through Christ’s grace are spiritually the seed of Abraham: “The children of the promise are reckoned as descendants” (Rom

9:8). Through Christ they inherit the world, inasmuch as all things are for the glory of the elect: “All are yours and you are Christ’s” (1 Cor 3:22).

353. In regard to this promise he denies one thing and asserts another.

He denies that such a promise came through the law. This is not said on account of the promise itself, because at the time of the promise the Law had not been given, but in reference to the fulfillment of the promise, so that the sense is that such a promise was not made to Abraham as something to be fulfilled through the Law, because, as it says in Heb (7:19): “The law made nothing perfect.”

What he asserts is that such a promise was to be fulfilled *through the righteousness of faith*, because “the saints through faith conquered kingdoms” (Heb 11:33).

354. Then when he says *If it is* (v.14) he proves his statement:

first, in regard to the denial that the promise is to be fulfilled through, the Law;
secondly, in regard to the assertion that it is to be fulfilled through the righteousness of faith, there [v. 16; n. 359] at *Therefore it is of faith*.

In regard to the first he presents this argument: If the promise made to Abraham were to be fulfilled through the Law, Abraham’s faith believing the promise would be null, because the promise made to him would be abolished. But this is not fitting. Therefore, the first.

In regard to this he does two things:

first he presents a conditional statement;
secondly, he proves it, there [v. 15; n. 356] at *For the law*.

The destruction of the consequent is manifest.

355. He says first, therefore, that the promise was not made through the Law.

For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, i.e., if, in order to share in the promised inheritance, it is required that one obtain this from observing the Law, *faith is null*, i.e., the faith by which Abraham believed God promising Gen (c. 15) as been made futile. But this is not in keeping with what has been stated in 1 Cor (15:17): “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.”

Why it is futile is shown when he adds, *and the promise is abolished*, i.e., emptied, because it does not produce its effect. But this is contrary to what is stated in Heb (11:11): “She considered him faithful who had promised” and to what is stated in this chapter (v.21): “Fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.”

356. Then when he says *For the law* (v. 15) he proves the conditional statement through the effect or result of the Law.

First, he proposes the effect or result of the Law;

secondly, he proves it, there [v. 15b; n. 358] at *For where there is no law*.

357. He proves the conditional thus: If a promise is to be fulfilled through something which prevents its fulfillment, such a promise is void and the faith of believers futile. But the Law prevents one from obtaining the inheritance, *for the law brings wrath*; therefore, if the promise is to be fulfilled through the Law, *faith is null and the promise is void*.

Now the Law is said to bring wrath, i.e., vengeance, because through the Law men were made deserving of God’s vengeance: “Great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book,” i.e., of the Law (2 Kg 22:13).

But someone might suppose that the Law brings wrath as far as legal ceremonies observed in the era of grace are concerned, in line with Gal (5:2): “If you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.” However, what is stated here refers even to moral precepts, not because they command something which makes its observers deserving of God’s wrath, but because the Law commands and does not confer the grace to fulfill, according to 2 Cor (3:6): “The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life,” namely, because “the Spirit helps us inwardly in our weakness” (Rom 8:26).

358. Then when he says *For where there is no law* (v.15b) he shows how it brings wrath, saying: *But where there is no law, there is no transgression*, because even though a person, with no law given, could sin by commission against what is naturally just, he is not called a transgressor, unless he violates a law: “I looked at the transgressors with disgust, because they did not keep thy commands” (Ps 119:158). Yet every sinner can be called a transgressor, inasmuch as he transgresses the natural law: “I have accounted all the sinners of the earth transgressors” (Ps 119:119).

However, it is more grievous to transgress at once the law of nature and the written law than the law of nature alone. Hence, the Law having been given without the help of grace, transgression increased and deserved greater wrath.

Lecture 3

(16) [n. 359] Therefore it is of faith, in order that according to grace the promise might be firm to all the seed—not only to the adherent of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham, for he is the father of us all—

(17) as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"—before God, whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls the things that do not exist as the things that exist.

(18) [n. 367] Against hope he believed in hope, that he should become the father of many nations; as he had been told, "So shall your seed be."

(19) He was not weak in faith. Neither did he consider his own body, now dead because he was about a hundred years old, nor the dead womb of Sarah.

(20) [n. 374] No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,

(21) fully convinced that whatever God has promised he is able to do.

(22) [n. 377] That is why it was reckoned to him as justice.

(23) Now it is not written only for him that "it was reckoned to him as justice,"

(24) but for us also. It will be reckoned to us, if we believe in him that raised Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead,

(25) who was handed over for our trespasses and rose for our justification.

359. After showing that the promise made to Abraham and his seed was not to be fulfilled through the Law [n. 354], the Apostle now shows that it is to be fulfilled through faith.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he shows through what such a promise is to be fulfilled;

secondly, in whom it is to be fulfilled, there [v. 16b; n. 361] at *to all the seed*;

thirdly, by whom it is to be fulfilled, there [v. 17b; n. 364] at *who gives life to the dead*.

360. First, therefore, he concludes to his proposition, as it were by division.

For it seems necessary that the promise be fulfilled either by faith or by the Law; but not by the Law, because the promise would be abolished. Hence, he concludes, *that is why it depends on faith*, if we are to attain the promise of being heirs of the world:

“This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith” (1 Jn 5:4).

Then he confirms this with a middle term contrary to the one he used above. For it was stated that if justice were from the Law, the promise would be abolished; but if it be from faith, the promise remains solid in virtue of the power of divine grace justifying man through faith. And that is what he says, *in order that the promise may be guaranteed and rest* not on actions, which can fall short, but *on grace*, which is infallible: “My grace is sufficient for you” (2 Cor 12:9); “For all the promises of God find their Yes in him,” namely, Christ, i.e., they are true (2 Cor 1:20).

361. Then when he says *to all the seed* (v.16b) he shows in whom this promise is fulfilled.

First, he proposes what he intends and says that this promise, which is to be thus fulfilled through faith, is guaranteed by grace *to all the seed*, i.e., to every man who would be in any way descended from Abraham: “Their prosperity will remain with their descendants, and their inheritance to their children’s children” (Si 44:11).

362. Secondly, at *not only*, he explains what he meant by *all the seed*.

For there is a bodily descendant, as is referred to in Jn (8:33): “We are the descendants of Abraham,” and there is a spiritual descendant, as is referred to in Mt (3:9):

“God is able from these stones,” i.e., from the Gentiles, “to raise up children to Abraham.” Only the bodily descendants of Abraham kept the Law, but the spiritual descendants also imitate his faith.

Thus, if the promise were solely through the Law, it would be fulfilled not in all the descendants but only in the bodily ones. But because it is fulfilled through faith, which is common to all, it is plain that it is fulfilled in all his descendants.

363. Thirdly, at *he is the father*, he proves something he had presupposed, namely, that the descendants of Abraham are not only the children of the Law but also the children of faith. He proves this with a text from Scripture. First, he gives its sense, saying, *he, namely, Abraham, is the father of us all*, i.e., of all believers, Jew or Gentile: “The purpose was to make him father of all who believe” (Rom 4:11); “Look to Abraham, your father” (Is 51:2).

Secondly, he cites the text, saying, *as it is written* (Gen 17:4), *‘I have made you the father of many nations,’* Another version has, *I have appointed you*. But it does not change the sense. “Abraham was the great father of a multitude of nations” (Si 44:19).

Thirdly, at *in the presence of God*, he explains what he had said. For “*I have made you*” seems to imply that something destined to be fulfilled in the distant future had already come to pass. However, things that are future in themselves are present in God’s providence: “Before the universe was created, it was known to him; so it was also after it was finished” (Si 23:20). Accordingly, the Apostle says that the statement, *I have made you*, should be understood *in the presence of God*, i.e., in his presence *in whom he believed*. For Abraham had believed God promising things to come as if he saw them

present, because, as is stated in Heb (11:1); “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

364. Then when he says *who gives life to the dead* (v. 17b) he shows by whom this promise is to be fulfilled, saying, *who*, namely, God, *gives life to the dead*, i.e., the Jews, who were dead in sin for acting against the Law; he vivifies with faith and grace to enable them to realize the promise to Abraham: “As the father raises the dead and gives them life so the Son gives life to whom he will” (Jn 5:21).

And calls the things that are not, i.e., he calls the Gentiles to grace *as those that are*, i.e., as the Jews: “Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people’” (Rom 9:25).

He refers to the Gentiles as *those that are not*, because they were completely estranged from God, and it is stated in 1 Cor (13:2): “If I do not have charity, I am nothing.” Consequently, through this call the promise to Abraham is fulfilled even in the Gentiles.

365. Or *he calls those that are not* refers not to one’s temporal calling but to the call of eternal predestination, because even those who are not, are called and chosen as if they were: “He chose us in him before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4). Concerning this call it is stated below (9:11): “Not because of works but because of his call she was told, ‘The elder will serve the younger.’”

Or he is calling God’s simple knowledge a call, or the knowledge by which he knows the future as present. This is the way it is taken in Ps 147 (v.4): “He calls the stars by their names.” According to this sense, what is said here is mentioned on account of an earlier statement (v.17): *in the presence of God in whom he believed*.

Two things seem to militate against what was said: *I have made you the father of many nations*. One of these was that Abraham was as good as dead from old age. Against this he says, who gives life to the dead. The other is that those many nations did not exist yet. Against this he says: *He calls into existence the things that do not exist*.

367. Then [v.18; cf. n. 323] he commends Abraham's faith.

First, he shows the greatness of his faith;

secondly, its efficacy or fruit, there [v. 22; n. 377] at *This is why it was reckoned*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows the greatness of Abraham's faith as far as the promise of multiplying his descendants is concerned;

secondly, in regard to the promise to exalt his descendants, there [v. 20; n. 374] at *No distrust made him waver*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows that his faith was great;

secondly, that it was solid, there [v. 19; n. 370] at *He was not weak in faith*.

368. In regard to the first he does two things: first, he mentions the greatness of Abraham's faith, saying, *In hope he*, namely, Abraham, *believed that he should become the father of many nations*, but against another hope.

Here it should be noted that hope implies a certain expectation of a future good, the certainty being based sometimes on a human or natural cause as in 1 Cor (9:10): "The plowman should plow in hope," or on a divine cause as in Ps 31 (v.1): "In thee, O Lord, have I hoped."

Therefore, in regard to this good of becoming the father of many nations Abraham had certainty on the part of God promising, but the contrary appeared on the part of natural or human causes. Hence, he says, *against the hope* of natural and human causes *he believed in hope* of the divine promise.

369. Secondly, this promise is set out when he says, *as he had been told*, namely, in Gen (22:17): *So shall your descendants be* as the stars of heaven and as the sand on the seashore.

Both of these are mentioned, because they suggest an uncountable multitude. For as to the stars it is stated in Dt (1:10): “The Lord your God has multiplied you, and you are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude”; as to the grains of sand it is stated in 1kg (4:20): “Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea.”

Yet a difference between the two can be noted, if the just, who were of Abraham’s seed, be compared to the stars: “Those who turn many to righteousness are like the stars forever and ever” (Dan 12:3) and sinners be compared to the grains of sand, because they are overcome by the waves of the world as of a sea: “I placed the sand as the bound for the sea” (Jer 5:22).

370. Then when he says, *he did not weaken*, he shows Abraham’s firmness. For as temperance is shown not to be weak, because it is not overcome by strong temptations, so faith is shown not to be weak but strong, because it is not overcome by great difficulties: “Resist him, firm in your faith” (1 Pt 5:9).

371. Secondly (v.19b), he mentions the difficulties from which it is shown that his faith was not weak.

First, on the part of Abraham himself when he says, *Neither did he consider*, namely, to question the promise, *his own body, now dead*, namely, because the reproductive power in it was slack on account of old age; hence he says, *because he was about 100 years old*. For “Abraham was a hundred years old when Isaac was born to him” (Gen 21:15) and it was the year before that a son had been promised him: “The Lord said, ‘I will surely return to you in the spring, and Sarah your wife shall have a son’” (Gen 18:10).

372. But it seems that his body was dead as far as the reproductive power was concerned, because even after Sarah died he took another wife, Keturah, who bore him a number of sons, as is recorded in Gen (25:1).

Some answer that the reproductive power in him was dead as far as reproducing from an old woman was concerned, but not as far as reproducing from a young woman. For old men are wont to beget offspring from the young but not from old women, who are less fit for conception. However, it seems better to say that Abraham’s reproductive power was miraculously restored both in regard to Sarah and to all women.

373. Secondly, he mentions difficulty on the part of the wife when he says, *nor the dead womb of Sarah*, i.e., he does not consider it so as to question the promise. He says, *dead*, on account of sterility as well as old age. For “it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women” (Gen 18:11). Hence in Is (51:2), where it is written: “Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you,” the preceding passage says: “Look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you were digged,” in order to show the feebleness and frigidity of both.

374. Then when he says, *concerning the promise of God*, he commends Abraham's faith in the repeated promise that his seed would be exalted.

First he mentions the firmness of faith;

secondly, the cause of the firmness, there [v. 20b; n. 376] at *giving glory to God*.

375. First, therefore, he says: *concerning the [repeated] promise of God*, i.e., the promise that his seed would be exalted or that it would be multiplied, which was repeated: "Look toward heaven and number the stars...So shall your descendants be." (Gen 15:5); "You shall be the father of a multitude of nations" (Gen 17:4); "I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven" (Gen 22:17).

Or it can refer to the exaltation of his descendants, because when he had said: "I will multiply your descendants," he added at once: "And your descendants shall possess the gates of their enemies and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Concerning this promise of God *no distrust made him waver*, i.e., doubt the truth of the divine promise: "He who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind" (Jas 1:6); *but he grew strong in his faith*, i.e., clung firmly to his belief: "Resist him, firm in your faith" (1 Pt 5:9).

376. Then (v .20c) he gives the reason why Abraham's faith was firm, for he grew strong in his faith *as he gave glory to God* by considering his omnipotence: "Great is his power" (Ps 147:5).

Hence he continues: *fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised*: "Thou hast power to act whenever thou dost choose" (Wis 12:18).

From this it is clear that whoever is not firm in faith detracts from God's glory either in regard to his veracity or his power.

377. Then (v.22b) he commends Abraham's faith in regard to its effect.

First, he mentions the effect it had in him, saying, *that is why*, namely, because Abraham believed this so firmly, *it was reckoned to him as righteousness*: "And it was reckoned to him as righteousness" (1 Macc 2:52).

378. Secondly, he shows the effect which his faith had on others. In regard to this he does three things.

First, he shows the likeness between the effect it had in him and in others, saying, *But the words, 'It was reckoned to him,' were written not for his sake alone*, so as to make us think that for Abraham alone faith was reckoned as justice, *but for ours also*. *It*, namely, faith, *will be reckoned to us* as justice: "Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction" (Rom 15:4).

Therefore, it was written for him that he might be an example to us, and for us that he might raise our hope for righteousness.

379. Secondly, there at *believing in him* (v.24b), he shows a likeness in faith.

For what was reckoned as justice was Abraham's faith believing that his body, as good as dead, and the barren womb of Sarah could be vivified for procreating children. It will be reckoned also to us *who believe in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord* and in God the Father, to whom he says in Ps 41 (v.10): "But do thou, O lord, be gracious to me and raise me up." And because the power of the Father and of the Son is the same, he also rose by his own power.

That this faith justifies is shown below (10:9): “If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

380. Thirdly, (v. 24c) he assigns the cause why faith in the resurrection of Christ justifies, saying, *who*, namely, Christ, *was put to death [was delivered over]* by God the Father: “He did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all” (Rom 8:32), by himself: “He gave himself up for us” (Eph 5:25), by Judas: “He who delivered me to you has the greater sin” (Jn 19:11) and by the Jews: “They will deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked” (Mt 20:19).

And raised for our justification, i.e., to justify us by rising: “So that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Rom 6:4).

That he was put to death for our sins seems plain from the fact that by his death he merited the remission of our sins, but he did not merit by rising, because in the risen state he was not a pilgrim but one who had arrived.

Therefore, it must be said that Christ’s death was salutary for us not only by way of merit but also by way of effecting it. For since Christ’s human nature was somehow the organ of his divinity, as Damascene says, all the acts and sufferings of his human nature were salutary for us, considering that they flowed from the power of his divinity. But because an effect has to some extent a similarity to its cause, the Apostle says that Christ’s death, by which mortal life was extinguished in him, is the cause of extinguishing our sins. But his resurrection, by which he returns to a new life of glory, he calls the cause of our justification, by which we return to the new life of righteousness.

Chapter 5

Lecture 1

v. 1 [n. 381] Being justified therefore by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ:

v. 2 Through whom also we have access through faith to this grace in which we stand [n. 384], and glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God.

v. 3 And not only so, but we glory also in tribulation, knowing that tribulation works patience;

v. 4 And patience trial; and trial hope;

v. 5 [n. 390] And hope does not confound, because the charity of God is poured out in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit who is given to us.

381. After showing the need for Christ's grace, because without it neither the knowledge of the truth benefited the Gentiles nor circumcision and the Law benefited the Jews unto salvation, the Apostle now begins to extol the power of grace.

Concerning this, he does two things.

First, he shows what goods we obtain through grace;

secondly, from what evils we are freed by it, there [v.12; n. 406] at *Therefore as through one man*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he indicates the manner of reaching or the way by which we come to grace;

secondly, the good things we obtain through grace, there [v. 2b; n. 384] at *And we glory in the hope of glory*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he exhorts to the due use of grace;

secondly, he shows us the entrance to grace, there [v. 2; n. 383] at *Through whom we have access*.

382. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that faith will be reckoned as justice to all who believe in Christ's resurrection, which is the cause of our justification. *Being justified therefore by faith*, inasmuch as through faith in the resurrection we participate in its effect, *let us have peace with God*, namely, by submitting ourselves and obeying him: "Agree with God and be at peace" (Jb 22:21); "Who has hardened himself against him and been at peace?" (Jb 9:4).

And this *through our Lord Jesus Christ*, who has led us to that peace: "He is our peace" (Eph 2:14).

383. Hence he continues: *Through whom*, namely, Christ, *we have access* as through a mediator: "One mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5); "Through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father" (Eph 2:18).

Access, I say, *to this grace*, i.e., to the state of grace: "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Jn 1:17). *In which*, i.e., through which grace, we have not only risen from sin but *we stand* firm and erect in the heavens through love: "Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem" (Ps 122:2); "We have risen and stand upright" (Ps 20:8). And this *through faith*, through which we obtain grace, not because faith precedes grace, since it is rather through grace that there is faith: "By grace you have been saved through faith" (Eph 2:8), i.e., because the first effect of grace in us is faith.

384. Then when he says *and glory in the hope of the glory*, he indicates the blessings that have come to us through grace.

First, he says that through grace we have the glory of hope;
secondly, that through grace we have the glory of God, there [v. 11; n. 404] at *And not only so*.

In regard to the first he does three things.

First, he shows the greatness of the hope in which we glory;
secondly, its vehemence, there [v. 3; n. 386] at *And not only so*;
thirdly, its firmness, there [v. 5; n. 390] at *And hope does not confound*.

385. The greatness of hope is considered in terms of the greatness of things hoped for. He sets this out when he says, *and glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God*, i.e., in the fact that we hope to obtain the glory of sons of God.

For through Christ's grace *we have received the spirit of sonship* (Rom 8:15); "Behold how they have been numbered among the sons of God" (Wis 5:5). But to sons is due the father's inheritance: "If sons, then heirs" (Rom 8:17). This inheritance is the glory which God has in himself: "Have you an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like his?" (Job 40:9). Our hope for this has been given to us by Christ: "We have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and to an inheritance which is incorruptible" (1Pet 1:3). This glory, which will be completed in us in the future, is in the meantime begun in us through hope: "For in this hope we were saved" (Rom 8:24), "All those who love your name will glory in you" (Ps 5:11).

386. Then when he says *And not only so*, he shows the vehemence of this hope.

For anyone who vehemently hopes for something endures difficult and bitter things for it, as a sick person who strongly desires health gladly drinks a bitter medicine to be healed by it. Therefore, the sign of the vehement hope we have for Christ is that we not only glory in virtue of our hope of future glory but also in the evils we suffer for it. Hence he says, *And not only so*, i.e., we not only glory in the hope of glory but *we glory also in tribulation*, through which we arrive at glory: “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (Ac 14:22); “Count it all joy when you meet various trials” (Jas 1:2).

387. Then he shows the cause when he says, *knowing that*.

Here he mentions four things in order: the first is tribulation, about which he says, *tribulation works patience*, not in the sense that tribulation is the cause that begets it, but because suffering is the material and occasion for exercising the act of patience: “Be patient in tribulation” (Rom 12:12).

388. Secondly, he mentions the effect of patience when he says, *And patience trial*: “For gold is tested in the fire and acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation” (Sir 2:5).

For it is plain that we accept the loss of some thing easily for the sake of another thing we love more. Hence, if a person endures patiently the loss of bodily and temporal goods for the sake of obtaining eternal benefits, this is sufficient proof that such a person loves eternal blessings more than temporal.

However, James (1:3) seems to say the opposite: “The trial of your faith produces patience.”

The answer is that trial [*probatio*] can be understood in two ways. In one way, as it takes place in the one tested; then the trial is the very suffering through which a man is tested. Hence, it is the same to say that tribulation produces patience and that tribulation tests patience. In another way, trial is taken for the fact of having been tested. This is the way it is taken here, because if a person endures sufferings patiently, he has been tested.

389. Thirdly, he mentions the third, saying, *and trial hope*, namely trial brings about hope, because after a person has been tested, hope can be had by himself and by others that he will be admitted to God's inheritance: "God tested them and found them worthy of himself" (Wis3:5). Therefore, from the first to the last it is clear that suffering paves the way to hope. Hence, if a person rejoices strongly in hope, it, follows that he will glory in his sufferings.

390. Then when he says *And hope does not confound*, he shows the firmness of such hope.

First, he asserts it, saying, *Hope*, namely, by which we hope for the glory of the sons of God, *does not confound*, i.e., does not fail, unless the man fails it. For a person is said to be confounded in his hope, when he falls away from the thing he hoped for: "In you, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be disappointed" (Ps 31:1); "No one has hoped in the Lord and been disappointed" (Si 2:10).

Secondly, at *because the charity of God*, he presents two arguments for the certainty of hope.

The first is based on a gift of the Holy Spirit;

the second on the death of Christ, there [v.6; n. 394] at *For why did Christ*.

392. First, therefore, he says: We can be certain that hope does not confound, *because the charity of God is poured out in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit who is given to us.*

The love of God can be taken in two ways: in one way, for the love by which God loves us: “He loved you with an everlasting love” (Jer 31:3); in another way for the love by which we love God: “I am sure that nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God” (Rom 8:39). Both these loves of God are poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

For the Holy Spirit, who is the love of the Father and of the Son, to be given to us is our being brought to participate in the Love who is the Holy Spirit, and by this participation we are made lovers of God. The fact that we love him is a sign that he loves us: “I love those who love me” (Pr 8:17); “Not that we loved God but that he first loved us” (1 Jn 4:10).

The love by which he loves us is said to be poured into our hearts, because it is clearly shown in our hearts by the gift of the Holy Spirit sealed in us: “By this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit he has given us” (1 Jn 3:24).

But the love by which we love God is said to be poured into our hearts, because it reaches to the perfecting of all the moral habits and acts of the soul; for, as is stated in 1 Cor 13(:4), “Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful....”

393. Both interpretations of these words lead to the conclusion that *hope does not confound*. For if they are taken to mean the love of God by which he loves us, it is clear that God does not deny himself to those whom he loves: “He loved his people; all the holy ones were in his hand” (Dt 33:3). Similarly, if they are taken as referring to the love

by which we love God, it is clear that he has prepared eternal goods for those who love him: “He who loves me will be loved by my father and I will love him and manifest myself to him” (Jn 14:21).

Lecture 2

(6) [n. 394] While we were still weak, according to the time Christ died for the ungodly.

(7) Why, one will hardly die for a just man—though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die.

(8) [n. 398] But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners, according to the time,

(9) Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath through him.

(10) For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

(11) [n. 404] Not only so, but we also glory in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

394. After disclosing that hope is firm, because it is a gift of the Holy Spirit [n. 391], the Apostle now traces its firmness to the death of Christ.

First, he asks a question;

secondly, a difficulty arises in answering it, there [v. 7; n. 396] at *Why, one will hardly*;

thirdly, he answers the question, there [v. 8; n. 398] at *But God shows his love*.

395. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that hope does not disappoint.

This is obvious to anyone who wonders why, *while we were yet weak, Christ died for the ungodly*; weak, that is, languishing in sin: “Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am languishing” (Ps 6:2).

For just as the due harmony of the humors is destroyed by bodily sickness, so by sin the correct order of our affections is removed. Therefore, when we were yet helpless, Christ died for the ungodly: “Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous” (1 Pt 3:18).

And this *according to the time*, i.e., he was to remain dead for a definite time and then rise on the third day: “For as Jonah was three days in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Mt 12:40).

Therefore, this is marvelous, if we consider who died; also if we consider for whom he died. But it could not have been so marvelous, if no fruit were to be obtained: “What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit?” (Ps 30:8). None, if the salvation of the human race does not follow.

396. Then (v. 7) he shows a difficulty on the part of those for whom Christ died, i.e., the ungodly, saying, *One will hardly die for the release of a just man* rather, “the righteous man perishes and no one lays it to heart” (Is 57:1). That is why I say that *one will hardly die though perhaps for a good man one will even dare to die*, on account of his zeal for virtue.

It is rare, because it is so great; for “no man has greater love than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jn 15:13). Yet what Christ did is never done, namely,

to die for the just and the unjust. That is why there is reason to wonder why Christ did this.

397. This passage can be interpreted in another way, so that a just man will be one trained in virtue, and a good man one who is innocent. And although according to this the just man would be more excellent than the good man, yet scarcely anyone dies for the just man. The reason is that an innocent person, who is understood as good, seems more worthy of pity on account of his lack of years or of some such thing. But the just person, because he is perfect, lacks any defect that would elicit pity. Therefore, should anyone die for an innocent person, it could be through pity; but to die for a just man requires zeal for virtue, which is found in fewer persons than the emotion of pity.

398. Then when he says *But God shows* (v. 8), he responds to the foregoing question.

First, he sets out his response;

Second, he argues from this to what he intends, there [v. 9b; n. 400] at *Much more*;

Third, he shows how this follows of necessity, there [v. 10; n. 401] at *For if while we were enemies*.

399. He says therefore first. It was asked why Christ died for the ungodly, and the response to this is that, through this, *God shows his love for us*, i.e., through this he shows that he loves us to the greatest degree, because if *while we were still sinners*, *Christ died for us*, and this according to the time, as was explained above.

The very death of Christ shows God's love for us, because he gave his own son that he should die in making satisfaction for us: "For God so loved the world that he

gave his only son” (John 3:16). And so as the love of God the Father for us is shown by the fact that he gives his own Spirit to us, as was said above, so also it is shown by the fact that he gave his son, as is said here.

But by the fact that he says *shows* he indicates a certain immensity of the divine love, which is shown both by his own deed, because he gave his son, and by our condition, because he was not moved to do this by our merits, since we were still sinners: “God who is rich in mercy, on account of the exceedingly great love wherewith he has loved us, while we were still dead in sins, has raised us to life with Christ” (Eph 2:4).

400. Then when he says *Much more, therefore* (v. 9) he concludes what he had intended from the foregoing, saying: If Christ died for us while we were still sinners, *much more, therefore, being now justified by his blood*, as was said above in chapter 3(:25), “whom God set forth as a propitiation through faith,” through his blood, *shall we be saved from the wrath*, i.e., from the vengeance of eternal condemnation, which men incur by their sins: “Brood of vipers, who showed you to flee from the wrath to come?” (Mt 3:7).

401. Then when he says *For if while were enemies*, he shows the necessity of his conclusion, which proceeds by arguing from the lesser to the greater.

And one should observe here two comparisons of lesser to greater, one on our part and one on the part of Christ. On our part he compares enemies to those who are reconciled. For it seems a lesser thing that someone should treat enemies well who are already reconciled. On the part of Christ he compares death to life. For his life is more powerful than his death because, as is said the last chapter of 2Cor (13:4), “He died

through weakness,” namely the weakness of our flesh, “but lives through the power of God.”

And this is why he says: with reason I concluded that *much more*, being enlivened, *shall we be saved* through him. *For if while we were still enemies we were reconciled to God, and this by the death of his son, much more now that we are reconciled shall we be saved, and this by his life.*

402. Now one should note that a man is said to be an enemy of God in two ways. In one way, because he practices hostility towards God when he resists his commands: “He has run against him with his neck raised up” (Job 15:26).

In another way, a man is said to be an enemy of God by the fact that God hates men, not indeed insofar as he made them, because in this regard it says in Wis 11(:25), “You have loved all things, and you have hated nothing of the things you have made”; but insofar as the enemy of man, i.e., the devil, has worked in man—i.e., as regards sin: “Similarly God hates the ungodly” (Wis 14:9), and “The most high hates sinners” (Sir 12:7).

403. Once the cause of enmity, namely, sin, has been removed by Christ, reconciliation through him follows: “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor 5:19); for our sin was removed through the death of His Son.

In this regard it should be noted that Christ’s death can be considered in three ways.

First, precisely as a death; and so it is stated in Wisdom (1:13): “God did not make death” in human nature, but it was brought on by sin. Accordingly, Christ’s death,

precisely as death, was not so acceptable to God as to be reconciled through it, because “God does not delight in the death of the living” (Wis 1:13).

In another way Christ’s death can be considered with emphasis on the action of the killers, which greatly displeased God. Hence St. Peter says against them: “You denied the Holy and Righteous One...and killed the Author of life” (Ac 3:14). From this aspect Christ’s death could not be the cause of reconciliation but rather of indignation.

It can be considered in a third way as depending on Christ’s will, which chose to endure death in obedience to the Father: “He became obedient” to the Father “even unto death” (Phil 2:8) and out of love for men: “Christ loved us and gave himself up for us” (Eph 5:2). From this aspect Christ’s death was meritorious and satisfied for our sins; it was accepted by God as sufficient for reconciling all men, even those who killed Christ, some of whom were saved at his prayer: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Lk 23:34).

404. Then when he says *Not only so* (v. 11) he shows what benefits we obtain even now through grace, saying, *not only so*, i.e., not only in the hope of the glory we expect in the future, *but we also rejoice in God*, i.e., in being even now united to God by faith and charity: “Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord” (2 Cor 10:17). And this *through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have even now during this life received our reconciliation*, so that we have been changed from enemies to friends: “Through him he reconciled to himself all things” (Col 1:20).

405. The verse, *Not only so*, can be connected with the preceding one, so that the sense would be: We shall be saved by his life from sin and punishment; and not only

shall we be saved from evils, but shall rejoice in God, i.e., in the fact that we shall be the same in the future with him: “That they may be one in us, even as we are one” (Jn 17:22).

Lecture 3

(12) [n. 406] Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world and by sin death: and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.

406. After indicating the benefits we obtained through Christ’s grace [n. 381], the Apostle now indicates the evils from which we were set free. And concerning this he does three things.

First, he shows that through Christ’s grace we have been freed from the slavery of sin;

secondly, from the slavery of the Law, in chapter 7, there [n. 518] *Or do you not know, brothers;*

thirdly, from condemnation, in chapter 8, there [n. 595] at *There is therefore now no condemnation.*

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows that by Christ’s grace we are set free from original sin;

secondly, that we are shielded against future sins, there [c. 6; n. 468] at *What therefore shall we say.*

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he deals with the history of sin;

secondly, of grace destroying sin, there [v. 15; n. 430] at *But the gift is not like the trespass*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he sets forth the origin of sin;

second, he manifests it, there [v. 13; n. 421] at *Sin was indeed in the world*.

Concerning the first, he does two things:

first, he sets forth the origin of sin;

secondly, its universality, there [v. 12b; n. 417] at *And so death passed*.

In regard the first he does two things:

first, he shows the origin of sin;

secondly, the origin of death, there [v. 12b; n. 416] at *And through sin death*.

407. First, therefore, he says that we have been reconciled through Christ.

For reconciliation came into the world from Christ, *as sin came into the world through one man*, namely, Adam: “As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor 15:22).

Here it should be noted that the Pelagian heretics, who denied the existence of original sin in infants, claim that these words of the Apostle must be understood of actual sin which, according to them, entered this world through Adam, inasmuch as all sinners imitate Adam: “But like Adam they transgressed the covenant” (Hos 6:7).

But, as Augustine says against them, if the Apostle were speaking of the entrance of actual sin, he would not have said that sin entered this world through a man but rather through the devil, whom sinners imitate: “Through the devil’s envy death entered the world” (Wis 2:24).

Therefore, the interpretation is that sin entered this world through Adam not only by imitation but also by propagation, i.e., by a vitiated origin of the flesh in accordance with Eph (2:3): “We were by nature children of wrath” and Ps 51 (v.5): “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity.”

408. But it seems impossible that sin be passed from one person to another through carnal origin.

For sin exists in the rational soul, which is not passed on by carnal origin, not only because the intellect is not the act of any body and so cannot be caused by the power of bodily seed, as the Philosopher says in *Generation of Animals*, but also because the rational soul, being a subsistent reality (inasmuch as it can perform certain acts without using the body and is not destroyed when the body is destroyed), is not produced in virtue of the body’s being produced (unlike other forms which cannot subsist of themselves), but is caused by God. Therefore, it seems to follow that sin, too, which is an accident of the soul, cannot be passed on by carnal origin.

The reasonable answer seems to be that although the soul is not in the seed, nevertheless there is in it a power disposing the body to receive the soul which, when it is infused into the body, is also adapted to it in its own way for the reason that everything received by something exists in it according to a mode of the recipient. That is why children resemble parents not only in bodily defects, as a leper begets a leprous child and a person with gout a gouty child, but also in defects of the soul, as an irascible parent begets irascible children and mad parents mad offspring. For although the foot subject to gout or the soul subject to anger and madness are not in the seed, nevertheless in the seed is a power which forms the bodily members and disposes them for the soul.

409. Yet a difficulty remains, because defects traced to a vitiated source do not involve guilt. For they are not deserving of punishment but rather of pity, as the Philosopher says of one born blind or in any other way defective. The reason is that it is the character of guilt that it be voluntary and in the power of the one to whom the guilt is imputed. Consequently, if any defect in us arose through origin from the first parent, it does not seem to carry with it the nature of guilt but of punishment.

Therefore, it must be admitted that as actual sin is a person's sin, because it is committed through the will of the person sinning, so original sin is the sin of the nature committed through the will of the source of human nature.

410. For it must be remembered that just as the various members of the body are the parts of one human person, so all men are parts and, as it were, members of human nature. Hence Porphyry says that by sharing in the same species many men are one man.

Furthermore, the act of sin performed by a member, say the hand or the foot, does not carry the notion of guilt from the hand's or foot's will but from the whole person's will, from which as from a source the movement of sin is passed to the several members. Similarly, from the will of Adam, who was the source of human nature, the total disorder of that nature carries the notion of guilt in all who obtain that nature precisely as susceptible to guilt. And just as an actual sin, which is a sin of the person, is drawn to the several members by an act of the person, so original sin is drawn to each man by an act of the nature, namely, generation. Accordingly, just as human nature is obtained through generation, so, too, by generation is passed on the defect it acquired from the sin of the first parent.

This defect is a lack of original justice divinely conferred on the first parent not only in his role as a definite person but also as the source of human nature -- a justice that was to be passed along with human nature to his descendants. Consequently, the loss of this original justice through sin was passed on to his descendants. It is this loss that has the aspect of guilt in his descendants for the reason given. That is why it is said that in the progression of original sin a person infected the nature, namely, Adam sinning vitiated human nature; but later in others the vitiated nature affects the person in the sense that to the offspring is imputed as guilt this vitiated state of nature on account of the first parent's will, as explained above.

411. From this it is clear that although the first sin of the first parent is passed on to the descendants by generation, nevertheless his other sins, or even those of other men, are not passed on to their children, because it was only through the first sin that the good of nature, originally intended to be passed on by generation, was lost. Through all later sins the good of personal grace is lost, which does not pass on to one's descendants.

This also explains why, although Adam's sin was removed by his repentance: "She delivered him from his transgression" (Wis 10:2), nevertheless his repentance could not remove the sin of descendants, because his repentance was performed by a personal act, which did not extend beyond him personally.

412. Consequently, there is but one sole original sin, because the defect following upon the first sin is the only one passed on to the descendants. Therefore, the Apostle is careful to say that *through one man sin came into the world*, and not "sins," which he would have said, if he were speaking of actual sin.

But sometimes it is said in the plural: “And in sins did my mother conceive me” (Ps 51:7) because it contains many sins virtually, insofar as the corruption of bodily desire [*fomes*] inclines one to many sins.

413. It seems, however, that original sin entered this world not through one man, namely, Adam, but through one woman, namely, Eve, who was the first to sin “From a woman sin had its beginning and because of her we all die” (Si 25:24).

This is answered in a gloss in two ways: in one way, because the custom of Scripture is to present genealogies not through the woman but through the men. Hence, the Apostle in giving, as it were, the genealogy of sin makes no mention of the woman but only of the man.

In another way, because the woman was taken from the man; consequently, what is true of the woman is attributed to the man.

But this can be explained in another and better way, namely, that since original sin is passed on along with the nature, as has been said, then just as the nature is passed on by the active power of the man, while the woman furnishes the matter, so too original sin. Hence, if Adam had not sinned, but Eve only, sin would not have been passed on to their descendants.

For Christ did not contract original sin, because he took his flesh from the woman alone without male seed.

415. Augustine uses these words from the apostle Paul to respond to the heretic Julian, who asked: “The who is born does not sin, the who begot him does not sin, the one who bore him does not sin; through what crack, therefore, in such a garrison of innocence do you suppose sin has entered?” But Augustine responds: “Why do you seek

a crack when you have a wide open gate? For according to the Apostle, sin entered into this world through one man.”²²

416. Then he touches on the entry of death into this world when he says, *and death through sin* entered this world: “Ungodliness purchases death” (Wis 1:12).

However, it seems that death does not arise from sin but from nature, being due to the presence of matter. For the human body is composed of contrary elements and, therefore, is corruptible of its very nature.

The answer is that human nature can be considered in two ways: in one way according to its structural principles, and then death is natural. Hence Seneca says that death is natural not penal for man. In another way man’s nature can be considered in the light of what divine providence had supplied it through original justice. This justice was a state in which man’s mind was under God, the lower powers of the soul under the mind, the body under the soul, and all external things under man, with the result that as long as man’s mind remained under God, the lower powers would remain subject to reason, and the body to the soul by receiving life from it without interruption, and external things to man in the sense that all things would serve man, who would never experience any harm from them.

Divine providence planned this for man on account of the worth of the rational soul, which, being incorruptible, deserved an incorruptible body. But because the body, which is composed of contrary elements, served as an instrument for the senses, and such a body could not in virtue of its nature be incorruptible, the divine power furnished which was lacking to human nature by giving the soul the power to maintain the body

²² Augustine, *De Nuptiis et Conc.*, book 2, ch 28.

incorruptible, just as a worker in metal might give the iron, from which he makes a sword, the power never to become rusty.

Thus, therefore, after man's mind was turned from God through sin, he lost the strength to control the lower powers as well as the body and external things. Consequently, he became subject to death from intrinsic sources and to violence from external sources.

417. Then when he says *and so death passed* (v. 12c) he shows the universality of this process in regard both to death and to sin, but in reverse order. For above he treated first of the entry of sin, which is the cause of death's entry; but now he deals first with the universality of death as with something more obvious. Hence he says, *and so death* or the sin of the first parent, *spread to all*, because men merit the necessity of dying on account of a vitiated origin: "We must all die" (2 Sam 14:14); "What man can live and never see death?" (Ps 89:48).

418. Then he touches on the universality of sin when he says, *because [in whom] all men sinned*. According to Augustine this can be understood in two ways: in one way, *in whom*, i.e., in the first man, or *in which*, namely, in that sin; because while he was sinning, all sinned in a sense, inasmuch as all men were in him as in their first origin.

419. But since Christ derived his origin from Adam (Lk 3:23 ff), it seems that even he sinned in Adam's sin.

Augustine's answer in *On Genesis* is that Christ was not in Adam as completely as we were, for we were in him according to bodily substance and according to seed. But Christ was in him in the first way only.

Some who interpreted these words incorrectly supposed that the entire substance of all human bodies, which is required for a true human nature, was actually in Adam and that in virtue of a multiplication traced to God's power, something taken from Adam was increased to form such a quantity of bodies.

But this is far-fetched, because it explains the works of nature by a miracle. Indeed, it is obvious that the human body, even though it is required for the integrity of human nature, corrupts and becomes a corpse.

Hence it is better to say that, because everything generable is corruptible and vice versa, the matter which was present under some form other than human before a man is begotten, received the form proper to human flesh. Accordingly, not everything in our bodies that belongs to the integrity of human nature was in Adam actually, but only according to origin in the way that an effect is present in its active principle.

According to this, therefore, there are in human generation the bodily material, which the woman proffers, and an active force, which is in the male's seed; both are derived originally from Adam as their first principle. Hence, they are said to have been in him according to seed and according to bodily substance, inasmuch as both came forth from him. But in Christ's generation there was the bodily substance which he obtained from the virgin; in place of the male seed was the Holy Spirit's active power, which is not derived from Adam. Consequently, Christ was not in Adam according to his seedly power, but only according to bodily substance.

Thus, therefore, we not only receive sin from Adam and contract it; we also derive human nature from him as from an active principle -- which amounts to being in him according to seedly power. But this is not true of Christ, as has been stated.

420. Finally, it seems that original sin does not pass on to all, because the baptized are cleansed of original sin. Hence, it seems that they cannot transmit to their descendants something they do not have.

The answer is that through baptism a man is freed from original sin as far as the mind is concerned, but the infection of sin remains as far as the flesh is concerned. Hence the Apostle says below (7:22): “I serve the law of God with my mind, but the law of sin with my flesh.” But man does not beget children with the mind but with the flesh; consequently, he does not transmit the new life of Christ but the old life of Adam.

Lecture 4

(13) [n. 412] For until the law sin was in the world: but sin was not imputed, when the law was not.

(14) [n. 424] But death reigned from Adam unto Moses, even over those who did not sin after the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a figure of him who was to come.

412. After tracing the origin of sin and death and their entry into the world [n. 406], the Apostle now clarifies what he has said.

First, he explains his statement;

secondly, he clarifies the comparison he suggested (in v. 12), when he said: “as sin...so death”;

thirdly, he explains it, there [v. 14b; n. 429] at *who is a figure of the one who was come*.

Now he had stated that sin and death passed on to all men. Here, in line with Augustine's exposition [n. 418], he intends to explain this by the fact that sin remained even under the Law, implying that it was unable to expel it.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he explains his statement as far as sin is concerned;

secondly, as far as death is concerned [v. 14; n. 424].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows that sin existed under the Law;

secondly, what the Law did in regard to sin [v. 13b; n. 423].

422. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that all have sinned in Adam, because even the Law did not take away sin. *Before [until] the law*, i.e., even under the Law, *sin was in the world*. This can be understood of the natural law and the Law of Moses; similarly, for actual sin and original sin.

For original sin was in the child until the law of nature, i.e., until he reached the use of reason through which man adverts to these laws: "In sins did my mother conceive me" (Ps 51:5). Nor does this sin pass away with the coming of the natural law in a man; rather, it grows through the addition of actual sin, because, as stated in Ec (7:20): "There is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins."

But if we understand it of the Law of Moses, then the statement that sin was in the world until the Law can be understood not only of original sin but also of actual, because both sins continued in the world before the Law and under the Law: "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean?'" (Pr 20:9).

423. But although the Law did not remove sin, it produced knowledge of sin which previously was not recognized.

Hence he continues, *but sin was not imputed*. This is obvious, if it is understood of the natural law. For although original sin is in the child before the natural law and is counted against him by God, it was not imputed to him by men.

But if it be understood of the Law of Moses, it is clear that some actual sins were not imputed before the Law, as those which are specifically forbidden by the Law, which men did not regard as sins; for example, “You shall not covet” (Ex 20:17). But certain sins were imputed, inasmuch as they were against the law of nature. Hence, Joseph is sent to prison on a charge of adultery (Gen 39:11 ff).

424. Then he deals with death, saying: Although sins were not imputed before the Law, *yet death*, i.e., spiritual, i.e., sin or eternal damnation, of which it is written: “The death of the wicked is very evil” (Ps 34:21), *reigned*, i.e., exercised its power over men, by bringing them to damnation, *from Adam* through whom sin entered the world, *to Moses*, under whom the Law was given: “The law was given through Moses” (Jn 1:17), not only over those who sinned actually, but *even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam*, who sinned actually: “But like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me” (Hos 6:7), because even the children incurred damnation.

425. Under this sense it is also possible to understand bodily death, through which is shown the presence of sin, even when it was not imputed. As if to say: *Sin indeed was not imputed* before the Law, but we know that it existed, *because death reigned*, i.e., bodily, first by bringing suffering, such as hunger, thirst and sickness, and finally by

destroying life, *even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam*, i.e., even over children who committed no actual sins, because even they suffered bodily death before and after the Law: “What man can live and never see death?” (Ps 89:48).

426. Ambrose explained these words in another way, namely, of actual sin only, and of the Mosaic Law. According to him these words were written to explain that sin entered this world through the first parent and passed on to everyone.

For until the law, i.e., before the Law of Moses, *sin was in the world*, namely, actual sin. For men sinned against the law of nature in manifold ways. Hence, it is said in Gen (13:13): “The men of Sodom were the wickedest.” *But sin was not imputed when there was no law*, not as though it was not imputed as something to be punished by men, since there are records of men being punished for sin before the time of the Law (Gen c. 39 & 40); but it was not considered as something to be punished by God. For at that time men did not believe that God would punish or reward men’s actions: “Thick clouds enwrap him, so that he does not see” (Jb 22:14). But after the Law was given by God, it was recognized that sins are imputed by God for punishment and not only by men. Consequently, because men did not believe that they would be punished by God for their sins, they sinned freely and without restraint, whenever they did not fear human judgment. Hence he adds: *But death*, i.e., sin, *reigned*, i.e., exercised its power in every way, *from Adam to Moses* excluded. For when the Law was given through Moses, it began to weaken the reign of sin, inculcating fear of divine judgment: “Oh, that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and keep my commandments” (Dt 5:28). Sin *reigned*, I say, until Moses, not over *all but over those who sinned in the likeness of Adam*.

For Ambrose says that *not* is not found in the ancient manuscripts; hence, he believes it was added by corrupters. Adam, indeed, believed the devil's promise more than God's threat, as is clear in Gen (c.3); in a way, then, he preferred to devil to God. Therefore, idolaters sin in the likeness of Adam's sin, because they abandon the worship of God to venerate the devil. Over such, therefore, death, i.e., sin, reigned completely, because it possessed them entirely. But there were true worshippers of God before the Law; yet even if they sinned, sin did not reign over them, because it did not separate them totally from God. Rather, they sinned under God, i.e., under faith in the one God, if they sinned mortally, or under charity, if they sinned venially.

427. From both these interpretations a third can be obtained which seems more in accord with the Apostle's intention.

For he had said (v. 12) that "through one man sin entered this world"; but because sin is a transgression of the divine law, it might seem that this would not be true during the time before the Law, especially since he had stated in (4:15): "Where there is no law, there is no transgression. Consequently, one might suppose that sin entered the world not through a man but through the Law. To exclude this he says, *until the law*, i.e., the time before the Law, *sin was in the world*, both original and actual, but it was not recognized as something to be punished by God. And this is what he adds, *but sin was not imputed*, namely, as something against God, *since the law*, i.e., divinely given, did not exist.

428. For there were certain persons, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* V (ch. 10), who believed that nothing is just by nature and, consequently, nothing unjust, but only because there is a human law. According to this, a sin was not imputed as being contrary to God, especially original sin, since it was not known.

But the error of this opinion is shown by the effect, because bodily death reigned from Adam, through whom original sin entered the world, until Moses, under whom the Law was given. Consequently, since death is the effect of sin, especially original, it is clear that before the Law there was original sin in the world.

But lest anyone suppose that they died on account of actual sins, he excludes this, when he says that *it reigned even over those who did not sin* by their own act, namely, children and the just who did not sin mortally, but did sin in the first man, as has been stated. Therefore, he adds, *in the likeness of Adam's sin*, inasmuch as they contracted the likeness of that sin through their origin along with the likeness of nature. As if to say: The fact that they died without personal sin shows that the likeness of Adam's sin had been spread in them in virtue of origin. And this is what the Apostle intends to convey, namely, that original sin entered the world through Adam.

429. Then (v.14b) he explains the likeness which was understood in the adverb, “as” [*sicut*] (v. 12). Hence he says, *who*, namely, Adam, *was a type*, i.e., a figure, *of the one who was to come*, i.e., of Christ, although in an opposite way.

For just as sin and death entered the world through Adam, so justice and life entered through Christ: “The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven” (1 Cor 15:47).

There are other likenesses between Christ and Adam, namely, that just as Adam's body was formed without intercourse, so Christ's body from the Virgin. Again, just as the woman was taken from the side of the sleeping Adam, so from the side of the sleeping Christ flowed blood and water (Jn 19:34), which signify the sacraments by which the Church was formed.

Lecture 5

(15) [n. 430] But the gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.

(16) [n. 435] And the gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification.

(17) [n. 438] If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of justice reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

(18) [n. 442] Therefore as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's justice leads to acquittal and life for all men.

(19) [n. 445] For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made just.

430. After discussing the entry of sin into this world, the Apostle treats of the history of grace, which abolishes sin. And concerning this he does two things.

First, he shows how the grace of Christ removed sin, which entered the world through one man;

secondly, how it removed sin, which superabounded with the coming of the Law [v. 20; n. 448].

In showing how Christ's grace removed the sin introduced into the world by Adam, he compares Christ's grace to Adam's sin, stating that Christ's grace can accomplish more good than Adam's sin accomplishes evil. And concerning this he does two things.

First, he compares the causes, namely, Christ's grace, with Adam's sin; secondly, he compares their effects [v. 16; n. 435].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he gives the comparison;
secondly, he clarifies it [v. 15b; n. 432].

431. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that Adam is the type of the one who was to come, *but not like the trespass is the free gift*. As if to say: the efficacy of Adam's trespass must not be considered the equal of Christ's gift.

The reason is that sin came from the weakness of the human will, but grace comes from the immensity of the divine goodness, which excels the human will, especially in its weakness. Therefore, the power of grace exceeds every sin; consequently, David said: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy abundant mercy" (Ps 51:1). For this reason Cain's attitude is justly reproved: "My sin is too great to merit pardon" (Gen 4:13).

432. Then (v.15b) he explains what he had said, namely, that the gift of grace exceeds Adam's trespass, saying, *if through one man's trespass*, namely, Adam's, *many died*, i.e., if sin and death passed on to many others, because it passed on to all who sinned in him, *much more have the grace of God and the free gift*, where the "and" serves to explicate. Or, *grace of God* refers to the remission of sin as above (3:24): "Justified by his grace as a gift"; but *gift* refers to the blessings over and above the remission of sins, as

in Ps 67 (v.19): “The Lord gave gifts to men.” *Much more*, I say, have the grace and gifts *abounded for many*.

For the more potent something is, the more it can extend to a greater number. But the fact of death, which was Adam’s sin, extended to many. Hence, he says significantly that by the trespass of one many have died. For death is the argument for original sin, as stated above, for God said to Adam: “In the day that you eat of it, you shall die” (Gen 2:17). God’s grace, which is stronger, extends much more abundantly to many: “Who brings many sons to glory” (Heb 2:10).

433. It should be noted that he says, *abounded*, because God’s grace reached many not only to erase the sin incurred from Adam but also to remove actual sins and to bestow many other blessings: “God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance” (2 Cor 9:8).

For just as sin abounded from one man to many through the first suggestion of the devil, so God’s grace abounded to many through one man. Hence, he says, *in the grace*, i.e., through the grace, *of that one man Jesus Christ*. For grace is poured out by God upon many, in order that we might receive it through Christ, in whom every fullness of grace is found; “From his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace” (Jn 1:16).

434. This is how the text should be read according to Augustine’s interpretation, such that the word “many” is not taken comparatively but absolutely. So Augustine would have it that the comparison points to this, that if the sin of the one man Adam spread to many, much more will the grace of the one man Christ spread to many.

But according to Ambrose the word “many” should be taken comparatively, so that the meaning is that *by the sin*, i.e., the actual sin, *of one man*, namely Adam, *many*,

not all, *died* by the death of sin, namely by imitating the sin of Adam by idolatry, as was explained above [n. 426]. Wisdom 13:(10) says of idolaters: “They are unhappy, and their hope is among the dead.” And much more has *the grace of God abounded unto many*, namely more than in the idolaters who sinned in the likeness of Adam, because not only their sins are taken away by the grace of Christ but also the sins of those who persevered in the faith of the one God: “He will put away our iniquities: and he will cast all our sins into the bottom of the sea” (Mic 7:19).

435. Then when he says, *and the free gift*, he compares Christ’s grace to Adam’s sin as regards the effect, because not only does each affect many, but Christ’s grace had a greater effect than Adam’s sin. And concerning this he does three things.

First, he states his proposition;

secondly, he clarifies it [v. 16b; n. 437];

thirdly, he proves it [v. 17; n. 438].

436. First, therefore, he says: Not only does Christ’s grace more abound for many than Adam’s sin, but it produces a greater effect in them. And this is what he says: *The free gift is not like the effect of that one man’s sin*. As if to say: Not as great an effect comes to many through the one sin of Adam as comes to many through the gift of Christ’s grace. For the effect of a stronger cause is stronger. Hence, since it has been established that grace is stronger than Adam’s sin, it follows that it produces a greater effect.

437. Then (v.16b) he clarifies what he has said: *For the judgment*, i.e., God’s punishment, *following one trespass*, i.e., the sin of the first parent, *brought condemnation* on all men, because they sinned in his sin, as stated above (v.12): “Death spread to all

men because all men sinned.” *But the free gift*, which is given through Christ, *following many trespasses*, i.e., following not only that one original sin but also many actual sins, *brings justification*, i.e., complete cleansing: “And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified” (1 Cor 6:11).

438. Then when he says, *If, because of one man’s trespass*, he proves what he has said, namely, that Christ’s grace passes from many sins to righteousness.

First, he proves this from something later;

secondly, from something earlier [v. 19; n. 445].

439. In regard to the first it should be noted that in the foregoing comparison the Apostle does not posit things that correspond, i.e., things of the same class. For on the side of sin he posits condemnation, which pertains to punishment, while on the side of grace he posits justification, which does not pertain to reward but to the state of merit.

Consequently, in stating that sin brings condemnation the Apostle intends to show that grace brings justification. He uses this argument: As the condemnation of death proceeds from the first parent’s sin, so the kingdom of life proceeds from Christ’s grace.

440. For these two correspond uniformly, but no one can attain to the kingdom of life save by justice. Therefore, men are justified by Christ’s grace.

First, he lays down the premises;

secondly, he draws the conclusion [n. 442].

441. He states the first premise when he says, *If, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man*, because it was stated above (v.12): “Sin came into the world through one man and death through sin,” *much more will those reign in life*, namely, eternal, *through the one man Jesus Christ*, who says (Jn 10:10): “I came that

they may have life, and have it abundantly,” by sharing in the eternity of life, the abundance being designated here by “kingdom.” Hence, it is stated in Rev (20:4) that they will reign with Christ a thousand years, i.e., eternally.

The minor premise is presented in the words, *those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of justice*. As if to say: Men cannot attain to the kingdom of life except by receiving this. Here Christ’s grace is referred to the remission of sin, which no merits can anticipate and, therefore, is due entirely to grace: “If it is from works, it is no longer by grace” (Rom 11:6).

Gift refers to the gifts by which men are advanced in blessings: “He gave gifts with royal liberality” (Est 2:18).

Justice refers to upright actions: “Whom God made our righteousness” (1 Cor 1:30).

442. Then when he says, *Therefore as one man’s trespass*, he draws the intended conclusion which states the same thing as stated earlier, namely, that as by the sin of one man, Adam, the divine judgment led all men born of him according to the flesh to death, so by the righteous of one, namely, Christ, divine grace passed to all men, *leading to acquittal and life for all men*.

443. But this seems false, since not all men are justified by Christ, although all men die through Adam.

To answer this it must be noted that just as all men born according to the flesh from Adam incur condemnation through his sin, so all men who are reborn spiritually through Christ obtain the justification of life, because, as stated in Jn (3:5): “Unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

Although it can be said that Christ's justification passes on to justify all men in the sense that it is capable of doing so, although *de facto* it passes only to believers. Hence, it is stated in 1 Tim (4:10): "He is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe."

444. From what is said here we should gather that as no one dies except through Adam's sin, so no one is justified except through Christ's righteousness; and this is brought about through faith in him "The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (Rom 3:22).

But the men who believe in him are not only those who lived after the resurrection but even those who lived before. For as we believe in him as one who was born and suffered, so they believed in him as one who would be born and suffer. Hence, our faith and theirs is the same: "Having the same spirit of faith...we too believe and so we speak" (2 Cor 4:13).

Thus it is that the grace of Christ redounds to the justification of many by appeal to something later, namely to the reign of life.

445. Then the Apostle proves the same thing from something prior, when he says, *For as by one man's disobedience.*

For causes are similar to their effects. But the disobedience of the first parent, which bears the character of unrighteousness, made men sinners and unrighteous. Therefore, the obedience of Christ, which bears the character of righteousness, made them righteous.

And this is what he stated previously, namely, that grace proceeds forth into all men unto justification (v.16).

446. But there seems to be some problem about the statement that *by one man's disobedience many were made sinners*, i.e., all who are born from his seed. For his first sin seems to have been pride rather than disobedience, as is stated in Sir (10:13): "The beginning of every sin is pride."

In answer it must be noted that the same writer says in 10:(21), "The beginning of pride makes men separate themselves from God," because the first step of pride consists in a man's not willing to be subject to God's precepts, which pertains to disobedience. Hence, man's first sin seems to have been disobedience, not as far as the outward action was concerned but in regard to the inner movement of pride, by which he wills to go against the divine command. Hence, the Lord reproves his disobedience: "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it, cursed is the ground...in your work. In you labor you shall eat from it all the days of your life'" (Gen 3:17). On the other hand Christ's obedience consisted in accepting death for our salvation in accordance with the Father's command: "He became obedient unto death" (Phil 2:8).

This, of course, does not contradict the statement that Christ died out of love for us (Eph 5:2), because the obedience proceeded from the love he had for the Father and for us.

447. And one should not that by obedience and disobedience he proves that through one man we were made sinners and through one man we were justified, because legal justice, which is the ensemble of all virtues, is recognizable in observing the precepts of the law, which pertains to the notion of obedience. But legal injustice, which

is the ensemble of all wickedness, is recognizable in transgressing the precepts of the law, which pertains to the notion of disobedience.

Consequently, it is fittingly stated that by obedience men were made just and by disobedience sinners.

Lecture Six

(20) [n. 448] Now the law entered in secretly that sin might abound. [n. 464] And where sin abounded, grace superabounded,

(21) [n. 467] That as sin has reigned unto death, so also grace might reign by justice unto life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

448. After showing that through the gift of grace that sin is removed, which entered this world through Adam [n. 430], the Apostle now shows that through Christ's grace is taken away the sin that increased when the Law came.

Concerning this he does two things.

First, he mentions the increase of sin through the Law;

secondly, the absolution of sin through Christ's grace, there [v.20b; n. 464] at *And where sin abounded.*

449. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that through the obedience of one man many are made just. However, it was not the Law that could achieve this; rather, *the law entered in secretly [subintravit] that sin might abound.*

450. Two problems arise from these statements of the Apostle.

First, from the statement that the Law *subintravit*, i.e., entered secretly, “after original and actual sin or after the natural law,” as the Gloss says. For the Law did not come in secretly but was given openly, in accord with John 18(:20), “I have not spoken in secret.”

The answer is that although the legislation had been given openly, the mysteries of the Law were hidden, especially in regard to God’s intention in promulgating the Law, which would point out sin without healing it: “Who has known the mind of the Lord?” (Rom 11: 34).

It can also be said that the Law *sub-intravit*, i.e., entered into the middle, so to speak, between man’s sin and the gift of Christ’s grace, each of which he had said above passed from one [man] to many.

451. The second problem arises from the statement that the Law came in *that sin might abound*.

For this would seem to make increase of sin the purpose of the Law; consequently, the Law would be evil, because a thing whose purpose is evil is itself evil. But this is contrary to the statement in 1 Tim 1(:8), “We know that the law is good.”

452. A Gloss answers this in three ways [cf. n. 459, 460].

First, that the word *that* [*ut*] should be taken as indicating not a causal connection but a mere sequence. For the Law was not given in order that sins might increase; rather, the Law, as far as in it lay, forbade sin: “I have laid up thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Ps 119:11). But, once the Law was given, increase of sin followed in two ways [cf. n. 458].

453. In one way, as to the number of sins. For although the Law pointed out sin, it did not take away desire for sin [*concupiscentia*]. Indeed, when someone is forbidden what he desires, he burns with a stronger desire for it, as a torrent flows with greater force against an obstacle erected against it and finally breaks it.

454. There can be three reasons for this.

First, because when something is subject to a man's power he does not consider it anything great, whereas he perceives a thing beyond his power as great. But a prohibition against something desired puts that thing, as it were, beyond man's power; consequently, the desire for it increases as long as it is prohibited.

The second reason is that internal affections, when they are kept within and permitted no outlet, burn the more strongly within. This is clear in sorrow and anger which, when they are kept within, continually increase; but if they are given any kind of release outwardly, their vigor is dissipated. But a prohibition, since it threatens a penalty, compels man not to give outward expression to his desire, so that, being kept within, it burns more vigorously.

The third reason is that anything not forbidden is regarded as something possible to do any time it pleases us; therefore, even when the opportunity is present, we often avoid doing it. But when something is forbidden, it is measured as something not capable of being ours at just any time; therefore, when the opportunity arises to obtain it without fear of punishment, we are readier to seize it.

455. These, then are the reasons why in the face of the Law, which forbade acts of concupiscence and yet did not mitigate that concupiscence, the concupiscence itself leads men more feverishly toward sin. Hence, it is stated in Ezekiel 5(:5), "This is Jerusalem; I

have set her in the center of the nations, with countries round about her. She wickedly rebelled against my ordinances more than the nations, and against my statutes more than the countries round about her.”

456. But according to this it seems that every human law, which of course does not confer grace to lessen concupiscence, would make sin increase. However, that seems to be against the lawgiver’s intention, because his aim is to make the citizen good, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* II.

The answer is that the intention of human law is one thing and that of divine law another. For human law is subject to human judgment, which is concerned with external acts; but the divine law is subject to divine judgment, which is concerned with the inward movement of the heart, as is said in 1 Sam 16(:7), “Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart.” Accordingly, human law achieves its aim when by means of prohibitions and threats of punishment it prevents external sinful acts, even though the inward concupiscence increases more. But as far as the divine law is concerned, it imputes as sin even the inward evil desires, which increase when the law forbids them without destroying them.

457. Yet it should be noted, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* X, that although a legal prohibition restrains the ill disposed from outward sins by the fear of punishment, it nevertheless guides the well disposed through love of virtue. Now that good disposition is present to a certain extent by nature, although its perfection is achieved only by grace. Consequently, even after the Old Law had been given, sin did not increase in all but in the majority. But some, guided by the law’s prohibitions and further strengthened by

grace, reached the heights of virtue: “Let us now praise glorious men...men great in virtue” (Sir 44:1).

458. Secondly [n. 453], with the coming of the Law sin abounded as far as the weight of guilt was concerned. For sin was more grievous when it became a transgression not only of the law of nature but also of the written law. Hence it was said above in 4(:15) that where there was no law there was no transgression.

459. A second answer [n. 452] is that the word *that* [*ut*] can be taken causally but in the sense that the Apostle is speaking of sin’s increase as far as our knowledge of it is concerned. As if to say: *Law entered in secretly that sin might abound*, i.e., that sin might be more abundantly known, according to the manner of speaking whereby something is said to come to pass when it is recognized. Hence, he said above (3:20) that *through the law comes knowledge of sin*.

460. The third answer also takes *that* [*ut*] in a causal sense, but not as meaning that increase of sin is the goal of the Law’s entering in, but what results from sin’s increase, namely, man’s humiliation.

For after the Law came in, sin abounded, as was said in the first explanation. The consequence of this increase of sin was that man, recognizing his weakness, was humbled. For the proud man, presuming on his own strength, said: “There is no lack of doers, but of commanders,” in accord with Ex 24(:7), “All that the Lord has spoken we will do and will be obedient.” But when, after the Law had been given, the number of sins increased, men recognized how weak they were in observing the Law: “Man is weak and short-lived, with little understanding of judgment and laws” (Wis 9:5).

Therefore, God's intention in giving the Law is not aimed at increasing sin but at man's humility, for the sake of which he permitted sin to abound. Accordingly, because this [purpose] was hidden, he says that the law *entered in secretly*.

461. Since we are dealing with the Law and the end of the Law, two things propose themselves for consideration. First, the number of senses of the word "law"; secondly, what is the end of the law [n. 463].

In regard to the first it should be noted that "law," taken one way, names the entire scripture of the Old Testament; for example, John 15(:25) says, "It is to fulfill the word that is written in the law, that now they have sin and hated both me and my Father," when this was written in a Psalm [24:19]. But sometimes the "law" refers to the five books of Moses, in accord with Deut 33(:4), "Moses commanded us a law." Thirdly, the precepts of the Decalogue are called the "law": "I will give you the tables of stone, with the law and commandment, which I have written for their instruction" (Ex 24:12). Fourthly, the entire content of the ceremonial precepts is called the "law," as in Heb 10(:1), "Since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come." Fifthly, any definite ceremonial precept is called a "law," as in Lev (7:11): "This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings."

But in this section of the epistle, the Apostle takes "law" in a general way, i.e., as referring to the total doctrine of the Mosaic Law, namely, the moral and ceremonial precepts, because through the ceremonies of the Law grace was not given help man fulfill the precepts and to reduce concupiscences.

463. In regard to the end of the Law it should be noted that among the Jewish people, as among every people, there were three kinds of men: the adamant, i.e., sinners

and rebels, the proficient and the perfect. With respect to the adamant the Law was given as a scourge both as to the moral precepts to whose observance they were compelled by threats of punishment, as is evident from Leviticus 2, and as to the ceremonial precepts, which were multiplied to prevent them from cultivating alien gods: “With a strong hand and outstretched arm, and with anger poured out I will rule over you” (Ezek 20:34).

For the proficient, who are called the ordinary people [*mediocres*], the Law was a pedagogue: “The law was our pedagogue in Christ” (Gal 3:24). It was so with respect to the ceremonial precepts, by which they were restrained in divine worship, and with respect to the moral precepts, by which they were advanced toward justice.

For the perfect the Law regarding ceremonies was a sign: “I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I the Lord sanctify them” (Ezek 20:12); the Law regarding morals acted as a consolation, as expressed below (7:22); “I delight in the law of God.”

464. Then when he says *where sin abounded*, he shows how increase of sin was taken away by grace.

First, he sets out that grace abounded;
secondly, the effect of abounding grace, there [n. 467] at *that as sin has abounded*.

465. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that with the coming of the Law sin abounded. But this was no obstacle to the divine plan for the salvation of the Jews and of the whole human race, because *where sin abounded*, namely, in the human race and especially among the Jews, *grace superabounded*, namely, the grace of Christ forgiving sins: “God is powerful to make every grace abound in you” (2 Cor 9:8).

466. Two reasons can be given for what is said here.

One is based on the effect of grace. For just as the enormity of a disease is not cured except by a strong and effective medicine, so an abundant grace was required to heal the abundance of sins: “Many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much” (Lk 7:47).

The other reason is based on the attitude of the sinner. Some, realizing the enormity of their sins, give way to despair and contempt: “When wickedness comes, contempt comes also” (Pr 18:3); others by the help of divine grace are humbled when they consider their sins and so obtain a greater grace: “Their infirmities were multiplied; afterwards they made haste” (Ps 16:4).

467. Then when he says *That as sin has reigned unto death*, he shows the effect of abounding grace, an effect that corresponds by way of opposition to that of sin. *That as sin*, introduced by the first man and abounding through the Law, *has reigned*, i.e., obtained complete dominion over men, and this until it brought them *unto death* both temporal and eternal: “The wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23) – *grace also*, i.e., God’s, *might reign*, i.e., rule entirely in us, *by justice*, which it produces in us: “They are justified by his grace” (Rom 3:24). And this until it brings us *to eternal life*: “The free gift of God is eternal life” (Rom 6:23). And all of this is *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, who is the giver of grace: “Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (Jn 1:17); he is justice: “Whom God made our righteousness” (1 Cor 1:30); and he is the giver of eternal life: “I give them eternal life” (Jn 10:28).

Chapter 6

Lecture 1

- (1) [n. 468] What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?
- (2) [n. 470] Let it not be! If we are dead to sin, how can we still live in it?
- (3) [n. 472] Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?
- (4) [n. 474] For we were buried together with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.
- (5) [n. 477] For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

468. After showing that it is through Christ's grace that we are freed from the sin of our first parent and from that which abounded by reason of the Law [n. 406], the Apostle now shows that Christ's grace gives us the power to resist further sin.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he raises a question suggested by the foregoing;

secondly, he answers it [v. 2; n. 470].

469. Above he had said that "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." This could be misinterpreted by supposing that an increase of sin causes grace to abound all the more. That is why he asks: *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?* One would have to say, Yes, if increase of sin were the cause and

not merely the occasion of grace abounding. Hence he had stated above (3:8): “And why not do evil that good may come? -- as some slanderously charge us with saying.” “Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all who are treacherous thrive?” (Jer 12:1).

470. Then (v. 2) he answers the question.

First, he states why we should not continue in sin;

secondly, he ends with an exhortation [v. 12; n. 492].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows why we should not continue in sin;

secondly, he shows that we have the power not to continue in sin [v. 6; n. 478].

In regard to the first he presents the following argument: If we are dead to sin, we ought not live in sin. But we are dead to sin. Therefore, we ought not live in sin.

Therefore, in regard to this he does four things:

first, he states the conditional proposition;

secondly, he proves the antecedent [v. 3; n. 472]

thirdly, he concludes the consequent [v. 4; n. 476];

fourthly, he proves that the consequent necessarily follows [v. 5; n. 477].

471. First, therefore, he says, *By no means* are we to continue in sin that grace may abound, because “God has not given anyone permission to sin” (Si 15:20). For *how can we who died to sin*, inasmuch as sin has been put to death in us, *still live in it*? For it is not the natural order of things to return from death to life: “They are dead, they will not live” (Is 25:14); “I had bathed my feet, how could I soil them?” (S of S 5:3).

472. Then (v. 3) he proves the antecedent, namely, that the faithful are dead to sin:

first, he presents the fact he uses to prove his point;

secondly, he proves it [v. 4; n. 474].

473. First, therefore, he says: *Do you not know?* As if to say: What I am about to propose to you is so obvious that you cannot fail to see it -- “if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized” (1 Cor 14:38) -- namely, *that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus*. This can be interpreted in three ways: first, as indicating that baptism was instituted by Jesus Christ; “Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them” (Mt 28:19); secondly, as indicating that it is conferred in the name of Christ: “In the name of Jesus Christ they were baptized, both men and women” (Ac 8:12); thirdly, *into Christ Jesus*, i.e., into some likeness of Christ Jesus: “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal 3:27).

Were baptized into his death, i.e., into a likeness of his death as re-presenting in ourselves the very death of Christ: “Always carrying in the body the death of Jesus” (2 Cor 4:10); “I bear on my body the marks of Jesus” (Gal 6:17). Or *into his death*, i.e., by virtue of his death: “He freed us from our sins by his blood” (Rev 1:5). Hence, from the side of Christ hanging on the Cross flowed blood and water after his death (Jn 19:34).

Therefore, just as we are configured to his death, inasmuch as we have died to sin, so he has died to his mortal life, in which there was the likeness of sin, although no sin was there. Therefore, all we who are baptized are dead to sin.

474. Then (v. 4) he proves that we are all baptized in conformity with the death of Christ, saying, *we were buried with him by baptism into death*. As if to say: Burial is only for the dead: “Let the dead bury their dead” (Mt 18:22).

By baptism, however, men are buried with Christ, i.e., conformed to his burial. For just as a buried man is put under the earth, so one being baptized is submerged under water. Hence, there are three immersions in baptism not only to indicate belief in the Trinity but also to represent the three days of Christ's burial. And just as the three days of burial were one burial, so the triple immersion constitutes one baptism. That is also why solemn baptism is celebrated in the Church on Holy Saturday, when the burial of Christ is commemorated and on the vigil of Pentecost in honor of the Holy Spirit, from whom the water of baptism derives its power to cleanse: "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven" (Jn 3:5).

475. Yet it must be noted that in the body one dies before he is buried, but in the spiritual order the burial of baptism causes the death of sin, because the sacraments of the New Law bring about what they signify. Hence, since the burial which occurs through baptism is a sign of the death of sin, it produces such a death in the baptized. And this is what he says, namely, that *we were buried into death*, so that in receiving in ourselves the sign of Christ's burial we might obtain death to sin.

476. Then (v. 4b) he infers the consequent, namely, that we should not live in sin. To this end he adduces a likeness to the resurrection of Christ, saying *that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father*, i.e., by the Father's power, whereby the Father himself is glorified: "let thy glory be over all the earth" (Ps 57:5), *we too might walk in newness of life*, i.e., advance in the spiritual life through good works. For the life of sin carries with it the weakness of old age, because it leads to dissolution: "What is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away" (Heb 8:13); hence Bar (3:10) says: "Why is it, O Israel, that you are in the land of your enemies" but whatever

leads to restoration is called newness of life: “Your youth is renewed like the eagle’s” (Ps 103:5) “Be renewed in the spirit of your minds” (Eph 4:25).

477. Then (v. 5) he shows how the consequence follows necessarily.

For after he died, Christ arose; hence it is fitting that those who are conformed to Christ’s death in baptism should be conformed also to his resurrection by leading a blameless life. And that is what he says: *For if we have been united with him in a death like his*, i.e., if we are incorporated into him as a branch is grafted to a tree, then, as we are united with Christ in his passion, *we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his*, so as to lead a blameless life and attain to a glory similar to his in the future life: “He will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body” (Phil 3:21); “If we have died with him, we shall also live with him” (2 Tim 2:11).

Thus, after using our likeness to the death of Christ to prove that we are dead to sin, the Apostle used our likeness to the resurrection of Christ to show that we should not live in sin; which he introduces above as a consequence.

Lecture 2

(6) [n. 478] We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.

(7) [n. 482] For he who has died is justified from sin.

(8) [n. 484] But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

(9) [n. 487] For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

(10) [n. 489] The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

(11) [n. 491] So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

478. After showing that we should not continue to sin after baptism has made us dead to sin [n. 470], the Apostle now shows that we have the means to do this.

Concerning this he does two things.

First, he indicates the benefit we have received;

secondly, the effect of this benefit [v. 7; n. 482].

Concerning this he does two things.

First he sets out the benefit we obtain;

Second, the effect of this benefit [v. 6b; n. 481].

479. First, therefore: We have said that the baptized should walk in newness of life. To anyone who says that this is impossible he responds that *we know our old self*, i.e., the oldness caused by sin, *was crucified with him*, i.e., put to death by the Cross of Christ. For as was stated above, man's oldness was brought about by sin -- in the sense that the goodness of his nature was corrupted by sin -- and is predominant as long as he continues in sin. But because what is predominant in a man characterizes the man himself, it follows that the oldness of sin in a man subject to sin is an apt description of the man himself. That is why he says the old self.

480. Now the oldness of sin can refer to the guilt of sin or to the stain of actual sins or even to the habit of sinning, which engenders a sort of compulsion to sin, or even to the “fomes” deriving from the sin of the first parent.

Thus, therefore, our old self is said to be crucified together with Christ, inasmuch as the aforesaid oldness is removed by the power of Christ; either because it has been entirely removed, as the guilt and stain of sin are entirely removed in baptism, or because its force has been diminished, i.e., the force of the “fomes” or even of the custom of sinning: “Having canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross” (Col 2:14).

481. Then (v. 6b) he mentions the twofold effect of this benefit, the first of which is the removal of previous sins. Hence he says: *that the body of sin may be destroyed*. The body of sin is the assemblage of evil deeds, just as the assemblage of members makes one natural body: “His body is like molten shields.” (Jb 41:6).

The second effect is that it makes us beware of future sins; hence, he adds: *and we might no longer be enslaved to sin*. For a man is a slave of sin, when he obeys the attraction of sin by consenting to and doing the sin: Everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin” (Jn 8:34).

482. Then (v. 7) he clarifies what he had said:

first, in regard to the first effect;

secondly, in regard to the second [v. 8; n. 484].

483. In regard to the first it should be noted that the assemblage of sins is destroyed when a man has his sins remitted. So he clarifies how the body of sin is

destroyed when he says *he who has died* to sin through baptism, in which we die together with Christ, *is freed from sin*, i.e., transferred to the state of righteousness:

“And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified” (1 Cor 6:11).

Therefore, because man dies to sin through the cross of Christ, he is freed from sin in such away that the body of sin destroyed.

484. Then (v. 8) he clarifies the second effect by showing how it conforms one to the life of Christ. The reasoning is this: One who dies with the dying Christ also lives with the rising Christ.

But Christ rose from the dead, never to die again. Therefore, one who has died to sin lives with the risen Christ in such a way that he has the faculty of never returning to sin.

485. In regard to this he does three things:

first, he shows the believer’s conformity to the risen Christ;

secondly, a condition of this life [n. 487];

thirdly, he draws the conclusion [v. 11; n. 491].

486. First, therefore, he says: *But if we have died with Christ*, i.e., if we are dead to sin by virtue of Christ’s death, *we believe that we shall also live with him*, i.e., in the likeness of his life. We shall live, I say, the life of grace here and the life of glory in the future: “When we were dead through sin, he made us alive together with Christ” (Eph 2:5).

487. Then (v. 9) he describes the condition of life of the risen Christ:

first, he states it;

secondly, he proves it [v. 10; n. 489].

488. First, therefore, he says: We believe this, I say, *because we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again*, but will live an everlasting life: “I died, and behold I am alive for evermore” (Rev 1:18).

What is more, *death no longer has dominion over him*, but it does over man: not only when his soul and body are separated when he dies, but also before he dies, when he is subject to sickness, hunger, thirst and such things as lead to death. From all these things the life of the risen Christ is free. Consequently, he is not subject to the dominion of death; rather, he has dominion over death: “I have the keys of Death and Hades” (Revs 1:18).

489. Then (v. 10) he proves his statement, namely, that the risen Christ will not die again. And he proves this in two ways [n. 490].

First he proves it with a reason based on the death he underwent, saying: *The death he died, he died to sin, once for all*.

This must not be taken to mean that he died to sin he committed or contracted, because sin had no place whatever in him: “Who did no sin” (1 Pt 2:22). But he is said to have died to sin in two ways: in one way, because he died to take away sin: “For our sake he made him who knew no sin to be sin” (2 Cor 5:21), i.e., a victim for sin. In another way, because he died to the likeness of sinful flesh, i.e., to a suffering and mortal body: “God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3).

In both ways it can be concluded that Christ died once, from the fact that he died to sin. In regard to the first it is clear that he wiped out all sins through one death: “By a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified” (Heb 10:14).

Therefore, he does not need to die again for sin: “For Christ also died for sins once for all” (1 Pt 3:18). In regard to the second the same can be concluded. For if Christ endured death in order that the likeness of death disappear from him, his death ought to have been like that of others, who wear the flesh of sin and die but once. Hence, it says in Heb (9:27): “Just as it is appointed for men to die once, so Christ also offered once to bear the sins of many.”

490. Secondly, he shows the same thing by considering the condition of life he obtained by rising. Hence he says: *But the life he lives he lives to God*, i.e., conformed to God. For it says in 2 Cor (13:4): “He was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God.”

Now the effect is conformed to the cause. Hence, the life which the rising Christ acquired is deiform. Therefore, just as God’s life is everlasting and without decay: “Who alone has immortality” (1 Tit 6:16), so Christ’s life is immortal.

491. Then (v. 11) he reaches the intended conclusion that we be conformed to the life of the risen Christ both with respect to its death to sin, i.e., to the mortal life which has the likeness of sin, never to return to it, and with respect to living conformed to God.

In regard to the first he says: *So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin*, i.e., as never to return to sin: “Let not the dead live” (Is 26:14).

In regard to the second he says: and alive to God, i.e., to the honor and in the likeness of God, that we never die through sin: “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God” (Gal 2:20).

So he adds, *in Christ Jesus*, i.e., through Jesus Christ, through whom we die to sin and live to God; or *in Christ Jesus*, i.e., as incorporated into Christ Jesus, that by his

death we may die to sin and by his resurrection live to God: “He made us alive together with Christ, by whose grace you have been saved through Christ” (Eph 2:5).

Lecture 3

(12) [n. 492] Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.

(13) Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of justice.

(14) [n. 496] For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

(15) [n. 499] What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? Let it not be!

(16) Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

**(17) But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,
(18) and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of justice.**

492. After showing that we ought not remain in sin [n. 470] and that we have the faculty for this [n. 478], the Apostle concludes with a moral exhortation.

And concerning this he does three things:

first, he proposes an admonition;

secondly, he assigns a reason [v. 14; n. 496];

thirdly, he raises and solves a question [v. 15; n. 499].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he proposes the admonition;

secondly, he clarifies [v. 12b; n. 494].

493. First, therefore, he says: We have said that our old self was crucified once, so that the body of sin may be destroyed. This means that the power of sin has been so weakened that it cannot rule us. Therefore, *let not sin reign in your mortal bodies* any longer.

He does not say: Let not sin be in your mortal body, because as long as our body is mortal, it is not possible for sin not to be in our body, i.e., the inclination to sin. But since we have been freed from the kingdom of sin by God, we must struggle in order that sin not recover its dominion now lost in our body. And this is what he says: Let not sin reign in your mortal body. This is something about which one must be on his guard, as long as we wear the mortal body: “The corruptible body is a load upon the soul” (Wis 9:15).

494. Then (v.12b) he clarifies this admonition.

In regard to this it should be noted that sin reigns in man in two ways: in one way, through internal consent of the mind. To remove this he says: *to make you obey their passions*. For it is by obeying the passions of sin with our minds that sin reigns in us: “Go not after thy lusts” (Si 18:30).

In a second way sin reigns in us by performing the act. To exclude this, he adds: *do not yield your members to sin*, i.e., to the inclination to sin, *as instruments of wickedness*. For when man commits sin through his members, he yields to sin. In this way he seeks to restore sin's dominion, which grows in us through the habit of sinning: "They went down to hell with their weapons" (Ex 32:27).

495. Then (v.13b) he urges them to the opposite, namely, to mold themselves to God.

And first with regard to the internal faculties when he says: *But yield yourselves to God* by submitting your mind to God: "And now, Israel, what does the Lord thy God require of you but that you fear the Lord your God and walk in his ways" (Dt 10:12). And you ought to do this *as men who have been brought from death to life*, i.e., as led from the death of sin to the life of grace. Hence it is fitting, since he died for all, "that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised" (2 Cor 3:15).

Secondly, with respect to outward actions; hence he says: *Yield your members to God*, i.e., to his service, *as instruments of righteousness* with which to fight against God's enemies: "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph 6:11).

496. Then (v.14) he assigns the reason for this admonition.

For someone might excuse himself, alleging that sin's dominion is an obstacle to obeying the admonition. But the Apostle excludes this, saying: *For sin will have no dominion over you*, i.e., if you begin to resist sin and yield yourself to God: "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (Jas

4:8). As if to say: You can observe my admonition, because you do not find sin dominating and holding you. For we have been freed by Christ, as Jn (8:36) says: “If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”

497. Then he clarifies what he had said, saying: *For you are not under the law but under grace.*

Here it should be noted that he is not speaking of the Law merely with respect to its ceremonial precepts, but even with respect to moral matters. For one is said to be under the Law in two ways: in one way, as voluntarily subject to the observance of the Law. Even Christ was under the Law in this way according to Gal (4:4): “Born under the law,” namely, because he observed the Law, not only the moral but also the ceremonial precepts. But the faithful of Christ are under the Law in this way, with respect to the moral precepts but not the ceremonial.

In another way, one is said to be under the Law as though compelled by the Law. In this way, one is under the Law when he does not obey it voluntarily from love but is compelled by fear. But such a one lacks grace which, if it were present, would incline the will to observe the Law and fulfill its moral precepts from a motive of love. Therefore, as long as one is under the Law in such a way that he does not fulfill it voluntarily, sin has dominion over him. As a result, such a man’s will is inclined to choose what is contrary to the law. But through grace such dominion is removed; consequently, a man observes the Law not as existing under the Law but as free: “We are not children of the slave but of the free woman, by the freedom with which Christ has set us free” (Gal 4:31).

498. This grace, making men freely obey the Law, was not conferred by the sacraments of the Old Law, but Christ's sacraments conferred it. Consequently, those who submitted themselves to the ceremonies of the Law were not, so far as the power of those sacraments was concerned, under grace but under the Law, unless they happened to obtain grace through faith. But one who submits to Christ's sacraments obtains grace from his power, so as not to be under the Law but under grace, unless they enslaved themselves to sin through their own fault.

499. Then (v. 15) he raises a question against what he has said.

And concerning this he does three things:

first, he raises the question;

secondly, he answers it [v. 16; n. 501];

thirdly, he shows how awkward it would be to misinterpret his statement [v. 17; n. 502].

500. In regard to the first it should be noted that his statement could be falsely interpreted, namely, that Christ's faithful are not under the Law with respect to being obliged to obey its moral precepts. For it would follow that Christ's faithful could lawfully commit sin and act against the moral precepts.

Therefore, in this context he raises the question: *What then? Are we to sin*, i.e., act against the moral precepts, *because*, as has been said, *we are not under the law but under grace?* This interpretation the Apostle rejects in Gal (5:13): "For you were called to freedom, brethren, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh."

501. In the same fashion he answers here: *By no means* should we sin because we have been set free from the Law; because if we were to sin, we would once more be reduced to the slavery of sin.

Hence, he continues: *Do you not know that if you yield yourselves of your own will to anyone as obedient slaves, you are voluntarily the slaves of the one whom you obey.* For obedience is a debt which slaves owe to their master: “Slaves, be obedient to your earthly masters” (Eph 6:5). Hence, when someone obeys another, he admits that he is his slave by obeying. But different masters are obeyed for different remunerations. For the one who obeys sin is led to death through the slavery of sin. And this is what he says: *either of sin*, i.e., you are its slaves by obeying it, *which leads to death*, i.e., to the eternal damnation of the one who falls. Concerning this death it says in Rev (2:11): “He who conquers shall not be hurt by the second death.” But the one who obeys God is made a slave of this obedience, because through the habit of obeying the mind is inclined more and more to obeying and as a result achieves holiness. Therefore, he says: *or of obedience*, namely, of the divine precepts, *which leads to righteousness*: “It is the doers of the law who will be justified” (Rom 2:13).

Sin and obedience are fittingly presented as opposites, because, as Ambrose says, sin is a transgression of the divine law, disobedience against the heavenly commands.²³

502. Then (v.17) he shows the folly of obeying sin and thereby returning to the slavery of sin: first, by considering the benefit we have received. For if someone, by another’s graciousness is freed from slavery, it is foolish to subject oneself freely to slavery. Hence, since we have been freed from sin by the grace of God, it is foolish willfully to return to the slavery of sin.

²³ Ambrose, *De Paradiso*, ch. 8.

Secondly, by considering the state into which we were placed after freedom from sin, namely, that we are slaves to righteousness. But, it is not lawful for a slave to subject himself to the dominion of an opposite master; hence, it is not lawful, if we have been made slaves of righteousness, to return to the slavery of sin.

503. The Apostle touches on both of these considerations, when he says: *I thank God*, and you too should thank God, *that you who were once slaves of sin may become obedient*, namely, by believing, not as though compelled but *from the heart*: “For man believes with the heart and so is justified” (Rom 10:10) *to the standard of teaching*, i.e., to the doctrine of the Catholic faith: “Follow the pattern of the sound words you have heard from me” (2 Tim 1:13) *to which you were committed*: i.e., gave yourselves entirely: “But first they gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God” (2 Cor 8:5). *And having been set free from sin*, so that it is not fitting for you to return to the slavery of sin, *you have become slaves of righteousness*, so that it is not fitting to desert righteousness: “You were bought with a price” (1 Cor 7:23) and are not your own.

Lecture 4

(19) [n. 504] I speak an human thing, because of the weakness of your flesh. For as you have yielded your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity, unto iniquity, so now yield your members to serve justice, unto sanctification.

(20) [n. 507] For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from justice.

(21) What fruit did you have then in those things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

(22) [n. 512] But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end is life everlasting.

(23) [n. 516] For the wages of sin is death. But the grace of God is life everlasting in Christ Jesus our Lord.

504. After showing with a reason based on God's grace that we should not continue in sin but should serve God, the Apostle shows the same thing with a reason based on a condition of the former life.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he describes the terms in which he will present his teaching;

secondly, he presents the teaching [v. 19b; n. 506];

thirdly, he gives the reason for the teaching [v. 20; n. 507].

505. First, therefore, he says: I have advised that you yield yourselves to God. *I am now speaking to you in human terms*, i.e., as suited to human feebleness. For man is sometimes so presented in Scripture to signify a weakness of the human condition: "I am a weak man, and of a short time, and falling short of the understanding of judgment and laws" (Wis 9:5); "Since there are jealousy and strife among you, are you not carnal and walking as mere men?" (1 Cor 3:3).

He assigns the cause, when he adds, *because of the limitations*; for it is to the mature that the more perfect precepts are given: "Wisdom, however, we speak among those who are mature" (1 Cor 2:6); "Solid food is for the mature" (Heb 5:14), but lighter precepts are given to weaker men: "As to little ones in Christ, I fed you with milk, not

with solid food” (1 Cor 3:1); “You have become such as have need of milk and not of solid food” (Heb 5:12).

But this weakness comes not from the spirit but from the flesh, because the body, which is subject to decay is a load on the soul, as it says in Wis (9:15); hence, he adds: *of your flesh*: “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Mt 26:41).

506. Then (v.19b) he presents the teaching he called human, in which he teaches that the body must be yielded to the slavery of righteousness in the same measure as we yielded it to the slavery of sin. And this is what he says: *For just as you once yielded your members*, namely, by doing evil works, *to impurity and to iniquity* born in the heart. Here “impurity” refers to sins of the flesh: “But immorality and every uncleanness, let it not even be named among you” (Eph 5:3), and “iniquity” to spiritual sins, particularly those that harm one’s neighbor: “He plots mischief [iniquity] while on his bed” (Ps 36:4).

So now, set free from sin, *yield your members*, namely, by performing good works, *to righteousness* proposed to us in the divine law: and this *for sanctification*, i.e., for the increase of holiness: “Let the holy still be holy” (Rev 22:11).

He calls this human, because right reason demands that man serve righteousness more than he previously served sin: “For as it was your mind to go astray from God; so when you return again, you shall seek him ten times as much (Bar 4:28).

507. Then when he says, *When you were slaves*, he assigns the reason for this teaching.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he presents a reason for the teaching;

secondly, he proves something he had presupposed [v. 23; n. 516].

The reason behind the above teaching is that the state of grace is preferable to the state of sin. For if more benefits accrue to us from the state of righteousness than from sin, we should be more eager to serve righteousness than we were to serve sin.

First, therefore, he describes the state of sin;

secondly, the state of righteousness [v. 22; n. 512].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he describes the condition of the sinner;

secondly, the effect of sin [v. 21; n. 510];

thirdly, its end [v. 21b; n. 511].

508. In regard to the first it should be noted that man is by nature free because of his reason and will, which cannot be forced but can be inclined by certain things. Therefore, in regard to the freedom of the will man is always free of compulsion, although he is not free of inclinations.

For the free judgment is sometimes inclined to the good through the habit of grace or righteousness; and then it is in slavery to righteousness but free from sin. But sometimes the free judgment is inclined to evil through the habit of sin; and then it is in slavery to sin and free from righteousness. Now, slavery to sin consists in being drawn to consent to sin against the judgment of reason: “Everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin” (Jn 8:34).

And in regard to this he says: *When you were slaves of sin*. Freedom from righteousness, on the other hand, implies that a man rushes headlong into sin without the restraint of righteousness; in regard to this he says: *you were free in regard to righteousness*. This happens especially in those who sin of set purpose: “Long ago you

broke your yoke and burst your bonds; and you said, ‘I will not serve’” (Jer 2:20); “A vain man is lifted up into pride, and thinks himself born free like a wild ass’ colt” (Jb 11:12).

509. Yet it should be noted that this state involves true slavery and only apparent freedom.

For since man should act according to reason, he is truly a slave when he is led away from what is reasonable by something alien. Furthermore, if he is not restrained by the yoke of reason from following concupiscence, he is free only in the opinion of those who suppose that the highest good is to follow one’s concupiscence.

510. Then (v.21) he shows the effect of sin.

One effect he excludes, namely, a fruitful return, when he says: *But then what return did you get*, namely, when you were committing those sins. For the works of sin are unfruitful, because they do not help man to obtain happiness: Their works are unprofitable works” (Is 59:6); “Woe to you that devise that which is unprofitable and work evil in your beds” (Mic 2:1).

The effect he mentions is confusion, saying: *from the things*, namely, the sins, *of which you are now*, in the state of repentance, *ashamed* because of their baseness. “You shall be ashamed of the gardens” (Is 1:29), namely, of the pleasure you had chosen.

511. Then (v.21b) he mentions the end of sin, saying: *For the end of those things*, namely of sins, *is death*.

This of course is not the objective in the mind of the sinner, because he does not intend to incur death by sin; nevertheless, it is the end of those sins, because of their very nature they bring temporal death. For when the soul separates God from itself, it

deserves to have its body separated from it. Sins also bring eternal death, because when one wills to be separated from God for a time, he deserves to be separated from him forever; and this is eternal death: “Those who do such things deserve to die” (Rom 1:32).

512. Then (v.22) he describes the state of righteousness:

first, he describes a condition of this state;

secondly, the effect [v. 22b; n. 514];

thirdly, the end [v. 22c; n. 515].

513. In regard to the first it should be noted that just as when one is by sin inclined to evil, he is free from righteousness, so when one is by the habit of righteousness and grace inclined to good, he is free from sin, so that he is not overcome by it to the point of consenting to it. Hence he says: But now in the state of righteousness, *having been set free from sin*: “If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed” (Jn 8:36).

On the other hand, just as in the state of sin one is a slave of sin which he obeys, so in the state of righteousness one is a slave of God and obeys him willingly: “Serve the Lord with gladness” (Ps 100:2); “O Lord, I am thy servant” Ps 116 (v.16). And this is what he adds: *you have become slaves of God*.

But this is true freedom and the best form of slavery, because by righteousness man is inclined to what befits him and is turned from what befits concupiscence which is distinctively bestial.

514. Then (v.22b) he mentions the effect of righteousness, saying: *The return you get is sanctification*, i.e., the fruit of sanctity by good works is your return, inasmuch as

these please you in a spiritual and holy way: “My flowers are the fruit of honor and riches” (Si 24:23).

515. After that he mentions the end, saying, *and its end, eternal life*, which is the goal of all just men who do all their works for the sake of obtaining eternal life: “Seek first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added unto you” (Mt 6:33). It is also the end of the works themselves which merit eternal life, since they are done out of obedience to God and in imitation of God: “My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life” (Jn 10:27).

516. Then (v.22c) he clarifies what he had said about the ends of evil and of good.

First, in regard to evil he says: We have stated that the end of sins is death: *the wages of sin is death*. Wages or stipends were the salaries paid soldiers. These were paid in money. Therefore, because by sinning one makes war by using his members as arms for sin, death is said to be the wages of sin, i.e., the return paid to those who serve it.

Death, therefore, is the return which pays those who are its slaves. It is not the end they seek but the end paid to them: “On the wicked he will rain coals of fire and brimstone; a scorching wind will be the portion of their cup” (Ps 11:6).

517. In regard to the good he says: *The free gift [grace] of God is eternal life*.

For since he had said that just men have eternal life, which it is certain cannot be had except through grace, then the very fact that we do what is good and that our works are worthy of eternal life is the result of God’s grace: “He bestows grace and glory” (Ps 84:11).

Thus, therefore, if our works are considered in themselves and as coming from our free will they do not merit eternal life *ex condigno*, but only as coming from the grace

of the Holy Spirit. Hence it says in Jn (4:14): “The water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

And this *in Christ Jesus our Lord*, i.e., through Christ or inasmuch as we exist in him through faith and love: “Every one who sees the Son and believes in him has eternal life” (Jn 6:40).

Chapter 7

Lecture 1

- (1) Do you not know, brethren -- for I am speaking to those who know the law -- that the law is binding on a person only during his life?**
- (2) Thus a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband.**
- (3) Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.**
- (4) Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God.**
- (5) While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.**
- (6) But now we are discharged from the law of death wherein we were detained, so that we serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.**

518. After showing that we are set free from sin through the grace of Christ, the Apostle now shows that through the same grace we are freed from slavery to the Law.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he excludes an objection [v. 7; n. 532].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows that through the grace of Christ we are freed from the slavery of the Law;

secondly, that this liberation is useful [v. 4c; n. 529].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he makes a statement from which he argues to his proposition;

secondly, he clarifies it [v. 2; n. 521];

thirdly, he concludes [v. 4; n. 527].

519. The statement he makes is presented as something known to them.

Hence he says: *Do you not know, brethren?* As if to say: You should not be ignorant of this.

The reason they should not be ignorant of it is shown when he says: *I am speaking to those who know the law.*

520. But since the Romans were Gentiles and ignorant of the Law of Moses, it seems that what is said here does not apply to them. Therefore, some explained this as referring to the natural law, of which the Gentiles were not ignorant, as he said earlier: “When the Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves” (Rom 2:14). Hence it is added: *that the law is binding on a person*, i.e., the natural law, *as long as it lives*, i.e., the law in man. And it lives as long as natural reason functions efficaciously in a person; but it dies, as long as natural reason succumbs to the passions: “They have broken the everlasting covenant” (Is 24:5), i.e., of the natural law.

But this interpretation does not seem to agree with the intention of the Apostle who always has in mind the Law of Moses, when he speaks of the Law with no modifying qualifications.

Therefore, it is better to say that the Roman believers were not only Gentiles; there were many Jews among them. Hence it says in Acts 18 that Paul found at Corinth a certain Jew named Aquila, who had recently arrived from Italy, and Priscilla his wife, because Claudius had expelled all the Jews from Rome.

Therefore, the Law is binding on a person as long as he lives. For the Law was given to direct man in the way of this life, as it says in Ps 25 (v.12): “He will instruct him in the way that he should choose.” Therefore, the obligation of the Law is dissolved by death.

521. Then (v.2) he clarifies what he had said with an example from the law of marriage:

first, he gives the example;

secondly, he clarifies it by a sign [v. 3; n. 525].

522. In regard to the first he does two things [n. 523].

First, in the example he states how the obligation endures during life, saying:

Thus a married woman is by divine law bound to her husband as long as he lives: “Your husband shall rule over you” (Gen 3:16); “What God has joined together, let no man put asunder” (Mt 19:6).

And this indissolubility of marriage is especially considered, inasmuch as it is the sacrament of the indissoluble union of Christ and the Church, or of the Word and human

nature in the person of Christ: “This is a great mystery, and I take it to mean Christ and the Church” (Eph 5:32).

523. Secondly, he shows in the example how the obligation of the law is dissolved by death, saying: *But if her husband dies, the woman*, after the death of the husband, *is discharged from the law concerning the husband*, i.e., from the law of marriage by which she is obliged to the husband.

For since, as Augustine says in his book *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, marriage is a good of mortal man, its obligation does not extend beyond mortal life. For this reason “in the resurrection,” when life will be immortal, “they neither marry nor are given in marriage” (Mt 22:30).

From this it is plain that if a person were to die and be restored to life, as Lazarus was, the one who had been his wife is no longer so, unless he marries her again.

524. But against this one might bring what is stated in Heb (11:35): “Women received their dead by resurrection!”

But one should realize that the women received not their husbands but their sons, as the woman in 1 Kg 17 through Elijah, and another in 2 Kg 4 through Elisha.

The case is different with sacraments which imprint a character, which is a consecration of an immortal soul. Now every consecration endures as long as the consecrated thing lasts, as is plain in the consecration of a church or altar. Therefore, if a baptized or confirmed or ordained person were to die and rise again, he would not have to repeat these sacraments.

525. Then (v. 3) he clarifies what he had said by a sign.

And first, in regard to the obligation of marriage, which continues for the wife as long as the husband is alive. The sign of this is that *she will be called an adulteress, if she lives with another man*, i.e., as wife and husband, *while her husband is alive*: “If a man divorces his wife and she goes from him and becomes another man’s wife, would not she be polluted and contaminated?” (Jer 3:1).

Secondly, he adduces a sign of the fact that the obligation of the law of marriage is dissolved by death, saying: *But if her husband dies, she is free from that law* by which she is bound to the husband, so that she is not an adulteress, if she is carnally united to another man, particularly *if she has married him*: “If the husband dies,” namely, the woman’s, “she is free to be married to whom she wishes only in the Lord” (1 Cor 7:39).

526. This shows that second, third or fourth marriages are lawful of themselves, and not only by dispensation as Chrysostom seems to say, when he says that just as Moses permitted a bill of divorce, so the Apostle permitted second marriages.

For there is no reason, if the marriage law is dissolved by death, why the survivor may not marry again. It is not because second marriages are illicit that the Apostle says: “A bishop should be married only once” (1 Tim 3:2), but on account of the sacramental sign: for he would not be one of one, as Christ is the spouse of one Church.

527. Then (v. 4) he concludes to his main proposition, saying: *Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ*, i.e., in becoming members of the body of Christ, dying and being buried with him, as stated above; *you have died to the law* in the sense that the obligation of the Law ceases in you, *so that you may belong to another*, namely, Christ, in whom through rising with him you have received a new

life. Hence you are held obliged not by the law of the former life but by the law of the new life.

But this application seems awkward, because in the preceding example the man, died and the woman remarried without obligation of the law. But here the one released from obligation is said to die.

However, if we consider it another way, there is a parallel, because since marriage is between two, it makes no difference which one dies. In either case the law is taken away by death. Hence the obligation of the Old Law ceases in virtue of the death by which we die with Christ.

529. Then (v. 4b) he shows the utility of this liberation.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he mentions the utility, saying: *that we may bear fruit to God*. For if we have been made members of Christ and abide in Christ, we can bear fruit, i.e., good works, for the honor of God: “As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine” (Jn 15:4).

530. The second is there at *While we were living*.

He shows that this fruit was impeded when we were under the slavery of the Law, saying: *while we were living in the flesh*, i.e., subject to the concupiscence of the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were *at work in our members*, i.e., moved our members: “What causes wars and what causes fightings among you? Is it not your passions?” (Jas 4:1). And this *to bear fruit for death*: “Sin when it is full-grown brings forth death (Jas 1:15).

The third is there at *But now we are discharged*.

He shows that this usefulness is acquired by those freed from the slavery of the Law, saying: *But we are now discharged* by the grace of Christ *from the law of death*, i.e., from the slavery of the Law of Moses, which is called the law of death, because it killed violators without mercy: “A man who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy” (Heb 10:28). Or better, it is called the law of death because it offered the occasion for spiritual death, as it says in 2 Cor (3:6): “For the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life.”

Dead to that which held us captive as slaves under the law: “Before faith came we were confined under the law” (Gal 3:23). We have been freed in such a way *that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit*, i.e., renewed in the spirit through the grace of Christ: “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you” Ez (36:26); not in the old written code, i.e., not according to the old law. Or not in the old written code of sin which the letter of the law could not remove: “I have grown weak in the midst of all my foes (Ps 6:7).

Lecture Two

(7) What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? [n. 534] Let it not be! But I had not known sin, except through the law. For I would not have known concupiscence, if the law had not said: You shall not covet.

(8) [n. 540] But taking the occasion, sin through the commandment wrought in me every concupiscence. [n. 544] For without the law sin was dead.

(9) And I lived some time without the law. [n. 547] But when the commandment came, sin revived,

(10) And I died. [n. 549] And for me the commandment that was unto life was found to be unto death.

(11) [n. 550] For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, seduced me and by it killed me.

(12) [n. 551] Wherefore the law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

(13) [n. 552] Was that then which is good made death for me? Let it not be! But sin, that it may appear sin, through what is good wrought death in me, that sin might become sinful above measure through the commandment.

532. After showing that through Christ's grace we are freed from the slavery of the Law [n. 518], and that this liberation is useful, the Apostle now answers an objection which arises from the foregoing, namely, that the Old Law seems not to be good.

In regard to this he does two things.

First, he solves the objection through which it seems that the Old Law is not good; secondly, he shows that the Law is good, there [v.14; n. 556] at *For we know*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he sets out the objection with regard to the Law;

secondly, he solves it, there [v.12; n. 551] at *Wherefore the Law indeed*.

533. First, therefore, he says: I have said that sinful passions existed by means of the Law and that it is a Law of death. *What then shall we say* follows from such statements? Shall we say that *the law is sin*?

This can be taken in two ways. In one way, that the Law teaches sin, as is said in Jer 10:(3), “The laws of the people are vain,” namely because they teach vanity. In another way, that the Law is called sin, because the one who gave the Law sinned by decreeing such a law. These two follow one from the other, because if the Law teaches sin, the lawgiver sins by decreeing the law: “Woe to them that make wicked laws” (Is 10:1). Now it seems that the Law does teach sin, if the sinful passions come through the Law, and if the Law leads to death.

534. Then when he says *Let it not be*, he solves the aforesaid objection.

Concerning this it should be noted that if the Law *per se* and directly caused sinful passions or death, it would follow that the Law is sin in either of the two ways mentioned; but not if the Law were the occasion of sinful passions and death.

In regard to this he does two things.

First, he shows what the Law does *per se*;

secondly, what follows from it as from an occasion, there [v. 8; n. 540] at *But taking the occasion*.

535. Concerning the first he does three things.

First, he answers the question, saying: *Let it not be*, namely that the Law be sin.

For it does not teach sin: “The law of the Lord is perfect” (Ps 19:7). Nor has the lawgiver sinned as though decreeing an unjust law: “By me kings reign and lawgivers decree just things” (Pr 8:15).

536. Secondly, there at *But I would not have known*, he indicates what pertains *per se* to the Law, namely, to make sin known and not to remove it.

And that is what he says: *But I would not have known sin except through the law*: “Through the law comes knowledge of sin” (Rom 3:20). This is clear if it is understood of the natural law, because man distinguishes between good and evil through the natural law: “He filled their heart with wisdom and showed them both good and evil” (Sir 17:6). But here the Apostle seems to be speaking of the Old Law, which he signified above when he said *the oldness of the letter*.

One should say therefore that without the Law sin could be known insofar as it has the character of ignobility, i.e., as something contrary to reason, but not inasmuch as it is an offense against God, because through the Laws divinely decreed, man learns that human sins displease God, since he forbids them and commands that they be punished.

537. Thirdly, there at *For I would not have known concupiscence*, he proves what he had said, saying: *For I would not have known concupiscence, if the law had not said: You shall not covet [non concupisces]*.

In regard to this it should be noted that his statement, *I would not have known sin except through the law*, could be interpreted as referring to the sinful act which the Law brings to man’s attention, when it forbids it. This, of course, is true in some cases, for it says in Leviticus 18(:23), “A woman shall not lie down with a beast.” But that this is not the Apostle’s meaning is clear from what he says here. For no one is unaware of the act of concupiscence, since all experiences it.

Therefore, it must be interpreted as saying that, as was stated above, it is only through the Law that sin is recognized as something subject to punishment and an offense against God. He uses concupiscence to prove this, because corrupt concupiscence is common to all sins. Hence a gloss says, with Augustine, “Here the Apostle chose a

general sin, i.e., concupiscence.” Therefore the law is good, because when it forbids concupiscence, it forbids all evils.

538. It might be supposed that concupiscence is a general sin according as it is taken for the desire for something illicit, which is of the essence of any sin. This is not the way Augustine called concupiscence a general sin, but because the root and cause of every sin is some special concupiscence. Hence a Gloss says that concupiscence is a general sin from which all sins come.

For the Apostle quotes a precept from Ex 20(17), “You shall not covet [*non concupisces*] your neighbor’s property.” This is the concupiscence involved in avarice, about which it says in 1 Tim (6:10): “The love of money is the root of all evils,” because “all things obey money (Ecc 10:19). Therefore, the concupiscence about which he is now speaking is a general evil, not with the commonness of a genus or species but with the commonness of causality.

Nor is this contrary to what is stated in Sir (10:15) that “pride is the beginning of all sin.” For pride is the beginning of sin on the side of turning away [from God]; but covetousness is the beginning of sins on the side of turning toward a changeable good.

539. But it can be said that the Apostle takes covetousness to clarify his proposition, because he wants to show that without the Law sin was not known, i.e., its aspect as offense against God. This is particularly clear from the fact that the Law forbids covetousness, which is not forbidden by man. For God alone considers man guilty for coveting with the heart, as it says in 1 Sam (16:7): “Man sees those things that appear, but the Lord beholds the heart.” But the reason God’s law forbade coveting another’s property, which is taken by stealing, and another’s wife, who is violated by

adultery, and not the coveting involved in other sins is that the former sins involve a pleasure in the very coveting, which does not happen in other sins.

540. Then (v.8) he shows what follows from the Law by way of opportunity.

First, he states his intention;

secondly, he clarifies it [v. 8b; n. 544].

541. First, therefore, he says that sin, *finding opportunity in the commandment* of the Law forbidding sin, *wrought in me all kinds of covetousness*.

By sin can be understood the devil, because he is the beginning of sin; and according to this he works all kinds of covetousness in man: “He who commits sin is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning” (1 Jn 3:8).

But because the Apostle had not mentioned the devil here, it can be said that each actual sin, as apprehended in thought, works in man a desire for it, as it says in Jas (1:14): “Each one is tempted by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin.”

542. But it is better to say that this refers to the sin he described above (c.5) as entering this world through one man, namely, original sin, which before the grace of Christ is in men according to guilt and punishment. But with the coming of grace its liability to punishment passes, although it abides with respect to inclination or habitual covetousness, which works in man every act of covetousness, whether it be the kinds of covetousness involved in various sins (for the covetousness involved in stealing is not the same as that in adultery) or the various degrees of covetousness as found in thought, pleasure, consent and deed.

But to work this effect in man sin finds opportunity in the Law. And that is what he says: *finding opportunity*. Or because with the coming of the precept the aspect of transgression is added, for “where there is no law there is no transgression” (Rom 4:15); or because desire for the forbidden sin increases, for the reasons given above.

543. It should be noted that he does not say that the Law gave the opportunity for sin, but that sin itself found opportunity by reason of the Law.

For one who gives an opportunity scandalizes and, as a consequence, sins. This happens when someone commits an unrighteous act by which his neighbor is offended or takes scandal; for example, if someone frequents places of evil even with no evil intention. Hence he says below (14:13): “But decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.” But if someone does a righteous act, for example, if he gives alms, by which someone else is scandalized, he is not giving an opportunity for scandal; hence he neither gives scandal nor sins, but the one scandalized finds the act an opportunity for taking scandal and sins. Thus, therefore, the Law did what is right, because it forbade sin; hence it gave no opportunity for sinning, but man takes opportunity from the Law. For this reason it follows that the Law is not sin, but rather that sin is on the part of man.

Consequently, sinful passions, which pertain to the covetousness involved in sin, do not exist in virtue of the Law as though the Law wrought them, but sin causes them, taking occasion from the law. And for the same reason it is called a law of death, not because the Law begets death, but because sin begets death by finding opportunity in the Law.

Now in the same sense the words can be arranged another way to say that sin worked all concupiscence through the command of the law, and this by taking occasion from the command; but the first exposition is simpler and better.

544. Then (v.8b) he clarifies what he had said; and this through experience of the effect:

first, he mentions the effect;

secondly, he repeats the cause [v. 11; n. 550].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he describes conditions before the Law;

secondly, under the Law [v. 9b; n. 547];

thirdly, from a comparison of the two conditions he concludes to the outcome of the Law [v. 10b; n. 549].

545. First, therefore, he says: But sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, wrought in me all kinds of covetousness. This is obvious from the fact that *apart from the law sin lay dead*, not as though sin did not exist, because through one man sin entered this world before the Law (Rom 5:12), but in the sense that it was dead either with respect to man's knowledge, which did not know that certain things forbidden by the Law were sins, for example, covetousness; or because it was dead as compared to what it was later. For it did not have as much power to lead men to death as it had later, when it took opportunity from the Law. For that is considered dead whose strength is weakened: "Mortify your members which are on earth" (Col 3:5). This, therefore, was the condition before the Law as far as sin was concerned.

546. But the condition so far as man was concerned is indicated when he says: *I was once alive apart from the law.*

This can also be understood in two ways; in one way with respect to the fact that it seemed to man that he was alive, so long as he did not know that sin was that by reason of which he was dead: “You have the name of being alive, but you are dead” (Rev 3:1). Or this is said in comparison to the death which followed by occasion of the Law. For those who sin less are said to be alive in comparison to those who sin more.

547. Then (v. 9b) he describes conditions under the Law.

First in regard to sin when he says: *But when the commandment came*, i.e., after the law was decreed, *sin revived*. This can be understood in two ways: in one way with respect to the knowledge of man, who began to know that sin existed in him, which he did not know before: “After I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed and I was confounded” (Jer 31:19). He says, *revived*, because in paradise man had full knowledge of sin, although he did not have it through experience. Or *sin revived* as to its power, because after the Law was given, the opportunity was given for the power of sin to increase: “The power of sin is the law” (1 Cor 15:56).

548. Secondly, with respect to man himself; hence he says: *and I died*. This can also be understood in two ways: in one way as referring to man’s knowledge, so that “I died” means that I knew myself dead. In another way in comparison to the previous state, so that the sense is: I died, i.e., I was more bound to death than before. Hence what was said to Moses and Aaron is somewhat true: “You have killed the Lord’s people” (Num 16:13).

549. Then (v.10) he concludes from the comparison between the two states the outcome of the Law, saying that *the very commandment which promised life* according to the intention of the lawgiver: “I gave them my statutes and showed them my ordinances by whose observance man shall live” (Ez 20:11) *proved to be an occasion of death for me*, i.e., through sin which existed in man: “His food is turned in his stomach, it is the gall of asps within him” (Jb 20:14).

550. Then (v.11) he repeats the cause as though intending to clarify it by the outcome of the Law, saying: This happened, namely, that the commandment which promised life proved to be death, *because sin, finding opportunity in the commandment deceived me* through the covetousness it wrought in me. “Beauty hath deceived thee and lust hath perverted thy heart” (Dan 13:56) *and by it*, namely, the commandment, sin took occasion to kill me: “The written code kills” (2 Cor 3:6).

551. Then (v.12) he reaches the main conclusion, namely, that the Law is not only not sin but furthermore is good, making sin to be known and forbidding it.

First he concludes with respect to the whole law, saying: As is clear from the foregoing, *the law is holy*: “The law of the Lord is without blemish” (Ps 19:7); “We know that the law is good” (2 Tim 1:8).

Secondly, with respect to the particular commandments of the Law, saying: *and the commandment is holy* in regard to the ceremonial precepts by which men are directed in the worship of God: “Be holy because I am holy” (Lev 20:7) *and just*, in regard to the judicial precepts by which man is ordained to his neighbor in the proper way: “The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether” (Ps 19:9); *and good*, in regard to the moral precepts: “The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and

silver pieces” (Ps 119:72). Yet, because all the commandments ordain us to God, he called the whole law holy.

552. Then (v.13b) he raises a question in regard to the effect of the Law.

First the question, saying: *Did that which is good*, namely, in itself, *bring death to me*, i.e., act as a *per se* cause of death? For someone could falsely gather this from what he stated above, namely, that the commandment which promised life proved to be death to me.

553. Secondly, he answers negatively, saying: *Let it not be*. For that which in itself is good and life-giving cannot be the cause of evil and death, because “a good tree cannot bear evil fruit” (Mt 7:18).

554. Thirdly, he shows that what he is now saying is in agreement with what he had said above. For the commandment itself does not bring death; but sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, brings death.

And that is what he says: *But sin, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, worked death in me through what is good*, because the Law is good by the very fact that it brings knowledge of sin.

555. This does not mean that sin worked death through the law, as though there was no death without the Law. For it was stated above that death reigned from Adam to Moses, i.e., before the Law was given. What it means is that sin worked death through the Law, because the damnation of death was increased when the Law came.

And this is what he says: *that sin might become sinful beyond the previous measure*, either because the liability for transgression grew or because the inclination to sin increased with the coming of the Law’s prohibitions.

As stated above [n. 541ff.] “sin” here means the devil, or rather the inclination to sin.

Lecture 3

(14) [n. 556] For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.

(15) [n. 562] I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

(16) [n. 567] Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good.

(17) [n. 568] So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

(18) For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. [n. 577] I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.

(19) For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.

(20) [n. 582] Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

556. After showing that the Law is neither evil nor productive of an evil effect [n. 532], the Apostle now proves that the Law is good.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he proves its goodness from the very repugnance to good found in man, a repugnance the Law cannot take away;

secondly, he shows what can take away this repugnance [v. 24; n. 589].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it [v. 15; n. 562];

thirdly, he draws the conclusion [v. 21; n. 583].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he asserts the goodness of the Law;

secondly, man's condition [v. 14b; n. 558].

557. First, therefore he says: We have stated that the Law is holy. We said this because *we*, who are wise in divine matters, *know that the law*, i.e., the old, *is spiritual*, i.e., in harmony with man's spirit: "The law of the Lord is stainless Ps 19 (v.7). Or it is spiritual, i.e., given by the Holy Spirit who is called the finger of God: "If by the finger of God I cast out demons" (Lk 11:20). Hence it says in Ex (31:18): "He gave Moses two tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

Yet the New Law is not only called spiritual but "the Law of the Spirit" (Rom 8:2), because it is not only given by the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit imprints it on the heart in which he dwells.

558. Then (v. 14b) he indicates man's condition.

This passage can be interpreted in two ways: in one way so that the Apostle is speaking in the person of a man existing in sin. This is the way Augustine explained it. But later in a book against Julian he explained it as though the Apostle is speaking in his own person, i.e., of a man in the state of grace.

Let us continue, therefore, by showing how these words and those that follow can be explained under both interpretations, although the second explanation is better.

559. The first statement, therefore, *but I am carnal*, is so interpreted that the word "I" stands for man's reason, which is the chief thing in man; hence each man seems to be

his own reason or intellect, as a city seems to be the ruler of the city, so that whatever he does the city seems to do.

560. But man is called carnal, because his reason is carnal. It is called carnal in two ways: in one way from the fact that it is submissive to the flesh and consents to things to which the flesh urges it: “For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh?” (1 Cor 3:3). In this way it is understood of man not yet healed by grace. In another way reason is said to be carnal, because it is under attack from the flesh: “The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit” (Gal 5:17). In this way, even the reason of a man in the state of grace is said to be carnal. In both cases it is carnal on account of sin; hence he adds, *sold under sin*.

561. But it should be noted that the carnality, which implies rebellion of the flesh against the spirit, arises from the sin of the first parent, because this pertains to the inclination to sin derived from that sin. But the carnality which implies submission of reason to the flesh arises not only from original sin but actual, through which a man by obeying the desires of the flesh makes himself a slave of the flesh; hence he adds: *sold under sin*, namely, of the first parent or of the self.

He says, *sold*, because the sinner sells himself into the slavery of sin as payment for fulfilling his own will: “For your iniquities you were sold” (Is 50:1).

562. Then (v.15) he clarifies what he had stated:

first, that the Law is spiritual;

secondly, that man is carnal, sold under sin [v. 17; n. 568].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he presents a proof;

secondly, he draws the conclusion [v. 16; n. 567].

The proof is based on man's infirmity, which he first asserts;

secondly, he gives the proof [v. 15b; n. 564].

563. The proof is based on man's infirmity, revealed by the fact that he does what he knows should not be done; hence he says: *For what I do, I do not understand*, i.e., do not know that it should be done.

This can be taken in two ways: in one way of a person subject to sin, who understands in general that sin should not be committed, but overcome by the suggestion of the devil or by passion or by the inclination of a perverse habit, he commits it. Therefore, he said to do what he understands is not to be done, acting against conscience, just as "the servant who knew his master's will but did not act according to his will" (Lk 12:47).

In another way it can be understood of one in the state of grace. He does evil not by performing the deed or consenting with the mind, but only by desiring through a passion in the sensitive appetite; and that desire escapes the reason or intellect, because it exists before the intellect's judgment. When the judgment is made, the desire is impeded. Therefore, it is significant that he does not say: "I understand it is not to be done" but "I do not understand"; namely, because such a desire arises before the intellect has deliberated or has perceived it: "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh" (Gal 5:17).

564. Then (v.15b) he proves what he had said by division and by effect.

First, he distinguishes under the division between “not doing the good” and “doing evil,” because even a person who does not do the good is said to commit sin, i.e., the sin of omission.

565. In regard to the omission of the good therefore, he says: *For I do not do the good I want [will]*.

In one way this can be understood of a man in the state of sin; then *I do* refers to a complete action performed outwardly with the consent of reason, whereas *I will* refers not to a complete act of will commanding the deed, but to an incomplete willing by which men want the good in general, just as they have a correct judgment about the good in general; yet this judgment is perverted by a bad habit or a perverse passion with the result that the will goes wrong, when it gets down to the particular case, and does not do what it knows in a general way should be done and would want to do.

In another way it is understood of a man healed by grace; then, conversely, *I will* refers to a complete act of willing which lasts through the act of choosing a particular deed, whereas *I do* refers to an incomplete action which has gone no further than the sense appetite and has not reached the stage of consent. For a man in the state of grace wants to preserve his mind from wicked desires, but he fails to accomplish this good on account of disorderly movements of desire that arise in the sensitive appetite. This is similar to what he says in Gal (5:17): “So that you do not do all that you will.”

566. Secondly, in regard to perpetrating evil he says: *But the evil I hate, I do*. If this is understood of the sinner, *I hate* means an imperfect hatred in virtue of which every man naturally hates evil; *I do* means an action completely performed in keeping with

reason's consent. For that general hatred of evil is frustrated in a particular choice by the inclination of a habit or passion.

But if it is understood of a person in the state of grace, *I do* means an incomplete action which has gone no further than existing as a desire in the sensitive appetite; *I hate* refers to complete hatred, by which one continues hating evil until its final reprobation: "I hate them with a perfect hatred" (Ps 139:22), namely, evil men, inasmuch as they are sinners: "While the laws were very well observed because of the piety of the high priest Onias and his hatred of wickedness" (2 Macc 3:1).

567. Then (v.16) he concludes from the aforementioned condition of man that the Law is good, saying: *But if I do what I do not want*. No matter which of the aforementioned ways is taken, by the very fact that I hate evil *I agree that the law is good* in forbidding evil which I naturally do not want.

For it is clear that man's inclination in keeping with reason to will the good and flee evil is in accord with nature or grace; and each is good. Hence, the Law also, which agrees with this inclination by commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil, is good for the same reason: "I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching" (Ps 4:2).

568. Then (v.17) he proves what he had said about man's condition, namely, that he is carnal and sold under sin.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it [v. 18; n. 572];

thirdly, he draws the conclusion [v. 20; n. 582].

569. That man is carnal and sold under sin as though somehow a slave of sin, is clear from the fact that he does not act but is led by sin. For a free man acts of himself and is not led by another.

Therefore, he says: I have said that I agree with the Law so far as my intellect and will are concerned, but when I act against the Law, *it is no longer I that do it*, i.e., do what is against the Law, *but sin which dwells within me*. So it is evident that I am a slave of sin, inasmuch as sin by exercising its dominion over me does it.

570. It is easy to understand this of a man in the state of grace; for the fact that he desires something evil, so far as the sensitive appetite pertaining to the flesh is concerned, does not proceed from the work of reason but from the inclination to sin. But a person is said to do what his reason does, because man is what he is according to reason; hence the movements of concupiscible desire, which are not from reason but from the inclination to sin, the man does not do but the inclination to sin, which is here called sin “Whence wars and fightings among you? Is it not your passions that are at war in your members?” (Jas 4:1).

But this cannot properly be understood of a man in sin, because his reason consents to sin; therefore, he commits it. Hence Augustine and a Gloss say: Greatly deceived is the man who consents to the desires of the flesh and decides to do what they desire and then thinks he can say of himself: I am not doing this.

571. However, there is a way, although forced, to understand this even of a sinner.

For an action is mainly attributed to the principal agent acting in virtue of its proper characteristic, not to the agent acting in virtue of a characteristic proper to some other thing by which it is moved. But it is clear that man’s reason, considered in the light

of what is proper to it, is not inclined to evil, but insofar as it is moved by concupiscible desire. Therefore, the doing of evil, which reason does, inasmuch as it has been overcome by desire, is not attributed principally to reason, which is understood here to be man, but rather to the desire or habit in virtue of which reason is inclined to evil.

It should be noted that sin is said to dwell in man, not as though sin were some reality, since it is a privation of good, but to indicate the permanence of this kind of defect in man.

572. Then (v.18) he proves that sin dwelling in man does the evil which man commits:

first, he presents the medium proving the proposition;

secondly, he explains the medium [v. 18b; n. 577].

573. First, therefore, he proves that sin dwelling in man does the evil which man commits. This proof is clear when the words are referred to a man in the state of grace, who has been freed from sin by the grace of Christ. Therefore, as to a person in whom Christ's grace does not dwell, he has not yet been freed from sin. But the grace of Christ does not dwell in the flesh but in the mind; hence it is stated below (8:10) that "if Christ is in us, the body is indeed dead because of sin, but the spirit lives because of righteousness." Therefore, sin, which the desire of the flesh works, still rules in the flesh.

For he takes "flesh" here to include the sensitive powers. For the flesh is thus distinguished against the spirit and fights it, inasmuch as the sensitive appetite tends to the contrary of what reason seeks, as it says in Gal (5:17): "The desires of the flesh are against the spirit."

574. He says, therefore: We have said that in me, even though healed by grace, sin acts; but this must be understood of me according to the flesh along with the sensitive appetite. *For I know* through reason and experience *that the good*, namely, of grace by which I have been reformed, *does not dwell in me*.

But lest this be understood to include reason according to the manner explained above, he adds: *that is, in my flesh*. For in me, i.e., in my heart, this good does dwell, for it says in Eph (3:17): “That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”

575. This makes it clear that this passage does not favor the Manicheans who want the flesh not to be good according to its nature and, consequently, not a good creature of God, whereas it is written: “Everything created by God is good” (1 Tim 4:4). For the Apostle is not discussing a good of nature but the good of grace, by which we are freed from sin.

576. If this passage referred to man existing under sin, it would be superfluous to add, “that is, in my flesh,” because in a sinner the good of grace does not dwell either in regard to the flesh or the mind. A forced interpretation would explain this passage by saying that sin, which is the privation of grace, is somehow derived from the flesh to the mind.

577. Then (v.18b) he clarifies what he had said:

first, from man’s capabilities;

secondly, from his action which proves his capability [v. 19; n. 581].

578. Man’s capability is described first in regard to willing, which seems to be in man’s power; hence he says, *I can will*. For nothing is so much within man’s power as his will.

Secondly, he describes man's capability, or rather his difficulty in achieving an effect, when he says: *But I cannot do the good*, i.e., I do not find it within my power, as it says in Pr (1:9); "The heart of a man disposes his way, but the Lord directs his steps."

579. This passage of Paul seems to favor the Pelagians who said that the start of a good work is from us, inasmuch as we will the good. And this is what the Apostle seems to say: But I cannot *do* the good. However, he rejects this interpretation in Phil (2:13): "But God is at work in you both to will and to do."

580. Therefore, the fact that *I can will*, once I have been healed by grace, is due to the work of divine grace, through which I not only will the good but also do some good, because I resist concupiscence and, led by the Spirit, act against it; but I do not find it within my power to accomplish that good so as to exclude concupiscence entirely. This indicates that the good of grace does not reside in the flesh, because if it did, then just as I have the faculty of willing the good because of grace dwelling in the mind, so I would have the faculty of accomplishing the good in virtue of grace residing in the flesh.

581. But if be referred to man existing under sin, then it could be explained so that to will is taken for an incomplete act of willing, which from the impulse of nature is good in some who sin. Then when he says, *I do not do the good I want*, he manifests what he had said by citing man's action, which is a sign and effect of human capability. For man does not have the strength to accomplish good, because he does not do the good he wants but does the evil he does not want. This has been explained earlier [n. 564ff].

582. Then (v.20) he concludes to what he had previously proposed, saying: *Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it but sin which dwells within me*. This, too, has been explained earlier.

But it should be noted that in virtue of the same medium the Apostle concludes to the two things he had proposed above, namely, the goodness of the law, when he said: “If I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good” (v.16), and the dominion of sin in man, when he says here: “If I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells in me.” The first of these conclusions pertains to his statement that the Law is spiritual; the second to the statement: “But I am carnal, sold under sin.” But he draws the first conclusion, which is about the goodness of the law, from that medium by reason of “I do not want,” because his mind does not want what the law forbids, which shows that the Law is good. But in virtue of the phrase, “I do” he concludes that sin, which functions against reason’s will, holds sway over man.

Lecture 4

(21) [n. 583]] So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

(22) [n. 585] For I delight in the law of God, according to the inward man,

(23) [n. 586] but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members.

(24) [n. 589] Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

(25) [n. 592] The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

583. After showing that the Law is good because it concords with reason [n. 556], the Apostle now draws two conclusions based on the two things he had posited;

the second conclusion is there [v. 23; n. 586] at *But I see*.

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he draws a conclusion from what he had said;

secondly, he offers a sign to clarify it [v. 22; n. 585].

584. Now he had posited two things: the first was that the Law is spiritual, from which he concludes: *So I find*, namely, by experience, *it to be a law* consistent with that of Moses, *when I will to do the good*, i.e., there is agreement between the Law of Moses and my reason, by which I approve the good and detest evil, just as that Law commands the good and forbids evil: “The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that you mayst do it” (Dt 30:14).

And in this way it was necessary *that evil*, i.e., sin or the inclination of sin, *lie at hand*, i.e., lie next to my reason, as though dwelling in my flesh: “Guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom,” i.e., from the flesh (Mic 7:5).

585. Then (v.22) he presents a sign to show that the Law agrees with reason.

For no one delights except in that which agrees with him. But man according to his reason delights in the Law of God; therefore, the Law of God agrees with reason. And that is what he says: *I delight in the law of God in my inner man*, i.e., according to reason or mind, which is called the inner man, not that the soul is fashioned according to man’s figure, as Tertullian supposed, or that it alone is man, as Plato said that man is a soul using a body; but because that which is more important in man is called man, as was explained above [n. 570].

But in man that which is more important, so far as appearance is concerned, is outward, namely, the body so fashioned that it is called the outward man. But so far as

the truth is concerned, the more important is within, namely, the mind or reason, which is here called the inner man: “How sweet to my taste are your words” (Ps 119:103).

586. Then (v.23) he presents the other conclusion which corresponds to his previous statement that “I am carnal.”

The conclusion is this: *But I see another law in my members*, which is the inclination to sin and can be called a law for two reasons: first, by reason of the effect. For just as the Law induces to do good, so the inclination induces to sin. Secondly, by reason of their cause.

587. But since the inclination to sin is a punishment for sin, it has a twofold cause: one cause is sin, which has taken mastery over the sinner and imposed its law on him, i.e., the inclination to sin, just as a master imposes his law on a vanquished slave. The other cause of the inclination is God, who imposed this punishment on sinful man, i.e., that his lower powers do not obey reason. And in this sense the very disobedience of the lower powers constitutes the inclination to sin and is called a law, inasmuch it was introduced by the law of divine justice, just as the sentence of a just judge has the force of law: “And this has been done from that day forward, and was since made a statute, and an ordinance, and as a law in Israel” (1 Sam 30:25).

588. This law is found in the sensitive appetite as in its source, but it is found spread over all the members which play a role for concupiscent desire in sinning: “Just as you once yielded your members to serve impurity and every iniquity, so now yield your members to serve righteousness” (Rom 6:19). Hence he says “in my members.”

Now this law has two effects in man: first, it resists reason; hence he says: *at war with the law of my mind*, i.e., with the Law of Moses, which is called the law of the mind,

inasmuch as it agrees with the mind or with the natural law, which is called the law of the mind, because it is present by nature in the mind: “They show that what the law requires is written in their hearts” (Rom 2:15). Concerning this resistance it says in Gal (5:17): “The desires of the flesh are against the spirit.”

The second effect is that it makes man a slave; hence he says: *and making me captive*, or leading me captive, according to another text, *to the law of sin which is in my members*, i.e., in myself, following the Hebrew custom of speech whereby a noun is used in place of a pronoun.

But the law of sin makes man captive in two ways: the sinner it makes captive through consent and action; the man in grace through the movement of concupiscent desire. Psalm 126 says of this captivity: “When the Lord led back the captives of Zion.”

589. Then (v.24) he deals with liberation from the law of sin and does three things:

first, he poses a question;

secondly, he answers [v. 25; n. 592];

thirdly, he draws a conclusion [v. 25b; n. 594].

In regard to the first he does two things.

590. First, he declares his misery when he says: *Wretched man that I am*. This wretchedness is the result of sin which dwells in man: either in the flesh only, as in the just man, or also in the mind, as in the sinner: “Sin makes nations miserable” (Pr 14:34).

591. Secondly he asks: *Who will deliver me from this body of death?* This question seems to express the desire voiced in Ps 142 (v.7): “Bring my soul out of prison.”

Yet it should be remembered that in man's body one can consider the very nature of the body which agrees with the soul. It is not from this that he desires to be separated: "We do not wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed over" (2 Cor 5:4). One can also consider the corruptible body which is a load upon the soul, as it says in Wis (9:15).

Hence it is significant that he says: *from this body of death*.

592. Then (v.25) he responds to the question.

For man by his own power cannot be freed from the corruption of the body, nor even of the soul, although he agrees with reason against sin, but only by the grace of Christ, as it says in Jn (8:36): "So if the Son makes you free, you are free indeed."

Therefore, he says: *the grace of God* will free me and it is given *through Jesus Christ*: "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Jn 1:17).

593. This grace liberates from the body of this death in two ways: in one way so that the corruption of the body does not dominate the soul and draw it to sinning; in another way so that the corruption of the body is taken away entirely.

In regard to the first, it is fitting for the sinner to say: Grace has freed me from the body of this death, i.e., from sin into which the soul is led by the corruption of the body. But the just man has already been freed to that point; hence, it befits him to say in regard to the second: The grace of God has freed me from the body of this death, so that in my body is neither the corruption of sin nor of death: which will happen at the resurrection.

594. Then (v.25b) he draws the conclusion which follows in different ways from the foregoing words, depending on how they are explained.

For if they are explained in the person of a sinner, the conclusion is inferred in the following manner: It has been said that the grace of God has freed me from the body of

this death, so that I am not led into sin by it; therefore, when I have been freed, *I serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin*, which law remains in my flesh in regard to the inclination to sin, in virtue of which the desires of the flesh are against the spirit.

But if the words are understood as spoken in the person of a just man, the conclusion is inferred in this manner: *The grace of God through Jesus Christ* has freed me from the body of this death, so that the corruption of sin and death is not in me. *So then I*, one and the same before being freed, *serve the law of God with my mind* by consenting to it; *but with my flesh I serve the law of sin*, inasmuch as my flesh is moved to concupiscent desire according to the law of the flesh.

Chapter 8

Lecture 1

(1) [n. 595] There is now therefore no damnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh.

(2) [n. 600] For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and of death.

(3) [n. 606] For what was impossible for the law, in that it was weakened by the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and of sin, has damned sin in the flesh.

(4) [n. 610] That the justification of the law might be fulfilled in us [n. 612] who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

(5) [n. 614] For those who are according to the flesh savor the things that are of the flesh, but those who are according to the spirit sense the things that are of the spirit.

(6) [n. 617] For the prudence of the flesh is death: but the prudence of the spirit is life and peace.

595. After showing that we are freed from sin [n. 406] and the Law [n. 518] through Christ's grace, the Apostle now shows that through the same grace we are freed from damnation.

First he shows that through the grace of Christ we are freed from the damnation of guilt;

secondly, from the damnation of punishment, there [v.10; n. 628] at *And if Christ*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he sets forth his intention;
secondly, he proves his proposition, there [v.2; n. 600] at *For the law of the spirit of life*.

596. In regard to the first he does two things: first, he mentions the benefit which grace confers, drawing his conclusion from the foregoing in this way: The grace of God through Jesus Christ has freed me from the body of this death and in this consists our redemption. *Therefore*, now that we have been freed through grace, *there is no damnation* left, because the damnation has been removed both as regards guilt and as regards punishment: “It is he himself who grants peace, who is there who will condemn?” (Job 34:29).

Secondly, he shows to whom this benefit is granted and he mentions two conditions required for it. He sets out the first when he says *for those who are in Christ Jesus*, i.e., incorporated in him by faith and love and the sacrament of faith: “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal 3:27); “As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me” (Jn 15:4). But to those who are not in Christ damnation is due. Hence John (15:6) continues: “If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered together, thrown into the fire and burned.”

Then he sets out the second condition, saying *who do not walk according to the flesh*, i.e., do not follow the desires [*concupiscentia*] of the flesh: “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not make war according to the flesh” (2 Cor 10:3).

597. From these words some want to infer that in unbelievers who are not in Christ Jesus the first movements [of desire] are mortal sins, even though they do not

consent to them, and that this is what is meant by walking according to the flesh. For regarding those who do not walk according to the flesh, if the fact that they serve the law of sin in their flesh through the first movements of desire is not damnable for them precisely because they are in Christ Jesus, it follows from the contrary sense, that for those who are not in Christ Jesus [the first movements of desire] are damnable.

They also give this argument. They say that an act is necessarily damnable which proceeds from the habit of a damnable sin. But original sin is damnable, because it deprives man of eternal life, and its habit remains in the unbeliever whose original sin has not been remitted. Therefore, any movements of desire that arise from original sin are a mortal sin in their case.

598. First, it is necessary to show that this position is false.

For the reason why the first movement [of desire] is not a mortal sin is because it does not reach reason, in which the notion of sin is completed. But this reason is present even in unbelievers; therefore, the first stirrings in unbelievers cannot be mortal sins.

Furthermore, in the same type of sin a believer sins more gravely than an unbeliever: “How much more punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the Son of God and profaned the blood of the covenant?” (Heb 10:29). Therefore, if the first stirrings in unbelievers were mortal sins, all the more so in believers.

599. Secondly, it is necessary to respond to their reasons. For, first of all, they cannot derive this position from the words of the Apostle. For the Apostle does not say that the only thing not damnable for those who are in Christ Jesus is that in the flesh they serve the law of sin according to the movements of desire, but that there is no

condemnation at all for them. But for those who are not in Christ Jesus, this very fact is damnable.

Furthermore, if this passage refers to first movements [of desire] experienced by those not in Christ Jesus, such stirrings are damnable according to the condemnation due to original sin, which still remains in them and from which those in Christ Jesus have been freed. But this does not mean that a new condemnation is added on account of such stirrings.

Neither does their second argument conclude of necessity to what they intend. For it is not true that any act proceeding from the habit of a damnable sin is itself damnable, but only when it is a act perfected by the consent of reason. For if the habit of adultery is present in a person, the stirring of adulterous desire, which is an imperfect act, is not a mortal sin for that person, but only the perfect motion that exists by the consent of reason. Furthermore, an act proceeding from such a habit does not have a new reason for condemnation added to the reason for condemning the habit. Accordingly, the first stirrings in unbelievers, inasmuch as they proceed from original sin, do not receive the condemnation due to mortal sin but only to original sin.

600. Then when he says *For the law*, he proves what he had said.

And first, in regard to the first condition that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus;

secondly, in regard to the second condition, i.e., for those who do not walk according to the flesh, there [v. 4b; n. 612] at *who walk not according to the flesh*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he presents a proof;

secondly, he manifests his presupposition through its cause, there [v. 3; n. 606] at *For what was impossible for the Law*.

601. In regard to the first he presents this argument.

The law of the spirit frees man from sin and death; but the law of the spirit is in Christ Jesus. Therefore, by the fact that one is in Christ Jesus, he is freed from sin and death.

That the law of the spirit frees from sin and death he proves thus: The law of the spirit is the cause of life; but sin and death, which is an effect of sin, are excluded by life, for sin itself is spiritual death for the soul. Therefore, the law of the spirit frees man from sin and death. But damnation is only through sin and death. Therefore, nothing of damnation exists in those who are in Christ Jesus.

This, therefore, is what he says: *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death*.

602. In one way this law can be the Holy Spirit, so that the *law of the spirit* means the law which is the Spirit.

For a law is given in order that through it men may be led to the good; hence, the Philosopher says in *Ethics* II that the intention of the lawgiver is to make citizens good. Human law does this by merely indicating what ought to be done; but the Holy Spirit dwelling in the mind not only teaches what is to be done by instructing the intellect but also inclines the affection to act aright: “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things,” as to the first, “and suggest to you all things,” as to the second, “all that I have said to you” (Jn 14:26).

603. In another way the law of the spirit can be the proper effect of the Holy Spirit, namely, faith working through love. This faith teaches what is to be done: “His anointing teaches you about everything” (1 Jn 2:27) and inclines the affections to act: “The love of Christ controls us” (2 Cor 5:14).

And this law of the spirit is called the new law, which is the Holy Spirit himself or something which the Holy Spirit produces in our hearts: “I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts” (Jer 31:33). But when he spoke about the old law [n. 557] he said only that it is spiritual, i.e., given by the Holy Spirit.

604. And so, considering what has been said, we find four laws mentioned by the Apostle: first, the law of Moses, about which he says: “I delight in the law of God in my inmost self”; secondly, the law of inclination to sin [*fomes*]: “I see in my members another law”; thirdly, the natural law in one sense of the term, concerning which he adds, “at war with the law of my mind”; fourthly, the new law, when he says: *the law of the spirit*.

605. He adds, *of life*, because just as the natural spirit makes the life of nature, so the divine Spirit makes the life of grace: “It is the Spirit that gives life” (Jn 4:63); “The Spirit of life was in the wheels” (Ezek 1:2).

He adds, *in Christ Jesus*, because this Spirit is given only to those who are in Christ Jesus. For just as the natural spirit does not reach a member not connected to the head, so the Holy Spirit does not reach a man not joined to Christ, the head: “By this we know that he abides in us, because he gave us of his own Spirit” (1 Jn 3:24);²⁴ “The Holy Spirit whom God has given those who obey him” (Ac 5:32).

²⁴ This citation from 1John does not precisely match the Vulgate or modern editions.

This law, I say, since it is in Christ Jesus, *has set me free*: “If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed” (Jn 8:38). *Free from the law of sin*, i.e., from the law of evil inclinations [*fomes*] which inclines to sin. Or *from the law of sin*, i.e., from consenting to and committing sin, which holds man bound after the manner of a law. For sin is remitted by the Holy Spirit: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven” (Jn 20:22). *And of death*, not only spiritual but also bodily, as will be proved below. And this because he is the Spirit of life: “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live” (Ezek 37:9).

606. Then when he says *For what was impossible*, he manifests what he had said, namely, that the law of life, which is in Christ Jesus, frees man from sin; for it will be proved later that it frees from death. He proves this by an argument taken from the resurrection of Christ.

In regard to this he mentions three things.

First, the need for the Incarnation [n. 611];

secondly, the mode of the Incarnation, there [v. 3b; n. 607] at *God, sending his own son*;

thirdly, the fruit of the Incarnation, there [v. 3c; n. 609] at *and of sin*.

To make the explanation easier we shall take the second point first, then the third, and finally the first, in this way.

607. I am correct in saying that *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* frees from sin, for *God*, the Father, *sending his own Son*, i.e., his own consubstantial and co-eternal Son: “He said to me, ‘You are my son; this day I have begotten you’” (Ps 2:7) -- *sending*, i.e., not creating or making him but as already existing he sent him: “Afterward

he sent his son to them” (Mt 21:37). He sent him not to exist where he previously did not exist, because as it says in John 1(:10), “He was in the world,” but to exist in a way in which he did not exist in the world, i.e., visibly by means of the flesh he assumed; hence in the same passage (John 1:14): “And the Word became flesh.....and we have beheld his glory”; “Afterwards he appeared upon earth” (Bar 3:37).

608. Therefore he adds *in the likeness of sinful flesh*. This should not be taken to mean that he did not have true flesh but only the likeness of flesh, as though it were imaginary, as the Manicheans say, since the Lord himself says: “A spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have” (Lk 24:40). Hence, he does not merely say in the likeness of flesh, but *in the likeness of sinful flesh*.

For he did not have sinful flesh, i.e., conceived with sin, because his flesh was conceived by the Holy Spirit who takes away sin: “That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 1:20). Hence Ps 25(:11) says, “I have entered in my innocence,”²⁵ namely entered into the world. But he had *the likeness of sinful flesh*, i.e., he was like sinful flesh in the fact that he was able to suffer. For man’s flesh before sin was not subject to suffering: “Therefore, he had to be made like his brethren, so that he might be made merciful” (Heb 2:17).

609. Then he mentions the two effects of the Incarnation, the first of which is removal of sin, which he sets out when he says *and of sin has condemned sin in the flesh*.

This can be read: *of sin [de peccato]*, i.e., for the sin [*pro peccato*] committed against the flesh of Christ by his executioners at the devil’s instigation, *he condemned*, i.e., destroyed, *sin*; because since the devil conspired to deliver over to death an innocent

²⁵ The Hebrew text says only “I have walked,” but the Vulgate rendering, *ingressus sum*, carries the note of entrance.

person over whom he had no rights, it was just that he lose his power. Therefore, by his passion and death he is said to have destroyed sin: “He disarmed,” namely, on the cross, “the principalities and powers, triumphing over them in him” (Col 2:15).

But it is better to say that *he condemned sin in the flesh*, i.e., weakened the inclination to sin [*fomes*] in our flesh, *of sin*, i.e., through the power of his passion and death, which is called sin on account of its likeness to sin or because through it he was made a victim for sin. For in sacred scripture such a victim is called sin: “They feed on the sin of my people” (Hos 4:8). Hence it says in 2 Cor 5:(21), “Him who did not know sin for our sake God made to be sin,” i.e., a victim for sin. And so by satisfying for our sin, he took away the sins of the world: “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn 1:29).

610. He sets out the second effect when he says *that the justification of the law*, i.e., the justice which the Law promised and which some hoped to obtain from the Law, *might be fulfilled*, i.e., made perfect, *in us*, who exist in Christ Jesus: “The Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained the righteousness which is through faith” (Rom 9:30); and in 2 Cor 5:(21) after saying, “Him who did not know sin for our sake he made to be sin,” he adds, “so that in him we might be made the justice of God.”

611. The only way this could be done was through Christ. Therefore, he prefaced this passage by saying that he was able to condemn sin in the flesh and to enact justification, *which the law could not do*: “For the law made nothing perfect” (Heb 7:19).

Now the reason why the Law could not do this was not due to a shortcoming in the Law, but because it was *weakened by the flesh*, i.e., because of a weakness of the flesh, a weakness which was in man due to the corruption of inclination [*fomes*], with the

result that in spite of the Law man was overcome by sinful desire [*concupiscentia*]: “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Mt 26:41). “I am speaking in natural terms on account of the weakness of the flesh” (Rom 6:19).

From this it is clear that it was necessary for Christ to be incarnated; for it says in Gal 2(:21), “If justification were through the law, then Christ died *gratis*,” i.e., for no reason. Therefore it was necessary that Christ be incarnated, because the Law could not justify.

612. Then when he says *who walk not according to the flesh*, he proves his point in regard to the second condition and shows that in order to avoid condemnation it is necessary that one not walk according to the flesh.

In regard to this he does three things.

First, he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it, there [v. 5; n. 614] at *For those who are according to the flesh*;

thirdly, he clarifies something he had presupposed in the proof, there [v. 7; n. 619] at *Because the wisdom of the flesh*.

613. First, therefore, he says: We have stated that the justification of the Law is fulfilled in us who not only are in Christ Jesus but also *walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit*, i.e., who do not follow the desires [*concupiscentias*] of the flesh but the prompting of the Spirit: “walk by the Spirit” (Gal 5:16).

614. Then when he says *For those who [walk] according to the flesh*, he proves what he had said.

And he brings in two syllogisms. One is on the side of the flesh, and runs like this: All who follow the prudence of the flesh are brought to death; but those who walk according to the flesh follow the prudence of the flesh. Therefore, all who walk according to the flesh are brought to death.

He sets out the other syllogism on the side of the spirit, and it runs like this: All who follow the prudence of the spirit obtain life and peace; but those who walk according to the spirit follow the prudence of the spirit. Therefore, all who walk according to the spirit obtain life and peace.

And so it is clear that those who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, are freed from the law of sin and death.

615. First, therefore, he states the minor of the first syllogism, saying: *For those who are according to the flesh*, that is, who obey the flesh as though subject to it, “such men serve not the Lord but their own belly” (Rom 16:18). *Savor [sapiunt] the things of the flesh*—as if to say: they have the wisdom [*sapientia*] of the flesh.

For to savor the things of the flesh is to approve and judge as good that which is according to the flesh: “You savor not the things of God but of men” (Mt 16:23); “They are skilled in doing evil” (Jer 4:22).

616. Secondly, he states the minor of the second syllogism, saying: *but those who are according to the spirit*, i.e., who follow the Holy Spirit and are led according to him, in accord with Gal 5(:18), “If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law,” *sense the things of the spirit*, i.e., have a right sense in spiritual matters: “Think [*sentite*] concerning the Lord with uprightness” (Wis 1:1).

The reason for these facts, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* III, is that as a person is, so the end seems to him. Hence a person whose soul is invested with a good habit or a bad habit, judges about his goal according to the demands of that habit.

617. Thirdly, he states the major of the first syllogism, saying: *for the prudence of the flesh is death.*

To understand this it should be noted that prudence is right reason concerning the doable, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* IV. But right reason concerning things to be done presupposes one thing and does three things. For it presupposes a goal which functions as a principle in human actions, just as the speculative reason presupposes principles from which it proceeds to demonstration. But right reason concerning the doable does three things: first, it plans correctly; secondly, judges correctly about plans; thirdly, it correctly and firmly commands what was planned.

Hence, for prudence of the flesh it is required that a person presuppose as his goal a pleasure of the flesh and that he plan and judge and command what leads to this end. That is why such prudence *is death*, i.e., the cause of eternal death: “He who sows in the flesh will from the flesh reap corruption” (Gal 6:8).

618. Fourthly, he states the major of the second syllogism, saying: *but the prudence of the spirit is life and peace.*

Now according to what has just been said, there is *prudence of the spirit* when someone, presupposing a spiritual good as the goal, plans and judges and commands the things which are suitably ordered to that goal. Hence such prudence *is life*, i.e., the cause of grace and glory: “He who sows in the spirit will from the spirit reap eternal life” (Gal 6:8); and it is *peace*, i.e., the cause of peace, for peace is caused by the Holy Spirit:

“Great peace have those who love thy law” (Ps 119:165); “The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace....” (Gal 5:22).

Lecture 2

(7) [n. 619] Because the wisdom of the flesh is hostile to God. For it is not subject to the law of God, nor can it be.

(8) [n. 624] And those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

(9) [n. 625] But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have not the Spirit of Christ, he is not his.

(10) [n. 628] But if Christ is in you, the body indeed is dead because of sin, but the spirit lives because of justification.

(11) [n. 630] And if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall enliven your mortal bodies also, because of his indwelling Spirit in you.

(12) [n. 631] Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live according to the flesh.

(13) [n. 633] For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you will live.

619. In the preceding section [n. 612] the Apostle had presupposed that the prudence of the flesh is death, and here he intends to prove this.

And first, he proves it;

secondly, he shows that the believers to whom he writes are immune to such prudence, there [v. 9; n. 625] at *But you are not in the flesh*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he proves his statement about prudence of the flesh in the abstract;

secondly, he applies what he had said about prudence of the flesh to those who follow prudence of the flesh, there [v. 8; n. 624] at *And those who are in the flesh*.

In regard to the first he sets out three middle [terms], each of which proves the one before it.

620. Using the first middle, he proves something stated earlier [n. 617], namely, that the prudence of the flesh is death, in the following way: He that is hostile to God incurs death: “But as for those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me” (Lk 19:27); and this because God is our life: “For he is your life” (Dt 30:20). And so, he that is hostile to God incurs death; but *the wisdom of the flesh is hostile to God*. Therefore, the prudence of the flesh is the cause of death.

621. Here it should be noted that what he earlier called the prudence of the flesh he now calls the wisdom of the flesh, not because prudence and wisdom are absolutely the same but because wisdom in human matters is prudence: “Wisdom is prudence to a man” (Pr 10:23).

To understand this it should be recognized that one who knows the highest cause on which all things depend is called wise in the strict sense. But the supreme cause absolutely of all things is God. Therefore, wisdom in the strict sense is knowledge of divine things, as Augustine says in *The Trinity*: “Yet among the mature we do impart

wisdom” (1 Cor 2:6). Now one who knows the highest cause in a particular genus is said to be wise in that genus. For example, in the art of building it is not the man who knows how to cut wood and stones but the one who conceives and plans the house who is called wise; for the entire building depends on him. Hence the Apostle says in 1 Cor 3(:10), “As a wise architect I have laid the foundation.” Thus, therefore, one is called wise in human matters who has a good understanding about the goal of human life and regulates the whole of human life accordingly, which pertains to prudence.

And thus the wisdom of the flesh is the same as the prudence of the flesh, about which James 3(:15) says that it is “not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish.”

This wisdom is said to be hostile to God, because it inclines a man against God’s law: “Running stubbornly against him with a thick-bossed shield” (Jb 15:26).

622. To prove this he uses another middle, adding: *it is not subject to the law of God.*

For a person cannot hate God according to what he is in himself, since God is the very essence of goodness; but a sinner hates God inasmuch as some precept of the divine law is contrary to his will, as an adulterer hates God inasmuch as he hates the precept: “You shall not commit adultery.” And so all sinners, inasmuch as they are unwilling to submit to God’s law, are hostile to God: “Should you love those who hate the Lord?” (2 Chr 19:2).

Hence, he has satisfactorily proved that the prudence or wisdom of the flesh is hostile to God, because it is not subject to the law of God.

623. He proves this [argument] through a third middle [term], saying: *nor can it be.*

For the prudence of the flesh is a form of vice, as is clear from what has been said. But although a person subject to a vice can be freed from it and submit to God, as it says above (6:18): “Having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness,” the vice itself cannot submit to God, since the vice itself is a turning away from God or from God’s law; just as something black can become white, but the blackness itself can never become white: “An evil tree cannot bear good fruit” (Mt 7:18).

From this it is clear that the Manicheans were not correct in using these words to support their error, for they wished by these words to show that the nature of the flesh is not from God, since it is hostile to God and cannot be subject to God. For the Apostle is not dealing here with the flesh, which is a creature of God, but of the prudence of the flesh, which is a human vice, as has been said.

624. Then when he says *And those who are in the flesh*, he applies what he had said about prudence of the flesh to men whom the prudence of the flesh rules, saying: *Those who are in the flesh*, i.e., who follow the desires of the flesh by the prudence of the flesh, so long as they are this way *cannot please God*, because, as it says in Ps 147:(11), “The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him.”

Hence those who do not submit to him cannot please him, so long as they remain such. But they can cease to be in the flesh according to the manner described and then they will be pleasing to God.

625. Then when he says *But you*, he shows that those to whom he is speaking are immune from the prudence of the flesh. In regard to this he does three things. First, he

describes the state of believers, saying: *But you are not in the flesh*. This makes it clear that he is not speaking about the nature of the flesh. For the Romans, to whom he was speaking, were mortal men clothed in flesh. Rather, he is taking flesh for the vices of the flesh, as in 1 Cor 15(:50), “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” Hence he says *You are not in the flesh*, i.e., you are not in the vices of the flesh as though living according to the flesh: “Living in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh” (2 Cor 10:3). *But in the spirit*, i.e., you follow the spirit: “I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day” (Rev 1:10).

626. Secondly, he appends a condition, saying: *if the Spirit of God dwells in you*, namely, through love: “You are God’s temple, and God’s Spirit dwells in you” (1 Cor 3:16).

He appends this condition because, even though they received the Holy Spirit in baptism, they might through a later sin have lost the Holy Spirit. Concerning this it says in Wis 1(:5) that [the Holy Spirit] “will not abide when iniquity comes in.”

627. Thirdly, he shows that this condition should be found in them, saying: *Now if anyone does not have not the Spirit of Christ, he is not his*. For just as that is not a bodily member which is not enlivened by the body’s spirit, so he is not Christ’s member who does not have the Spirit of Christ: “By this we know that we abide in him, because he has given us of his own Spirit” (1 Jn 4:13).

It should be noted that the Spirit of Christ and of God the Father is the same; but he is called the Spirit of God the Father inasmuch as he proceeds from the Father, and the Spirit of Christ inasmuch as he proceeds from the Son. Hence the Lord always ascribes him to both, as in John 14(:26), “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father

will send in my name” and again: “When the Counselor comes whom I will send to you from the Father” (Jn 15:26).

628. Then [n. 595] when he says *But if Christ*, he shows that through the grace of Christ or through the Holy Spirit we are freed from punishment.

And first, he shows that we are freed by the Holy Spirit in the future from bodily death;

secondly that in the meantime the Holy Spirit helps us against the infirmities of the present life, there [v. 26; n. 686] at *Similarly the Spirit*;

Concerning the first he does three things.

First, he sets out what he intends;

Secondly, he draws a corollary from this, there [n. 631] at *Therefore, brethren*;

Thirdly, he proves his proposition, there [v. 14; n. 634] at *For all who are led*.

In regard to the first it should be recalled that above he mentioned the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ, although it is one and the same Spirit.

First, therefore, he shows what we obtain from the Spirit inasmuch as he is the Spirit of Christ;

secondly, inasmuch as he is the Spirit of God the Father, there [v. 11; n. 630] at *And if the Spirit of him*.

629. He says, therefore: We have said that if one does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him; hence, since you belong to Christ, you have the Spirit of Christ and Christ himself dwelling in you through faith: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Eph 3:17). *But if Christ is thus in you*, you should be conformed to Christ.

Now Christ so came into the world that as far as the Spirit was concerned, he was full of grace and truth, but as for the body, he had the likeness of sinful flesh, as was stated above. Hence this should also be in you, that your *body indeed, because of sin* which still remains in your flesh *is dead*, i.e., subject to the necessity death: “In whatsoever day you eat it, you shall die the death” (Gen 2:17), i.e., subject to the necessity of death; *but the spirit lives*, being recalled from sin: “Be renewed in the spirit of your minds” (Eph 4:23); it lives with the life of grace *because of justification*, through which it is justified by God: “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God” (Gal 2:20); “The just man lives by faith” (Rom 1:17).

630. Then when he says *And if the Spirit*, he shows what we obtain from the Holy Spirit inasmuch as he is the Spirit of the Father, saying: *If the Spirit of him*, namely, of God the Father, *who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you*: “But do thou, O Lord, be gracious to me and raise me up” (Ps 41:10); “Him God raised from the dead” (Acts 3:14). Although Christ rose by his own power, because the power of the Father and of the Son is the same, it follows that what God the Father did in Christ, he can also do in us.

And this is what he says: *He who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will enliven your mortal bodies*. He does not say “dead” but “mortal,” because in the resurrection there will be taken away from our bodies not only that they are dead, i.e., necessarily having to die, but also that they are mortal, i.e., capable of dying, as was Adam’s body before sin. For after the resurrection our bodies will be wholly immortal: “Thy dead shall live, their bodies shall rise” (Is 26:19); “After two days he will revive us” (Hos 6:2).

And this *because of his indwelling Spirit in you*, i.e., in virtue of the Spirit dwelling in you: “Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live” (Ezek 37:5).

And this is *because of his indwelling Spirit*, i.e., on account of the dignity our bodies have from being receptacles of the Holy Spirit: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?” (1 Cor 6:19). Those indeed whose bodies were not temples of the Spirit will also rise, but their bodies will be able to suffer.

631. Then when he says *Therefore, brethren*, he draws a corollary from the foregoing.

And first, he sets out a conclusion;

secondly, he gives the reason, there [v. 13; n. 633] at *For if*.

First, therefore, he says: We have said that many benefits flow to us through the Holy Spirit and that from the prudence of the flesh follows death; therefore, *we are debtors, not to the flesh*, but to the Holy Spirit on account of the benefits received from him, to live according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh: “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (Gal 5:25).

633. Then when he says *For if you live according to the flesh*, he gives the reason for the above conclusion.

And first, as to the flesh, saying: *If you live according to the flesh*, namely, by following the desires of the flesh, *you will die*, namely, the death of guilt in the present and the death of damnation in the future: “She who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives” (1 Tim 5:6).

Secondly, he gives a reason as to the spirit, saying: *but if by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh*, i.e., deeds which flow from the desires of the flesh, *you will live*, namely, the life of grace in the present and the life of glory in the future: “Put to death what is earthly in you” (Col 3:5); “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal 5:24).

Lecture 3

(14) [n. 634] For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

(15) [n. 637] For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, in which we cry, “Abba,” “Father”.

(16) [n. 645] For the Spirit himself gives testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God.

(17) [n. 646] And if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him.

634. After stating that through the Holy Spirit will be given to us the life of glory, which will exclude all mortality from our bodies [n. 628], the Apostle now proves this:

first, he shows that this glorious life is given by the Holy Spirit;

secondly, why it is deferred [v. 17b; n. 650].

In regard to the first he presents this argument: All who are sons of God obtain the inheritance of a glorious life; but those who are ruled by the Holy Spirit are sons of God. Therefore, all who are ruled by the Holy Spirit obtain the inheritance of a glorious life.

First, therefore, he posits the minor of this proof;

secondly, the major [v. 17; n. 646].

In regard to the first he does two things;

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it [n. 637].

635. In regard to the first there two things to consider.

First, how some are led by the Spirit of God. This can be understood in the following way: *All who are led by the Spirit of God*, i.e., ruled as by a leader and director, which the Spirit does in us, inasmuch as he enlightens us inwardly about what we ought to do: “Let thy good spirit lead me” (Ps 143:10).

But because one who is led does not act on his own, whereas the spiritual man is not only instructed by the Holy Spirit regarding what he ought to do, but his heart is also moved by the Holy Spirit, it is necessary to get a better understanding of what is meant by *all who are led by the Spirit of God*.

For those are led who are moved by a higher instinct. Hence we say that animals do not act but are led, because they are moved to perform their actions by nature and not from their own impulse. Similarly, the spiritual man is inclined to do something not as though by a movement of his own will chiefly, but by the prompting of the Holy Spirit, as it says in Is (59:19): “He will come like a rushing stream, which the wind of the Lord drives,” and in Lk (4:1): “Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”

However, this does not mean that spiritual men do not act through will and free choice, because the Holy Spirit causes the very movement of the will and of free choice in them, as it says in Phil (2:13): “God is at work in you both to will and to work.”

636. Secondly, we must consider how those who are led by the Spirit of God *are sons of God*.

This is clarified by a likeness to natural children, who are produced by the natural seed coming from the father. But the spiritual seed proceeding from the Father is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, through this seed some men are born as sons of God: “No one born of God commits sin, because the seed of God abides in him” (1 Jn 3:9).

637. Then (v.15) he proves that men who receive the Holy Spirit are sons of God; and this in three ways.

First, by distinguishing the gifts of the Holy Spirit;

secondly, by our own testimony [v. 15b; n. 644];

thirdly, by the testimony of the Spirit [v. 16; n. 645].

638. In regard to the first it should be noted that the Holy Spirit produces two effects in us: one is fear: “His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord” (Is 11:3); the other is love: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us” (Rom 5:5). But fear makes slaves; love does not.

To realize this it is necessary to consider that fear bears on two things, namely, the evil from which someone flees through fear, and whatever seems to be the source of that evil. For a person is said to fear being killed and the king who has the power to kill. But sometime it happens that the evil from which someone recoils is contrary to a bodily or temporal good which a person sometimes loves inordinately and recoils from having it injured or destroyed by a mere man. This is human or worldly fear and is not from the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the Lord forbids such fear: “Do not fear those who kill the body” (Mt 10:28).

639. There is a second type of fear which recoils from an evil contrary to created nature, namely, the evil of being punished, and shrinks from having this evil inflicted by a spiritual cause, namely, by God. Such fear is praiseworthy at least in one respect, namely, that it fears God: “Oh that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments” (Dt 5:29). In this respect it is from the Holy Spirit.

But insofar as such fear does not recoil from an evil opposed to ones spiritual good, namely, sin, but only punishment, it is not praiseworthy. It has this shortcoming not from the Holy Spirit but from man’s guilt; just as deformed faith is from the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as it is faith but not its deformity. Hence, even if a person does something good under the influence of such fear, he does not act well, because he does not act spontaneously but compelled by fear of punishment -- and this is characteristic of slaves. Therefore, this fear is properly called servile, because it makes a man act as a slave does.

640. There is a third type of fear which recoils from evil opposed to a spiritual good, namely, from sin or separation from God, which a person fears to incur from the just vengeance of God. Thus it bears on spiritual goods, but with an eye on punishment.

This is called initial fear, because it is usually found in men at the beginning of their conversion. For it fears punishment due to past sins and it fears separation from God through sin because of grace infused with charity. This is the fear mentioned in Ps 111 (v.10): “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

641. The fourth type of fear has its eye entirely on spiritual things, because it fears nothing except separation from God. This is holy fear which endures forever,” as it says in Ps 19 (v.9). But just as initial fear is caused by imperfect love, so this fear is caused by

perfect love: “Perfect love casts out fear” (1 Jn 4:18). For this reason initial fear and chaste fear are not distinguished against charity’s love which is the cause of both, but the fear of punishment is; because just as this fear produces slavery, so charity’s love produces the freedom of sons. For it makes a man act voluntarily for the honor of God -- which is characteristic of sons.

642. Now the Old Law was given in fear which was signified by the thunder and things of that sort which occurred when it was given, as it says in Ex 19 and in Heb (12:21): “So terrifying was the sight that Moses said, ‘I tremble with fear.’” So the Old Law, which induced men to obey God’s commandments by inflicting punishments, was given in a spirit of slavery; hence it says in Gal (4:24): “One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery.”

643. Therefore, he says here: It was correct to say that “all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” For in the New Law *you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear*, namely, of punishments; *but you have received the Spirit of sonship*, by which we are adopted as children of God: “That we might receive adoption as sons” (Gal 4:5).

This does not mean that there is one spirit and another spirit, but that it is the same spirit, who produces servile fear in some and love in others.

644. Then (v.15b) he manifests the same thing by our confession.

For we confess that we have God as our Father, when we follow the -Lord’s instruction to pray: “Our Father, who art in heaven” (Mt 6:9). And since it is suitable not only for the Jews but also for Gentiles to say this, he uses two words to signify “Father,” namely, “Abba,” which is Hebrew, and “Pater,” which can be Latin or Greek. Even the

Lord himself says: Father, all things are possible to you” (Mk 14:36); “You will call me, My Father” (Jer 3:19).

We say this not so much with the sound of our voice as with the intention of our heart, an intention so strong that it is called a cry, as with Moses to whom it was said: “Why do you cry to me? (Ex 14:15), namely, with the intention in your heart. But the great strength of this intention comes from the feeling of filial fear which he produces in us. Therefore, he says: *In which*, namely, the Holy Spirit, *we cry: Abba, Father*. Hence it says in Is (6:3) that the seraphim, burning with the fire of the Holy Spirit, “cried one to another: Holy, holy, holy...”.

645. Then (v.16) he manifests the same thing through the testimony of the Holy Spirit, to show that we are not deceived in our confession; hence he says: The reason I say that “we cry, Abba, Father” in the Holy Spirit is that *the Spirit himself is bearing witness to our spirit that we are children of God*. He bears this testimony not with external words that reach men’s ears, as the Father gave testimony to his own Son in Mt (3:17), but through the effect of filial love he produces in us. Therefore, he says that *he bears testimony* not to our ears *but to our spirit*.

646. Then (v.17) he posits the major.

First he shows that to children is owed the inheritance, saying: If some are children, namely, through the Spirit, it follows that they are heirs, because the inheritance is owed not only to the natural child but also to the adopted: “We have been born anew to an inheritance which is imperishable” (1 Pt 1:4); “Yea, I have a goodly heritage” (Ps 16:6).

647. Secondly, he shows what that inheritance is.

First he describes it in relation to God the Father, saying: *heirs of God*. Now one's heir is a person who receives or gets his chief goods and not some small gifts, as we read in Gen (25:15) that Abraham gave all his possessions to Isaac, but to the sons of his concubines he bestowed gifts. Now the chief good by which God is rich is himself. For he is rich of himself and not in virtue of something else, because he does not need the goods others have, as it says in Ps 15 (v.2): "You do not need my goods." Hence the children of God obtain God himself as their inheritance: "The Lord is my chosen portion" (Ps 16:5); "The Lord is my portion, says my soul" (Lam 3:24).

648. But since the child does not obtain the inheritance unless the Father dies, it seems that man cannot be an heir of God, who never dies.

The answer is that this applies to temporal goods which cannot be possessed by many at the same time; hence one must die, if another is to inherit. But spiritual goods can be held by many at the same time; therefore, it is not necessary that the Father die in order that the children become heirs.

Yet it can be said that God dies for us inasmuch as he is in us by faith.

649. Secondly, he describes this inheritance on the part of Christ, saying: *fellow heirs with Christ*, because just as he is the chief Son with whom we share sonship, so he is the chief heir, to whom we are united in the inheritance: "This is the heir" (Mt 21:38).

650. Then (v.17b) he shows why this glorious life is delayed:

first, he gives the reason concerned with suffering;

secondly, the preeminence of glory over suffering [v. 18; n. 652].

651. In regard to the first it must be recalled that Christ, the principal heir, attained to the inheritance, of glory through suffering: "Was it not necessary that the

Christ should suffer these things and enter his glory?” (Lk 24:26). But we must not expect to obtain the inheritance by an easier way. Therefore, it is necessary that we attain to that inheritance through suffering: “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (Ac 14:22). For we do not receive an immortal and unsuffering body at once, in order that we might suffer along with Christ.

Hence he says, *provided we suffer with him*, i.e., along with Christ endure the tribulations of this world patiently, *in order that we may also be glorified* with Christ: “If we have died with him, we shall also reign with him” (2 Tim 2:11).

Lecture 4

(18) [n. 652] I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

(19) [n. 656] For the eager longing of creation eagerly longs for the revealing of the sons of God;

(20) [n. 661] for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope;

(21) [n. 666] because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.

(22) [n. 670] We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now.

652. After proving that we are freed through the grace of Christ [n. 650], the Apostle now assigns the cause of the postponement of immortal life, which is the

inheritance of the children of God, namely, that it is necessary for us to suffer with Christ in order to reach the fellowship of his glory. But because someone might say that such an inheritance is burdensome, since it cannot be obtained except by enduring suffering, he shows the superiority of future glory over the sufferings of the present life:

first he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it [v.19; n. 656].

653. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that it is necessary for us to suffer in order to be glorified, and that we should not reject sufferings, if we would have glory. For *I*, who have experienced both, *consider*: “A man of much experience will speak with understanding” (Si 34:9). He endured many sufferings: “with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings” (2 Cor 11:23) and was a beholder of future glory: “Caught up into Paradise, he heard things that cannot be told” (2 Cor 12:3).

This I consider, namely, *that the sufferings of this time are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us*.

654. Herein he mentions four things to show the excellence of that glory. First, he designates its eternity when he says: *the glory that is to be*, namely, after the present time; but there is nothing after the present time except eternity. Hence that glory surpasses the sufferings of this time as the eternal surpasses the temporal: “For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison” (2 Cor 4:17).

Secondly, he designates its dignity when he says: *glory*, which suggests a splendor of dignity: “Let the faithful exult in glory” (Ps 149:5).

Thirdly, he designates how it will be manifested when he says: *to be revealed*. For the saints have glory now, but it is hidden in their conscience: “Our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience” (2 Cor 1:12). But later that glory will be revealed in the sight of all, both good and bad, about whom Wis (5:2) says: “They will be amazed at his unsuspected salvation.”

Fourthly, he designates its truth when he says: *in us*. For the glory of this world is vain, because it is based on things outside a person, namely, in the trappings of wealth and in the opinion of men: “They boast of the abundance of their riches” (Ps 49:6). But that glory will be based on something within a man, as it says in Lk (17:21): “The kingdom of God is within you.”

655. Thus, the sufferings of this life, if they are considered in themselves, are slight in comparison to the quantity of this glory: “For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you” (Is 54:7). But if these sufferings are considered insofar as they are voluntarily endured for God out of love, which the Holy Spirit produces in us, then man merits eternal life *ex condigno* through them. For the Holy Spirit is a fountain whose waters, i.e., effects, well up to eternal life, as it says in Jn (4:14).

656. Then (v.19b) he proves his proposition by the excellence of that glory:

first, by the eager longing of the creature;

secondly, by the eager longing of the apostles [v. 23; n. 675].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he mentions the eager longing of the creature;

secondly, he manifests it [v. 20; n. 661].

657. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that future glory exceeds present sufferings. Yet this is obvious, *for the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God*: “We are God’s children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be” (1 Jn 3:2). For the dignity of divine sonship is hidden in the saints on account of the things they suffer outwardly; but that dignity will be revealed later, when they receive immortal and glorious life, and when the wicked will say: “Behold how they have been numbered among the sons of God” (Wis 5:5).

And he says that the *eager longing eagerly longs* to designate by such repetition the intensity of the eager longing, in accord with Ps 39:1, “Eagerly longing I have eagerly longed for the Lord.”

658. It should be noted that *creation* or “creature” can be interpreted in three ways here. In one way for just men, who are called God’s creature in a special way, either because they continue in the good in which they were created, or on account of their excellence, because every creature somehow serves them: “Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures” (Jas 1:18).

But this creature, i.e., the just man, waits *for the revealing of the sons of God* as a reward promised him: “Awaiting the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God” (Tit 2:23).

659. Secondly, the creature can be human nature itself, which is the substratum of the goods of grace. In the unrighteous this nature is not yet sanctified but is as though without form.

In the men who have already been justified it is partially formed now with grace, but it is still, as it were, without form and awaits the final form which comes through glory.

Thus, therefore, this creature, i.e., we ourselves, in virtue of our human nature *wait for the revealing of the sons of God*. We also wait for this in virtue of the grace received into our nature, as we might say that matter waits for its form or colors wait for the completed picture: “All the days of my service I would wait till my release should come” (Jb 14:14).

In a third way it can be understood of the visible creature, as are the elements of this world: “From the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator” (Wis 13:5) [n. 665, 668].

This sort of creature waits for something in two ways, for the eager longing of a sensible creature, according as it has its origin in God, is ordered to some end. And this happens in two ways.

In one way, inasmuch as God endows this creature with a natural form and powers that incline it to some natural end. Thus we might say that a tree waits for its fruit to be produced or that fire waits for its higher natural place.

In another way the visible is ordained by God to an end which transcends its natural form. For just as the human body will be clothed with the form of supernatural glory, so all visible creation in that glory of the children of God will itself obtain a new glory: “I saw a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev 21:1). In this way the visible creature waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

661. Then (v.20) he explains this waiting:

first, the need to wait;

secondly, its terminus [v. 21; n. 66];

thirdly, the sign of waiting [v. 22; n. 670].

662. Now the need to wait is due to a defect to which the creature is subject. For a thing subject to no defect has no need to wait for something. He shows the creature's defect when he says: *for the creature was subjected to vanity*.

663. If by creature is understood the just man, he is understood to be subject to vanity, i.e., to those bodily things which are changeable and inclined to fail. Hence they are called vain: "Vanity of vanities. All is vanity" (Ec 1:2).

But it is subjected to them, because the needs of the present life require that he occupy himself with them, *not of his own will*, because he does not love such temporal things as those do against whom it is said in Ps 4 (v.3): "How long will you love vanity and seek after lies?" But this creature is subjected to such vanity *by the will of him*, i.e., by God's ordinance, *who subjected it*, i.e., the just man, to these visible creatures; but *in hope*, namely, that at some time he will be freed from such occupation "in the resurrection" when "they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven" (Mt 22:30).

664. If by creature is understood human nature itself [n. 659], then such a creature *is subjected to vanity*, i.e., to changeableness; "Every man stands as a mere breath" (Ps 39:5). *Not of its own will*, because such vanity is inflicted on human nature as a punishment; but punishment is involuntary just as guilt is voluntary. But human nature is subjected to such sufferings *by the will of him*, i.e., by the sentence of God, *who subjected*

it, namely, human nature, to defects, but nevertheless *in hope* of the time when such sufferings will be avoided: “The thresher shall not thresh it forever” (Is 28:28).

665. But if by creature is understood the sensible creation [n. 660], then such creation was *subjected to* futility, i.e., to changeability, but *not of its own* will. For the defects which follow on changeableness, such as aging and ceasing to be and the like, are contrary to the particular nature of this or that thing which seeks self-preservation, although they are in keeping with the general nature of things. Nevertheless, the visible creature is subjected to such vanity by the ordinance of God who subjected it *in hope*, i.e., in expectation of a glorious renewal as was stated above.

666. Then (v.21) he indicates the terminus of this waiting.

For its waiting or hope is not in vain, *because the creature itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

If by creature is meant the just man, *its bondage to decay* means his care in seeking food and clothing and the other things which serve our mortal life. This is a form of slavery from which the saints are freed, as they struggle toward the liberty of the children of God. Although they have the liberty of righteousness by which they are released from the slavery of sin, they do not yet have the liberty of glory, which is release from the slavery of misery: “Who has let the wild ass go free?” (Jb 39:5).

667. If by creature is meant human nature, *it will be set free from its bondage to decay*, i.e., from suffering and decay, and tend toward the glorious liberty of the children of God, which is freedom not only from guilt but from death, as it says in 1 Cor (15:54): “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

668. But if it is taken for the visible creature, then that creature will be set free from its bondage to decay, i.e., changeableness: because in every change there is an element of decay, as Augustine says and the Philosopher too in *Physics* VIII this will contribute to the glorious liberty of the children of God, because just as they will be renewed, so will their dwelling place be renewed: “I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things will not be remembered,” i.e., the former changeableness of the creature (Is 65:17).

669. But he says, *the creation itself will be set free from its bondage*. According to one sense it means not only we Apostles, but also the other just. In the second sense it means not only the just but human nature, too. In a third sense: not only men but other creatures.

670. Then (v.22) he presents the sign of this waiting, saying: *We know*, namely, the apostles instructed by the Holy Spirit and also by experience, *that every creature has been groaning in travail together until now*.

671. If this is understood of the visible creature, it presents two difficulties.

First, because he says, *groans in travail*, for this seems to fit only the rational creature. But this can be explained so that “groan” is the same as the previous expression, “not of its own will.” For we groan against things repugnant to our will. Therefore, inasmuch as the defects of the visible creature are contrary to the natural desire of a particular nature, the visible creature is said to groan. When he says, *in travail*, it is the same as the previous expression, “awaits.” For travail is part of the process of producing offspring.

672. The second difficulty lies in the fact that he says, *every creature*, because that would include the heavenly bodies; hence a Gloss says that the sun and moon do not complete their assigned span without labor.

But this must be explained in such a way that labor is taken for motion, just as rest is sometimes taken for cessation from work, as God is said to have rested on the seventh day. Accordingly, by groaning is understood decay, which is an element of local motion, inasmuch as a body ceases to be in one place and begins to be in another. By travail is understood the destiny of heavenly bodies to be renewed.

673. But if it is understood of men, then human nature is said to be *every creature*, because it shares something with every creature: with the spiritual creature it shares intellect, with the animal it shares bodily life, with the corporeal creature it shares bodily existence. Therefore, this creature, i.e., man, *groans*, partly because of the evils it suffers and partly because of the good things it hopes for but are delayed: “Many are my groans” (Lam 1:22). It is *in travail*, because it endures with affliction of soul the postponement of the glory it awaits: “Hope deferred makes the heart sick” (Pr 13:12); “A woman in travail has sorrow” (Jn 16:21); “Anguish as of a woman in travail” (Ps 48:6).

674. He says, *until now*, because this groaning was not removed when we were made righteous, but it remains *until now*, i.e., until death. Or *until now*, i.e., even though those in glory have been set free, the rest of us still remain. Or until now, because not only the ancient fathers who lived before Christ, but we also who did not live until the time of grace, suffer the same things. In 2 Pt (3:4) scoffers are described as saying: “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation.”

It should be noted that “God’s creature” can mean everything under God.

Hence some try to explain the above words about every creature in such a way as to include angels. But it is quite awkward to suppose that they are subjected to futility or that they groan or are in travail, because they already have the glory, the likeness of which we await, for it says in Mt (22:30): “They will be as the angels in heaven.” Therefore, ours is a more suitable explanation.

Lecture 5

(23) [n. 675] and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

(24) [n. 681] For we are saved by hope. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?

(25) [n. 685] But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

(26) [n. 686] Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with indescribable sighs.

(27) [n. 694] And he who searches the hearts of men knows what the Spirit desires, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to God.

675. After showing the excellence of future glory from the longing of the creature [n. 656], the Apostle now shows the same from the longing of the apostles. For that cannot be a trifle which is desired so anxiously by great men.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it [v. 24; n. 681].

676. In regard to the first he does three things [n. 679, 680].

First, he describes the dignity of those longing when he says: *And not only the creature* awaits the glory of the sons of God, *but we ourselves*, namely, the apostles, *who have the first fruits of the spirit*, namely, because the apostles had the Holy Spirit before others and more abundantly than others, just as earthly fruit which ripens earlier is richer and more delicious: “Israel was holy to the Lord, the first fruits of his harvest” (Jer 2:3); “You have come to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven” (Heb 12:23).

From this it is clear that the apostles are greater than all other saints no matter what their credentials, whether virginity or learning or martyrdom, because they have the Holy Spirit more fully.

677. But someone might say that some other saints have endured more torture and greater austerities for Christ than the apostles.

But it should be recognized that the amount of one’s merit depends principally and in respect to essential reward on charity. For the essential reward consists in the joy one has in God. But it is plain that one who loves God more will enjoy Him more. Hence, the Lord promises that blessed vision to those who love: “He who loves me will be loved by my Father and I will love him and manifest myself to him” (Jn 14:21). But according to the quantity of his works man merits an accidental reward which is joy taken in those works. Therefore, the apostles performed the works they did with greater charity, which made their hearts prepared for much greater ones, if it had been opportune.

678. But if it is said: Someone can try so hard that he will have charity equal to that of the apostles the answer is that a man's charity is not derived from himself but from God's grace, which is given to each "according to the measure of Christ's gift" (Eph 4:7).

Now he gives to each the grace proportionate to his calling. Thus, the most excellent grace was given to Christ, because he was called to have his human nature taken into the unity of his divine person; after him the greatest fullness of grace was conferred on blessed Mary, who was called to be the mother of Christ. Among the rest, however, the apostles were called to a greater dignity than all others, for they received from Christ himself the things that pertain to salvation and the commission to deliver them to others. Hence, the Church is in a sense founded on them, as it says in Rev (21:14): "The wall of the city had twelve foundations and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Therefore, God gave them a greater abundance of grace than the rest.

679. Secondly, he mentions the anxiety with which they wait, when he says, *we groan inwardly*. This groaning indicates the distress caused by the postponement of something desired with great longing, as it says in Pr (13:12); "Hope deferred makes the heart sick"; "I am weary with my moaning" (Ps 6:6).

This groaning, however, is more internal than external, because it proceeds from the hidden feelings of the heart and because it is concerned with internal goods. Hence he says, *we groan inwardly*: "My groans are many" (Lam 1:22).

680. Thirdly, he mentions what is awaited, saying: *as we wait for adoption as sons*, i.e., for the completion of this adoption. For this adoption was begun by the Holy

Spirit justifying the soul: “You have received the spirit of adoption as sons” (Rom 8:15). But it will be brought to fulfillment, when the body is glorified: “We rejoice in the hope of sharing the glory of the children of God” (Rom 5:2). And that is why he adds: *the redemption of our bodies*, so that as our spirit has been redeemed from sin, so our body might be redeemed from corruption and death: “I shall ransom them from death”(Hos 13:14); “He will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body” (Phil 3:21).

681. Then when he says, *For in this hope*, he proves what he had said with the following reason: Hope is concerned with things not seen in the present but awaited in the future. But we have been saved through hope; therefore, we wait for the completion of salvation as something future.

682. First, therefore, he presents the minor, saying: For we, the apostles and the rest of the believers, *were saved in hope*, namely, because we hope for our salvation: “We have been born anew to a living hope” (1 Pt 1:3); “Hope in him at all times, O people” (Ps 62:8).

683. Secondly, he presents the major, saying: *Now hope*, i.e., the thing hoped for, *which is seen*, as though possessed at present, *is not hope*, i.e., not something hoped for, but something possessed. For hope is the expectation of something future: “Wait for me, for the day when I arise” (Zeph 3:8).

684. Thirdly, he presents proof of the major, saying: *For who hopes for what he sees?* As if to say: Hope implies a movement of the soul toward something not possessed. But when something is already possessed, there is no need for one to be moved toward it.

And it should be noted that because hope somehow springs from faith, he attributes to hope something that belongs to faith, namely, that it is concerned with something not seen: “Faith is the conviction of things not seen” (Heb 11:1).

685. Fourthly, he presents the conclusion, saying: *But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it in patience.*

Hence it should be noted that patience, properly speaking, inclines one to tolerate tribulation with a certain evenness of mind: “Be patient in tribulation” (Rom 12:12). But because the postponement of something good has an aspect of evil, even the continued wait for absent goods with evenness of mind is attributed to patience, although they pertain more to long-suffering; “Be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord” (Jas 5:7). But patience is taken in both ways here, because the apostles awaited glory with evenness of mind, along with the delay and tribulation.

686. Then [v. 26; n. 628] he shows how we are helped by the Holy Spirit in the defects of the present life:

first, for the fulfillment of desires;

secondly, for the direction of external events [v. 28; n. 695].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he clarifies it [v. 26b; n. 688].

687. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that our mortal bodies will be vivified by the Holy Spirit, when our weakness shall be removed from us. *Likewise in the present life in which we are still subject to weakness the Spirit helps us in our weakness*, even though he does not take it away entirely: “The Spirit lifted me up and

took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heart of my spirit,” as though weakness was not yet entirely removed, “for the hand of the Lord was with me, strengthening me” (Ez 3:14); and in this way he helped me: “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Mt 26:41).

688. Then (v. 26b) he clarifies what he had said:

first, he shows the need for the Spirit’s help, which pertains to a weakness of the present life;

secondly, he indicates the way he helps [v. 26c; n. 692];

thirdly, he shows the efficacy of the help [v. 27; n. 694].

689. First, therefore, he says: I am correct in saying that the Spirit helps our weakness, *for* in this we suffer a weakness that *we do not know how to pray as we ought*: “Why does God surround with darkness the man whose way is hid?” (Jb 3:23).

690. And it should be noted that the Apostle says there are two things we do not know, namely, what we should ask for in prayer and the manner in which we ought to ask [n. 691]. But both seem to be false.

For in the first place we know what we should ask for, because the Lord taught us in Mt (6:9): “Hallowed be thy name.”

The answer is that we can know in a general way what it is suitable to pray for, but we cannot know this in particular. First of all, if we desire to perform a virtuous deed, which is to fulfill God’s will on earth as it is in heaven, it can happen that the virtuous deed does not befit this or that person. For example, the quiet of contemplation is not expedient for a person who can press onward usefully in action, as Gregory says in

Morals on Job 5:26: “You shall come to your grave in ripe old age.” Hence it says in Pr (14:12): “There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”

Secondly, a person desires a temporal good to sustain life, which is to seek one’s daily bread, but it puts him in danger of death. For many have perished because of riches: “Riches were kept by their owner to his hurt” (Ec 5:13).

Thirdly, a person desires to be freed from a bothersome trial which, nevertheless, is for him a guardian of humility. For example, St. Paul sought the removal of a thorn of the flesh, but it had been given him to keep him from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, as it says in 2 Cor (12:7).

691. Likewise, it also seems that we know how to pray as we ought, since it says in Jas (1:6): “Let him ask in faith, with no doubting.”

Here, too, the answer is that we can know in general, but we cannot discern exactly the special motive; for example, whether we are asking from anger or from a zeal for justice. Hence in Mt (20:20) the petition of the sons of Zebedee was refused because, although they seemed to be asking to share in divine glory, their petition proceeded from vain glory or from elation.

692. Then (v.26c) he tells the way the Holy Spirit helps when he says: *but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too keep for words*. This statement seems to support the error of Arius and Macedonius, who held that the Holy Spirit is a creature and lower than the Father and Son. For intercession is the role of a lesser person. But if from the fact that he is said to intercede we understand that he is a creature subject to suffering and inferior to the Father, then from the fact that he intercedes with sighs, we should

suppose that he is a creature subject to suffering and not yet enjoying beatitude -- which no heretic has ever said. For a sigh proceeds from pain which pertains to wretchedness.

Consequently we must explain *intercedes [asks]*, i.e., makes us ask; as in Gen (22:12): “Now I know that you fear God,” i.e., I have made you know.

693. For the Holy Spirit makes us ask, inasmuch as he causes right desires in us, because to ask is to make desires known. Now right desires arise from the ardor of love, which he produces in us: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us” (Rom 5:5).

But with the Holy Spirit directing and inciting our heart, our desires can not but be profitable to us: “I am the Lord who teaches you to profit” (Is 48:17); therefore, he adds: *for us*.

But when we desire something strongly and pray for it longingly, we suffer its delay with pain and sighing; therefore, he adds: *with sighs*, which he causes in our heart, inasmuch as he inspires us to desire heavenly things which are postponed for the soul. These are the sighs or moanings of the dove, which the Holy Spirit causes in us: “Moaning like doves” (Nah 2:7).

They are *indescribable*: either because they concern an indescribable thing, namely, heavenly glory: “He heard things that cannot be told” (2 Cor 12:4); or because those movements of the heart cannot be sufficiently described, inasmuch as they proceed from the Holy Spirit: “Who can explain the wisdom of the heavens?” (Jb 38:37).

694. Then (v. 27) he shows the efficacy of the help with which the Holy Spirit aids us, saying: *He who searches the hearts*, i.e., God, who alone searches the heart: “Thou who tried the minds and hearts” (Ps 7:9).

But God is said to search hearts, not as though He investigates the secrets of the heart, but because he knows clearly the hidden things of the heart: “I will search Jerusalem with lamps” (Zeph 1:12).

God, I say, searches the hearts and *knows*, i.e., approves, *what is the mind of the Spirit*, i.e., what he makes us desire: “All my desires are known to you” (Ps 38:9).

But the desires which the Holy Spirit causes in the saints are accepted by God, *because the Spirit intercedes for the saints*, i.e., makes them ask *according to the will of God*, i.e., for things pleasing to God: The desire of the righteous ends in all good (Pr 11:23). As an example of this the Lord said to the Father: “Not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Mt 26:39).

Lecture 6

(28) [n. 695] We know that for those that love God all things work together for the good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

(29) [n. 701] For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

(30) [n. 707] And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

(31) [n. 710] What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us?

(32) [n. 712] He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how has not had also, with him, given us all things?

695. Having shown that the Holy Spirit helps us in the weaknesses of the present life in regard to fulfilling our desires [n. 686], the Apostle now shows how he helps us in relation to external events by directing them to our good.

First, he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it [v. 29; n. 701];

thirdly, he draws a conclusion [v. 35; n. 721].

696. In regard to the first there are two things to consider [cf. n. 699].

First, the greatness of the benefit conferred on us by the Holy Spirit, namely, that all things work together for good.

To realize this we should consider that whatever happens in the world, even if it be evil, accrues to the good of the universe; because, as Augustine says in *Enchiridion*: “God is so good that he would permit no evil, unless he were powerful enough to draw some good out of any evil.”

However, the evil does not always accrue to the good of that in which it is. Thus, the death of one animal accrues to the good of the universe, inasmuch as by the destruction of one thing something else begins to be, although it does not accrue to the good of that which ceases to be; because the good of the universe is willed by God according to itself and to this good all the parts of the universe are ordained.

697. The same seems to apply to the relationship of the noblest parts to the other parts, because the evil affecting the other parts is ordained to the good of the noblest parts. But whatever happens to the noblest parts is ordained only to their good, because his care for them is for their sake, whereas his care for the others is for the sake of the noblest: as a physician allows a malady in the foot that he might cure the head.

But the most excellent parts of the universe are God's saints to each of whom applies the word of Mt (25:23): "He will set him over all his goods." Therefore, whatever happens to them or to other things, it all accrues to the benefit of the former. This verifies the statement in Pr (11:20): "The fool will be servant to the wise," namely, because even the evil of sinners accrues to the good of the just. Hence, God is said to exercise a special care over the just, as it says in Ps 34 (v.15): "The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous," inasmuch as he takes care of them in such a way as to permit no evil to affect them without converting it to their good.

This is obvious in regard to the penal evils which they suffer, hence it says in the Gloss [of Lombard, col. 1488 D] that "because in their weakness humility is exercised, in affliction patience, in contradictions wisdom and in hatred good will." Hence it says in 1 Pt (3:14): "If you suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed."

It might be asked whether their sins also work together for their good.

Some say that sins are not included when he says, *all things*, because according to Augustine: "Sin is nothing and men become nothing, when they sin." But contrary to this a Gloss says: "God makes all things work together for their good to the extent that if they deviate and stray from the path, he even makes this contribute to their good." Hence it says in Ps 37 (v.24): "Though the righteous man fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord is the stay of his hand."

But according to this it seems that they always arise with greater love, because man's good consists in love in such a way that without it the Apostle says that he is nothing (1 Cor 13:2).

The answer is that man's good consists not only in the amount of love but especially in his perseverance until death, as it says in Mt (24:13): "He who endures to the end will be saved." Furthermore, because he has fallen, he rises more cautious and more humble; hence, the Gloss adds that this makes them progress, because they return to themselves more humble and wiser; for they fear extolling themselves or trusting in their powers to persevere.

699. Secondly, we consider the recipients of this benefit and see something on God's part and on man's part.

He indicates what is involved on man's part when he says: *for those who love God*. For the love of God is in us through the indwelling Spirit. But it is the Holy Spirit who directs us in the right path; hence it says in 1 Pt (3:13): "Who is there to harm you, if you are zealous for what is right?" and in Ps 119 (v. 165): "Great peace have they who love your law; nothing can make them stumble."

And this is reasonably so, because, as it says in Pr (8:17): "I love those who love me." To love is to will good to the beloved; but for God to will is to accomplish, for "whatever the Lord wills he does" (Ps. 135:6). Therefore, God turns all things to the good of those who love him.

700. Then he considers what is involved on God's part who, first of all, predestined believers from all eternity; secondly, calls them in time; thirdly, sanctifies them. He touches on these three things when he says: *Who are called according to his purpose*, i.e., the predestined, the called and the sanctified; "purpose" here refers to predestination which, according to Augustine, is the resolve to be merciful: "according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will"

(Eph 1:11). “Called” refers to calling: “He called him to follow him” (Is 41:2). “Saints” refers to sanctification: “I am the Lord who sanctifies you” (Lev 21:8). The Apostle says that he knows this, saying: *we know*: “He gave him knowledge of holy things” (Wis 10:10). This knowledge arises from experience and from considering the efficacy of love: “Love is as strong as death” (S of S 8:6) and of eternal predestination: “My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose” (Is 46:10).

701. Then (v.29) he proves what he had said with the following proof:

No one can harm those whom God advances; but God advances the predestined who love him. Therefore, nothing can harm them, but everything works for their good.

First, therefore, he proves the minor, namely, that God advances them;

secondly, the major [v. 31; n. 710].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he mentions things that refer to advancement of the saints from all eternity;

secondly, those that occur in time [v. 30; n. 707].

702. First, therefore, he presents two things, namely, foreknowledge and predestination when he says: *Those whom he foreknew he also predestined*.

Now some say that predestination is taken here for the preparation which occurs in time, during which God prepares the saints for grace. They say this in order to distinguish foreknowledge from predestination.

But closer examination shows that both are eternal and that they differ in notion. For, as was stated above, predestination implies the mental preordaining of things which a person intends to do. But from all eternity God has predestined the benefits which he intends to give his saints. Hence, predestination is eternal. But foreknowledge differs

conceptually from predestination; because foreknowledge implies only the knowledge of future things, whereas predestination implies causality in regard to them. Consequently, God has foreknowledge even of sins, but predestination bears on salutary goods. Hence The Apostle says in Eph (1:5): “Predestined according to the purpose of his will, to the praise and glorious grace which he freely bestowed.”

703. Regarding the order between foreknowledge and predestination some say that foreknowledge of good and of evil merits is the reason for predestination and reprobation, in the sense that God predestines certain ones, because he foresees that they will act well and believe in Christ. According to this the present text reads: “Those whom he foreknew to be conformed to the image of his Son, he also predestined.”

This interpretation would be reasonable, if predestination were restricted to eternal life which is bestowed for merits. But under predestination falls every salutary benefit prepared for man from all eternity by God; hence all the benefits he confers on us in time he prepared for us from all eternity. Hence, to claim that some merit on our part is presupposed, the foreknowledge of which is the reason for predestination, is nothing less than to claim that grace is given because of our merits, and that the source of our good works is from us and their consummation from God.

Hence, it is more suitable to interpret the present text as stating that those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. Then this conformity is not the reason for predestination, but its terminus or effect. For the Apostle says: “He destined us to be his adopted sons through Jesus Christ” (Eph 1:5).

704. For the adoption as sons is nothing more than that conformity, because a person adopted into the sonship of God is conformed to his true Son.

First, in the right to the inheritance, as was stated above (v. 17): If sons, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.” Secondly, in sharing his splendor. For he is begotten of the Father as the splendor of his glory (Heb 1:3). Hence by enlightening the saints with the light of wisdom and grace, he makes them be conformed to himself.

705. The phrase, *to the image of his Son*, can be interpreted in two ways: in one way so that it means: conformed to the image of his Son, who is an image: “He is the image of the invisible God” (Col 1:15). In another way so that the sense is this: He predestined us to be conformed to his Son in the fact that we bear his image: “Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven” (1 Cor 15:49).

He says, *those whom he foreknew he also predestined* not because he predestines all the foreknown, but because he could not predestine them, unless he foreknew them: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you” (Jer 1:5).

706. Then he indicates what follows from this predestination, when he says: *in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren.*

For just as God willed to communicate His natural goodness to others by imparting to them a likeness of his goodness, so that he is not only good but the author of good things, so the Son of God willed to communicate to others conformity to his sonship, so that he would not only be the Son but the first-born among sons. Thus, he who is the only-begotten through an eternal origin, as it says in Jn (1:18): “The only Son who is in the bosom of the Father,” is the first-born among many brethren by the bestowal of grace: “He is the first-born of the dead, and ruler of kings on earth” (Rev 1:5).

Therefore, Christ has us as brothers, both because he communicated to us a likeness of his sonship and because he assumed the likeness of our nature, as it says in Heb (2:17): “He had to be made like his brethren in every respect.”

707. Then (v. 30) he mentions what happens on the part of the saint as a consequence of predestination.

First, he mentions the call, when he says: *Those whom he predestined he also called*. For predestination cannot be voided: “The Lord of hosts has sworn, ‘As I have planned, so shall it be, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand’ (Is 14:24).

Predestination begins to be carried out with the person’s being called. This call is twofold: one is external and is made by the mouth of a preacher: “She has sent out her maids to call from the highest places” (Pr 9:3). In this way God called Peter and Andrew, as it says in Mt (4:18). The other call is internal and is nothing less than an impulse of the mind whereby a man’s heart is moved by God to assent to the things of faith or of virtue: “Who stirred up one from the east and called him to follow?” (Is 41:2).

This call is necessary, because our heart would not turn itself to God, unless God himself drew us to him: “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him” (Jn 6:44); “Turn us to thyself, O Lord, that we may be turned” (Lam 5:21). Furthermore, this call is efficacious in the predestined, because they assent to the call: “Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me” (Jn 6:45).

708. Hence secondly, he mentions justification when he says: *those whom he called he also justified* by infusing grace: “They are justified by his grace as a gift” (Rom 3:24).

Although this justification is frustrated in certain persons, because they do not persevere to the end, in the predestined it is never frustrated.

709. Thirdly, he mentions glorification, when he adds: and those he also glorified and this in two ways, namely, by growth in virtue and grace and by exaltation to glory: “In all things, O Lord, thou hast exalted and glorified thy people” (Wis 19:22).

He uses the past for the future, either because the future is certain, or because what is future in some is already fulfilled in others.

710. Then (v. 31) he clarifies the major premise, namely, that nothing can harm those advanced by God:

first, he shows that they cannot suffer any loss through the evil of punishment; secondly, nor through the evil of guilt [v. 33; n. 715].

711. The evil of punishment is twofold: one consists in the imposition of evils, the other in the removal of good things.

First he shows that those who are advanced by God do not suffer harm from the efforts of persecutors, saying: *What then shall we say?* As if to say: since God bestows so many good things on his elect, what can be said against this, so as to nullify it? As if to say: Nothing. “No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel, can avail against the Lord” (Pr 21:30). Or: *What shall we say?* For one is struck with amazement, when he considers these things: “I considered thy works and became terrified” (Hab 3:2). Or: *What shall we say to this?* i.e., what return could we make to God for such great blessings: “What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me” (Ps 116:12).

Then he continues, *If God is for us* by predestining, calling, justifying and glorifying, *who is against us*, i.e., successfully? “Let us stand up together, who is my

adversary?” (Is 50:8); “Place me next to you, and let anyone’s hand fight against me” (Jb 17:3).

712. Secondly, he shows that God’s holy ones cannot suffer loss by the removal of good things, saying: *He who did not spare his own Son*.

But whereas he spoke earlier about adopted sons, he separates this Son from all others, saying: *his own Son*, i.e., not adopted, as heretics pretend, but natural and co-eternal: “That we may be in his true son, Jesus Christ” (1 Jn 5:20) of whom the Father says in Mt (3:17): “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

713. He says, *did not spare*, to indicate that he did not exempt him from punishment. For there was no guilt in him to forgive: “He who spares the rod hates his son” (Pr 13:24).

However, God the Father did not spare his Son, as though to add something to him who is in all things perfect God; rather he subjected him to the passion for our benefit. And this is what he adds: *but gave him up for us all*, i.e., in expiation for our sins: “He was put to death for our trespasses” (Rom 3:25); “The Lord put on him the iniquity of us all” (Is 53:6).

God the Father gave him up to death by appointing him to become incarnate and suffer and by inspiring his human will with such love that he would willingly undergo the passion. Hence he is said to have given himself over: “He gave himself up for us” (Eph 5:2). Judas, too, and the Jews gave him up, as was explained at the end of ch. 4.

714. It should be noted that in saying, *He did not spare his own Son*, it is as though he were saying: He not only exposed other holy men to tribulation for their

salvation: “I have hewn them by the prophets” (Hos 6:5); “If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation” (2 Cor 1:6), but even his own Son.

But in the Son of God all things exist as in their primordial and preoperative cause: “He is before all things and in him all things hold together” (Col 1:17). Therefore, when he was given up for us, all things were given to us; hence he adds: *how has not had also, with him, given us all things*, the highest things, namely, the divine persons to enjoy, rational spirits to live with, all lower things to use, not only prosperity but adversity as well: “All are yours and you are Christ’s and Christ is God’s” (1 Cor 3:23). Hence, it is clear that, as it says in Ps 34 (v.9): “Those who fear him have no want.”

Lecture 7

(33) [n. 715] Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies;

(34) who is to condemn? [n. 718] Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us?

(35) [n. 721] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

(36) [n. 724] As it is written, “For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

(37) [n. 725] No, in all these things we overcome through him who loved us.

(38) [n. 731] For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

715. After showing that the holy ones God advances can suffer no loss, as though from the evil of punishment [n. 710], the Apostle now shows that they can suffer no loss as though from the evil of guilt.

First, he presents his proposition;

secondly, he excludes an opposite view [v. 34; n. 718].

In regard to the first it should be noted that a person suffers injury for guilt from two sources: first, from an accusation; secondly, from the judge who condemns [n. 717].

First, therefore, he shows that no accusation can harm God's holy ones, and this by reason of divine election. For whoever chooses a person seems by that very fact to approve him. But the saints are chosen by God: "He chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy" (Eph 1:4). On the other hand, whoever accuses, disapproves of the one accused. Therefore he says: *Who shall bring any charge*, i.e., successfully, *against the elect*, i.e., against those God has chosen to be saints; hence it says in Rev (12:10): "For the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down."

717. Secondly, he shows that no accusation can be harmful to the saints.

He shows this by referring to another of God's benefits, namely, that God justifies us. This benefit is mentioned when he says: *It is God who justifies us*, in keeping with what he had said above (v.30): "Those whom he called he also justified"; "You were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 6:11)

But condemnation finds a place against the unjust: *Who, then, is to condemn* those justified by God: "When he is quiet, who can condemn" (Jb 34:29).

718. Then (v. 34b) he excludes an opposite view. For someone could fear that a person might be accused by Jesus Christ as a violator of Christ's commandment in the same way as the Lord says of Moses: "It is Moses who accuses you, on whom you set your hope" (Jn 5:45); and also that he might be condemned by him, for "He is the one ordained by God to judge the living and the dead" (Ac 10:42). Furthermore, he is immune to sin: "Who did no sin" (1 Pt 2:22); consequently, he seems qualified to accuse and condemn, as it says in Jn (8:7): "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her."

And so he says, *Christ Jesus*. As if to say: Will Christ Jesus make accusations against God's elect or even condemn them? And he says, not so; because even according to his human nature he confers great benefits on the saints, just as he also does according to his divinity.

719. Then he mentions four benefits from his humanity.

First, from his death, when he says: *he died*, namely, for our salvation: "For Christ also died for sins once for all" (1 Pt 3:18).

Secondly, from his resurrection, through which he vivifies us both with spiritual life now and with bodily life later. Hence he adds: *yes, who rose from the dead*. He says, *yes*, because it is preferable to commemorate him now for the power of his resurrection and for the weakness of his passion: "He was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God" (2 Cor 13:4).

Thirdly, from his sitting with the Father when he says: *who is at the right hand of God*, i.e., equal to God the Father according to the divine nature and recipient of his choicest blessings according to his human nature. And this is also for our glory because,

as it says in Eph (2:6): “He made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

For inasmuch as we are his members, in him we sit with God the Father: “He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne” (Rev 3:21).

Fourthly, from his intercession when he says: *who indeed intercedes for us* as our advocate: “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ” (1 Jn 2:1). But an advocate’s duty is not to accuse or condemn, but to repel an accuser and prevent condemnation.

720. Christ is said to intercede for us in two ways.

In one way by praying for us, as it says in Jn (17:20): “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word.” But now his intercession for us is his will that we be saved: “Father, I desire that they also may be with me where I am” (Jn 17:24).

In another way he intercedes by presenting to his Father’s gaze the human nature assumed for us and the mysteries celebrated in it: “He entered into heaven itself to appear in the presence of God on our behalf” (Heb 9:24).

721. Then he draws the conclusion [n. 695].

But because this conclusion does not seem credible to the inexperienced, he presents it in the form of a question. Hence he does three things:

first, he presents the question;

secondly, he shows the need for this question [v. 36; n. 724];

thirdly, he presents the solution [n. 725].

722. This question can be derived in two ways from the foregoing.

One way is this: So many and such powerful benefits have been conferred on us by God that no one can count them. Furthermore, they all tend toward one thing, namely, “that we be rooted and grounded in love” (Eph 3:17). *Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ?* i.e., the love by which we love Christ and neighbor as he commanded: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another” (Jn 13:34).

Another way is this: God bestows great benefits on his holy ones, and when we consider them, such love of Christ burns in our hearts that nothing can quench it: “Many waters cannot quench love” (S of S 8:7).

723. He mentions the evils which might induce one to abandon love of Christ.

And first, those that refer to life; secondly, the one which refers to death.

In regard to those which threaten us in the course of our lives, he mentions present evils and evils to come. In regard to present evils he mentions evils to be endured; secondly, the loss of good things.

Evils to be endured can be considered in two ways.

In one way as they are present in the sufferer who is afflicted by them in two ways: first, externally in the body. Hence he says: *tribulation*. This word is related to “tribulus,” a prickly herb: “Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you” (Gen 3:18). But the just are not overcome by them: “Many are the tribulations of the just, and the Lord frees them from all of these” (Ps 34:19). A person is also afflicted by them internally in the form of mental anxiety, when he does not know where to go or which way to turn. In regard to this he says: *or distress*: “I am hemmed in on every side, and I do not know what to choose” (Dan 13:21).

Again such evils can be considered as they are present in the one inflicting them. In this respect he says: *or persecution*, For although persecution in the strict sense would imply pursuit of someone to make him flee: “If they persecute you in one city, flee to another” (Mt 10:23), yet in a general sense it can mean the infliction of any injury. Then he mentions the evils which consist in the removal of good things necessary for life, namely, food and clothing: “If we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content” (1 Tim 6:8). In regard to the removal of food he says: *or famine*; of clothing: *or nakedness*: “To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad” (1 Cor 4:11).

In regard to future evils he adds: *or peril*, threatening at any moment: “In danger from rivers, danger from robbers...” (2 Cor 11:26).

In regard to death he says: *or sword*: “They were killed with the sword” (Heb 11:37).

724. Then (v. 36) he shows the importance of this question, inasmuch as he says that all these things lie at hand to be suffered by the saints for the love of Christ.

And he quotes the words of the Psalmist as though spoken by the martyrs. These words mention, first of all, the cause of the suffering: “For it is not the suffering but the cause that makes the martyr,” as Augustine says.²⁶ Hence he says: *for thy sake*: “He who loses his life for my sake shall find it” (Mt 10:39); “Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief; yet if one suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed” (1 Pt 4:15). One suffers for Christ by suffering not only for the faith of Christ but for any righteous deed done for the love of Christ: “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake” (Mt 5:10).

²⁶ Augustine, *Ennarationes in Ps. 34*, sermon 2, n. 13.

Secondly, he mentions the severity of the suffering when he says: *we are being killed*, i.e., handed over to death: “For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed” (Est 7:4).

Thirdly, the duration of the persecution when he says: *all the day long*, i.e., during the whole period of life; “While we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus’ sake”(2 Cor 4:11).

Fourthly, the persecutor’s readiness to kill when he says: *we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered*, i.e., marked to be killed in the meat market. So, too, the saints are intentionally killed: “The hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God” (Jn 16:2); “Feed the flock doomed to slaughter” (Zech 11:4).

725. Then (v. 37) he answers the question.

First he gives the answer saying: *No, in all these things*, namely, the evils mentioned above, *we overcome*, as long as we preserve our love unsullied: “In his arduous contest she gave him the victory” (Wis 10:12).

But we do not succeed by our own strength but through Christ’s help; hence he adds: *through him who loved us*, i.e., on account of his help or on account of the affection we have for him; “not as though we first loved him, but because he first loved us” (1 Jn 4:19); “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 15:57).

726. Secondly, he clarifies the solution, showing that the saints’ love is insuperable.

First he shows that it cannot be separated by creatures that exist;
secondly, nor by creatures that do not exist but could [v. 39b; n. 733].

727. In regard to the first he does two things.

First he mentions things that exist in man, saying: *I am sure that neither death*, which is the first among things we fear, *nor life*, which is first among things we desire, can separate us from the love of God: “If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord” (Rom 14:8).

In these two are included all the ones previously mentioned. For six evils previously mentioned refer to life; but one, namely, the sword, refers to death.

728. Then he mentions things outside of man. Among these are, first, spiritual creatures; hence he says: *nor angels*, i.e., the lower ones assigned to guard individual men: “He will give his angels charge of thee” (Ps 91:11). *Nor principalities*, i.e., those assigned to guard nations: “Now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I am through with him, the prince of Greece will come. And there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael” (Dan 10:20). He adds: *nor powers*, which is the highest order of ministering angels: “The powers of heaven will be shaken” (Lk 21:26).

This can be understood in two ways: in one way of wicked angels, who struggle against the saints: “Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers” (Eph 4:12). In another way it can refer to the good. Here Chrysostom in his book *On Compunction of Heart* says that the Apostle said this, not that the angels would at some time try to separate him from Christ; rather, these impossible things would be more possible, so to speak, than for him to be separated from the love of Christ. He speaks this way to show how great in him is the strength of divine love, and to lay everything out in the open. For this is the way of lovers, that they cannot hide their love

in silence but assert and bare it to their friends and to the beloved, and they cannot confine the flames within their heart. They speak of them frequently, so that by constantly recounting their love they may gain some relief, some cooling of the tremendous burning within them. In just this way blessed [Paul] here acts as an outstanding lover of Christ: he gathers up in one sentence all things that are and that were, everything that can be and even those that cannot. It is similar to what is said in Galatians chapter 1(:8), “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach to you another gospel than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”

729. Then he mentions visible creatures, and he sets out two distinctions.

First according to time, by which they are distinguished according to present and future. Hence he says: *nor things present*, whether they cause pain or pleasure: “We look not to the things that are seen” (2 Cor 4:18). Then he adds: *nor things to come*. Whether we fear them or desire them, they cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Hence it says in Ac (21:13): “For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

730. Then he distinguishes visible creatures on the basis of magnitude: first he touches on magnitude of strength when he says: *nor power*, i.e., no strong creature, such as a raging fire or sea, can separate me from the love of Christ, because “love is as strong as death” (S of S 8:6).

731. Secondly, he mentions magnitude of dimension, describing them by what properly belongs to bodies, namely height and depth.

Hence he says: *nor height*, from which someone might threaten to cast me headlong, as in Lk (4:29): “They led Jesus to the brow of the hill, that they might throw

him down headlong”; *nor depth*, in which someone might submerge me: “I sink in deep mire” (Ps 69:2).

These three things can also be referred to the ways a person could turn a man away from God: in one way by the force of power: but as it says in 1 Sam (2:2): “No one is strong as our God.” Secondly, by the lofty height of one’s authority; but “God is the highest of the kings of the earth” (Ps. 89:27). Thirdly, by the depth of one’s wisdom; but God’s knowledge is deeper: “Deeper than Sheol -- what can you know?” (Jb 11:8).

732. These two, height and depth, can be referred to adversity and prosperity, according to 2 Cor (6:7): “With the weapons of righteousness for the right and for the left.”

733. With regard to creatures which do not exist but could, he says: *nor anything else in all creation*. According to Chrysostom, he says this about the things that are not, as though all things that are do not suffice, but he must so to speak challenge to battle even the things that are not.

None of them, he says, *will be able to separate us from the love of God*: “Love never falls away” (1 Cor 13:8). This love of God is *in Christ Jesus our Lord*, because it was given to us through him, inasmuch as he gave it to us through the Holy Spirit: “I have come to cast fire on the earth and what will I but that it be kindled” (Lk 12:49).

734. But since it says in Ec (9:1): “A man does not know whether he is worthy of love or hatred, but all things are kept uncertain,” why does the Apostle say that he is certain that nothing can separate him from the love of God?

One can answer that the Apostle is not speaking of himself personally but is spokesman for all the predestined, about whom he declares that nothing can separate

them from the love of God because of the certainty of predestination. This certainty can be caused by the power of charity which, considering its nature, cannot be separated from certain persons, since it loves God above all things. Hence if a person falls away from love, it is not on account of a shortcoming in this virtue but on account of a defect in one's free choice.

But if Paul is speaking for himself, he could be certain of it only by a revelation, because it was said to him: "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Cor 12:9). For as to the outcome of free choice he says elsewhere: "Lest while speaking to others, I myself become a castaway" (1 Cor 9:27).

Chapter 9

Lecture 1

- (1) I am speaking the truth in Christ, I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit,**
- (2) that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.**
- (3) For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen by race.**
- (4) They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption as children, the glory, the covenant, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises;**
- (5) to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is over all things, God blessed for ever. Amen.**

735. Having shown the need [n. 97] and power [n. 381] of grace, the Apostle begins to discuss the origin of grace and ask whether it is conferred solely by God's choice or from the merits of previous works. He raises this question because the Jews, seemingly called to God's special protection, had fallen from grace; whereas the Gentiles, previously alienated from God, had been admitted to it.

First, therefore, he discusses the election of the Gentiles;
secondly, the fall of the Jews, in chapter 10 [n. 813].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he recounts the greatness of the Jews;

secondly, he shows how the Gentiles have been drawn into that greatness [v. 6; n.

748].

In regard to the first, he does two things:

first the Apostle shows his affection for the Jewish people, lest anything he had said or was about to say against them should seem to proceed from hatred;

second, he shows their dignity [v. 4; n. 742].

Concerning the first he does two things.

First he confirms what he was about to say;

second, he demonstrates his affection [v. 2; n. 737].

736. Concerning the first he does two things.

First, he confirms what he is about to say with a simple assertion: *I am speaking the truth*, which especially befits the preacher who is a witness to the truth: “My mouth will utter truth” (Pr 8:7); “Love truth and peace” (Zech 8:19).

And because a person sometimes mixes falsehood with the truth, he excludes this when he adds: *I am not lying*: “Putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth to this neighbor” (Eph 4:25).

Secondly, he confirms what he is about to say with an oath, which is a confirmation supported by the testimony of infallible truth. Such are the witnesses of the saints: first, God Himself, as it say in Job 16:19: “My witness is in heaven.” Hence Paul says, *in Christ*, i.e., through Jesus Christ Who is the truth without falsehood: “The Son of God whom we preached among you was not Yes and No” (2 Cor 1:19). Secondly, the infallible witness of the saints is their conscience; hence he adds: *my conscience bears me witness*: “Our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience” (2 Cor 1:12). But because one’s conscience is sometimes erroneous unless it is corrected by the Holy Spirit he adds: *in the Holy Spirit*: “The Spirit himself bears witness to our spirit” (Rom 8:16).

737. Then (v. 2) he shows his affection for the Jews by the pain he suffered from their fall.

First, he describes this pain;

secondly, he mentions a sign of it [v. 3; n. 739].

738. He emphasizes how much pain he has suffered in three ways.

First by its magnitude: *I have great sorrow*, because it concerns a great evil, namely, the exclusion of such a great people: “Vast as the sea is your ruin” (Lam 2:13).

But this seems to conflict with Sir (30:22) where it says: “Give not up your soul to sadness,” which seems to agree with the opinion of the Stoics, who admitted no sadness at all in the soul of a wise man. For since sadness is a reaction to a present evil, it cannot exist in a wise man to whom no evil is present. For they supposed that virtue was the only good and sin the only evil.

But this opinion is refuted in two ways. First, because bodily defect, although they are not such evils as make men evil, are nevertheless among the evils which nature abhors. Hence, even the Lord is described as saddened by them: “My soul is sorrowful, even to death” (Mt 26:38).

Secondly, since charity requires that a person love his neighbor as himself, it is laudable for a wise man to grieve over a son of his neighbor as over his own. Hence the Apostle says: “I fear that I May have to mourn over many of those who sinned” (2 Cor 12:2).

Thus, worldly sadness, which springs from love of the world, works death and is rejected, but sadness which is godly and springs from divine love works salvation, as it says in 2 Cor 7:10. Such was Paul’s sadness.

Secondly, he emphasizes his grief by its duration, when he says: *and unceasing anguish*; not that he never ceased to grieve actually, but habitually: “That I might weep day and night for the slain of my people” (Jer 9:1).

Thirdly, he emphasizes how real it was when he says: *in my heart*; for it was not superficial but rooted in the heart: “My eyes are spent in weeping.... My heart is poured out in grief” (Lam 2:11).

739. Then (v. 3) he presents the sign of his sadness, saying: *For I, who am so fervent in the love of Christ, as was shown above, could wish that I myself were accursed [anathema]*.

Here it should be noted that “anathema” is a Greek word formed by combining “ana” which means “above” and “thesis” which means “placing,” so that something placed above is said to be anathema. For when they found among the spoils of war something they did not wish men to use, they hung it in the temple. From this, the custom arose that things but off from the common use of men were said to be “anathema”; hence, it says in Jos 6:17: “Let this city be an anathema, and all things that are in it, to the Lord.”

740. He says, therefore: *I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ*, i.e., separated from Him.

One is separated from Christ in two ways: in one way by a sin, through which one is separated from the love of Christ for not obeying His commandment: “If you love me, keep my commandments” (Jn 14:15) But the Apostle could not wish to be separated from Christ in this way for any reason, as he explained in c. 8. For this is against the order of charity, by which a person is bound to love God above all things and his own salvation more than that of others. So he does not say “I wish” but “I could wish” during his days

of unbelief. But according to this explanation the Apostle is not saying anything great, because in those days he was willing to be separated from Christ even for himself.

Hence, a Gloss explains that he says, *I have great sorrow*, referring to the sorrow with which he grieved over his past state of sin, during which he willed to be separated from Christ.

In another way one can be separated from Christ, i.e., from the fruition of Christ possessed in glory.

This is the way the Apostle wished to be separated from Christ, for the salvation of the Gentiles, not to mention the conversion of the Jews. For he says in Phil (1:23): “My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.” This he now says: *I could wish*, namely, if it were possible, *to be anathema*, i.e., separated from glory either absolutely or temporarily from Christ’s honor, which would be enhanced by the conversion of the Jews, as it was in Pr 14:28: “In the multitude of the people is the dignity of the king.” Hence, Chrysostom says: “Love so ruled his mind that to please Christ he would not only sacrifice being with Christ, which he deemed more desirable than anything else, but also the kingdom of heaven, which would be the reward of his labor for Christ.”

741. The cause of this attitude is shown when he says: *for the sake of my brethren*. Hence Sir (25:1) says: “Three things are approved before God and men: the concord of brethren, the love of neighbors, and a wife and husband who live in harmony.” Then to show that he was not referring to those who were his spiritual brethren in Christ, he adds: *who are my kinsmen by race*: “Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I” (I Cor 11:22).

742. Then (v. 4) he shows the greatness of the Jews in order that his sadness appear reasonable on account of the ancient dignity of a deteriorating people (for it is a weightier evil to lose greatness than never to have possessed it) and not as though it arose solely from worldly love.

743. But he shows their greatness in three ways.

First, from their face when he says: *They are Israelites*, i.e., descending from the stock of Jacob who was called Israel (Gen 32:28). This pertains to their greatness, for it says in Dt (4:7): “Neither is there any nation so great as to have their gods coming to them...”

744. Secondly, he shows the greatness of that race from God’s blessings: first, the spiritual blessings, one of which refers to the present: *to them belongs the sonship*: hence it says in Ex (4:22): “Israel is my son, my firstborn.” This refers to the spiritual men who arose among that people: but as to worldly men he stated above (8:15) that they received the spirit of slavery in fear. Another spiritual blessings refers to the future when he says: *the glory*, namely, of the sons of God promised to them. A reference to this is found in Ex (40:32): “The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.”

Then he sets out other, figural benefits, of which there were figures of present spiritual benefit. The first of these is the covenant, i.e., the pact of circumcision given to Abraham, as is recorded in Gen c. 17, although this could be referred to the new covenant preached first to the Jews. Hence, the Lord Himself said: “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mt 15:24); and Jer (31:31): “I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel.” The second is the Law given through Moses; hence, he continues: *the giving of the law*: “Moses commanded a law to us” (Sir 24:33). The third is

divine worship when he says: *the worship* with which they served God, when all the other nations were serving idols: “But now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen” (Is 44:1).

Then he mentions the blessing which pertains to future glory when he says: *and the promises*. For the promises made in the Old Testament and fulfilled by Christ seem made especially to the Jews; hence he says below (15:8): “I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs.” Now many other promises were made to them about earthly goods, as is recorded in Lev (c. 26) and Dt (c. 18), but by these temporal goods spiritual [goods] were prefigured.

745. Third he describes the Jews’ dignity by their origin, when he says: *to them belong the Patriarchs*, because they were begotten according to the flesh by those ancestors who were especially acceptable to God: “I love your fathers and chose their descendants after them” (Dt 4:37); “Like the first fruit on the fig tree I saw their fathers” (Hos 9:1).

746. Fourthly, he shows their greatness from the a descendant when he says: *and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ* Who says: “Salvation is from the Jews” (Jn 4:22).

747. Then to prevent this from being underestimated he shows the greatness of Christ, saying: *Who is God over all, blessed for ever. Amen*: “This is the true God and eternal life” (I Jn 5:20).

In these words four heresies are refuted: first, Manichean, which held that Christ had not a true but imaginary body. This is refuted when he says, *according to the flesh*.

For He has true flesh, as it says in Lk (24:39): “A spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

Secondly, Valentinus’ heresy which claims that Christ’s body was not taken from the human line but brought from heaven. This is excluded when he says that Christ was from the Jews *according to the flesh*, in keeping with Mt (1:1): “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

Thirdly, the heresy of Nestorius according to whom the Son of man was other than the Son of God. Against this the Apostle says here that He is from *the patriarchs* according to the flesh Who is God over all.

Fourthly, the Arian heresy, which claimed that Christ was less than the Father and created from nothing. Against the first he says that *He is over all*; against the second that *He is blessed for ever*. For it is true of God alone that His goodness remains forever.

Lecture 2

(6) [n. 748] But it is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,

(7) and not all are children of Abraham because they are his descendants; [n. 751]

but “Through Isaac shall your descendants be named.”

(8) [n. 753] This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are reckoned as descendants.

(9) [n. 754] For this is what the promise said, “About this time I will return and Sarah shall have a son.”

(10) [n. 755] And not only so, but also when Rebecca had conceived of one man, our forefather Isaac,

(11) [n. 757] though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad, in order that God's purpose of election might continue, [n. 760] not because of works but because of his call,

(12) she was told, “The elder will serve the younger.”

(13) [n. 762] As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

748. After asserting the greatness of the Jews [n. 735], the Apostle now shows that it did not refer to those who descended according to the flesh from the ancient patriarchs but to the spiritual progeny chosen by God.

First, he shows that this greatness arises from God's selection;

secondly, that this selection applies generally to Jew and Gentiles [v. 24; n. 796].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows how from God's choice men obtain spiritual greatness;

secondly, he raises a question about the justice of God's choice [v. 14; n. 765].

In regard to the first he does two things:

First, he states his proposition;

secondly shows it [v. 7b; n. 751].

Concerning the first, he does two things.

First he sets out the firmness of the divine election;

second, he shows in whom it is accomplished [v. 6b; n. 750].

749. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that the promises, the adoption of sons, and glory referred to people whose fall is to me a source of great sadness and unceasing sorrow. *But it is not as though the word of God had failed*, i.e., was frustrated, because although it has found no place in those who had fallen, it has a place in others: "The word that goes forth from my mouth shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose" (Is 55:11); "For ever, O Lord, thy word is firmly fixed" (Ps 119:89).

750. Then (v. 6b) he shows how and in whom God's word had failed.

In regard to this it should be noted that the Jews boasted mainly of two things, namely, Abraham, who first received the pact of circumcision from God (Gen c.17) and Jacob of Israel, all of whom descendants were counted as God's people. This was not true of Isaac, for the descendants of his son Esau did not belong to God's people.

Hence the Apostle states his proposition: first, by a comparison with Jacob: *For not all who are descended from Israel* i.e., from Jacob according to the flesh, *are true Israelites*, to whom God's promises belong, but those who are upright and see God by faith: "Fear not, Jacob, and thus most righteous whom I have chosen" (Is 44:2). Hence the Lord also said to Nathanael: "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile" (Jn 1:47). Now this name, "Israel," had been put on Jacob by an angel (Gen c.32).

Secondly, he states the same things by comparison with Abraham saying: *and not all are children of Abraham because they are his descendants*, i.e., are not the spiritual sons of Abraham to whom God promised the blessings, but only those who imitate his faith and works: "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did" (Jn 8:40).

751. Then (v. 7b) he clarifies his statement:

first, in regard to Abraham;

secondly, in regard to Jacob [v. 10; n. 755].

752. In regard to the first he does three things: first, he cites a text from Scripture, saying: *through Isaac shall your descendants be named*. This the Lord said to Abraham, as it says in Gen (c. 21), when describing the expulsion of Ishmael.

As if to say: not all who were born from Abraham according to the flesh belong to that seed to whom the promises were made, but those who are like Isaac.

753. Then (v. 8) he explains the quoted text so far as it applies to his thesis.

To understand this it should be noted that the Apostle says in Gal (4:22):

"Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave," namely, Ishmael, "was born according to the flesh," because he was born according to the law and custom of the flesh from a young woman: "the son of the free woman," namely, Isaac, "through promise" and not according to the flesh, i.e., not according to the law and custom of the flesh, because he was born from a sterile, old woman, as it says in Gen (c.18); although he was born according to the flesh, i.e., according to the substance of the flesh he received from his parents.

From this the Apostle decides that those adopted into the sonship of God are not *the sons of the flesh*, i.e., not because they are the bodily descendants of Abraham, *but the children of the promise are descendants*, i.e., those who are made sons of Abraham because they imitate his faith, as it says in Mt (3:9): "God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham." Thus, Ishmael, born according to the flesh was not numbered among the seed, but Isaac born by the promise was.

Thirdly, (v.9) he proves that his explanation is valid, when he says that the children of the promise are the ones signified by Isaac, namely, because Isaac was born as the result of a promise.

Hence he says: *For this is what the promise said*. Indeed, this is the statement the angel or the Lord through an angel made to Abraham: *About this time I will return*, by which the time of grace is signified: "When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son" (Gal 4:4) *and Sarah shall have a son* on account of the promise. Hence, it says in Gal (4:5): "So that we might receive adoption of sons."

755. Then (v. 10) he clarifies his thesis so far as it concerns Jacob.

First he states his intention;

secondly, he clarifies his position [v. 11; n. 757].

756. First, therefore, he says: *And not only she*, namely, Sarah, begot a son about whom the promise was made, *but also Rebecca*, having in her womb two sons, one of whom pertained to the promise and the other only to the flesh, *had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac*. For it says in Gen (25:21): "Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren, and the Lord gave her conception, but the children struggled together within her."

And it should be noted that the Apostle cites this against the Jews who supposed that they would obtain righteousness through the merits of their forefathers, which is contrary to what is said about just men, namely, that "they will deliver neither sons nor daughters but they alone will be delivered" (Ez 14:18). This is why John said to the Jews: "Do not presume to say, 'We have Abraham as our father'" (Mt 3:9). Paul, therefore,

counters this opinion by reminding them that of Abraham's children one was chosen and the other rejected.

But he could have ascribed this difference to the mothers, because Ishmael was born of a slave and Isaac of a free woman, or to the changed meriting state of the father; because while uncircumcised he begot Ishmael but circumcised he begot Isaac. To exclude any such subterfuge, therefore, he cites the case where one is chosen and the other rejected, even though both were born of the same father and the same mother at the same time and, indeed, from one coition.

757. Then (v. 11) he clarifies his thesis: first,
by the authority of Gen (c. 28);
secondly, by a text from the prophet Malachi (v. 13).

758. In regard to the first he does three things: first, he indicates the time of the promise and says that *when they were not yet born*, one of the sons of Rebecca was set over the other in virtue of the promise.

And just as his previous statement excluded the opinion of the Jews trusting in the merits of their forefathers, so this statement counters the error of the Manicheans who claimed that a person's life and death were controlled by the constellation under which he was born, against what is said in Jer (10:2) "Be not afraid of the signs of heaven which the heathens fear."

Then when he continues: *though they had done nothing either good or bad*, the Pelagian error is refuted which says that grace is given according to one's preceding merits, even though it says in Tit (3:5): "He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy."

Both of these are shown false by the fact that before birth and before doing anything one of Rebecca's sons is preferred to the other.

This also corrects Origen's error who supposed that men's souls were created when the angels were, and that they merited different lives depending on the merits they earned for the good or evil they had done there. This could not be true in the light of what is stated here, namely that *they had done nothing either good or bad*. Against this also is Job (38:7): "Where were you when the morning stars praised me together and all the sons of God made joyful melody?" For according to Origen's error, he could have answered: I was among those joyful sons of God.

759. Secondly, he shows what could be understood from that promise by which one of the twins in the womb was chosen over the other. He says: *In order that God's purpose*, by which one would be greater than the other, *might continue*, i.e., be made firm: and this not by reason of merits but *of election* i.e., inasmuch as God himself spontaneously forechose one over the other, not because he was holy but in order that he be holy, as it says in Eph (1:4): "He chose us in himself before the foundation of the world that we should be holy." But this is a decree of predestination about which the same text says: "Predestined according to the purpose of his will" (Eph 1:15).

760. Thirdly, he sets down the promise, saying, *not because of works*, for no works preceded it, as has been said: *but because of his call*, i.e., through the grace of God calling, for *she was told*, i.e., Rebecca, *that the elder*, i.e., Esau, *will serve the younger*, i.e., Jacob. This can be understood in three ways.

761. In one way, as referring to the persons involved, and then Esau is understood to have served Jacob, not directly but indirectly, inasmuch as the persecution he launched

against him ended in Jacob's benefit, as it says in Pr (11:29): "The fool will serve the wise."

Secondly, it can be referred to the people who sprang from each, because the Edomites were once subject to the Israelites, as it says in Ps 60 (v.8); "Upon Edom I cast my shoe." This seems to fit Gen (25:23): "The nations are in your womb; the one shall be stronger than the other."

Thirdly, it can be taken figuratively so that by the elder is understood the Jewish people, who were the first to receive the adoption of sons, in accord with Ex 4:22, "Israel is my firstborn son," and by the younger is understood the Gentiles, who were called to the Father later and were signified by the prodigal son (Lk c. 15).

The elder people in this case serve the younger, inasmuch as the Jews are our *capsarii*,²⁷ guarding the books from which the truths of our faith are drawn: "Search the scriptures" (Jn 5:39).

762. Then (v. 13) he proves his point by the authority of the prophet Malachi speaking in the person of God Who says: *Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*

A gloss on this says that the statement, *the elder will serve the younger*, was spoken from foreknowledge, but that the present statement results from judgment, i.e., that God loved Jacob on account of his good works, just as He loves all the saints: "I love those who love me (Pr 8:17), but he hated Esau on account of his sins, as it says in Si (12:3): "The Highest hates sinners."

But because man's love is preceded by God's love: "Not that we loved God, but that he has first loved us" (1 Jn 4:20), we must say that Jacob was loved by God before he

²⁷ A *capsa* was a box for holding parchment scrolls. A *capsarius* was slave whose job it was to carry the scrolls.

loved God. Nor can it be said that God began to love him at a fixed point in time; otherwise His love would be changeable.

Consequently, one must say that God loved Jacob from all eternity, as it says in Jer (31:3): "I have loved you with an everlasting love."

763. Now these words of the Apostle identify in God three things pertaining to the saints, namely, election, by which is understood God's predestination and election. In God these are really the same, but in our understanding they differ. For it is called God's love, inasmuch as he wills good to a person absolutely; it is election, inasmuch as through the good he wills for a person, he prefers him to someone else. But it is called predestination, inasmuch as he directs a person to the good he wills for him by loving and choosing him. According to these definitions predestination comes after love, just as the will's fixation on the end naturally precedes the process of directing things towards the end.

Election and love, however, are ordered differently in God than in man. For in men, election precedes love, for a man's will is inclined to love a thing on account of the good perceived in it, this good also being the reason why he prefers one thing to another and why he fixed his love on the thing he preferred. But God's love is the cause of every good found in a creature; consequently, the good in virtue of which one is preferred to another through election follows upon God's willing it—which pertains to His love, Consequently, it is not in virtue of some good which He selects in a man that God love him; rather, it is because He loved him that He prefers him to someone by election.

764. But just as the love, about which we are speaking, pertains to Gods eternal predestination, so the hatred about which we are speaking pertains to the rejection by which God rejects sinners.

It should not be supposed that this rejection is temporal, because nothing in the divine will is temporal; rather, it is eternal. Furthermore, it is akin to love or predestination in some respect and different in another.

It is akin in the sense that just as predestination is preparation for glory, so rejection is preparation for punishment: "For a burning place has long been prepared, yes, for the king it is made ready" (Is 30:33).

It is different in that predestination implies preparation of the merits by which glory is reached, but rejection implies preparation of the sins by which punishment is reached. Consequently, a foreknowledge of merits cannot be the reason for predestination, because the foreknown merits fall under predestination; but the foreknowledge of sins can be a reason for rejection on the part of the punishment prepared for the rejected, inasmuch as God proposes to punish the wicked for the sins they have from themselves, not from God; the just He proposes to reward on account of the merits they do not have from themselves: "Destruction is thy own, O Israel; thy help is only in me" (Hos 13:9).

Lecture 3

(14) [n. 765] What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? [n. 768] Let it not be!

(15) For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”

(16) [n. 775] So it does not depend on the one who wills or on the one who runs, but on God who has mercy.

(17) [n. 779] For the scripture says to Pharaoh, “I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.”

(18) [n. 783] So then he has mercy upon whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

765. After showing that by God's choice one is preferred to the other not from works but from the grace of the one calling [n. 748], the Apostle now inquires into the justice of this choice.

First, he raises a question;

secondly, he answers it [v. 14b; n. 768];

thirdly, he objects against the solution [v. 19; n. 786].

766. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that God chose one and rejected the other without any preceding merit. *What shall we say then?* Does this enable us to prove *that there is injustice on God's part?*

It seems so. For it pertains to justice that things be dispensed equally to equals. But when differences arising from merit are removed, men are equal. Therefore, if without consideration of merits God dispensed unequally by choosing one and rejecting the other, it seems that there is injustice to Him; contrary to what is said in Dt (32:4)

"God is faithful and without any iniquity"; "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and right are thy judgments" (Ps 119:137).

767. It should be noted that Origen fell into error trying to solve this objection.

For he says in his *Periarchon* that from the beginning God made only spiritual creatures and all were equal, lest he be charged with injustice for any inequality; later, differences among these creatures arose from differences of merit. For some of those spiritual creatures were turned to God by love, some more and some less; on this basis the various orders of angels were distinguished. Others turned from God, some more and some less; on this basis they were bound to bodies, either noble or lowly; some to heavenly bodies, some to bodies of demons, some to bodies of men. Accordingly, the reason for making and distinguishing bodily creatures is the sin of spiritual creatures. But this is against what is said in Gen (1:31): "God saw everything which he had made, and it was very good," which gives us to understand that goodness was the cause of producing bodily creatures, as Augustine says in *The City of God* (c.11).

768. Therefore, we must set aside this opinion and see how the Apostle solves the problem when he says: *Let it not be!*

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he solves the problem with respect to choosing the saints;

secondly, with respect to hating and rejecting the wicked [v. 17; n. 799].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he proposes the scriptural text from which the solution comes;

secondly, he draws the conclusion from it [v. 16; n. 775].

769. The text he adduces is from Ex (33:19) where the Lord said to Moses: "I will be gracious to whom I will and I will be merciful to whom it shall please me." But the Apostle quotes it according to the Septuagint version saying: *For the Lord says to Moses: I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.* The meaning is that all our blessings are ascribed to God's mercy, as it says in Is (63:7): "I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord, the praise of the Lord for all the things the Lord has bestowed upon us"; and in Lam (3:22): "The mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed; because his commiserations have not failed.

770. The text Paul cites is explained in two ways in a Goss, so that it solves the question and the objection in two ways.

First, *I will have mercy on whom I have mercy*, i.e., on him who is worthy of mercy. To amplify this he repeats: *I will have compassion on whom I have compassion*, i.e., on whom I judge worthy of compassion, as it says in Ps 103 (v.13): "The Lord has compassion on them that fear him."

It follows from this that although he imparts his blessings from mercy, he is nevertheless excused from injustice; for he gives to those who should be given and does not give to one who should not be given, according to the correctness of His judgment.

771. But having mercy on one who is worthy can be understood in two ways: in one way so that one is counted worthy of mercy on account of preexisting works in this life, though not in another life, as Origen supposed. This belongs to the Pelagian heresy which taught that God's grace is given to men according to their merits.

But this cannot stand, because, as has been stated, the good merits themselves are from God and are the effects of predestination.

772. But there is another way in which one is considered worthy of mercy, not on account of merits preceding grace, but on account of merits subsequent to grace; for example, if God gives a person grace and He planned from eternity to give him that grace which He foresaw would be used well.

According to this the Gloss is saying that He has mercy on him who should be given mercy. Hence he says: *I will have mercy on whom I have mercy*, i.e., by calling and bestowing grace, I will have mercy on him to whom I know beforehand that I will show mercy, knowing that he will be converted and abide with me.

But it seems that not even this is a suitable explanation.

For it is clear that nothing which is an effect of predestination can be taken as a reason for a predestination, even if it be taken as existing in God's foreknowledge, because the reason for a predestination is presupposed to the predestination, whereas the effect is included in it.

But every benefit God bestows on a man for his salvation is an effect of predestination. Furthermore, God's benefits extend not only to the infusion of grace, by which a man is made righteous, but also to its use, just as in natural things God not only causes their forms but all the movements and activities of those forms, inasmuch as God is the source of all movement in such a way that when He ceases to act, no movement or activity proceeds from those forms. But sanctifying grace and the accompanying virtues in the soul are related to their use as a natural form is related to its activity. Hence, it is states in Is (26:12): "O Lord, thou hast wrought for us all our works."

773. Aristotle proves this in a particular way when he discusses the works of the human will.

For since man is open to opposites, say to sitting or not sitting, it must be resolved by something else. But this is done by deliberation, which is followed by choosing one over the other. But again, since man has the power to deliberate or not to deliberate, it will be necessary that something move him to deliberate. But since this does not proceed *ad infinitum*, there must be some external principal superior to man which moves him to deliberate—and this principle is none other than God.

In this way, then, the very use of grace is from God. But this does not mean that sanctifying grace is superfluous, any more than natural forms are superfluous, even though God works in all, as it says in Wis (8:1): "Wisdom orders all things sweetly," because through their forms all things are inclined spontaneously, as it were, to that to which they are planned by God. Consequently, it is impossible that the merits which follow grace are the reason for showing mercy or for predestination; the only reason is God's will, according to which he mercifully delivers certain ones.

For it is clear that distributive justice has its field in things given as due; for example, if some persons have earned wage, more should be given to those who have done more work. But it has no place in things given spontaneously and out of mercy; for example, if a person meets two beggars and gives one an alms, he is not unjust but merciful. Similarly, if a person has been offended equally by two people and he forgives one but not the other, he is merciful to the one, just to the other, but unjust to neither.

For since all men are born subject to damnation on account of the sin of the first parent, those whom God delivers by His grace He delivers by His mercy alone; and so He is merciful to those whom He delivers, just to those whom He does not deliver, but unjust to none.

Thus, the Apostle solves the question with a text which ascribes all to divine mercy.

774. Yet it should be noted that God's mercy is viewed according to three aspects: first, according to predestination by which He proposed from all eternity to deliver certain ones: "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting" (Ps 103:17); secondly, according to His calling and justifying, by which He saves men in time: "He saved us in his mercy" (Tit 3:5); thirdly, according to the bestowal of glory, when He frees from all misery: "Who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy" (Ps 103:4).

Therefore, he says: *I will have mercy*, namely, by calling and justifying, *on whom I have mercy* by predestining and having compassion and finally by crowning with glory him on whom I have mercy by calling and justifying.

This interpretation is more in keeping with the version before me: "I will be gracious to whom I will, and I will be merciful to whom it shall please me" where divine mercy is clearly ascribed not to merits but solely to the divine will.

775. Then (v. 16) he draws his conclusion from the authority he cited.

This conclusion can be understood in a number of ways; in one say thus: *So a man's salvation depends not on man's will or exertion*, i.e., it is not owing to anyone through any willing of his own or any outward action; *but on God's mercy*, i.e., it proceeds from the sole mercy of God. What follows from the authority cited is found in Dr (9:4): "Do not say in your heart, 'It is because of my righteousness that the Lord has brought me into this land.'"

776. But it can be understood in another sense: all things proceed from God's mercy; so it depends *not on man's will to will or exertion to exert oneself*, but each

depends *on God's mercy*, as it says in 1 Cor (15:10): "it was not I but the grace of God which is with me," and in Jn (15:5): "Without me you can do nothing."

777. But if this is all that is understood in this word, since even grace without man's free judgment does not will or strive, he could have said the converse, namely, it does not depends on God's mercy but on man's will or exertion, which is offensive to pious ears.

Consequently, something more must be understood from these words, if first place is to be given to God's grace.

For an action is attributed more to the principal agent than to the secondary, as when we say that the hammer does not make the box but the carpenter by using the hammer. But man's will is moved to good by God, as it says above: "All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God" (Rom 8:14); therefore, an inward action of man is not to be attributed principally to man but to God: "It is God who of his good pleasure works in you both the will and the performance" (Phil 2:13).

But if willing does not depend on the man willing or exertion on the man exerting himself, but on God moving man to this, it seems that man is not master of his own action, which pertains to freedom of will.

But the answer is that God moves all things, but in diverse ways, inasmuch as each is moved in a manner befitting its nature. And so man is moved by God to will and to perform outwardly in a manner consistent with free will. Therefore, willing and performing depends on man as freely acting; but on God and not on man, as initial mover.

779. Then (v. 17) he solves the above problem as it refers to rejection of the wicked.

First, he quotes an authority;

secondly, he draws the conclusion (v. 18).

780. He says, therefore: It has been shown that there is no injustice, when God loves the just from all eternity. But neither is there injustice in rejecting the wicked from all eternity. For out of God's mouth the Scripture says, *I have raised you up*, or according to another rendition: "Have preserved you" *for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.*

781. The first point to notice here is what God does in regard to the rejected. He shows this when he says: *For this purpose have I preserved you*, i.e. you had deserved to die for the evils you had done: Those who do such things deserve to die" (Rom 1:32), but I did not call you to die at once; rather I preserved you in life for this purpose, namely, *of showing my power in you.*

This interpretation can also be obtained from the version which reads: *I have raised you up*, i.e., although before me you deserved to be dead, I granted you life, as if I had raised you up. From this it appears that God works no injustice against the rejected, sine they deserved to be destroyed at once for their crimes; rather, the fact that He preserves their life proceeds from His exceeding goodness: "Correct me, O Lord, but yet with judgment; and not in thy fury, lest thou bring me to nothing" (Jer 10:24).

Another interpretation is this, *I have raised you up* for sin, that you might become worse. This should not be understood as though God causes sin in man; rather, it should be understood in a permissive sense, namely, that from His just judgment he permits

some to fall into sin on account of previous sins, as it says above (1:28): "God gave them up to a base mind."

But it seems to me that still more must be understood here, namely, that men are moved to good and to evil by God through an inward prompting. Hence, Augustine says in his book *On Grace and Free Will* that God works in men's hearts to incline their wills whithersoever He wills, either to good through His mercy or to evil according to their deserts. Thus, God is said very often to tempt men to do good, as it says in Dan (13:45): "The Lord raised up the holy spirit of a young boy." He is also said to raise up others to do evil, as in Is (13:1): "I will stir up the Medes against them and with their arrows they shall kill the children."

However, He stirs them to good and to evil in different ways: for he inclines men's wills to good directly as the author of these good deeds; but he is said to incline or stir up men to evil as an *occasional* cause, namely, inasmuch as God puts before a person, either in him or outside of him something which of itself is conducive to good but which through his own malice he uses for evil: "Do you not know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath" (Rom 2:4-5) and "God gave his place for penance: and he abused it unto pride" (Jb 24:23).

Similarly, as far as in him lies, God enlightens a man inwardly to good, say a king to defend the rights of his kingdom or to punish rebels. But he abuses this good impulse according to the malice of his heart. This is plain in Is (10:6) where it is said of Assyria: "Against a godless nation I send him and against the people of my wrath I command him to take spoil and seize plunder..." and further on: "But he does not so intend, and his mind

does not so think, but it is in his mind to destroy." That is the way it happened with Pharaoh, who, when he was prompted by God to defend his kingdom, abused this suggestion and practiced cruelty.

782. Secondly, there is need to consider the purpose behind God's doing certain things and permitting certain things.

For one must remember that God works in creatures to manifest Himself, as it says in Rom (1:20): "His invisible nature has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made"; hence these promptings are ordained to this manifestation both for those present, *for the very purpose of showing my power in you*, "and Israel saw the great work which the Lord did against the Egyptians Ex (14:3), and for those absent, *so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth*.

Thus, it is clear that in this matter there is no injustice in God, because he uses his creature according to its merits for his glory. And it can be interpreted in the same sense if it be said *I have raised you up*, i.e., I have ordered your malice to my glory; for God orders the malice, but does not cause it.

783. Then (v. 18) he draws a conclusion from the two texts cited: from the text, *I will have mercy on whom I have mercy*, he concludes: *Therefore he has mercy upon whomever he wills*: "The Lord has mercy on them that fear him" (Ps 103:11); from the text, *I have raised you up*, he concludes, *and he hardens the heart of whomever he wills*: "You have hardened our heart, so that we fear thee not: (Is 3:17); "Some of them he blessed and exalted, and some of them hath he cursed and brought low" (Sir 33:12).

There seems to be no difficulty about God's mercy, once we grant what has been said above.

784. But two difficulties seem to exist in regard to hardening: first, hardening of heart seems allied to sin, as it says in Sir (3:27): "A hard heart shall fear evil at the last." Consequently, if God hardens the heart, He is the author of a sin—contrary to what is said in Jas (1:13): "God is no tempter to evil."

The answer is that God is not said to harden anyone directly, as though He causes their malice, but indirectly, inasmuch as man makes an occasion of sin out of things God does within or outside the man; and this God Himself permits. Hence, he is not said to harden as though by inserting malice, but by not affording grace.

The second difficulty is that this hardening does not seem ascribable to the divine will, since it is written: "This is the will of God, your sanctification" (I Th 4:3) and "He desires all men to be saved" (1 Tim 2:4).

The answer is that both mercy and justice imply a disposition of the will. Hence, just as mercy is attributed to the divine will, so also that which is just.

Therefore, the interpretation is that *he has mercy upon whomever he wills* through His mercy and *he hardens whomever he wills* through His justice, because those whom He hardens deserve to be hardened by Him, as was stated above in chapter 1.

Lecture 4

(19) [n. 786] You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?"

(20) [n. 788] But who are you, a man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me thus?"

(21) [n. 791] Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

(22) [n. 793] What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction,

(23) [n. 794] in order to make known the riches of his glory for the vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory.

786. Having solved the question proposed [n. 765], the Apostle objects to the solution, particularly to the last part, which states that God has mercy on whomever He wills and hardens whomever He wills.

First, he places the objection;

secondly, the solution [v. 20; n. 788].

787. First, therefore, he says: We have said that God has mercy on whomever He wills and hardens whomever He wills. *You will say to me then: Why does he still find fault?* i.e., what need is there to inquire any further into the cause of the good and evil done here, since all things are attributed to the divine will, which is a sufficient cause, since no one can resist Him? Hence he continues: *For who can resist his will?*" I applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven" (Ec 1:13).

Or in another way: *Why does he still find fault?* i.e., why does God complain about men when they sin, as in Is (1:2): "some have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me." Therefore, He does not seem to have a just complaint, because it all proceeds from His will, which no one can resist. Hence he adds: *Who can resist his will?*

Or still another way: *Why does he still find fault*, i.e., why is man still required to do good and avoid evil: "He has showed you , O man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you but o do justice, and love mercy and walk with your God?" (Mic 6:8). For it is useless to require of someone that which is not in his power. But nothing seems to lie in man's power, according to the above, in which all things seem ascribed to the divine will, which cannot be resisted. He adds: *For who can resist his will?* As if to say: no one. "There is none that can resist they majesty" (Est 13:11). And this seems to be the Apostle's meaning.

788. Then (v. 20) he answers the question.

To understand his answer it should be noted that with regard to the election of the good and the rejection of the wicked two questions can arise. One is general, namely, why does God will to harden some and be merciful to some; the other is particular, namely, why does He will to be merciful to this one and harden this or that one?

Although a reason other God's will can be assigned, in the first question the only reason that can be assigned in the second question is God's absolute will. An example is found among humans. For if a builder has at hand many similar and equal stones, the reason why he puts certain ones at the top and others at the bottom can be gathered from his purpose, because the perfection of the house he intends to build requires both a foundation with stones at the bottom and walls of a certain height with stones at the top. But the reason why he put these stones on the top and those others at the bottom seems to be merely that the builder so willed.

First, therefore, the Apostle answers the problem involved in the second question, namely why He has mercy on this one and hardens that one;

secondly, the problem involved in the first question, namely, why He is merciful to some and hardens others [v. 22; n. 792].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he censures the questioner's presumption;

secondly, he cites an authority which solves the question [v. 21; n. 790];

thirdly, he explains the authority [v. 21b; n. 791].

789. First, therefore, he says: *But who are you, O man, fragile and unknowing, to answer back to God*" How would you answer Him, if He were to contend with you in judgment? "If one wished to contend with him, one could not answer him once in a thousand times" (Jb 9:3). Again, as it says in Jb (39:30): "He who argues with God let him answer him."

In this we are given to understand that man should not examine the reason for God's judgments with the intention of comprehending them, for they exceed human reason: "Seek not the things that are too high for thee" (Sir 3:22); "He that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory" (Pr 25:27).

790. Then (v. 20b) he cites the authority of Is (29:16): "Shall the thing made say of its maker, He did not make me?"

Here it should be noted that if an artisan uses base matter to make a beautiful vessel for noble uses, it is all ascribed to the goodness of the artisan; for example, if from clay he fashions pitchers and serving-dishes suited to a banquet table. If, on the other hand, from such base matter, say clay, he produced a vessel adapted to meaner uses, for example, for cooking or such, the vessel, if it could think, would have no complaint. But

it could complain, if from precious metals, such as gold and precious stones, the artisan were to make a vessel reserved for base uses.

But human nature has baseness about it from its matter, because as Gen (2:7) says: "God formed man of dust from the ground," and more baseness after being spoiled by sin, which entered this world through one man. That is why man is compared to dirt, in Jb (30:19) "I am compared to dirt and I am likened to dust and ashes." Hence, any good that man possesses is due to God's goodness as its basic source: "O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou art the potter, we are all the work of thy hand" (Is 64:8). Furthermore, if God does not advance man to better things but leaves him in his weakness and reserves him for the lowliest use, He does him no injury such that he could justly complain about God.

791. Then (v. 21) the Apostle explains the words of the prophet.

As if to say *What is molded*, i.e., the vessel., should not say to the potter: *Why have you made me thus?*, because the potter is free to make anything he wishes out of the clay. Hence he says: *Has the potter no right over the clay, to make without any injury to it out of the same lump of base matter one vessel for honor*, i.e., for honorable use *and another for dishonor*, i.e., for meaner uses: "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and earthenware, and some for noble use, some for ignoble." (2 Tim. 2:20).

In the same way God has free power to make from the same spoiled matter of the human race, as from a clay, and without any injustice some men prepared for glory and some abandoned in wretchedness: "Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel" (Is 18:6).

792. Then (v. 22) he answers the first question, namely, why God wills to be merciful to some and leave others in wretchedness, i.e., to choose some and reject others.

Here it should be noted that the end of all divine works is the manifestation of divine goodness: "The Lord has made all things for himself" (Pr 16:4). Hence, it was stated above that the invisible things of God have been clearly perceived in the things that have been made (1:20).

But the excellence of the divine goodness is so great that it cannot be manifested in one way or in one creature. Consequently, he created diverse creatures in which He is manifested in diverse ways. This is particularly true in rational creatures in whom is justice is manifested with regard to those he benefits according to their deserts and His mercy in those He delivers by His grace. Therefore, to manifest both of these in man He mercifully delivers some, but not all.

First, therefore, he gives an account of the rejections of the wicked; secondly, of the election of the good [v. 23; n. 794].

793. In both cases three differences should be considered.

First, with respect to the end; secondly, with respect to use; thirdly, with respect to the divine act.

Now the end of the rejection or hardening of the wicked is the manifestation of divine justice and power. Referring to this he says: *What*, i.e., *But if God, desiring to show him wrath*, i.e., retaliatory justice. For wrath is said of God not as an emotion but as the effect of retaliation: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven" (Rom 1:18). Then he adds: *and to make known his power*, because God not only uses wrath, i.e., retribution, by punishing those subject to him, but also by subjecting them to himself by his power:

“According to his work by which he can subject all things to himself” (Phil 3:21); “And they saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore, and the mighty hand that the Lord had used against them” (Ex 14:31).

The use which God makes of the wicked is wrath, i.e., punishment. And this is why he calls them vessels of wrath, i.e., instruments of justice that God uses to show wrath, i.e., retributive justice: “We were by nature children of wrath” (Eph 2:3).

But God’s action toward them is not that he disposes them to evil, since they of themselves have a disposition to evil from the corruption of the first sin. Hence he says *fit for destruction*, i.e., having in themselves an disposition towards eternal condemnation: “God saw that the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that all the thought of their heart was bent upon evil at all times” (Gen 6:5). The only thing God does concerning them is that he lets them do what they want. Hence not without meaning does he say *has endured*. And the fact that he does not exact retribution immediately shows his patience; so he adds *with much patience*: “The most high is a patient rewarder” (Sir 5:4).

794. Then on the part of the good he likewise sets out three things.

First the end, when he says *in order to make known the riches of his glory*. For the end of the election and mercy shown the good is that he might manifest in them the abundance of his goodness by calling them back from evil, drawing them to justice, and finally leading them into glory. And this is the meaning of *that he might show the riches of his glory*, the riches concerning which he said above (2:4), “Or do you despise the riches of his goodness?” “God who is rich in mercy” (Eph 2:4).

And it is significant that he says *in order to make known the riches of his glory*, because the very condemnation and reprobation of the wicked, carried out in accord with God's justice, makes known and highlights the glory of the saints, who were freed from such misery as this.

Second he describes their use, when he says *for the vessels of mercy*. He names them vessels of mercy because God uses them as instruments to show his mercy: "These were men of mercy" (Sir 44:10).

Thirdly he sets out God's action in their regard. For God does not merely endure them, as though they were of themselves disposed to the good, but rather he prepares and disposes them by calling them to glory. Hence he says *which he has prepared beforehand for glory*: "Preparing the mountains by your power."

795. Even to this point the Apostle uses an incomplete and suspensive construction, so that the meaning is: If God wants to do this, to have mercy on some and harden others, what can justly be said against it? As though to imply: Nothing. For he does not will to harden them in such a way that he compels them to sin, but rather he endures them so that they may tend to evil by their own inclination.

Lecture 5

(24) [n. 796] Even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

(25) [n. 798] As indeed he says in Hosea, "Those who were not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who was not beloved I will call 'my beloved,' and her who had not obtained mercy, 'one who has obtained mercy.'"

(26) [n. 800] "And in the very place where it was said to them, `You are not my people,' they will be called `sons of the living God.'"

(27) [n. 801] And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved;

(28) [n. 803] a fulfilling and shortening word in equity, for the Lord will make a brief word over the earth."

(29) [n. 806] And as Isaiah predicted, "If the Lord of hosts had not left us children, we would have fared like Sodom and been made like Gomorrah."

(30) [n. 807] What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue justice have attained it, that is, justice through faith;

(31) [n. 809] but that Israel who pursued the justice which is based on law did not succeed in fulfilling that law.

(32) [n. 810] Why? Because they did not pursue it through faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

(33) [n. 812] as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of offense and a rock of scandal; and he who believes in him will not be put to shame."

796. After showing that God's grace is given to men as a result of God's election through which men are called to grace [n. 748], the Apostle shows that such election or calling applies not only to the Jews (as if they could boast on account of what is said in Dt (4:37): "He loved your fathers,") but also to the Gentiles.

First, he states the intended proposition;

secondly, he proves it [v. 25; n. 798]

thirdly, he draws the conclusion [v. 30; n. 807].

797. First, therefore he says: We have states that God prepared the saints for glory, *whom he also called*, namely, by His grace, *not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles*: "Is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also?" (Rom 3:29): "They shall adore him, every man from his own place, all the islands of the Gentiles" (Zeph 2:11).

798. The (v. 25) he proves the proposition:

first, with respect to the Gentiles,
secondly, the Jews [v. 27; n. 801].

In regard to the first he cites two texts from Hosea speaking fro the Gentiles: the first of these promises them God's gifts;

the second, divine sonship [v. 26; n. 800].

799. First, therefore, he says: *As the Lord says in Hosea*, because it was he who spoke in the prophets: "The spirit of the Lord spoke through me, his word is upon my tongue" (2 Sam 23:2). Hence, too, it says in Hosea (1:2) "When the Lord first spoke through Hosea."

Here it should be noted that the Gentiles were cut off from three blessings for which the Jews were famous: first, divine sonship, by reason of which they were called the people of God, as though serving Him and obeying His precepts: "We are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his herd" (Ps. 96:7). But the Gentiles were alienated from the society of this people, as it says in Eph (2:12): "Alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise." However, through Christ they have become God's people: "He gave himself for us to purify for himself a people of his own"

(Tit 2:14). And that is what he says: *Those who were not my people*, i.e., the Gentiles, *I will call my people*, i.e., that they be my people.

The second is the privilege of divine love: "The Lord loves the people of Israel" (Hos 3:1), because He offered them many benefits leading to special graces. From this love the Gentiles had formerly been excluded: "Alienated from God's truth because of the ignorance that is in them" (Eph 3:18). Hence, he says: *and her who was not beloved*, i.e., the Gentile races, *I will call my beloved*: "You who were once far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ" (Eph 2:13), "While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom 5:10).

The third is deliverance from original sin through circumcision: "The Lord will have compassion on Jacob" (Is 14:1). But the Gentiles had no share in this compassion: "On the day you were born your navel string was not cut and no eye pitied you, to do any of these things to you out of compassion for you" (Ex 16:5). But later through Christ they obtained compassion: "He saved us in virtue of his own mercy" (Tit 3:5).

He cites this text from Hosea according to the Septuagint, in the place where our text has: "I will have mercy on her who was without mercy, and I will so to not my people, 'You are my people'" (Hos 2:23).

800. Then (v. 25) he cites another text from Hosea in which they are promised the dignity of being sons of God, about which the Jews boasted because, as it says in Is (1:2): "Sons have I reared and brought up" and in Dt (32:6): "Is he not your father?"

For the Gentiles not only were not called sons, which applies to those who serve God out of love and are led by the Spirit of God; they were not even worthy to be called

the people of God, which could apply at least to those who had received the spirit of servitude in fear.

Hence, he says: *And in the very place*, i.e., in Judea, *where it was said to them*, i.e., to the Gentiles by the Jews speaking as though in God's person: *You are not my people*, because they did not consider them God's people, *there*, i.e., even among the believing Jews, *they will be called sons of God*.

Or *in the very place*, i.e., in the entire world where they will be converted to the faith. This would indicate that they would not be converted in the same way as proselytes, who would leave their native land and journey to Judea. That this would not happen in the case of those converted to Christ is shown in Zeph (2:11): "To him they shall bow down, each in his own place." Therefore, to each one living in his own place, *where it was said to them* in former times, "You are not my people," *there will be called sons of God* by divine adoption: "To all who believed in his name, he gave them power to become children of God" (Jn 1:12).

801. Then (v. 29) he proves his proposition with respect to the Jews and presents two texts from Isaiah.

The first of these seems to pertain to all the Jews who came to believe;

the second particularly to the Apostle [v. 29; n. 806].

802. First, therefore, he says: We have indicated what Hosea said about the Gentiles. *But Isaiah cries out*, i.e., clearly speaks about the conversion of Israel: "Cry, cease not, lift up they voice like a trumpet" (Is 58:1).

In this first citation he first shows how few will be converted from Israel, saying: *Although the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea*: "Judah and Israel

were as many as the sand by the sea" (1Sam 4:20), *only a remnant of them will be saved*, i.e., not all, not the majority, but a certain few who will be left after the pruning: "I am become as one that gleaneth in autumn the grapes of the vintage" (Mic 7:1); "At the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace" (Rom 11:5).

803. Secondly, he cites the cause of salvation: first, the efficacy of the word of the gospel, saying: *A fulfilling and brief word*.

Note here a twofold efficacy of the evangelical word. The first is that the word is *fulfilling*, i.e., perfective: "The law made nothing perfect" (Heb 7:19); but the Lord says, "I have come not to abolish the law but to fulfill" (Mt 5:17), because He applied the truth to the figures of the Law, explained the moral precepts of the Law properly, removed occasions for transgressing them and even added counsels of perfection. Thus He said to the young man who had kept all the precepts of the Law: "One thing is lacking to you. If you would be perfect, go and sell what you possess and give to the poor" (Mt 19:21). For this reason He said to His disciples: "you must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48).

The second efficacy is that the word is *shortening*. This is suitably joined to the first efficacy, because the more perfect a word is the more profound it is and, as a consequence, simpler and briefer. Now the word of the Gospel shortens the words of the Law, because it included all the figurative sacrifices of the Law in one true sacrifice, in which Christ offered himself as a victim for us (Eph 5:2). Furthermore, it includes all the moral precepts of the Law in the two precepts of charity: "On these two precepts depend the law and the prophets (Mt 22:40).

Hence he says *shortening in equity*, either because nothing is omitted of the multitude of figures and precepts of the law, but all are included in the brevity of the Gospel; or because nothing remains of them to be observed [but] what is equitable according to the dictates of natural reason:²⁸ “All your commands are equitable” (Ps 118:72).

804. Secondly, (v. 28) he gives the reason for this efficacy, saying: *For the Lord upon the earth*, i.e., when He lives on earth as man: "Afterwards he was seen upon earth and conversed with men" (Bar 3:38), *will execute his word*.

For the word which the Lord himself spoke in the flesh should be more perfect and powerful than the words He spoke through the prophets, as it says in Heb (1:1): "God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son."

805. Or, in another way: *For the Lord*, i.e., God the Father, *will execute his brief word*, i.e., incarnate, because the Son of God emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave. He is called brief, not because anything was subtracted from the fullness or greatness of His divinity, but because He underwent our exile and smallness.

806. Then (v. 29) he cites the texts pertaining specifically to the Apostles, saying: *If the Lord of hosts had not left us*, namely, in His mercy, *seed*, i.e., the word of the Gospel: "The seed is the word of God" (Lk 8:11); or *seed*, i.e., Christ; "And to your seed which is Christ" (Gal 3:16); or *seed*, i.e., the apostles: "That which shall stand therein shall be a holy seed" (Is 6:13), *we would have fared like Sodom and been made like Gomorrah*.

²⁸ This sentence might also be rendered: "...because nothing of them remain to be fulfilled, which is equitable according to the dictates of natural reason."

For the sin of the Jews was greater than that of the men of Sodom: "The iniquity of my people has been greater than the sin of Sodom" (Lam 4:6) and "Your sister Sodom and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done" (Ez 16:48).

Consequently, it was an act of divine mercy that the Jews were not totally exterminated as were the Sodomites: "The mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed" (Lam 3:22).

807. Then (v. 30) he draws the conclusion from the above.

First, with respect to the Gentiles;

secondly, with respect to the Jews [v. 31; n. 809].

808. In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he draws his conclusion, saying: *What shall we say, then*, in the light of the foregoing/ I say it is this, namely, *that the Gentiles have attained it*, i.e., righteousness, by which they are called sons: "And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were justified" (1 Cor. 6:11). And this, indeed, from God's calling and not from any merits, because he says: *The Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness*: At that time you were separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel" (Eph 2:12).

Secondly, he explains what he calls, *righteousness through faith*, i.e., not that which consists in works. For the Gentiles were not converted in order to observe the justice of the Law, but to be justified through faith in Christ: "The justice of God through faith in Jesus Christ upon all who believe" (Rom 3:22).

809. Then when he says *but Israel*, he draws his conclusion as regards the Jews.

And first he concludes what he intends, saying: *but Israel*, i.e., the people of the Jews, *who pursued the righteousness based on the law did not succeed in fulfilling the law*.

The law of righteousness is the law of the Spirit of life through which men are made righteous and which the Jewish people did not attain, although they pursued it by observing the shadow of this spiritual law: "The law has but a shadow of the good things to come" (Heb 10:1). Or *who pursued the law of righteousness*, i.e., the Law of Moses, which is the law of righteousness, if it is well understood, because it teaches righteousness.

Or it is called the law of righteousness, because it does not make men truly, but only outwardly, righteous, as long as sins are avoided not from love but from fear of the punishment the Law inflicted: "Hearken to me, you who pursue that which is righteous and you that seek the Lord" (Is 51:1), "Hearken to me, you that know what is just, my people, who have my law in your heart" (Is 51:7).

810. Secondly, he states the cause, saying, *Why?* Because they did not observe the Law in the proper way.

And this is what he says: *Because they did not pursue it through faith*, i.e., they sought to be made righteous not through faith in Christ but as if it were based on works. For they followed the figure and repudiated the truth: "For by the words of the law no human being shall be justified before him" (Rom 3:20).

811. Thirdly, he explains the cause assigned: "first, he presents the explanation, saying: *They have stumbled over the stumbling-stone*, i.e., Christ, Who is likened to a stumbling-stone; for just as a stone against which a man stumbles is not guarded against

because it is small, so the Jews, seeing Christ clothed with our weakness, did not guard against stumbling over Him: "His look was as it were hidden and despised. Whereupon we esteemed him not" (Is 53:3); "Before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains" (Jer 13:16), i.e., upon Christ and His apostles who are called dark mountains, because their great dignity is hidden.

812. Secondly, he cites an authority for this, saying: *As it is written*, namely, in Isaiah. Here the Apostle gathers together the words of Isaiah found in various places. For it says in Is (28:16): "behold, I will lay a stone in the foundations of Zion, a tried stone, a corner stone, a precious stone, founded in the foundation." From this he takes the first part of his quotation: *Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone*, i.e., as a foundation, by which is meant that by divine command Christ was established as the foundation of the Church: "For no other foundation can anyone lay that that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 3:11).

Again it says in Is (8:14): "He shall be for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to the two houses of Israel." He uses this in the middle of the quotation where he says: *A stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall*. Here the stumbling refers to their ignorance, because it says in 1 Cor (2:8): "if they had known this, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory"; but the falling refers to their unbelief by reason of which they persecuted Christ and his apostles: "We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews" (1Cor 1:23); "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel" (Lk 2:34).

The end of the quotation is taken from Is (28:16): "He that believes, let him not hasten." In place of this he says: *He who believes in him will not be put to shame*, namely,

because he will receive a reward from Him: "Ye that fear the Lord, hope in him: and your reward shall not be made void" (Si 2:8).

The Apostle takes these words according to the Septuagint. Its sense pertains to what is in our text: "He that believes, let him not hasten," for he seems to hasten, who considers himself deceived, because he does not quickly get what he hoped.

Chapter 10

Lecture 1

(1) [n. 813] Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

(2) [n. 815] I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened.

(3) [n. 817] For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

(4) [n. 819] For the end of the law is Christ, that every one who has faith may be justified.

(5) [n. 820] Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law shall live by it.

(6) [n. 823] But the righteousness based on faith says, Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down)

(7) or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

(8) [n. 826] But what does it say? The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach);

(9) because, if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

813. After showing how the Gentiles have been called to faith by the election of God's grace and also some of the Jews, i.e., a minority who did not stumble and fall [n. 735], the Apostle now discusses in more detail the fall of the Jews.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he explains the cause of their fall, over which he laments;

secondly, he shows that their fall is not universal, in chapter 11 [n. 859];

thirdly, that it is neither unprofitable nor irreparable [11:11; n. 878].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows that their fall is lamentable, considering its cause;

secondly, that it is not wholly inexcusable [v. 18; n. 845].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he shows that he feels pity for the Jews;

secondly, the cause of his pity [v. 2; n. 815].

814. First, therefore, he says: I have said that the Jews have not attained the law of righteousness, because they stumbled over the stumbling-block. But I am not indignant against them; rather, I feel compassion. And, therefore, I say to you, *brethren*, whether you be converts from the Gentiles or from the Jews: "You are all brethren" (Mt 23:8), *my heart's desire* is for their salvation, namely, that they be saved, as I have been saved: "I wish that all were as I myself am" (1 Cor 7:7); "would to God that all who hear me this day might become such as I am" (Ac 26:29). In this he was conformed to God, "Who desires all men to be saved" (1 Tim 2:4).

Not only his will but his prayer were directed to their salvation, but even the affection of his will, hence, he adds: *and y prayer for them is that they may be saved:*

"Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you" (1 Sam 12:23); "Pray for one another that you may be saved" (Jan 5:16).

This makes it clear that we should pray for unbelievers that they may be saved, because faith is a gift from God: "By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph 2:8).

815. Then when he says, *I bear them witness*, he discloses the cause of his compassion, namely, because they sinned from ignorance, not from set malice.

In regard to this he does three things.

First, he cites their ignorance;

secondly, he shows the area of their ignorance [v. 3; 817];

thirdly, he proves the truth of those matters about which they were ignorant [v. 5; n. 820].

816. First, therefore, he says: I desire and pray for their salvation and I grieve for them, because I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, i.e., out of zeal for God they persecute Christ and His members: "The hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God" (Jn 16:2). He is a good witness to this, because he himself had once been in a similar state of mind: "As to zeal a persecutor of the Church" (Phil 3:6), *but not according to knowledge*, namely, because their zeal was not guided by correct knowledge as long as they were ignorant of the truth: "Therefore, my people go into exile for want of knowledge" (Is 5:13); "If anyone does not recognize this, he will not be recognized" (I Cor 14:38).

817. Then when he says, *For, being ignorant*, he shows wherein they were ignorant:

first, he makes his statement;

secondly, he explains it [v. 4; n. 819].

818. First, therefore, he says: I am right in saying that it was *not according to knowledge*; for *being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God*, i.e., by which God justifies them through faith: "The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" (Rom 3:22), *and seeking to establish their own* righteousness, which consists in the works of the Law, which in their opinion awaited nothing from God but depended solely on the decision of the performer.

Consequently, he describes their righteousness as human and not divine, as he says above (12:2): "If Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about" before men, "But not before God."

For they did not submit to God's righteousness, i.e., they refused to be subject to Christ through faith in whom men are made just by God: "Only in God is my soul at rest" (Ps 63:1); "That the whole world may be subject to God" (Rom 3:19); "How long do you refuse to submit to me?" (Ex 10:3).

819. Then when he says, *Christ is the end of the law*, he explains what he had said, namely, that they are ignorant of God's righteousness and refuse to submit to Him, while they seek to establish their own righteousness based on the Law.

In regard to this it should be noted that, even as the philosophers say, the intention of any lawgiver is to make men virtuous: much more, then, the Old Law given by God to men was directed toward making men virtuous.

But the Law was unable to do this of itself, because "the law made nothing perfect" (Heb 7:19); rather, it ordained men to Christ Whom it promised and prefigured:

"The law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might justified by faith" (Gal 3:24). And that is what he says, namely, that *the end of the law is Christ*, to whom the whole Law is ordained: "I have seen the end of all perfection" (Ps 119:96); the end that through Christ men may attain the righteousness the Law intended: "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, he condemned sin in the flesh in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us" (Rom 8:3-4). And this *to everyone that has faith*, because he justified his own by faith: "To all who believed in his name he gave power to become children of God" (Jn 1:12).

820. Then when he says, *Moses writes*, he proves the truth of those things about which the Jew were ignorant, namely, that God's righteousness is more perfect than that of the Law; and this he shows on the authority of Moses, the lawgiver of the Old Law.

First therefore he shows by his words the condition of legal justice;

Second, he shows the condition of the justice of faith [n. 823].

821. First, therefore, he says: I have correctly distinguished human righteousness from God's righteousness, *for Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law shall live by it*, where my text has: "Keep my laws and judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them" and (Ez 20:13): "They cast away my judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them," namely, because by observing the Law a man obtained the advantage of not being killed as a transgressor of the Law: "A man who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy" (Heb 10:28); "Everyone who curses his father or his mother shall be put to death" (Lev 20:9), and so on for the other commandments.

822. We can also say that by observing the Law a man was regulated in the present life, for the Law promised temporal goods and commanded things "which were bodily regulations imposed until a time of reformation" (Heb 9:10).

But all this seems contrary to what the Lord answered the person asking Him: "What good deed must I do to have eternal life?" (Mt 19:16); for He answered: "If you would enter life, keep the commandments" (Mt 19:17). Hence, a Gloss on Romans (5:20): "Law came in," says that righteousness based on the Law conferred not only temporal benefits but also eternal life.

But Christ's words must be understood according to the spiritual sense of the Law, a sense which refers to faith in Him. But Paul's words refer to the inward sense of the Law according to which the Law makes no mention of eternal life.

823. Then when he says, *But the righteousness based on faith*, he quotes Moses on righteousness based on faith.

First, Moses shows the certitude of faith which ought to be in man's heart; secondly, the effect of faith [v. 8; n. 826].

824. First, therefore, he says: Moses speaks not only of the righteousness based on the Law, but also of that based on faith. *But the righteousness based on faith* says, i.e., speaks thus in a man's heart: "Who ascends into heaven and descends?" (Pr 30:4). *Who will ascend into heaven?* For to hold that this is impossible is to bring Christ down from heaven, i.e., to assert that Christ is not in heaven, which is against what it says in Jn (3:13): "No one has ascended into heaven but the Son of man who descended from heaven."

Or again do not say, "Who will descend into the abyss? i.e., into hell, as though considering this impossible; for to deny this is to bring Christ up from the dead, i.e., to deny that Christ died. For after dying He descended into the abyss: "I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth" (Sir 24:41).

825. This explanation prevents any doubt about two articles of Christian faith, namely Christ's ascension and his death and descent into hell, the first of which pertains to his supreme exaltation and the second to his lowest humiliations.

But it can be explained in another way as giving us certainty about two other articles: first, the incarnation, in which He descended from heaven to earth. Then the sense is: *Do not say in your heart: "Who will ascend into heaven to bring Christ down?"* As if to say: This was not necessary, because He came down of His own power.

Secondly, of the resurrection, when he continues: *Or do not say: "Who will descend into the abyss to bring Christ up from the dead?"* as if to say: He descended there, so that he might call Christ thence, as is said in the person of the fool in Wis 2(:1), "No man has been known to return from hell."

This explanation accords with the words of Moses in Dt (30:11): "This commandment that I command you this day is not above you, nor far off from you. Nor is it in heaven, that you should say: 'Which of us can go up to heaven to bring it to us?'"

Nor is it unseemly, if the Apostle attributes to Christ what Moses said of the commandments of the Law; because Christ is the Word of God in which are all God's commandments. Therefore, one must interpret what he is saying, namely, *Who will ascend into heaven to bring Christ down?* as if he were saying: "Who can ascend into heaven to bring God's word to us?" and the same must be said in the other which follows.

826. Then when he says, *But what does the Scripture say*, he shows the fruit of faith on the same authority:

first, he quotes the authority;

secondly, he explains [v. 8b; n. 829];

thirdly, he proves that the explanation is fitting [v. 9; n. 830].

827. First, therefore he says: *But what does the Scripture say?* It says this: *The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart.* For this is what follows after the aforementioned words in Deuteronomy (30:14): *The word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart.*

As if to say: do not suppose that you are lacking the word of justifying faith, just because Christ is in heaven according to His divine nature and descended into hell after the death of His human nature. For in descending from heaven and rising from the dead, He impressed the word of faith on your lips and in your heart.

828. Hence the statement that *the word is near you* can be referred to the fact that we have obtained God's word through Christ's birth and resurrection: "It was declared at first by the Lord" (Heb 2:3); "Behold, I have given my words in your mouth" (Jer 1:9).

Or, according to the Gloss, the word *near* should be understood with reference to usefulness, as we say something is "near" us when it is expedient or useful to us. For our heart is cleansed by the word of God: "Now you are clean because of the word which I have spoken to you" (John 15:3).

Or it can be referred to the fact that the words of faith, even though they are above reason: "I have given my words in your mouth" (Jer 1:9). "Many things are shown to thee

above the understanding of men" (Sir 3:25) but they are not contrary to reason, because truth cannot be contrary to truth. "Thy decrees are very sure" (Ps. 93:5).

829. Then when he says, *This is the word*, he explains the above words.

First, he shows what that word is about which Moses speaks, saying, *This is the word of faith which we preach*. "Preach the word" (2 Tim 4:2); "He that has my word, let him speak my word with truth" (Jer 23:28).

Secondly, he explains how this word is on the lips by confession and in the heart by faith. And this is what he says" *confess with your lips that Jesus Christ is Lord*, i.e., recognize Him as Lord by submitting your will to Him; *and believe in your heart* with complete faith which works through love, *that God raised him from the dead*, because, as it says in 2 Cor (13:4): "He rose by the power of God," which is common to Him and to the Father, *you will be saved*: "Israel is saved in the Lord with an eternal salvation" (Is 45:17).

When he says, *Jesus is Lord*, he is referring to the mystery of the incarnation; when he says, *Christ*, the reference is to the resurrection.

Lecture 2

(10) [n. 830] For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved.

(11) [n. 833] The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame."

(12) [n. 834] For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him.

(13) For, "every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved."

(14) [n. 835] But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed?

And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?

(15) And how can men preach unless they are sent? [n. 839] As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace!"

(16) [n. 842] But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"

(17) [n. 844] So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ.

830. After explaining that confession on the lips and faith in the heart work salvation, the Apostle proves what he had said, setting out an example of this in two points which Moses seems to mention [n. 826], here he proves what he had said in the universal.

And concerning this he does three things.

First, he shows that by faith and confession of faith man obtains salvation;

secondly, he lays down the order of salvation [v. 14; n. 835];

thirdly, he draws the conclusion [v. 17; n. 844].

831. In regard to the first he does three things [n. 833, 834]. First, he presents his proposition, saying: I am correct in saying that if you confess with your lips and believe in your heart, you will be saved; *for man believes with his heart and so is justified*, i.e. he believes in order that he may obtain righteousness through faith: "Since we are justified through faith" (Rom 5:1).

Notice that he says man believes *with his heart*, i.e., his will, because man cannot believe, unless he wills. For the intellect of the believer, unlike that of the philosopher, does not assent to the truth as though compelled by force of reason; rather, he is moved to assent by the will, therefore, knowing does not pertain to man's righteousness, which is in the will, but to the belief: "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as justice" (Gen 15:6).

But after he has been justified by faith, it is required that his faith work through love, in order to achieve salvation. Hence, he adds: *he confesses with his lips unto salvation*, i.e., to reach eternal salvation.

832. Three kinds of confession are necessary for salvation.

First, the confession of one's own iniquity: "I said: 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'" (Ps 32:5), which is the confession of the repentant. The second is that by which a man confesses the goodness of God mercifully bestowing His benefits: "Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things: (Ps 98:11) and this is the confession of one giving thanks. The third is the confession of divine truth: "Every one who confesses me before men, I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 10:32) and this is the confession of the believer, about which the Apostle is now speaking.

This confession is necessary for salvation, depending on circumstances of place and time, namely when one's faith is demanded, namely, by a persecutor of the faith, as when the faith is endangered by an alien [belief]. Prelates especially ought to preach the faith to their subjects. Therefore, the baptized are anointed on the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross, so that they will not be ashamed to confess Christ crucified: "I am not

ashamed of the gospel" (Rom 1:16). What is said about confessing the faith applies to all virtuous acts necessary for salvation according to circumstances of time and place. for the precepts commanding the performance of these acts oblige us always but not for every moment of the day.

833. Secondly, he proves his proposition with an authority when he says: *For the Scripture*, namely (Is 28:16) *says: No one who believes in him with living faith will be put to shame*, i.e., miss salvation: "Ye that fear the Lord, believe him: and your reward shall not be made void" (Sir 2:8).

But our text has: "He who believes will not be in haste," as was said above.

834. Thirdly, when he says, *there is no distinction*, he shows that this applies to all men.

First, he asserts that in this matter *there is no distinction between Jew and Greek*: "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew circumcised and uncircumcised" (Col 3:11).

Secondly, he proves this with two reasons. The first is based on the fact *that the same lord is lord of all*; consequently, he provides for the salvation of all. The second is based on the fact that *He bestows his riches upon all who call on him*. For if His riches were not sufficient to supply for all, one might suppose that He could not provide for all believer. However, the riches of His goodness and mercy are inexhaustible "Or do you presume upon the riches of his goodness?" (Rom 2:4); "God, who is rich in mercy" (Eph 2:4).

Thirdly, he proves the same thing on the authority of Joel (2:32): *Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved*. This is done by calling on Him through love and devout worship: "When he calls on me, I will answer him" (Ps 91:15).

835. Then when he says, *But how are men to call upon him*, he presents the order in which one is called to salvation, which is from faith.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he shows that the later steps in this order cannot occur without the earlier;

secondly, he shows that after the earlier steps have been taken, the later do not necessarily follow [v. 16; n. 842].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he presents the order of things required for salvation;

secondly, he supports what he had supposed [v. 15b; n. 839].

836. First, therefore, he presents five things in order, beginning with the step which calls upon God.

Therefore, he says: *How are they to call upon him in whom they have not believed?* As if to say: It is certainly true that unless faith is present, one cannot call on God to save him. This calling upon God pertains to confession with the lips, which proceed from faith in the heart: "We believed, and so we spoke" (1 Cor 4:13).

837. Secondly, he moves from faith to hearing when he adds: *and how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?* For one is said to believe things which are said to him by others and which he does not see: "It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world" (Jn 4:42).

But hearing is twofold: one is internal, by which one hears from God revealing: "Let me hear what God the Lord will speak" (Ps 85:8); the other is that by which

someone hears another man speaking in his presence: "While Peter was still saying this, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word" (Ac 10:44).

The first kind of hearing pertains to the grace of prophecy, which is given to certain definite persons, but not to all, as it says in 1 Cor (12:4): "There are varieties of gifts."

But because he is now speaking of something that can pertain to all without distinction, it is the second kind of hearing that he has in mind. That is why he adds: *and how are they to hear without a preacher?* For outward hearing in the listener cannot occur without an action of the speaker. This is why the Lord commanded the disciples: "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mt 28:19).

But preachers do not possess the truths of faith of themselves but from God: "What I have heard from the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I announce to you" (Is 21:10); "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you" (1 Cor 11:23). Therefore, he adds: *and how can men preach unless they are sent?* As if to say: worthily: "I did not send the prophets, yet they ran" (Jer 23:21).

838. But some are sent by the Lord in two ways.

In one way, immediately by God Himself through internal inspiration: "And now the Lord God has sent me and his Spirit" (Jer 48:16). Sometimes the sign of this sending is the authority of Holy Scripture; hence, when John the Baptist was asked who he was, he invoked the authority of a prophet: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said" (Jn 1:23). Sometimes it is the truth of what is announced. Hence, in contrast to this it says in Dt (18:22): "When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the words does not come to pass of come true,

that is a word which the Lord has not spoken." Sometimes the sign of this sending is the working of a miracle. Hence it says in Ex (4:1) that when Moses said to the Lord: "They will not believe me or listen to my voice," the Lord gave him power to perform signs.

Nevertheless, the last two are not sufficient proof of a divine mission, especially when someone says something contrary to the faith. For it says in Dt (13:1): "If a prophet arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder comes to pass, and if he says, "Let us go after other gods," you shall not listen to the words of that prophet."

Secondly, some are sent by God mediately on the authority of prelates, who take God's place: "With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel" (2 Cor 8:18).

839. Then when he says, *As it is written*, he quotes an authority to prove what he had said about the need for preachers to be sent. He says *As it is written*, namely, in Is (52:7): *how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!* Here our text has *How beautiful on the mountain are the feet of those who preach and announce peace, announcing good.* And something similar is found in Nahum (1:15): "Behold on the mountains the feet of those who evangelize and announce peace."

840. In these words, first, the procedure of the preachers is commended when he says, *how beautiful are the feet*. This can be interpreted in two ways: in one way, so that by feet is understood their procedure, namely, because they proceed according to due order, not usurping the office of preachers: "How graceful are your feet in sandals, O queenly maiden!" (Song 7:1).

In another way, by feet are understood their affections which are right, as long as they announce God's word not with the intention of praise or gain but for the salvation of men and the glory of God: "Their feet were straight" (Ez 1:7).

841. Secondly, he touches on the preacher's subject matter, which is twofold.

For they preach things useful for the present life. These he designates when he says, *who preach peace*, which is of three kinds. First, they announce the peace which Christ made between men and God: "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, entrusting to us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor 5:19). Secondly, he announces peace to be had with all men: "If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all" (Rom 12:18). Thirdly, they announce the way a man can have peace within himself: "Much peace to them that love your law" (Ps 119:165). Under these three are contained everything useful in this life for salvation with respect to God, to ones neighbor and oneself.

They also preach the things we hope to have in the other life. In regard to these he says, *preaching good things*: "He will set him over all his goods" (Lk 12:44).

842. Then when he says, *But they have not all heeded*, he shows that the later steps do not always follow.

For although one cannot believe, unless he hears the word of the preacher, nevertheless, not everyone who hears believes; and this is what he says: *But they have not all heeded the gospel*: "Not all have faith" (2 Th 3:2).

He says this to show that the outwardly spoken word of the preacher is not sufficient to cause faith, unless a man's heart is attracted inwardly by the power of God

speaking: "Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me" (Jn 6:45). Consequently, if men believe, it should not be attributed to the industry of the preacher.

It also shows that not all unbelievers are excused from sin, but those who do not hear: "If I had not come and spoken to them they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin" (Jn 15:22).

And this is more consonant with what the Apostle will say further on.

843. Secondly, he cites his authority for this, when he says: *for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he had heard from us?"* As if to say: A few; "Thou art among unbelievers and destroyers" (Ez 2:6); "For I have become as one who gleans in autumn the grapes of the vintage" (Mic 7:1). Isaiah said this because he foresaw the future unbelief of the Jews: "With a great spirit he saw the last things" (Sir 48:27).

And he says *what he had heard from us*, referring either to what they heard from God, as is said in Obadiah 5(:1), "We have heard a heard thing from the Lord, and sent messengers to the nations"; or referring to what men heard from the apostles: "They heard your words, and they did not do them" (Ez 33:32).²⁹

844. Then when he says, *faith comes from hearing*, he draws his conclusion from the foregoing, saying: Therefore, since they do not believe unless they hear, *faith comes from hearing*: "As soon as they heard of me they obeyed me" (Ps 18:44).

But if faith comes from hearing, how can it be a divinely infused virtue?

The answer is that two things are required for faith: one is the inclining of the heart to believe; and this does not come from hearing, but from the gift of grace; the other is a decision about what to believe and comes from hearing. Thus, Cornelius whose heart

²⁹ Thomas comments in this paragraph on the Latin phrase *auditui nostro*, which could be translated in both of the ways he mentions. The ambiguity is difficult to reproduce in translation.

was inclined toward belief, needed Peter to be sent to him to point out what he should believe.

From the fact that they do not hear without a preacher who must be sent (v. 14), he concludes that what is heard by believers is the word of the preacher, which is the word of Christ; either because it is about Christ: "We preach Christ" (1 Cor 1:23), or because they have been sent by Christ: "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you" (1 Cor 11:23).

Lecture 3

(18) [n. 845] But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

(19) [n. 850] Again I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry."

(20) [n. 853] Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me."

(21) [n. 855] But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a people who do not believe, but contradict me."

845. After showing that the fall of the Jews is pitiable, because they sinned from ignorance [n. 813], here the Apostle shows that their fall is not entirely excusable; because their ignorance was not invincible or rooted in necessity, but somehow voluntary.

He shows this in two ways.

First, because they heard the teaching of the apostles;

secondly, from what they knew from the teachings of the Law and of the prophets [v. 19; n. 850].

846. In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he asks a question, saying: We have said that faith comes from hearing and that men cannot believe a person whom they have not heard. *But I ask, have they not heard?* so as to be totally excused for their unbelief, according to what is said in Jn (15:22): "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin."

847. Secondly, he answers the question by interjecting the authority of Ps (19:4): *Their voice has gone out to all the earth*; i.e., the voice of the apostles whose fame has reached every land, both of Jews and of Gentiles: "Destruction and death have said" with our ears we have heard the fame thereof" (Jb 28:22), namely, the wisdom preached by the apostles. For the Lord had commanded them: "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mt 28:19). *And their words*, i.e., their distinctive message, has gone out *to the ends of the world*: "From the ends of the earth we have heard praises" (Is 24:16),; "I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, to be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth" (Is 49:6).

848. It should be noted that, according to Augustine, these words had not yet been fulfilled when the Apostle spoke them, but he foresaw that they would be fulfilled. So he uses the past for the future, because divine pr-ordination is certain of fulfillment; For David, whose words he employed, also used the past for the future. Augustine said this,

because even in his own day there were certain parts of Africa where the faith of Christ had not been preached.

Chrysostom, on the other hand, says that what is said here had been fulfilled in the time of the apostles. He draws this from Mt 24(:14), “And this gospel must be preached in the whole world, and then will come the consummation,” i.e., the destruction of Jerusalem.

Each is correct in his own way. For in the days of the apostles some report about their preaching had reached all nations, even to the ends of the world, at least through their disciples and even through the apostles themselves. For Matthew preached in Ethiopia, Thomas in India, Peter and Paul in the west. And this is what Chrysostom means. However, during the times of the apostles it had not be fulfilled in such a way that the Church had been built up in all nations, but it would be fulfilled before the end of the world, as Augustine says.

Yet Chrysostom's explanation is more in keeping with the Apostle's intention that is Augustine's. For the basic excuse of their unbelief is not undercut by the fact that these unbelievers would hear something in the future. However, this does not imply that a report of the apostles' preaching had reached every individual, although it had reached all nations.

849. Does this mean that those it has not reached, for example if they were raised in the jungle, have an excuse for their sin of unbelief?

The answer is that according to the Lord's statement (Jn 15:22) those who have not heard the Lord speaking either in person or through his disciples are excused from the sin of unbelief. However, they will not obtain God's blessing, namely, removal of original

sin or any sin added by leading an evil life; for these, they are deservedly condemned. But if any of them did what was in his power, the Lord would provide for him according to his mercy by sending a preacher of the faith as he sent Peter to Cornelius and Paul into Macedonia. Nevertheless, the fact that they do what is in their power, namely, by turning to God, proceeds from God's moving their hearts to the good: "Turn us to thee, O Lord, that we may be turned" (Lam 5:19).

850. Then when he says, *Again I ask, did not Israel understand?* he shows that they were inexcusable, because of the knowledge they had from the Law and the prophets.

First, he raises the question, saying: *But I ask, did Israel*, i.e., the Jewish people, *not know* the things which pertain to the mystery of Christ and to the calling of the Gentiles and the fall of the Jews? They knew fully: "Instructed by the law" (Rom 2:18); "He has not dealt thus with another nation" (Ps 147:20); "We are happy, O Israel, because the things that are pleasing to God are made known to us" (Bar 4:4).

Secondly, he says, *First Moses says*, he answers the question and shows that they did know: first, through the teaching of the Law, saying: *First Moses*, who is the lawgiver. He says, *first*, because Moses was the chief teacher of the Jews: "There has not risen a prophet since in Israel like Moses" (Dr 34:12) or because he was the first among others to say this.

I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation, with a foolish nation I will make you angry. Here our text has this (Dt 32:21): "I will provoke them by that which is not a people and by a foolish nation I will anger them."

851. Two differences should be noted here [n. 852].

The first in regard to Gentiles, since he says, *not a nation*, as though unworthy to be called a nation, because the Gentiles were not united in the worship of one god: "There are two nations which my soul abhors, and the third is no nation, which I hate" (Si 50:27). But he called the same nation a foolish nation. If in some sense it could be called a nation, inasmuch it is united and governed by human law, it is, nevertheless, called foolish, as though lacking true wisdom, which consists in the knowledge and worship of God: "You must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds; they are darkened in their minds, alienated from the life of God" (Eph 4:17). And in this way it refers to the Gentiles, namely in their state before conversion.

These two things can also be applied to the Gentiles after conversion. They are called *not a nation*, i.e., not living in a gentile manner,³⁰ as the Apostle says in the same place (Eph 4:17). And converted Gentiles are also called foolish by those who do not believe: "If anyone among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become foolish that he may be wise" (1Cor 3:18).

852. The second difference consists in the fact that he first mentions the jealous, i.e. the envy with which the Jews envied the converted Gentiles: "They make much of you, but for no good purpose" (Gal 4:17); secondly, he mentions the anger with which they were irked against them: "The wicked man makes plots against the just man, and gnashes his teeth at him" (Ps 37:12).

These two are fittingly joined, because from envy springs anger: "Anger kills the foolish, and envy slays the little one" (Jb 5:2).

³⁰ Aquinas's interpretation here moves from *non gens* ("not a nation") to *non gentiliter vivens* ("not living in a Gentile manner").

But God is said to produce jealousy and stir to anger, not by causing the malice in them but by withdrawing grace, or rather by effecting the conversion of the Gentiles from which the Jews take occasion for jealousy and anger.

853. Secondly, he shows that they knew through the teaching of the prophets, and first he quotes Isaiah as foretelling the conversion of the Gentiles, saying: *Then Isaiah is so bold as to say*, i.e., Isaiah boldly declares the truth, although this would put him in danger of death: "He goes forth boldly to meet armed men" (Job 39:21). Isaiah says: *I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself plainly to those who did not ask for me*; here our text has "They have sought me that before asked not for me, they have found me that sought me not" (Is 65:1).

854. He mentions first the conversion of the Gentiles, saying *I have been found by those who did not seek me*. This shows that the conversion of the Gentiles was beyond their merits and intention: "Christ became a servant in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy" (Rom 15:9). About this finding Mt (13:44) says: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure in a field, which a man found..."

Secondly, he shows the cause and manner of their conversion.

The cause, indeed, because it was not by chance that they found what they were not seeking but by the grace of Him Who willed to appear to them. This is indicated, when he says: *He showed himself*; "The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men" (Tit 2:11).

The manner was that Christ did not appear to the Gentiles in the enigmas and figures of the Law but in plain truth; hence he says: *I have shown myself plainly to them*,

i.e., the Gentiles, *who did not ask for me*, i.e., who did not ask for my doctrine: "They keep on praying to a god that cannot save" (Is 45:20).

855. Then he shows that Isaiah foretold the unbelief of the Jews, saying: *But of Israel*, i.e., against Israel, *he says, All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people*. Here our text has this: "I have spread forth my hands all the day to an unbelieving people, who walk in a way that is not good after their own thoughts. A people that continually provoke me to anger" (Is 65:2-3a).

856. That he says, *I have held out my hands*, can be understood of Christ's hands held out on the cross, which are said to have been held out *all day long*, i.e., the principal part of a whole day, namely, from the sixth hour until evening. And although during that time the sun was darkened, the rocks rent, and the graves opened, the Jews persisted in their unbelief, blaspheming him, as it says in Mt 28(:39). Hence he adds *a people who do not believe, but contradict me*: "Consider him who endured such contradiction against himself from sinners" (Heb 12:3).

857. In another way, it can be taken as referring to God stretching out his hands to do miracles: "When you stretch out your hand to cures and signs and prodigies to be worked through the holy name of your son Jesus." The meaning then would be: *All the day*, i.e., through the whole time of my preaching, *I have stretched out my hands*, by working miracles, *to a people who do not believe*, even when they see miracles: "If I had not done the works which no other man has done, they would not have sin" (John 15:24); *but contradict me*, i.e., slander my miracles, in accord with Mt 12(:24), "By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he casts out demons"; "Your people are like those who contradict a priest" (Hos 4:4).

858. Thirdly, it can be understood of God stretching out his hands to give benefits to his people, in accord with Pr 1:24: “I stretched out my hands, and there was none who paid attention.” The meaning would then be: *All the day*, i.e., through the whole time of the Law and the prophets, *I stretched out my hands* to give benefits *to a people who do not believe but contradict me*: “Always you have been rebellious against the Lord” (Dt 31:27).

Chapter 11

Lecture 1

- (1) [n. 589] I ask, then, has God rejected his people? [n. 861] Let it not be! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.
- (2) [n. 862] God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. [n. 864] Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?
- (3) [n. 867] "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have demolished thy altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life."
- (4) [n. 870] But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."
- (5) [n. 871] So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.
- (6) But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.
- (7) [n. 872] What then? Israel failed to obtain what it sought. The elect obtained it, but the rest were blinded,
- (8) [n. 873] as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that should not see and ears that should not hear, down to this very day."
- (9) [n. 876] And David says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a pitfall and a retribution for them;
- (10) [n. 877] let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs for ever."

859. After showing that the fall of the Jews is deplorable, though not entirely excusable [n. 813], the Apostle now shows that it is not universal.

First, he raises a question;

secondly, he answer it [v. 1b; n. 861];

thirdly, he draws a conclusion [v. 7; n. 872].

860. First, therefore, he says: *I ask then, has God rejected his people?* i.e., the Jews, because he calls them unbelieving and contrary. Even the Psalmist asks: "O God, why dost thou cast us for ever?" (Ps 74:1; "The Lord has scorned his altar" (Lam 2:7).

861. Then when he says, *By no means*, he answers the question and shows that God has not totally rejected the Jewish people. And this is what he says: *By no means* has the Jewish people been rejected in its entirety. He proves this, first of all, with respect to himself, saying: *I myself*, living in the faith of Christ, *am an Israelite* by race: "are they Israelites? So am I" (2 Cor 11:22).

And because there were among the people of Israel some proselytes not descended in the flesh from the patriarchs, he says that this is not so of him, adding: *a descendant of Abraham*: "Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I" (2 Cor 11:23).

Furthermore, among the Jewish people the tribes were distinguished according to the sons of Jacob, some of whom were sons of slaves and some of wives. Joseph and Benjamin were sons of Rachel, Jacob's fondest wife. Hence he shows his eminence among the Jewish people, saying: *a member of the tribe of Benjamin*: "Of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin" (Phil 3:5). Hence, some apply to Paul what is in Gen (49:27): "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf, in the morning devouring the prey, and at evening dividing the spoil."

862. Secondly, when he says: *God has not rejected*, he shows that his people has not been rejected by God in regard to many chosen ones.

First, he states is proposition;

secondly, he recalls a similar situation [v. 2b; n. 864];

thirdly, he adapts it [v. 5; n. 871].

863. First, therefore, he says: Not only have I not been rejected, but *God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew*, i.e., the predestined ones: "For the Lord will not reject his people" (Ps 94:14). The Apostle applies this to the predestined.

864. Then when he says, *Do you not know*, he recalls a similar situation which occurred during the time of Elijah, when all the people seemed to have turned from the worship of the one God.

First, he presents Elijah's plea;

secondly, the Lord's reply [v. 4; n. 870].

865. First, therefore, he says: *Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah*, i.e., in the book written about Elijah? For the entire Book of Kings was written mainly to make known the saying and deeds of the Prophets. That is why it is counted among the prophetic books, as Jerome says. *How he pleads with God against Israel*.

866. The word of Samuel seems to be contrary to this when he says: "Far from me be this sin against the Lord, that I should cease to pray for you" (1 Sam 12:23). Much less, then, should one intervene against the people.

But it should be noted that prophets intervene against the people in three ways: in one way by conforming their wills to the divine will revealed to them, as it says in Ps (58:10): "The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance." In another way by

intervening against the kingdom of sin, in order that men's sins but not men be destroyed.

In a third way that the intervention or prayer be construed as a denunciation, as in Jer (17:18): "Let them that persecute me be confounded," i.e., they will be confounded.

867. In this intervention Isaiah alleges two things against them.

First, the impiety they committed against the worship of god. First, by persecuting His ministers, to which he refers when he says: *Lord, they have killed thy prophets*:

"Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?" (Ac 7:52); "Has it not been told my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord" (1 Kings 18:13).

Secondly, impiety against God's holy places, as it says in Ps (74:7): "They set they sanctuary on fire." In regard to this he says: They have demolished thy altars.

868. Here it should be noted what the Lord commanded, saying: "You shall seek the place which the Lord your God will choose out of all your tribes to put his name and make hi habitation there; thither you shall go, and thither you shall bring your burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Dt 12:5-6). However, before the temples was built, the people were allowed to build altars in various places for divine worship; but because this became illegal after the temple had been built, the pious king Hezekiah destroyed all such altars. And that is what it says in 2 Kgs (18:220 "Is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'?" Therefore, what Hezekiah did in a spirit of piety, Achab and Jezebel did in a spirit of impiety in their desire to root out the worship of God entirely.

869. Thirdly [cf. n. 867], he alleges against them the impiety they intended to do, saying: *and I alone am left*, namely, to worship the one God, because the rest did not show very clearly that they were God's worshippers: *and they seek my life*. For Jezebel

had sent word to Elijah, saying: "so may the gods do to me, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them (1Kgs 19:2), namely of the prophets of Baal whom Elijah had killed.

870. Then he gives the divine reply, saying: *But what is God's reply to him*, i.e., to Elijah. It is this: *I have kept for myself*, i.e., for my worship by not permitting them to fall into sin, *seven thousand men* (this definite number is put in place of the uncertain number, because seven and thousand are perfect numbers), *who have not bowed the knee to Baal*, i.e. who have not abandoned the worship of God: "All who call on my name, whom I created for my glory" (Is 43:17).

871. Then when he says, *So, too, at the present time*, he adapts all this to the present situation.

First, he sets out the adaptation, saying: *So, too, at the present time*, in which a multitude of people seems to have gone astray, *there is a remnant chosen by grace*, saved according to the choice of God's grace: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (Jn 15:16).

Secondly, he draws the conclusion from this: *But if it is by grace* that they have been saved, *it is no longer on the basis of works*: "He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy" (Tit 3:5).

Thirdly, that this conclusion follows from the premises is shown when he says: *Otherwise*, i.e., if grace is in virtue of works, *grace would no longer be grace*, for it is given gratis: "The free gift of righteousness through his grace" (Rom 5:17).

872. Then when he says, *What then*, he draws the conclusion he intended.

And first he sets it out, saying *What then* shall we say follows from what has been said? This, namely, that *Israel*, as far as the greater part of its people was concerned, *failed to obtain what it sought*, namely, righteousness. This is the way one must interpret what was said above (9:31): "But Israel whop pursued the righteousness based on the law did not attain it."

Nevertheless, *the elect* of the Jews *obtained it*: "He chose us in him, that we should be holy" (Eph 1:4). But *the rest were hardened* because of their malice: "Their own malice blinded them" (Wis 1:22)

873. Then when he says, *As it is written*, he clarifies the first part of the conclusion:

first, on the authority of Isaiah;

secondly, of David [v. 9; n. 876].

874. In regard to the first it should be noted that the Apostle bases himself on two passages from Isaiah. For it says in Is (29:10): "The Lord has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep." In regard to this he says: *God gave them a spirit of compunction*, which has to do with a perversity of emotion.

For compunction implies a puncturing of the heart or sorrow. Hence there is good compunction by which ones grieves over his own sins, as it says in Ps 60(:3), "You have made us drunk with the wine of compunction." There is also evil compunction, i.e., the compunction of envy, by which one grieves over the goods of another.

Therefore God gave them this spirit of compunction, i.e., envy, not by instilling malice but by withdrawing grace, as was said above (10:19): "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation."

875. Likewise it says in Is (6:10): "Male the heart of this people fat, and their eyes heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears." In this vein he designates their weakened power of knowing, when he adds: *eyes that should not see* the miracles which Christ performed in their presence, *and ears that should not hear* fruitfully the teachings of Christ and the apostle: "He sees many things but does not observe then, his ears are open, but he does not hear" (Is 42:20).

To this the Apostle adds on his own: *down to this very day*, because they will see and hear at the end of the world, when the hearts of the children will be converted to the hearts of their fathers, as it says in Mal (4:5).

876. Then when he says, *And David says*, he presents the authority of David on the same point.

First, he touches on the things which occasioned the fall of the Jews, saying " *Let their table*, i.e. the malice with which sinners are nourished: "Though wickedness is sweet in his mouth, though he hides it under his tongue" (Jb 20:12). This table is before them, when they sin from malice aforethought and it *becomes a snare*, i.e., a temptation to sin: "He who combs out of the pit shall be caught in the snare: (Is 24:18) *and a trap*, when they succumb to the pleasure of the temptation: "They shall be trapped and taken" (Is 8:15) *and a pitfall*, when they fall from one sin into another: "Much peace to those who love your law, and it is not a pitfall to them" (Ps 119:165) *and a retribution for them*, namely, when they will be punished for their sins. Or because they very fact that God permits them so to fall is itself a retribution for their sins: "Render to the proud their deserts" (Ps 94:2).

Or the table is the Sacred Scripture put before the Jews: “She has set forth her table” (Pr 9:2). It becomes a snare, when something ambiguous occurs; a trap, when it is not correctly understood, a pitfall, when it falls into obstinate error; and a retribution , as explained above.

877. Secondly, he mentions the weakening of their power to understand when he says: *let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see*, which is said more as a prediction than as a desire; *and their backs*, i.e., free choice, which carries something for good or for evil, *bend forever*, i.e., bend from eternal things to temporal things, from the path of justice to iniquity: "Bow down, that we may pass over" (Is 51:23).

Lecture 2

(11) [n. 878] So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? Let it not be! But through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make them jealous.

(12) [n. 883] Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their diminution means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fullness mean!

(13) [n. 885] Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I honor my ministry

(14) [n. 888] in order to make my flesh jealous, and thus save some of them.

(15) [n. 890] For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

(16) [n. 891] If the representative sample is holy, so is the whole lump; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

878. After showing that the fall of the Jews is not universal [n. 859], the Apostle now begins to show that their fall was neither useless nor irreparable.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he shows that the fall of the Jews is useful and reparable;

secondly, he disputes the Gentiles' boasting against the Jews [v. 17; n. 894].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he asks a question;

secondly, he answers it [v. 11b; n. 880].

879. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated and proved that except for the chosen, the rest of the Jews have been blinded. So the question arises: *Have they stumbled so as to fall?*

This can be interpreted in two ways: the first way is this: Has God permitted them to stumble only so as to fall, i.e., not for any benefit that might follow but merely willing their fall? This, of course, would be contrary to God's goodness which, as Augustine says, is so great that it would not permit any evil to occur except for some good, which He draws out of the evil. Hence it says in Jb (34:24): "He shall break in pieces many and innumerable, and shall make others to stand in their stead"; and in Rev (3:11): "Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown,": namely, because God permits some to fall in order that their fall be the occasion of salvation for others.

Another interpretation is this: *Have they stumbled so as to fall?* i.e., to remain fallen forever: "will he not rise again from where he lies?" (Ps 41:8).

880. Then when he says, *Let it not be!* he answers the question:

first, according to the second interpretation that it is reparable;

second, he resolves the question according to the second interpretation, showing that the Jews' situation is reparable [883].

881. First, therefore, he says: *By no means* was their fall useless; rather, *by their*, namely, the Jews', *trespass, salvation has come to the Gentiles*. Hence the Lord Himself says: "Salvation is from the Jews" (Jn 4:22).

This can be understood in three ways. In the first way, that *by their trespass*, which they committed in killing Christ, the salvation of the Gentiles was obtained through the redemption of Christ's blood: "you know that you were ransomed not with perishable things, such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of the Lamb" (1 Pt 1:18).

In the second way, it can be understood of the trespass by which they rejected the teaching of the apostles, with the result that the apostles preached to the Gentiles, as it says in Ac (13:46): "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it from you, we turn to the Gentiles."

In a third way it can be understood as meaning that on account of their impenitence they have been scattered among all the nations. As a result Christ and the Church had from the books of the Jews testimony to the Christian faith helpful in converting the Gentiles, who might have suspected that the prophecies concerning the testimony of the Jews; hence it says in Ps 59 (v.10): "Let me look in triumph on my enemies," i.e., the Jews. "Slay them not, lest my people forget, make them totter by thy power."

882. There follows *so that they may be jealous of them*.

And because he does not say who or whom, and since there are two kinds of jealousy, namely that of indignation and that of imitation, this phrase can be explained in four ways.

The first way is this. The Gentiles are jealous of *them*, namely the Jews, such that they imitate them in the worship of the one God: “You were at one time without Christ, alien to the way of life of Israel,” and later he adds, “But now you, who were once far off, have been drawn near in the blood of Christ” (Eph 2:12); “You have become imitators of the Church of God” (1Th 2:14), which was in Judea.

Or it can be interpreted this way. The Gentiles are jealous of the Jews, i.e., they are indignant against them on account of their unbelief: “I beheld the transgressors and I pined away, because they do not keep your words” (Ps 118:158).

Thirdly, it can be understood in this way. The Jews are jealous, i.e., imitate the Gentiles when everywhere, and now some of them particularly, are converted to the faith, imitating the faith of the Gentiles; and in the end all Israel will be saved when the fullness of the Gentiles have entered. Thus will be fulfilled what is said in Dt 28(44), “He will be the head and you will be the tail.”

Fourthly, it can be interpreted this way. The Jews are jealous of the Gentiles, i.e., are disturbed out of envy towards them when they see their glory passing over to them: “I will provoke you by that which is not a people” (Dt 22:21).

883. Then when he says, *Now if their trespass*, he answers the question as interpreted in the second way and shows that the fall of the Jews is reparable. He does this in three ways:

first, from its usefulness;

secondly, from the Apostle's intention [v. 12; n. 885];

thirdly, from the condition of that people [v. 16; n. 891].

In regard to the first he presents the following reason: a good is more powerful than an evil in producing usefulness, but the evil which befell the Jews produced something very useful for the Gentiles, therefore, their good will produce greater usefulness for the world. What he is saying is this: It has been said that by their trespass the salvation of the Gentiles was achieved. *Now if their trespass*, i.e., the Jews', *means riches for the world*, i.e., for the Gentiles, because the trespass of the Jews resulted in spiritual riches for the Gentiles, (This refers to their guilt, *and their failure*, by which they fell from the lofty glory they had, pertains to their punishment). "For we are diminished more than any nation and are brought low in all the earth this day for our sins" (Dan 3:37). *How much more will their full inclusion*, i.e., their spiritual abundance or their multitude converted to God, result in riches for the Gentiles: "My abode is in the full assembly of saints" (Sir 24:16).

And so, if for the benefit of the whole world God permitted the Jews to do wrong and be diminished, much more will He repair their disaster for the benefit of the whole world.

885. Then when he says, *For I am speaking to you Gentiles*, he shows the same things by revealing the purpose of his ministry, which he first states;

secondly, he assigns the reason [v. 15; n. 890].

886. In regard to the first it should be noted that whereas the previous parts of the epistle were directed to all the believers in Rome, whether from the Jews or from the Gentiles, he is now directing his words to the converted Gentiles.

887. He says, therefore: I have stated that their fullness will mean riches for the world. As testimony to this I say to you Gentiles, i.e., Gentiles converted to the faith: "I said, 'Behold me' to a nation that did not call upon my name" (Is 65:1). This, I repeat, I say to you: *inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles*, the special care of whom has fallen to me on account of the office entrusted to me: "For this was I appointed a preacher and apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth" (1 Tim 2:7); *I will magnify my ministry* not with things that pertain to worldly honor: but first by adorning it with good morals: "As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way in much patience." (2 Cor 6:4). Secondly, by performing extra works to which he was not bound: "What then is my reward? Just this: that by making his anxiety embrace everyone's salvation: "Apart from all other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches" (2 Cor 11:28).

888. Hence he adds: *in order to make my flesh*, i.e., the Jews, who are related to me in the flesh, as was said above in chapter 9(3), *jealous*: "Do not despise your own flesh" (Is 58:7): *and thus save some of them*, namely, of the Jews: "not seeking my own advantage but that of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor 10:33).

889. But this seems contrary to what he says in 2 Cor (10:13): "But we will not boast beyond limit, but will keep to the limits God apportioned us, to reach even to you" But he had not accepted the limit of his service, which was to the Gentiles. Therefore, he should not have concerned himself about the Jews.

Some say that the Jews living in Judea did not pertain to his apostolate, but to that of Peter, James and John (Gal c.2). But the Jews living among the Gentiles pertained to his apostolate and he worked for their salvation.

But this seems contrary to his statement here. For if those Jews were the limit of his apostolate, he would not be magnifying his service.

Therefore, it must be said that preaching to the Gentiles was committed to him in such a way that he was bound to it by necessity, as he says: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel. For necessity is laid upon me" (1 Cor 9:16); but he was not forbidden to preach to the Jews, even though he was not bound to do so. Consequently, by working for their salvation he magnified his service. But he would not have done this, if he thought their fall irreparable.

Hence the Apostle's very zeal for the conversion of the Jews was the sign he adduced for stating that the fall of the Jews was reparable.

890. Then when he says, *For if*, he assigns the reason for his interest, namely, that the conversion of the Jews would contribute to the salvation of the Gentiles. Hence he says, *For if their loss*, i.e., their unbelief and disobedience, as a slave is said to be lost when he flees from the cave and obedience of his master. *If I say the loss of the Jews means the reconciliation of the world*, inasmuch as we have been reconciled to God through the death of Christ, *what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?* i.e., that the Jews will be accepted again by God, as it says in Zech (11:17): "I took unto me two rods." What, I say, will such an acceptance mean but that it will make the Gentiles rise to life?

For Gentiles are the believers who will grow lukewarm: "Because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grown cold" (Mt 24:12), or will fall away entirely, being deceived by Antichrist. These will be restored to their primitive fervor after the conversion of the Jews.

891. Then when he says, *If the dough*, he proves the same thing by considering the statue of the Jewish race.

This he does in two ways.

First, on the part of the apostles, when he says: *If the representative portion [delibatio] is holy, so is the whole lump.*

The apostles chosen by God from the Jewish people are the representative sample taken from the whole lump. If, therefore, the apostles are holy, the consequence is that the Jewish people are holy. "You are a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Pt 2:9).

892. Secondly, he proves the same thing on the part of the patriarchs, who are compared to the Jews as root to branches; hence it says in Is (11:1): "there shall come forth a rod from the root of Jesse." If, therefore, the patriarchs, who are the root, are holy, then the Jews, who grew from them as branches, are also holy.

893. But this seems to conflict with what is said in Ex (18:9): "if a man is righteous, he shall surely live." Therefore, it does not follow that if the root is holy, so also the branches.

The answer is that the Apostle is not speaking here of actual holiness, for he does not mean to say that unbelieving Jews are holy; but of potential holiness. For if their ancestors and descendants are holy, nothing prevents them from being called back to holiness themselves.

Or one might answer that those who imitate the patriarchs are a special type of branch, as it says in Jn (8:39): "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did."

Lecture 3

(17) [n. 894] But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place to share the richness of the olive tree,

(18) [n. 897] do not boast over the branches. If you do boast, remember it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you.

(19) [n. 898] You will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."

(20) [n. 900] That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast only through faith. So do not taste high things, but stand in awe.

(21) [n. 902] For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

(22) [n. 903] Note then the goodness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's goodness to you, [n. 906] provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off.

(23) [n. 908] And even the others, if they do not persist in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.

(24) [n. 910] For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

894. After showing that the fall of the Jews was useful and reparable, the Apostle now forbids the Gentiles to boast against the Jews.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he shows that the converted Gentiles must not boast against the Jews;

secondly, he answers an objection from the Gentiles [v. 19; n. 898].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he forbids the Gentiles to boast against the Jews;

secondly, he gives the reason for this prohibition [v. 18b; n. 897].

895. There seemed to be two things that might tempt the Gentiles to boast against the Jews.

First, the defection of the Jews. Hence he says: We have stated that if the root is holy, so too the branches. *But if some of the branches*, i.e., some of the Jews but not all, *were broken off*, i.e., separated from the faith of their fathers who are compared as the root, *do not boast*: "The flame will dry up his shoots" (Jb 15:30); "The branches not being perfect shall be broken" (Wis 4:5).

The second ground for boasting was their own promotion. But the lower the state from which one has been promoted, the more he is inclined to vain boasting, as it says in Pr (30:21): "By three things the earth is disturbed, and the fourth it cannot bear: By a slave when he reigns..." Hence he reminds them of the low state from which they were raised, saying: *And you, O Gentile, a wild olive shoot*, i.e., a tree bearing no fruit: "He shall be like tamaric in the desert" (Jer 17:6); "Every tree that does not bear fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Mt 3:10).

896. Then he describes their promotion.

First, that they have been raised to the dignity of that race; hence, he says: *you were grafted in their place*: "He shall break in pieces many and innumerable, and shall make others to stand in their stead" (Job 34:24).

Secondly that they have been made associates of the patriarchs, whom he had compared to the root; hence he says: *to share the root*, i.e., united to the patriarchs and prophets: "Many will come from the east and west, and sit at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 8:11).

Thirdly, that they share the glory of the apostles when he says: *and share the richness of the olive tree*. The Jewish race is called the olive tree on account of the rich spiritual fruit they bore: "The Lord called you once a plentiful olive tree, fruitful and beautiful" (Jer 11:16); "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God" (Ps 52:8). But just as the roots of this olive tree are the patriarchs and prophets, so its richness is the abundance of the Holy Spirit's grace, which the apostles had more than all the others. This, therefore, is the way the Gentiles have been promoted to a partnership with that people, namely, with the patriarchs, apostles and prophets: "You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph 2:19).

And although these may seem to be reasons for boasting, do not boast against the branches, i.e., against the Jews: "Your boasting is not good" (1 Cor 5:1).

897. Then when he says, *If you do boast*, he gives the reason for his admonition, saying: *If* in spite of this admonition *you do boast* by insulting the Jews, who stand upright or have been cut off, you should *remember* as a check to your boasting that *it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you*, i.e., Judea did not receive salvation from the Gentiles, but just the reverse: "Salvation is from the Jews" (Jn 4:22). Hence, Abraham was promised that all the nations of the earth would be blessed in him (Gen c.22).

898. Then when he says, *You will say*, he excludes an objection from the Gentiles:

first, he presents the objection;

secondly, he excludes it [v. 20; n. 900];

thirdly, he urges them to scrutinize God's judgments [v. 22; n. 903].

899. First, therefore, he says: Therefore, O Gentile, who boasts against the Jews, you might say: *Branches were broken off, so that I might be grafted in*, i.e., God permitted the Jews to fall from faith, so that I might enter into faith.

But no one accepts the loss of one thing save for something more precious and more desired, just as a physician allows a foot to remain sore in order to heal the eye. Thus, it would seem that the Gentile nations are more valuable and acceptable to God than Judea. Hence it says in Mal (1:10): "I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hands. For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations" and in Is (49:6): "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob; I will give you as a light to the nations."

900. Then when he says, *That is true*, he excludes the objection.

First, he assigns the reason why the Jews fell away and the Gentiles were promoted, saying: *That is true*, i.e., that God permitted branches to be broken off, so that you might be grafted in, but consider the cause of the breaking off of the branches. It is *because of their unbelief*, i.e., because they refused to believe in Christ, *that they were broken off*: "If I speak the truth, why do you not believe me?" (Jn 8:46). *But you*, O Gentile, *stand fast in faith*, i.e., by believing in Christ, through Whom you have obtained

grace: "I preached to you the gospel, in which you stand, by which you are saved" (1 Cor 15:1).

901. Secondly, he gives an admonition, saying: *So do not become proud*, i.e., do not presume on yourself beyond yourself: "Do not be haughty, but consent to lower things" (Rom 12:15); *but stand in awe*, lest you too be broken off because of unbelief: "The fear of the Lord drives out sin" (Sir 1:27).

902. The reason for this admonition is given when he says: *But if the natural branches*, i.e., the Jews, who descended by natural origin from the patriarchs, *God did not spare* but allowed to be broken off, *neither will he spare you*, i.e., he might permit you to be broken off because of unbelief: "The jealousy and rage of the husband will not spare on the day of revenge" (Pr 6:34); "I will not spare and I will not pardon; nor will I have mercy, but to destroy them" (Jer 13:14).

This, therefore, is the Apostle's answer; that when someone sees that he has obtained grace and another has fallen, he should not boast against the fallen but rather fear for himself, because pride is the cause of falling headlong and fear is the cause of carefulness and being kept safe.

903. Then when he says, *Note then the kindness and severity of God*, he invites them to a close scrutiny of divine judgments:

first, he invites them to consider;

secondly, he instructs them as though unable to consider by themselves [v. 25); n. 912];

thirdly, as though he himself were not perfectly capable of this investigation, he exclaims in admiration of God's wisdom [v. 33; n. 933].

904. In regard to the first he does three things: first, he shows what should be considered, saying: *Note then*, i.e., give careful consideration to, *the kindness of God* having mercy: "How good, O Israel, is God to the upright of heart" (Ps 72:1); "Do you presume upon the riches of his kindness" (Rom 2:4); *and his severity* in punishing: "O Lord, thou God of vengeance (Ps 94:1); "The Lord is a jealous God and avenging (Nah 1:2).

For the first consideration begets hope, the second begets fear, so that despair and presumption are avoided.

905. Secondly, he indicates the ones affected by each of these two qualities, saying: *toward those who have fallen*, i.e., the Jews, *severity*: "The Lord has destroyed without mercy all the habitations of Jacob" (Lam 2:2); *but to you*, the engrafted Gentile, *kindness*: "You have dealt kindly with your servant, O Lord" (Ps 119:65).

906. Thirdly, he shows how the foregoing points should be considered, since the situation is not immutable but could change in the future.

907. First, he shows this with respect to the Gentiles, saying: *To you*, I say, *kindness*, if you persevere in goodness: "Remain in my love" (Jn 15:9); *otherwise*, if you do not strive to persevere through fear and humility, *you too will be cut off*: "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down" (Mt 3:10).

908. Secondly, he shows the same with respect to the Jews. First, he states the fact: *and even the others*, namely, the Jews, *if they do not persist in their unbelief, will be grafted in*, i.e., restored to their former status: "Thou has prostituted thyself to many lovers. Nevertheless, return to me, says the Lord" (Jer 3:1).

909. Then he proves what he has said: First, from God's power, saying: *For God has the power to graft them in against*; therefore, their salvation is not to be despaired of: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Is 59:1). Secondly, by arguing from the lesser, saying: *For if you, O Gentile, have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree*, i.e., from Gentileness, which by nature was not fruit-bearing, not as God made nature, but because it was spoiled by sin: "They were a wicked generation, and their malice natural" (Wis 12:10); "We were by nature children of wrath" (Eph 2:3); *and grafted into a cultivated olive tree*, i.e., into the faith of the Jews, *contrary to nature*, i.e., against the common course of nature. (For it is not the custom to graft the branch of a bad tree onto a good tree, but vice versa.

But what God does is not against nature; it is natural in the fullest sense. For we call that natural which is caused by an agent to which the patient is naturally subject, even if it is not in keeping with the specific nature of the patient; for just as the ebb and flow of the sea is natural, because it is produced by the motion of the moon, to which the water is naturally subject, although it is not natural to the nature of water: so, too, since every creature is naturally subject to God, whatever God does in creatures is natural in the full sense, although it is not natural to the proper and particular nature of the thing in which it is done, say when a blind man has sight restored or a dead man is revived).

911. If, I say, this was contrary to nature, *how much more will these natural branches*, i.e., which by natural origin pertain to the Jewish nation, *be grafted back into their own olive tree*, i.e., be brought back to the greatness of their nation: "He will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers" (Mal 4:6).

Lecture 4

(25) [n. 912] For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own conceits: a blindness in part has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles come in,

(26) and so all Israel will be saved; [n. 917] as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will take out, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob";

(27) [n. 920] "and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins."

(28) [n. 921] As regards the gospel they are enemies of God, for your sake; but as regards election they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers.

(29) [n. 924] For the gifts and the call of God are without repentance.

(30) [n. 930] Just as you once did not believe God but now have received mercy because of their unbelief,

(31) so they have now not believed in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may receive mercy.

(32) [n. 932] For God has consigned all men to unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all.

912. After leading the Gentiles to a knowledge of the divine judgments, in which God's kindness and severity were manifested, the Apostle, acting as though they are still unable to consider these things, explains how they seem to him.

First, he presents the fact;

secondly, he proves it [v. 26b; n. 917];

thirdly, he gives the reason [v. 30; n. 930].

913. In regard to the first he does three things.

First, he states his intention, saying: IO have urged you to consider the kindness and severity of God, *because I want you to understand this mystery*, for you cannot grasp all mysteries. Hence, this is a prerogative of the perfect to whom the Lord say: "To you it has been given to understand the mystery of God's kingdom: (Lk 8:9); "I will not hide from you the mysteries of God" (Wis 6:24). But ignorance of this mystery would be very damaging to us.

914. Secondly, he discloses the reason for his intention: *that you not be wise in your own conceits*, i.e., not presume on your own understanding to condemn others and prefer yourself to them: "Never be conceited" (Rom 1:16); "Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight (Is 5:21).

915. Thirdly, he states what he intended.

First, with respect to the fall of particular Jews, when he says: *a hardening has come upon Israel*, not universally but *upon a part*: "Blind the heart of this people" (Is 6:10).

Secondly, he predicts the end of this blindness, saying: *until the full number of the Gentiles come in* to the faith, i.e., not only some Gentile nations as were then converted; but either in all or the greater part the Church would be establishes: "The earth is the Lord's and all its fullness" (Ps 23:1).

The Gentiles converted to the faith are said to come in, as though from the exterior and visible things they venerated into spiritual things and the divine will: "Come into his presence with singing" (Ps 100:2).

916. It should be noted that the word, *until*, can signify the cause of the blindness of the Jews. For God permitted them to be blinded, in order that the full number of the Gentiles come in.

It can also designate the termination, i.e., that the blindness of the Jews will last up to the time when the full number of the Gentiles will come to the faith. With this agrees his next statement, namely, *and then*, i.e., when the full number of the Gentiles has come in, *all Israel will be saved*, not some, as now, but universally all: "I will save them by the Lord their God" (Hos 1:7); "He will again have compassion upon us (Mic 7:19).

917. Then when he says, *As it is written*, he proves what he had said about the future salvation of the Jews:

first, he proves this with an authority;

secondly, with a reason [v. 28; n. 921].

918. First, therefore, he says: I say that all Israel will be saved, as it is written in Is (59:20), where our text says: "A redeemer will come from Zion and this will be my covenant with them that return to Jacob says the Lord." But the Apostle uses the Septuagint and touches on three things.

First, the coming of a Savior, when he says: *God will come*, in human flesh to save us, *from Zion*, i.e., from the Jewish people who are signified by Zion, the citadel of Jerusalem, a city in Judea. Hence it says in Zech (9:9): " Rejoice greatly, o daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, our king comes to you..." and in Jn (4:22): "Salvation is from the Jews."

Or he says that he comes from Zion, not because he was born there, but because his doctrine went from there into the whole world, inasmuch as the apostles received the Holy Spirit in the cenacle in Zion: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law" (Is 2:3).

919. Secondly, he touches on salvation by Christ offered to the Jews, saying: *he will banish ungodliness from Jacob*. This could refer to deliverance from punishment: "He will snatch my soul from death" (Ps 115:8). *Banish ungodliness from Jacob* could refer to deliverance from guilt: "O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion" (Ps 53:6).

Or both could refer to liberation from guilt, but he says *he will take out*, because of the few, who now are converted with great difficulty and with, so to speak, a certain violence: "As if a shepherd should get out of the lion's mouth two legs, or the tip of the ear, so shall the children of Israel be taken out" (Amos 3:12). But he says *will banish ungodliness from Jacob* to show the ease with which the Jews will be converted at the end of the world: "Who is a God like thee, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance?" (Mic 7:18).

920. Thirdly, he shows the manner of salvation when he says: *And this will be my covenant with them*, a new one from me, *when I take away their sins*. For the old covenant did not remove sins, because "it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb 10:4). Therefore, because the Old Testament was imperfect, a new testament is promised to them: "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah" (Jer 31:31) and it will have the power to remit sin through the blood of Christ: "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many

for the forgiveness of sins" (Mt 26:28); "He will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea" (Mic 7:19).

921. Then when he says, *As regards the gospel*, he proves his statement with a reason:

first, he presents the proof;

secondly, he removes an objection [v. 29; n. 924].

922. First, therefore, he says that their sins will be taken away and that after they have sins, they are enemies of Christ. *As regards the gospel*, which they resist, *they are enemies for your sake*, i.e., it has turned out to your benefit. Hence, it says in Lk (19:27): "As for those enemies of mind, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me"; and in Jn (15:24): "But now they have seen and hated both me and my Father."

Or *as regards the gospel* means their enmity has helped the gospel, which has been spread everywhere by reason of such enmity: "In the word of truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing" (Col 1:5).

923. But *they are beloved by God for the sake of their forefathers as regards election*, because He chose their descendants on account of their forefathers' grace: "The Lord loved your fathers and chose their descendants after them" (Dt 10:15).

This does not mean that the merits established by the fathers were the cause of the eternal election of the descendants, but that God from all eternity chose the fathers and the sons in such a way that the children would obtain salvation on account of the fathers; not as though the merits of the fathers were sufficient for the salvation of the

sons, but through an outpouring of divine grace and mercy, the sons would be saved on account of the promises made to the fathers.

Or it can mean *as regards election*, i.e., as regards those elected from that people, salvation was obtained. For if they are dear to God, it is reasonable that they be saved by God: "The eye hath not seen, O God, besides thee, what things thou has prepared for them that wait for thee" (Is 64:4).

924. Then when he says, *For the gifts*, he excludes an objection.

For someone might claim that even though the Jews were formerly beloved on account of their forefathers, nevertheless the hostility they exert against the gospel prevents them from being saved in the future. But the Apostle asserts that this is false, saying: *The gifts and call o God are irrevocable*, i.e., without repentance. As if to say: That God gives something to certain ones or call certain ones is *without repentance*, because God does not change His mind: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind" (Ps 110:4).

925. However, this seems false, for the Lord says: "It repenteth me that I made man" (Gen 6:7) and "if that nation against which I have spoken shall repent of their evil, I also will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them" (Jer 18:8).

The answer is that just as God is said to grow angry, not because the emotion of anger is in him but because he is related to the effect of punishments after the manner of an angry man, so he is said to repent, not because the change involved in repentance is in him but because he changes what he had done after the manner of one who repents.

926. Nevertheless, it does seem that God's gifts are not without repentance, because they are frequently lost, as in Mt (25:28): "Take the talent from him and give it

to him that has ten talents." Furthermore, God's call seems to be changed sometimes, since it is written: "Many are called but few are chosen" (Mt 22:14).

But it should be noted that "gift" is taken here for a promise made according to God's foreknowledge or predestination, and "call" is taken for election. Because both are so certain, whatever God promises is as good as given and whomever He elects is somehow already called. Such temporal gifts and callings are not voided by a change in God, as though He repented of them, but by a change in man who casts them off: "Take heed lest anyone be wanting in the grace of God" (Heb 12:15).

927. This passage can also be taken to mean that God's gifts which are bestowed in baptism, and the calling by which the baptized person is called, exist without the repentance of the baptized person. Furthermore, it was introduced to counteract any despair about the future salvation of the Jews, since they do not seem to repent of their sin.

But against this interpretation are the words of Peter: "Repent and be baptized everyone of you" (Ac 2:38).

This can be answered by recalling that repentance is of two kinds: interior and exterior. Interior repentance consists in the heart's contrition by which one is sorry for past sins. Such repentance is required of the baptized, because, as Augustine says: "No one who is arbiter of his own will can begin the new life, unless he repents of the old life; otherwise, he would approach dissembling."

But exterior repentance consists in making satisfaction outwardly, and this is not required of the baptized person, because by baptismal grace man is freed not only of guilt but of all penalty, in virtue of the passion of Christ who satisfied for the sins of all: "All

of us who have been baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death" (Rom 6:3); "By the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ" (Tit 3:5).

928. But since the keys of the Church and all the other sacraments work by the power of Christ's passion, it seems that by the same reasoning all the other sacraments should liberate man from guilt and from all punishment.

But the answer is that Christ's passion works in baptism in the manner of a generation, which requires that a man die completely to his former life to receive a new life. And because the debt of punishment belongs to the oldness of the former life, it is taken away in baptism. But in the other sacraments Christ's passion works in the manner of a cleansing, as in the sacrament of penance. But a cleansing does not require that right away every remnant of weakness be taken away. And the same argument applies to the other sacraments.

929. But since the confession of sins is relevant for exterior repentance, one could ask whether confession of sins is required at baptism. And it seems that it is, because Mt 3(:6) says that men were baptized by John, "confessing their sins."

But the answer is that John's baptism was a baptism of repentance, namely because by receiving that baptism they declared that they would undertake penance for their sins, and so it was fitting that they should confess so that penance could be meted out to them in accord with the nature of their sins. But Christ's baptism is a baptism for the remission of all sins, such that the baptized person no longer owes any satisfaction for his past sins, and for this reason there is no need for vocal confession. For the reason

confession is necessary on the sacrament of penance is so that the priest can, by the power of the keys, fittingly loose or bind the penitent.

930. Then when he says, *Just as you were*, he gives the reason for the future salvation of the Jews after their unbelief.

First, he shows a similarity between the salvation of both people;
secondly, the cause of this similarity [v. 32; n. 932].

931. First, therefore, he says: So I say that Israel will be saved, although they are now enemies. *For just as you Gentiles once did not believe God*: “You were once without God in the world” (Eph 2:12); *but now have received mercy because of their unbelief*: below (15:9), “The Gentiles are to honor God for his mercy”; “I will have mercy on him who was without mercy” (Hos 2:23). And this was *because of their unbelief*, which was the occasion of your salvation, as was said above.

So they, i.e., the Jews, *now*, i.e., in the time of grace, *have not believed*, namely, Christ: “Why do you not believe me?” (Jn 8:46). And this is what he adds: *In order that by the mercy shown to you*, i.e., in Christ's grace, by which you have obtained mercy: “You have saved us according to your mercy” (Tit 3:5). Or they *have not believed* so that they enter into your mercy. Or they *have not believed*, which turned out to be the occasion of the mercy shown to you, *in order that they also* at some time *may receive mercy*: “The Lord will have compassion on Jacob” (Is 14:1).

932. Then when he says, *For God*, he gives the reason for this similarity, namely, because God wills that His mercy find room in all. And this is what he says: *For God has included*, i.e., allowed to be included, *all*, i.e., every race of men, both Jews and Gentiles, *in unbelief*, as in a chain of error: “They were all bound together with one chain of

darkness" (Wis 17:17), *that he may have mercy on us*, i.e., that His mercy find a place in every race of men. This should not be extended to included demons, as Origen would, or even to all men individually, but to all races of men. The statement applies to the genera of individuals not to all the individuals of the genera. God wishes all men to be saved by His mercy, in order that they be humbled by this fact and ascribe their salvation not to themselves but to God: "Destruction is thy own, O Israel: they help is only in me" (Hos 13:9); "In order that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be made subject to God" (Rom 3:19).

Lecture 5

(33) [n. 933] O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!

(34) [n. 938] "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"

(35) [n. 940] "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?"

(36) [n. 942] For from him and through him and in him are all things. To him be glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.

933. Above the Apostle endeavored to assign a reason for the divine judgments, by which Gentiles and Jews obtain mercy after unbelief; now he recognizes his inadequacy for such an investigation and exclaims his admiration of the divine excellence.

First, he extols the divine excellence;

secondly, he proves what he says [v. 34; n. 938].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he extols the divine wisdom in itself;

secondly, in relation to us [v. 33b; n. 937].

934. He extols the excellence of divine knowledge: first, as to its depth, saying: *O the depth*: "It is a great depth. Who shall find it out?" (Ec 7:25); "A glorious throne set on high from the beginning" (Jer 17:12).

This depth is considered in regard to three things: first, in regard to the thing known, inasmuch as God knows himself perfectly: "I dwell in the highest places" (Sir 24:7); secondly, in regard to the manner of knowing, inasmuch as he knows all things through himself: "The Lord looked down from his holy height, from heaven the Lord looked at the earth" (PS 102:19); thirdly, in regard to the certainty of His knowledge: "The eyes of the Lord are far brighter than the sun" (Sir 23:28).

935. Secondly, he extols the excellence of divine knowledge in regard to its fullness when he says: *of the riches* "Abundance of salvation, wisdom and knowledge" (Is 33:6).

This fullness is regarded in three ways: in one way as to the number of things known, because he knows all things: "Lord, you know all things" (Jn 21:17); "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3); in another way in regard to ease of knowing, because He intuits all things without search and difficulty: "All things are open and laid bare to his eyes" (Heb 4:13). Thirdly, in regard to the abundance of His knowledge, because He gives it generously to everyone: "If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask God who gives to all men generously" (Jas 1:5).

936. Thirdly, he extols the divine excellence in regard to its perfection when he says, *of the wisdom and knowledge of God*. For He has wisdom about divine things and knowledge about created things. "Who knows all things knows her" (Bar 3:32).

937. Then when he says, *How incomprehensible*, he shows the excellence of divine wisdom as compared to our understanding.

And first in regard to wisdom, whose function is to judge and put things in order, he says: *How incomprehensible are his judgments*, because man cannot comprehend the reason of God's judgments, since they are hidden in his wisdom: "Thy judgments are like the great deep" (Ps 36:6).

Secondly, in regard to knowledge, through which he is at work in things; hence he adds: *and unsearchable* i.e., his procedures, by which he works in creatures. Even though the creatures are known by man, the ways in which God works in them cannot be comprehended by man: "Thy way was through the sea, they path through the great waters; yet their footprints were unseen (Ps 77:19); "Where is the way to the dwelling of light" (Jb 38:19).

938. The when he says, *For who*, he proves what he had said by appealing to two authorities, one of which is Is 40(:13): *For who has helped the spirit of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?* The other is from Job (35:7; 41:11): *Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?*

In these words and those that follow them the Apostle does three things.

939. First, he shows the excellence of divine wisdom as compared to our understanding, saying: *For who has known the mind of the Lord*, namely, through which He judges and acts. As if to say: No one, unless God reveals it: "Who shall know they

though, except thou give wisdom, and send they Holy Spirit from above:" (Wis 9:17) and "The things of God no one knows but the Spirit of God. But to us God has revealed them through his Spirit" (1 Cor 2:12 & 10).

Secondly, he shows the excellence of divine wisdom according as it has height in itself, and indeed is that height which is the supreme principle. Two points pertain to this:

first, that it does not proceed from something else;

secondly, that other things proceed from it [v. 36; n. 942].

941. That God's wisdom does not depend on a higher source is shown in two ways.

First, by the fact that it is not instructed by someone else's teaching. Hence, he says: *Or who has been his counselor?* As if to say: No one. For counsel is needed by one who does not fully know how something is to be done, and this does not apply to God: "To whom has thou given counsel? Perhaps to him that has no wisdom" (Jb 26:3).

Secondly, by the fact that it is not helped by another's gift. Hence he adds: *Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid*, as one giving first? As if to say: No one. For man can give God only what he has received from God: "All this abundance comes from thy hand and is all thy own" (1 Chr 29:16); "If thou do justly, what shalt thou give him, or what shall he receive of thy hand" (Jb 35:7).

942. Then when he says, *For from him*, he shows God's depth, inasmuch as in Him are all things.

First, he shows its causality;

secondly, its dignity [v. 36b; n. 950];

thirdly, its perpetuity [v.36c; n. 951].

943. First, therefore, he says: It is right to say that no one first gave to him, because *from him and through him and in him are all things*. Thus nothing can be unless received from God.

To designate God's causality he uses three prepositions, namely, "from", "through" and "in".

But the preposition "from" [*ex*] denotes a principle of change; and this is in three ways. In one way the acting or movent principle; in another way the matter, in a third way the opposite contrary, which is the point of departure of the change.

For we say that the knife came to be "from" the knife maker, "from" the steel, and "from" the unshaped [matter]. But the universe of creatures was not made from pre-existing matter, because even their matter is an effect of God. Accordingly, created things are not said to be from something but from its opposite, which is nothing; because they were nothing, before they were created to exist: "We are born of nothing" (Wis 2:2). But all things are from God as from their first maker: "All things are from God" (1 Cor 11:12).

944. It should be noted that another Latin word for "from" is *de*, which seems to suggest the same relationships; however, *de* always designates a consubstantial cause. For we say that the knife is from [*de*] the iron, but not from [*de*] the maker. Therefore, because the Son proceeds from the Father as consubstantial with Him, we say that the Son is from [*de*] the Father. But creatures do not proceed from God as consubstantial with Him; hence, they are not said to be from [*de*] Him but from [*ex*] Him.

945. The preposition, "through" designates the cause of an action; but because an action lies between the maker and the things he makes, there are two ways in which the preposition, "through," can designate the cause of an action.

In one way accordingly as the action comes from its performer, as something which is its own cause of acting is said to act through itself. In one way this is the form, as we say that fire acts through heat. In another way it is a higher agent, as we say that man begets man through the power of the sun or rather of God.

So, therefore, all things are said to be through him in two ways: In one way as through the first agent, by whose power all things act: "Through me kings reign" (Pr 8:15). In another way, inasmuch as His wisdom, which is His essence, is the form through which God makes all things: "The Lord through wisdom founded the earth" (Pr 3:19).

946. In another way the preposition, "through," designates the cause of an action, not as it comes from the performer but as terminated in its products, as we say that the artisan makes a knife through a hammer: not that the hammer works with the artisan in the way described above, but because the knife comes to be from the activity of the artisan by means of the hammer. Therefore, it is said that this preposition, "through," designates authority directly, as when we say that the king acts through his bailiff—which pertains to what is now being said. But sometimes in a causal sense, as when we say that the bailiff acts through the king—which pertains to the preceding mode.

In this mode about which we are now speaking, all things are said to have been made by the Father through the Son, as in Jb (1:3): "All things were made through him," not that the Father has from the Son the power to make thing, but rather that the Son

accepts the power of making things from the Father, a power not instrumental but principal, not of a lower order but equal, not diverse but the same: "Whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise" (Jn 5:19).

Hence, although all things were made by the Father through the Son, The Son is not an instrument or minister of the Father.

947. The preposition, "in," also designates a causal relationship in three ways: in one way it designates matter, as we say that the soul is in the body or a form in matter. This is not the way in which things are said to be in God, because He is not the material cause of things.

In another way it designates a relationship of efficient cause, in whose power it lies to dispose of its effects. In this sense all things are said to be in Him, inasmuch as all things lie under His power and arrangement: "In his hand are all the ends of the earth" (Ps 95:4); "In him we live and move and have our being" (Ac 17:28).

In a third way it designates a relationship of final cause, in that the entire good of a thing and its preservation consists in its own optimum. In this sense all things are said to be in God as in the goodness preserving them. "All things hold together in him" (Col 1:17).

948. When he says, *All*, it is not be taken absolutely for all things which have true being. Sins do not have true being, but insofar as they are sins they lack some being, due to the fact that evil is nothing else than a deprivation of good.

Therefore, when he says: *From him and through him and to him are all things*, this does not include sin, because, according to Augustine, since is nothing and man accomplishes nothing when he sins. yet, whatever entity is present in sin, it is from God.

949. Therefore, according to the foregoing, all things are from Him, i.e., God as from the first operating power. All things are through Him, inasmuch as He makes all things through His wisdom. All things are in Him as in their preserving Goodness.

Now these three things, namely, power, wisdom and goodness are common to the three persons. Hence, the statement that *from him and through him and in him* can be applied to each of the three persons. Nevertheless, the power, which involved the notion of principle, is appropriated to the Father, Which is the principle of the entire godhead; wisdom to the Son, Who proceeds as Word, which is nothing else than wisdom begotten; goodness is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, Who proceeds as love, whose object is goodness.

Therefore, by appropriation we can say: *from him*, namely, from the Father, *through him*, namely, through the Son, *in him*, namely, in the Holy Spirit, are all things.

950. Then when he says, *To him be honor and glory forever*, he allows God's dignity, which consists in the two things previously mentioned. For from the fact that all things are from Him and through Him and in Him, honor and reverence and subjection are owed Him by every creature: "If I am a father, where is my honor" (Ma. 1:6). But from the fact that He has not received either counsel or gifts from anyone, glory is owed Him; just as on the contrary it is said of man: "If then you received it, why do you boast as though it were not a gift?" (1 Cor 4:7). And because this is proper to God, it says in Is (42:8): "I am the Lord; my glory I give to no other."

951. Finally, he mentions His eternity when he says: *unto the ages of ages*, because His glory does not pass as does man's glory, of which it is said: "All its glory is

like the flower of the field" (Is 40:6). But God's glory lasts for all ages, i.e., through all the ages succeeding all ages, inasmuch as the duration of any given thing is called an age.

Or *unto the ages of ages* refers to the durations of incorruptible things, which contain the ages of corruptible things. This applies especially to God's eternity, which can be spoken of as a plurality because of the multitude and diversity of things contained in it, even though it is one and simple in itself. The meaning would then be "unto the ages that contain the ages": "Your reign is a reign of all ages" (Ps 144:13).

952. He adds: *Amen*, as confirmation. As if to say: Truly it is so. This is the meaning in the gospels when it says: "Amen, I say to you." Sometimes, however, it means: May it come to pass.

Thus in Jerome's Psalter it says: "All the people will say: Amen, Amen," where our text has "May it come to pass! May it come to pass!"

Chapter 12

Lecture 1

(1) [n. 953] I beseech you therefore, brothers, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God, your reasonable service.

(2) [n. 965] And be not conformed to this age, but be reformed by the newness of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and the acceptable and the perfect will of God.

(3) [n. 968] For I say, by the grace that is given me, to all that are among you, not to be more wise than it is necessary to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety, and this as God has divided to each one the measure of faith.

953. Having shown the need for virtues and the origin of grace [n. 97], here the Apostle teaches how grace should be used, a subject pertaining to moral instruction.

And he does two things in this regard.

First he sets out a general moral teaching;

Second, he descends to more particular questions related to the recipients of his letter, around the middle of chapter 15 at [verse 14; n. 1163] *I myself am assured*.

And regarding the first, he does two things.

First, he teaches how one should use grace to be a perfect man;

Second, how the perfect man should sustain the imperfect, in chapter 14 there [verse 1; n. 1081] at *Now as for the man who is weak*.

Concerning the first, he does three things.

First he offers instruction about that perfection of life relating to the sanctity by which we a man serves God;

Second, relating to righteous dealings with one's neighbor, in chapter 13 at [verse 1; n. 1016] *Let every soul*;

Third, relating to that purity a man must preserve within himself, around the end of the thirteenth chapter at [verse 11; n. 1060] *And knowing this*.

Regarding the first, he does two things.

First he admonishes that a man should present himself holy to God;

Second, he teaches how one should use the gifts of God's grace that make one holy, there [n. 968] at *For I say, by the grace*.

First he teaches how one should present himself to God as regards the body;

Second, as regards the soul, there [n. 965] at *And be not conformed*.

954. Regarding the first, he does two things [n. 957].

First he leads them to heed what he has taught, and this in two ways [n. 956].

First on his own account, when he says, *I beseech you therefore, brothers*, as though to say: God's judgment were described as beyond all comprehension, and his ways as beyond all investigation, and so *I beseech you, brothers*, that you heed that you have been taught.

955. Now he resorts to beseeching them for three reasons.

First, to show his humility: "With supplication speaks the poor man," the one who puts no trust in his own wealth, and on this account attempts to compel men to good deeds not by what belongs to him but by what belongs to God. For to beseech [*obsecrare*] is to call on sacred things as witnesses [*ob sacra contestari*].

Second, to move his readers more by asking than by fear, than by commanding as one in authority: “Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you” (Phm 8-9); “You who are spiritual, instruct such a one in a spirit of gentleness” (Gal 6:1).

Third, out of reverence for the Romans, to whom he wrote: “Do not rebuke an older man but exhort him as you would a father.”

956. Next he leads them to heeding on God’s account when he says, *by the mercy of God*, that mercy by which you are saved: “According to his mercy he saved us” (Tit 3:5). And so when we consider God’s mercy we should do what we have been taught: “Should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?” (Matt 18:33).

Or it could mean *by the mercy of God*, i.e., in virtue of the apostolic authority mercifully entrusted to me: “I give my opinion as one who by the Lord’s mercy is trustworthy” (I Cor 7:25).

957. Secondly, he gives the admonition when he says: *present your bodies as a living sacrifice*.

Here it should be noted that, as Augustine says in the tenth book of *The City of God*,³¹ a visible sacrifice offered outwardly to God is a sign of an invisible sacrifice, whereby one offers himself and all he possesses for God’s service.

958. Now man possesses three goods.

First, he has the soul, which is presented to God by humble devotion and contrition: “The sacrifice acceptable to God is a contrite spirit” (Ps 51:17).

³¹ Augustine, *City of God*, book 10, chapter 5.

Secondly, a man has external goods, which he presents to God by giving alms: “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God” (Heb 13:16).

Thirdly, a man has the good which is his own body. In regard to this he says: *present*, i.e., to God, *your bodies*, as a spiritual sacrifice. Now an animal offered to God was called a sacrifice [*hostia*], either because it was offered for victory over enemies [*hostium*] or for protection from enemies [*hostium*] or because it was offered in the entrance [*ostium*] of the Tabernacle.

959. A person can present his body to God as a sacrifice in three ways.

First, when he exposes his body to suffering and death for God’s sake, as it is said of Christ: “He gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Eph 5:2); and as the Apostle says of himself: “Even if I am to be poured as a libation upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I rejoice” (Phil 2:17).

Secondly, when he weakens his body by fasts and watchings in the service of God: “I pommel my body and subdue it” (I Cor 9:27).

Thirdly, when he uses his body to perform acts of righteousness and of divine worship: “Present your members to serve righteousness for sanctification” (Rom 6:19).

960. Moreover, one should recall that the offering sacrificed to God had four features.

First, the thing offered was to be sound and unimpaired; hence Malachi 1(14), “Cursed be the cheat who has a male in his flock and vows it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished.” And this is why he says *living*, i.e., that the offering we make

to God of our body be living by faith formed by love: “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God” (Gal 2:20).

Note here that a natural sacrificial offering previously alive was killed and immolated to show that death as yet ruled the human race so long as sin reigned, as was said above (Rom 5:12ff). But this spiritual sacrificial offering is always alive and increasing in vigor, in accord with John 10(:10), “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly,” because sin has now been removed through Christ; unless we say that the sacrificial offering of our body is something alive to God through the righteousness of faith but is dead to the desires of the flesh: “Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you” (Col 3:5).

961. Secondly, the sacrificial offering presented to God was sanctified in its very immolation. Hence it is written: “Every man of your race who, having an uncleanness, approaches these things that are consecrated, and that the children of Israel offer to the Lord, shall perish before the Lord” (Lev 22:3). Therefore, he adds *holy*, made so by the devotion with which we bind our bodies to the service of God: “Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, because I the Lord your God am holy” (Lev 20:7). Now “holiness” in the proper sense bespeaks a relation to God, insofar as one does what is righteous before God.³²

962. Thirdly, when the sacrifice was consummated, it was described as a sacrifice pleasing and acceptable to God: “The priest shall burn the whole on the altar as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the Lord” (Lev 1:9). Hence, he says:

³² *Proprie autem sanctitas dicitur per respectum ad Deum, inquantum scilicet homo servat ea quae sunt iusta, quoad Deum.*

pleasing to God, by reason of a right intention: “That I may be pleasing to God in the light of the living” (Ps 56:13).

963. Fourthly, in the preparation of the sacrifice, salt was added: “You shall season all your offerings with salt” (Lev 2:13); “Every victim shall be salted with salt” (Mk 9:49).³³ Now salt signifies a wise discretion; hence he says: “Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt” (Col 4:5).

Hence, he continues: *your spiritual worship [your reasonable service]*, i.e., be discreet in presenting your bodies to God as a sacrifice whether by martyrdom or abstinence or any other righteous work, because “all things should be done decently and in order” (I Cor 14:40); “The king’s honor loves judgment” (Ps 99:4).

964. The righteous man is related one way to internal acts, by which He serves God, and another way to external acts. For a man’s good and his righteousness consist mainly in the internal acts, by which he believes, hopes and loves. Hence it says in Luke 17(21), “The kingdom of God is within you.” For it does not consist principally of interior works, as is said below in chapter 14(7), “The kingdom of God is not food and drink.” Hence, internal acts stand as an end sought for its own sake, whereas external acts, in which our bodies are presented to God, stand as means to the end.

No limit is set on something sought as an end; rather, the greater it is the better it is. But on what is sought as a means to an end, a limit is set in accord with its proportion to that end. Thus, a doctor seeks as much health as possible, but he does not give as much medicine as he can; rather, he limits it to the amount required for restoring health.

³³ This phrase is omitted from Mark 9:49 in modern critical texts of the New Testament and so does not appear in modern English translations.

Similarly, a person should set no limit on his faith, hope and love; rather, the more he believes and hopes and loves, the better he is. Hence it is stated in Deuteronomy 6(:4), “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

But in external acts a discreet limit is imposed by the requirements of love. Hence Jerome says: “Does not rational man lose his dignity, if he chooses to fast and watch at the expense of his bodily health or incur the marks of madness or sadness from singing the Psalms and office?”

965. Then when he says, *do not be conformed* and so on, he explains how one should present himself to God as regards the soul.

And first he forbids conformity to the age, when he says *do not be conformed to this age*, i.e., to things that pass with time.

For the present age is the measure of things that slide past in time. And a person is conformed to temporal things when he clings to them with love: “They became detestable, like the things they loved” (Hos 9:10); “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from this world” (Jas 1:27). The one who imitates worldly lifestyles is also conformed to this age: “I testify in the Lord that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do” (Eph 4:17).

966. Secondly, he tells them to reform their minds inwardly, when he says: *but be reformed by the newness of your sense*.

Man's sense is here called his "reason," because with the senses man forms judgments about what is to be done.³⁴ When man was created, this sense was sound and vigorous: "He filled their hearts with sense, and showed them good and evil" (Sir 17:7); but by sin it was corrupted and, as it were, grown old: "You have grown old in a foreign land" (Bar 3:10). As a consequence, it lost its beauty and charm: "From the daughter of Zion has departed all her charm" (Lam 1:6).

Therefore, the Apostle tells us to be reformed, i.e., to take up again that beauty and elegance which the mind once had. This is accomplished by the grace of the Holy Spirit. If a person does not share in this grace, he should desire to do so, and if he does share in it, he should desire to progress in it: "Be renewed in the spirit of your minds" (Eph 4:23); "Your youth shall be renewed like the eagle's" (Ps 103:5).

Or, interpreting in another way, *be renewed* in your outward actions *in the newness of your sense*, i.e., in the newness of grace, which you have received in your mind.

967. Thirdly, he gives a reason for this admonition when he says: *that you may perceive what is the will of God.*

Here it should be noted that just as a person with a diseased palate misjudges the taste of foods and sometimes recoils from the tasty but approves the disgusting, whereas a person with a healthy palate judges tastes correctly; so a person whose affections are corrupted by conformity to worldly things misjudges the good, whereas a person whose affections are upright and sound, his sense having been renewed by grace, judges the good correctly.

³⁴ *Sensus* here translates the Greek word *nous*, best rendered "mind"; the *Nova Vulgata* has *mentis*.

That is why he said: *Do not be conformed to this world, but be reformed by the newness of your sense*, namely *that you may prove*, i.e., know by experience: “Taste and see that the Lord is sweet” (Ps 34:8). *What is the will of God*, by which he wills that you be saved: “This is the will of God, your sanctification” (1Thess 4:3). That will is *good*, i.e., he wills that we will the honorable good and by his precepts leads us to it: “I will show you, O man, what is good, and what God requires of you” (Mic 6:8). *And acceptable*, inasmuch as what God wills that we will is pleasant to a well-disposed person: “The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart” (Ps 19:8). Indeed, what God wills is not only useful for attaining our end but also *perfect*, uniting us, as it were, with the end: “You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 5:48); “Walk before me and be perfect” (Gen 17:1).

God’s will is experienced as good, pleasing and perfect by those who are not conformed to this age, but are reformed in the newness of their sense. On the other hand, those who continue in their oldness, being conformed to this age, judge that God’s will is not good but burdensome and unprofitable: “Wisdom seems very harsh to the uninstructed” (Sir 6:20).

968. Then when he says, *For I say, by the grace that is given me*, he teaches how God’s gifts should be used.

First, he teaches this in regard to gifts that are not common to all, such as the graces freely given [*gratia gratis data*];

secondly, in regard to the gift of charity, which is common to all, there [verse 9; n. 983] *at love without pretense*.

In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he teaches in general how one ought to use *gratia gratis data*;
secondly, he follows this up in the parts, there [verse 6; n. 976] at *having gifts*.

Concerning the first, he does two things.

First he sets out the instruction;

second, he gives the reason for it, there [verse 4; n. 972] at *For as in one body*.

969. In regard to the first he does three things.

First, he warns against excess, saying: I have encouraged you to be renewed by the newness of your sense, but you should do this in moderation, *for I say*, i.e., I command, *by the grace* of the apostleship and the apostolic authority *given to me*: “When they perceived the grace that was given to me among the Gentiles” (Gal 2:9); “to me, the least of all the saints, this grace was given” (Eph 3:8). *Every one among you*, because it is profitable to every one: “I wish that all were as I myself am” (I Cor 7:7).

This, I say, I command: *not to be more wise than it is necessary to be wise*, i.e., no one should presume, relying on his own sense or wisdom beyond his limitations: “Be not wiser than is necessary” (Ec 7:16); “I have not walked among great things, nor among marvels above me” (Ps 131:1).

970. Secondly, he exhorts them to a middle course, saying *but be wise unto sobriety*, i.e., I direct you to be wise commensurate with the grace given to you. For although sobriety implies a measure. And although the word taken in its proper sense has to do with drinking wine, it can be used in regard to any matter in which a person should observe a due measure: “Training us to live sober, upright and godly lives in this world” (Tit 2:12).

971. Thirdly, he teaches how the middle course should be gauged when he says: *and this, I say, as God has divided, i.e., distributed, to each one the measure of faith, i.e.,* the measure of his gifts, which are given for the building up of the faith: “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (I Cor 12:7).

For God does not give such gifts the same to all, but distributes different ones to different persons: “There are varieties of gifts” (I Cor 12:4). Nor does he give them equally to all, but to each according to a definite measure: “Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (Eph 4:7). That is why the Apostle, thinking with sober judgment according to this measure, said: “We will not boast beyond measure, but will keep to the measure of the rule by which God has measured out to us” (2 Cor 10:13). To Christ alone has the Spirit been given without measure, as it says in John 3(:34).

God gives not only the *gratia gratis data* according to a measure, but even that faith which works through love. Hence the apostles said to Christ: “Lord, increase our faith” (Lk 17:15).

Lecture 2

- (4) [n. 972] For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same function,
- (5) [n. 974] so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another,
- (6) [n. 976] and having different gifts according to the grace that is given us, either prophecy, to be used according to the rule of faith;
- (7) [n. 977] or ministry, in ministering; or he who teaches, in teaching;
- (8) [n. 981] he who exhorts, in exhorting; he who gives, with simplicity; he who rules, with carefulness; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
- (9) [n. 983] Let love be without dissimulation. Hating what is evil, cleaving to what is good.
- (10) [n. 985] Loving one another with the charity of brotherhood, with honor anticipating one another.
- (11) [n. 987] In carefulness not slothful. In spirit fervent. Serving the Lord.
- (12) [n. 990] Rejoicing in hope. Patient in tribulation. Instant in prayer.
- (13) [n. 993] Sharing in the needs of the saints. Practice hospitality.

972. After this admonition the Apostle assigns a reason based on the mystical body's likeness to a natural body. First, he touches on three things in a natural body; first, its unity when he says: *For as in one body*; secondly, the multiplicity of members when he says: *we have many members*; for the human body is an organism consisting of various members; thirdly, the variety of functions when he says: *all the members do not*

have the same function. For the variety of members would serve no purpose unless they were ordered to different functions.

973. Then he likens these three aspects to the mystical body of Christ, which is the Church: “He made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body” (Eph 1:22).

Concerning which he touches on three things [n. 974ff].

First, he touches on the number of members, i.e., of believers when he says: *so we, though many*: “A man once gave a great banquet and invited many” (Lk 14:16); “Many are the children of the desolate” (Is 54:1).

For although they are few compared to the unfruitful multitude of the damned, according to Matthew 7(14), “Narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there are who find it,” yet absolutely speaking, they are many: “After this he looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number” (Rev 7:9).

974. Secondly, he touches on the unity of the mystical body when he says *we are one body*: “that he might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross” (Eph 2:16).

This mystical body has a spiritual unity through we are united to one another and to God by faith and love: “There is one body and one spirit” (Eph 4:4). And because the Spirit of unity flows into us from Christ—“Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him” (Rom 8:9)—he adds *in Christ*, who unites us to one another and to God by his Spirit whom he gives us: “That they may be one even as we are one” (Jn 18:22).

975. Thirdly, he touches on the variety of functions, which is rooted in the common good [*utilitatem*], when he says: *and individually members one of another*.

For any given member has its own function and power. Therefore, inasmuch as the function and power of one member aids another, it is said to be the other's member; thus, the foot is called the eye's member, inasmuch as it directs the foot: "the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'" (I Cor 12:21).

So, too, in the mystical body one who has received the gift of prophecy needs the one who has received the gift of healing, and so on for all the others. Hence, as long as each believer uses the grace given him to help another, he becomes the other's member: "Bear one another's burdens" (Gal 6:2); "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another" (I Pt 4:10).

Then when he says, *having gifts*, he explains in more detail the previous general admonition [n. 968] to use grace in a sober and moderate way. First, he sets out the variety of graces: *we are*, I say, *members one of another*, not on account of the same grace, but by *having different gifts*; and this is not due to differing merits but *according to the grace given to us*: "Each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and another of another" (I Cor 7:7); "He called his servants and gave to each his goods, and to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another only one" (Mt 25:14).³⁵

977. Secondly, he touches on the use of different graces, and first with respect to knowledge of divine things, saying: *if prophecy*, the one among us who has it should use it *according to the rule of faith*.

978. Prophecy is a kind of apparition arising from the divine revelation of things far remote. Hence it is said in I Sam 9:(9), "He who is now called a prophet was

³⁵ The verse in Matthew continues: "...to each according to his ability."

formerly called a seer.” Among matters far remote from our knowledge some are remote of their very nature, as future contingents, which are not knowable, because their causes are indeterminate; but divine matters are remote from our knowledge not of their very nature, for they are knowable in the highest degree, because “God is light and there is no darkness in him” (I Jn 1:5), but on account of the weakness of our intellect, which is related to matters most evident as the eye of an owl to sunlight. And because something is said to be thus and so in a truer sense, when it is thus and so on its own account rather than on account of something else, future contingents are in a truer sense said to be far from our knowledge. For this reason they are the proper concern of prophecy: “Surely the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets” (Am 3:7). But prophecy in a general sense includes the revelation of any secret things.

This gift of prophecy existed not only in the Old Testament but in the New as well: “I will pour out my spirit on all flesh: your sons and daughters shall prophesy” (Jl 2:28). In the Old Testament those who explained prophetic statements were also called prophets, because Sacred Scripture is explained in the same spirit as it is written: “I shall pour out teaching like prophecy” (Sir 24:46).

979. The gift of prophecy, as all the other charismatic graces, is ordained to the building up of faith: “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (I Cor 12:7); “It was declared,” i.e., the doctrine of faith, “by the Lord..., while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit” (Heb 2:30). Consequently, prophecy should be used *in proportion to our faith*, i.e., not in vain but in order that faith be strengthened not opposed by it: “If a prophet arises among you and says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ you shall not listen to the

words of that prophet” (Dt 13:1), because he is not prophesying in proportion to the faith.

980. In regard to administering the sacraments he adds: *if service, in our serving*, i.e., if one has received the grace or office of the ministry, such as the bishop or priest who are called God’s ministers – “You shall be called the priests of the Lord, the ministers of our God” (Is 56:6) – let him perform his office diligently by ministering: “Fulfill your ministry” (2 Tim 4:5).

981. Secondly, he touches on matters pertinent to human affairs in which one person can help another: first, with respect to knowledge both speculative and practical.

With respect to speculative knowledge he says: *He who teaches*, i.e., who has the office or grace of teaching, let him use it *in teaching*, i.e. teach diligently and faithfully: “Behold, you have taught man” (Jb 4:3); “Go, therefore, and teach all nations” (Mt 28:19).

With respect to practical knowledge he says: *he who exhorts*, i.e., has the office and grace of exhorting, let him use it *in exhorting*: “Our appeal does not spring from error or uncleanness, nor is it made with guile” (I Th 2:3); “Declare these things; exhort with all authority” (Tit 2:15).

982. Then he mentions those that pertain to external works in which a person sometimes helps another by giving a gift. In this regard he says: *He who contributes*, i.e., has the power and grace to contribute, should do this *in simplicity*, namely, with no evil ulterior motive, such as enticing men to evil with gifts, and with no intention of obtaining a great deal more from the small amount given: “A stupid man’s gift will bring

you no advantage, his eyes look for seven times as much in return. He gives little and reviles much” (Pr 11:3).

Sometimes one helps another, because he has charge of him. In regard to this he says: *he who rules*, i.e., has been entrusted with the office of prelate, should use that office *with zeal [solicitude]*: “Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give an account” (Heb 13:17); “My anxiety for all the churches” (2 Cor 11:28). Again, sometimes one helps another by easing his misery. In regard to this he says: *He who does acts of mercy*, i.e., has the means and a merciful heart, should do this *with cheerfulness*, as doing it gladly: “Not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:7); “In every gift make your countenance cheerful” (Sir 35:11).

983. Then [n. 968] when he says, *let love be genuine*, he shows how to use a gift which is common to all, namely, charity.

First, he states what pertains to charity in general;

secondly, charity toward special classes of persons [v. 13; n. 993].

With respect to the first he does three things:

first, he describes the qualities of charity as it exists in the one possessing it;

secondly, the qualities of charity toward one’s neighbor [v. 10; n. 985];

thirdly, toward God [v. 11; n. 987].

984. In regard to the qualities of charity he teaches three things.

First, that charity should be true. Hence he says: *let love be genuine [without pretense]*, so that it consist not in word or outward appearance but in a genuine affection

of heart and in efficacious works: “Let us not love in word or speech, but in deed and in truth” (I Jn 3:18); “Nothing can compare to a faithful friend” (Sir 6:15).

Secondly, he teaches that love should be pure when he says: *hate what is evil*. Love is pure when a person does not consent to his friend in evil, but so loves him that he hates his vices: “It does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the truth” (I Cor 13:6); “I hate the impious” (Ps 119:113).

Thirdly, he teaches that love should be honorable when he says: *hold fast to what is good*, so that one adheres to another because of his virtuous goodness: “Always emulate the good in his goodness” (Gal 4:18).

985. Then when he says, *love one another with brotherly affection*, he shows how charity should be shown to one’s neighbor.

And first as regards interior affection, when he says *love one another with brotherly affection*, i.e., so that through charity we not only love the brethren but even love the very charity by which we love them and are loved by them. For if we regard charity as such a great treasure, we will not allow it to be dissolved so easily: “Let brotherly love continue” (Heb 13:1); “If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned” (Song 8:7).

986. Secondly, with respect to its outward effect when he says: *outdo one another in showing honor*. Three things are designated here.

First, that a person should hold the neighbor in reverence. This pertains to the very notion of honor, for no one can truly love a person he despises: “In humility, count others better than yourselves” (Phil 2:3). This is realized when one considers his own shortcomings and the good qualities of his neighbor. Under the heading of honor are

included not only honor but the provision of necessities, for when it is commanded in Ex (20:12): “Honor your father and your mother,” the provision of necessities is commanded. This is clear from the fact that Our Lord in Mt (a5:3ff) rebuked the Pharisees for violating this precept by hindering children from helping their parents.

Secondly, it designates that the effect of love should be shown mutually, i.e., a person should desire not only to receive benefits but also to grant them: “Let not your hand be stretched out to receive and clenched when it is time to give” (Si 4:31); “In dividing by lot, give and take” (Si 14:15). He refers to this when he says: *one another*.

Thirdly, he designates that the effect of love should be prompt and swift, when he says: *anticipate*, so that one should anticipate a friend in doing favors: “Every friend declares his friendship” (Sir 37:1).

987. Then when he says, *in zeal*, he shows the qualities surrounding charity’s love of God.

First, he starts with reason’s attentiveness when he says: *never flag in zeal [carefulness]*, when it is a question of worshiping God: “He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you,” and he continues: “but to walk carefully with your God?” (Mic 6:8); “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved” (2 Tim 2:15).

988. Secondly, the affections when he says: *be aglow in the spirit*, namely, in loving God.

Being aglow [fervor] comes from an abundance of heat; hence it is called fervor of spirit, because the whole person is aglow toward God on account of the abundance of

his love: “Apollos, being fervent in spirit, spoke and taught concerning Jesus” (Ac 19:25); “Do not quench the Spirit” (I Th 5:19).

989. Thirdly, the outward homage when he says: *serve the Lord*, namely, with the worship of latria, which is paid to God alone: “The Lord your God shall you adore and him alone shall you serve” (Dt 6:13); “Serve the Lord with fear” (Ps 2:11).

Or according to another text, *serving the time*, namely that we should perform our service of God at the fitting time: “There is a time and an opportunity for every affair” (Ecc 8:6).

990. Fourthly, the reward of serving when he says: *rejoicing in hope*, namely of a reward which is the enjoyment of God: “I, the Lord, am your reward exceedingly great” (Gen 15:2); “We rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God” (Rom 5:2). But hope rejoices a man by reason of its certainty, but it afflicts him by reason of its delay: “Hope deferred makes the heart sick” (Pr 13:12).

991. Fifthly, the difficulty a person endures in the service of God when he says: *in tribulation*, which you endure for God, *be patient*: “Tribulation produces patience” (Rom 5:3)

992. Sixthly, in the light of all the foregoing he says: *be constant in prayer*, in which is indicated continuance in prayer: “We ought always to pray and not lose heart” (Lk 18:1); “Pray constantly” (I Th 5:17).

For by prayer carefulness is aroused in us and fervor kindled, we are stimulated to serve God, the joy of hope is increased and we win help in tribulation: “In my distress I called on the Lord and he answered me” (Os 120:1).

993. Then when he says, *contribute*, he discusses charity with regard to certain particular persons.

First, as regards the needy;

second, as regards enemies [v. 14; n. 996].

994. Concerning the first he does two things.

First, he urges in general that the subventions of charity be afforded to the needy, when he says: *Contribute to the needs of the saints*. Three things should be noted here: first, that alms be given out of charity to the poor and needy: “Let him labor, doing honest work with his hands, so that he may be able to give to others in need” (Eph 4:28).

Secondly, that upright and saintly persons should be helped before others; hence he says: *to the needs of the saints*: “Give to the good man; refuse the sinner” (Sir 12:4). This does not mean that sinners should not be helped in their needs, but that they should not be helped so as to nourish sin. Yet it is more useful to help the just, because such an alms is fruitful not only for the giver but also from the prayers of the recipient: “Make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal habitations” (Lk 16:19), namely, by their prayers.

995. Then he urges them to be hospitable when he says: *practice hospitality*, because the other works of mercy are included in this one. For a host offers not only his home as a shelter, but provides for other needs as well: “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers” (Heb 13:12); “Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another” (I Pt 4:9).

Lecture 3

- (14) [n. 996] Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.**
- (15) [n. 1003] Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.**
- (16) [n. 1005] Be of one mind towards one another, not minding high things, but consenting to the humble; do not be prudent in your own conceits.**
- (17) [n. 1007] Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble not only in the sight of God but also in the sight of all men.**
- (18) [n. 1010] If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all.**
- (19) [n. 1011] Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for wrath; [n. 1013] for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."**
- (20) No, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head."**
- (21) [n. 1015] Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

996. Above the Apostle showed that charity should be practiced toward the needy, now he shows how it should be practiced even toward enemies:

first, he gives the admonition;

secondly, he proves what he said [v. 19b; n. 1013].

With respect to the first it should be noted that three things pertain to charity: first, benevolence, which consists in willing good to another and not willing evil; secondly, concord, which consists in friends willing the same thing and rejecting the same thing; thirdly, beneficence, which consists in doing good and causing no injury to the one loved.

First, therefore, he touches on matters pertaining to benevolence;

secondly, to concord [v. 15; n. 1003];

thirdly, to beneficence [v. 17; n. 1007].

997. In regard to the first he does two things.

First, he urges that benevolence be broad enough to include enemies when he says: *Bless those who persecute you.*

Here it should be noted that to bless [*bene-dicere*] is to say something good. This can happen in three ways: first, by asserting a good, as when one person praises another's good points: "The lips of many shall bless him that is liberal of his bread; and the testimony of his truth is faithful" (Sir 31:28).

Secondly, by commanding: to bless in this way belongs to God by Whose command something good comes to creatures, or it belongs to His ministers who invoke the Lord's name upon the people: "Thus shall you bless the sons of Israel and say to them: The Lord bless you and guard you. The Lord show His face to you and have mercy on you. The Lord turn His countenance toward you and give you peace" (Num 6:22-26); "They shall invoke my name upon the people of Israel and I will bless them" (Num 6:27).

Thirdly, one blesses by desiring: "Nor did they who passed by say: "The blessing of the Lord be upon you.'" (Os 129:8). To bless in this way is to will someone's good and, as it were, to pray for his good. This is the way it is taken here.

998. Hence, this directive, to *bless those who persecute you*, shows that we must have good will even toward enemies and persecutors by desiring their welfare and praying for them: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5:44).

This directive can be interpreted in one way as a precept and in another as a counsel. For we are commanded to love our enemies in such a way as not to exclude them from our general love of neighbor and from the prayer one makes for all believers. We are also obliged to show the effect of this love of one's enemies in particular cases of critical need. Hence it says in Ex (23:4): "If you meet your enemy's ox or ass going astray, rescue it."

But for anyone to give his enemies the benefit of his help beyond cases of manifest need or to say special prayers and indicate a feeling of love in a special way pertains to the perfection of the counsels, because it shows that a person's love of God is so advanced that it triumphs over all human hatred. However, one who repents and seeks forgiveness should no longer be reckoned an enemy or persecutor; hence, there should be no difficulty in showing him marks of charity: "Forgive your neighbor if he has hurt you: and then your sins shall be forgiven when you pray" (Sir 28:2).

999. Secondly, he teaches that good-will should be pure, i.e., not mixed with its opposite. Hence he says: *Bless and do not curse them*, i.e., so bless that in no way do you curse. This is against those who bless with their mouth and curse in their heart: "They speak words of peace to their neighbor, but have evil in their hearts" (Ps 27:3). It is also against those who sometimes bless and sometimes curse, or bless some and curse others: "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brethren, this ought not to be so" (Jas 2:10); "Do not return reviling for reviling" (I Pt 3:9).

1000. But the fact that many curses are found in Sacred Scripture seems to be against this. For Dt (27:26) says: "Cursed be he that does not abide in the words of this law and does not fulfill them in work."

The answer is that to curse [*male-dicere*] is to say something evil [*malum dicere*]. As with blessing, this can happen in three ways, namely, by asserting, by commanding and by desiring; and in each of these ways something good can be done and something evil.

For something materially evil can be called evil in any of these ways. If it is called evil but has a good aspect, this is blessing rather than cursing and is not illicit. For a thing is judged more according to its form than its matter. But if someone says evil under the aspect of evil, he is speaking evil formally; hence it is altogether illicit.

Both of these cases occur when someone makes known an evil by asserting it.

For sometimes a person asserts that something is evil, in order to make known a necessary truth. Hence, he asserts evil under the aspect of a necessary truth, which is something good; hence it is licit. This is the way Job (3:1) is said to have cured his day, when he asserted the evil of the present life, just as the Apostle did in Eph (5:17): “Making the most of the time, because the days are evil.”

But sometimes a person asserts someone’s evil under the aspect of evil, namely, to detract from his good name; and this is illicit. For it is stated in I Cor (6:10): “The evil-tongued shall not possess God’s kingdom.”

1001. Similarly, when one says something evil by commanding it can happen that he says something materially evil but under a good aspect. For example, it is licit for a person in authority to command that someone undergo the evil of punishment, when it is just. In this way violators of the law are cursed, i.e., justly subjected to punishment.

But when someone commands another's evil unjustly, for example from hatred and revenge, such a curse is illicit: "He that curses his father or mother shall die the death" (Ex 21:17).

1002. It is the same with regard to saying something evil by desiring. For if the evil is desired under the aspect of good, for example, that through adversity a person may make spiritual progress, it is licit: "I have seen a fool with a firm root: and at once I cursed his beauty" (Jb 5:3).

But if this is done from hatred and revenge, it is altogether illicit: "The Philistine cursed David by his gods" (1 Sam 17:43).

1003. Then when he says: *Rejoice with those that rejoice*, He teaches about concord:

first, he sets out nature of concord;

secondly, the obstacles to it [v. 16b; n. 1006].

1004. Concord can be considered in two ways [cf. n. 1005].

In one way, as regards the effect it produces in reacting to good and evil. In regard to good it makes one rejoice in the good of others; hence he says: *Rejoice with those that rejoice*: "I am glad and rejoice with you all" (Phil 2:17). But this refers to rejoicing with one who rejoices in the good. For there are some who take joy in evil: "Some are glad when they have done evil, and rejoice in things most wicked" (Pr 2:17). In such cases one must not rejoice with others, for in I Cor (13:6) it is said of charity that "it does not rejoice over wickedness but rejoices in the truth."

In regard to evil the effect of concord is that it makes one grieve over another's evil. Hence, he says: *Weep with those who weep*: "I wept for him who was afflicted" (Jb 30:25); "Comfort them that weep, and walk with them that mourn" (Si 7:38).

For the compassion of a commiserating friend itself brings consolation in two ways: first, because it is convincing proof of friendship: "In a man's adversity his friend is known" (Si 12:9), and that itself is a joy, namely, to know that one has a true friend. Secondly, because the condolence of a friend implies that he is offering to carry the burden which causes the sorrow, and it is easier when a burden is carried by two than by one person alone.

1005. Secondly, concord consists in unity of opinion. In regard to this he says: *Live in harmony with one another*, i.e., agree on the same matters: "That all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you" (I Cor 1:10); "Complete my joy by being of the same mind" (Phil 2:2).

Yet it should be noted that there are two kinds of opinion: one pertains to the intellect's judgment about speculative matters, such as are considered in geometry and astronomy. Disagreement here does not militate against friendship or love, because love exists in the will, whereas judgments about these matters do not arise from the will but from the necessity of reason.

The other opinion pertains to reason's judgment about actions. Disagreement in these is contrary to love, because such dissension involves contrariety of will. And because faith is not only speculative but also practical inasmuch as it functions through love, as is stated in Gal (5:6), dissent from correct faith is contrary to love.

1006. Then when he says, *not minding high things*, he removes the two obstacles to concord.

The first is pride which inclines one to pursue his own excellence inordinately and to refuse subjection, at the same time desiring to subject someone else and impede his excellence. From this follows discord: “Among the proud there are always quarrels” (Pr 13:10). Hence to remove this obstacle he says: *not minding high things*, so that you seek inordinately your own excellence: Do not be proud, but stand in awe” (Rom 11:20). *But consenting to the humble*, i.e., accept humble things, i.e., when it is fitting, do not refuse what seems to be lowly: “I prefer to be one of no account in the house of my God” (Ps 83:11); “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God” (Pt 5:6).

The second obstacle to concord is over-confidence in one’s wisdom or one’s prudence, so that the opinion of others is not believed. To remove this he says: *Do not be prudent in your own conceits*, so that you judge as prudent only what seems so according to you: “Woe to you that are wise in your own eyes and prudent in your own conceits” (Is 5:21); “Lest you be wise in your own conceits” (Rom 11:25).

1007. Then when he says, *Repay*, he teaches what pertains to beneficence by excluding its contrary:

first, he teaches not to do evil to another for revenge;

secondly, he teaches not to do evil for the sake of defense [v. 19; n. 1011].

1008. In regard to the first he does three things: first, he forbids revenge when he says: *Repay no one evil for evil*: “If I have returned evil for evil” (Ps 7:5); “Do not repay evil with evil” (I Pt 3:9).

But this must be understood in a formal sense, as when we spoke above of evil. For we are forbidden to return evil for evil when it is inspired by hatred or envy, so that we take pleasure in another's evil. But if in return for the evil of guilt which someone commits a judge pronounces an evil of punishment in a just way to compensate for malice, he does, indeed, return evil materially, but formally and in itself he returns a good. Hence, when a judge hangs a criminal for murder, he does not return evil for evil but good for evil. This is the way the Apostle handed over to Satan the man guilty of incest, "for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved" (I Cor 5:5).

1009. Secondly, he shows that even good things must be provided for our neighbor, saying: *Take thought for what is noble in the sight of all*, so that you do things pleasing to men: "Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks, or to the church of God, just as I try to please all men in everything I do" (1 Cor 11:32).

But this can be done properly and improperly. For if it is done for human approval, it is not proper conduct: "Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them" (Mt 6:1). But it is proper, when it is done for the glory of God: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Mt 5:16).

1010. Thirdly, he gives the reason for this advice. For we should refrain from returning evil and should provide good things in the sight of all, in order that we might be at peace with men; therefore, he adds: *Live peaceably with all*.

But he qualifies this when he says: *if possible*. For sometimes other people's malice prevents us from having peace with them, namely, because no peace is possible

with them unless we consent to their malice. Such peace, of course, is illicit: “I came not to send peace but the sword” (Mt 10:34).

Another qualifier is added when he says: *so far as it depends on you*, i.e., even if they act against peace, we should do all in our power to preserve peace with them: “I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war” (Ps 120:7).

1011. Then when he says, *Never avenge*, he shows that we should not do evil to our neighbor in vengeance.

First, he presents the teaching: *You should not avenge yourselves, dearly beloved*, but as is said of Christ: “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard” (Is 50:6) and “Like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth” (Is 53:7). Hence, the Lord Himself commanded: “If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Mt 5:39).

But, as Augustine says, the things done by holy men in the New Testament are valid examples for understanding the commands given in Scripture. For the Lord Himself, when He was struck on the cheek, did not say: “Here is the other cheek,” but “If I have spoken ill, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why do you strike me.” This shows that one must be prepared in the heart to offer the other cheek. For the Lord was prepared not only to offer the other cheek for man’s salvation but His whole body to be crucified.

1012. Secondly, he assigns the reason when he says: *but leave it to the wrath of God*, i.e., to divine judgment. As if to say: Entrust yourself to God Who can defend and vindicate you by His judgment, as it says in I Pt (5:7): “Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you.”

But this applies to cases in which no opportunity is left to us to do otherwise according to justice. But because, as it says in Dt (1:17): “Judgment is the Lord’s, “when someone authorized by a judge seeks vengeance in order to repress malice and not because of hatred, or on the authority of his superior procures his own defense, he is understood to leave matters to the wrath of God, since magistrates are God’s ministers. Hence, even Paul obtained a bodyguard against the plots of the Jews (Ac 23:12ff).

1013. Then when he says, *As it is written*, he proves what he had said:

first, by an authority;

secondly, by reason [v. 21; n. 1015].

1014. In regard to the first he does two things: first, he proves what he said about revenge being forbidden, saying: Leave it to the wrath of God, i.e., to divine judgment, *for it is written: “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”* (Dt 32:35).

Our text has this: “Vengeance is mine, and I will repay in due time”; “God the Lord of vengeance” (Ps 93:1); “The Lord is a jealous God, an avenger” (Nah 1:2).

Secondly, he proves what he said about kindness to one’s enemies by an appeal an authority.

First, he presents the scriptural teaching that we help enemies who are in danger of death, because this binds by a necessity of precept, as stated earlier. And this is what it says: *If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink*: “Do good to those who hate you” (Mt 5:44).

Secondly, he assigns the reason, saying: *for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head*. This can be given a sinister interpretation, so that the sense would be: if you do good to him, your good will turn out evil for him, because from it he will

incur eternal fire by his ingratitude. But this sense is opposed to charity, against which a person would be acting, if he helped someone, so that the help would turn out evilly for him.

Therefore, it must be given a good sense, namely, *by doing so*, i.e., helping them in time of need, *burning coals*, i.e., the love of charity, of which Song 8(:6) says, “the lamps thereof are as lamps of fire and flame”; *you shall heap*, i.e., gather together, *upon his head*, i.e., on his mind. For, as Augustine says: “There is no greater incitement to love than to be the first to love. For the man is exceedingly hard who, though unwilling to bestow love, refuses to return love.”

1015. Then when he says, *do not be overcome by evil*, he proves what he had said by reason.

For it is natural to man that he wish to overcome his adversary and not be overcome by him. But that is overcome by another which is drawn to that other, as water is overcome by fire, when it is drawn to the heat of fire. Therefore, if a good man, on account of the evil done him by another, is drawn to do evil in return, the good man is overcome by the evil. If, on the other hand, on account of a favor which the good man does for his persecutor, he draws the latter to his love, the good man overcomes the evil.

He says, therefore, *do not be overcome by the evil* of the one who persecutes you, so as to persecute him, *but with your good overcome his evil*, so as to draw him from evil by doing good to him: “This is the victory which overcomes the world, our faith” (I Jn 5:4); “They shall turn to you, but you shall not turn to them” (Jer 15:19).

Chapter 13

Lecture 1

(1) [n. 1016] Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

(2) [n. 1025] Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur condemnation.

(3) [n. 1029] For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval,

(4) [n. 1034] for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer.

(5) [n. 1036] Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

(6) [n. 1037] For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing.

(7) [n. 1042] Pay all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due.

1016. After showing how man should behave toward God by using the gifts of His grace [n. 953], the Apostle now shows how man could comport himself toward his neighbor.

First, in regard to superiors;

secondly, toward all [v. 8; n. 1044].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he urges men to the subjection owed to superiors;

secondly, to show the sign of subjection [v. 6; n. 1037].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he proposes his teaching;

secondly, he assigns a reason [v. 1b; n. 1020];

thirdly, he draws the conclusion [v. 5; n. 1036].

1017. In regard to the first it should be noted that in the early Church some believers said that they should not be subject to earthly powers on account of the freedom they received from Christ, since it says in Jn (8:36): If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.” But the freedom granted by Christ is a freedom of the spirit, by which we are set free of sin and death, as was said above (8:2): “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death.” The flesh, however, remains subject to slavery, as was stated above (7:14). Therefore, the time when a man freed by Christ will not be liable to any subjection, either spiritual or carnal, will be “when Christ delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power” (I Cor 15:24).

In the meantime, as long as we live in the flesh, we are subject to temporal rulers; hence it says in Eph (6:5): “Servants, obey your masters in the flesh.” And that is what the Apostle says here: *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.*

What he calls higher powers are men established in power, to whom we owe subjection according to the order of justice: “Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme or to governors as sent by him” (I Pt 2:13).

1018. And he says indefinitely *higher powers* so that we may subject ourselves to them by reason of the sublimity of their office, even if they are wicked: “Be submissive to your masters, not only to the kind and gentle, cut also to the overbearing” (I Pt 2:18).

1019. The words *every soul* are to be taken as a synecdoche for “every man,” as we find in Gen 17(:14), “That soul shall be destroyed from among his people.”

And he uses this figure of speech because we owe subjection to the authorities from the soul, i.e., from a pure will: “Not serving to the eye, as though pleasing men, but from the soul with a good will.”

1020. Then when he says, *For there is no authority*, he presents the reason for this admonition:

first, because subjection is honorable;

secondly, because it is necessary [v. 2b; n. 1026].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he presents two principles;

secondly, he concludes from them [v. 2; n. 1025].

1021. First, therefore, he speaks about the source of power, saying: *There is no power except from God.*

For whatever is said in common of God and creatures, comes to creatures from God, as in the case of wisdom: “All wisdom comes from God” (Sir 1:1). But power is

said of God and of men: “God does not abandon the powers, since He is powerful” (Jb 35:5). Hence, it follows that all human power is from God: “The most high rules the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will” (Dan 4:17); “You would have no power over me, unless it had been given you from above” (Jn 19:11).

1022. But a passage in Hosea seems to be against this: “They made kings, but not through me. They set up princes, but without my knowledge” (Hos 8:4).

The answer is that royal power or the power associated with any other dignity can be considered from three aspects. First, in regard to the power itself, which is from God “through whom Kings reign,” as it says in Pr (8:15).

Secondly, in regard to the way in which power is obtained: from this aspect, power is from God sometimes, namely, when a person obtains it rightfully, as it says in Heb (5:4): “One does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, as Aaron was.” But sometimes it is not from God but from a man’s perverse desire, which obtains power through ambition or some other unlawful manner: “Have we not by our own strength taken horns for ourselves?” (Am 6:13).

Thirdly, it can be considered in regard to its use, and then it is from God sometimes, as when a person observes the precepts of divine justice in using the power granted him: “By me kings rule” (Pr 8:15). But sometimes it is not from God, as when a person uses power given to him to act against divine justice: “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and his anointed” (Ps 2:2).

1023. The question arises whether the power to sin is from God.

The answer is that the power by which one sins is from God. For it is the same power that is employed in sinning and in doing right: but that it is directed to good is from God; that it is directed to sin is due to a defect of the creature, inasmuch as it springs from nothingness.

1024. Secondly, he states that *those that exist have been instituted by God*, the reason being that God made all things through His wisdom, for it says in Ps 104 (v. 24): “In wisdom hast thou made all.” But it is the function of wisdom to dispose of things in order: “She reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other, and she orders all things well” (Wis 8:1). Therefore, divine effects must be orderly: “Do you know the ordinances of the heavens” (Jb 38:33).

But God has established a twofold order in His effects: one, whereby all things are ordained to Him: “The Lord has made everything for himself” (Pr 16:4); the other is that whereby divine effects are ordained one to another, as Dt (4:19) says of the sun and the moon and the stars, that He made them to serve all nations.

1025. Then when he says, *therefore, he who*, he draws the conclusion.

For if the power of rulers is from God and nothing is from God without order, it follows that the order whereby the lower are subjected to the higher powers is from God. *Therefore, he who* acts against the order and *resists the authority, resists what God has appointed*: “They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me” (1 Sam 8:7); “He who rejects you rejects me” (Lk 10:16).

But to resist the divine order is contrary to the good of virtue. Hence, whoever resists power in anything that pertains to the order of this power acts against virtue.

1026. Then when he says, *those who resist*, he shows that this subjection is not only virtuous but necessary.

First he states his proposition;

secondly, he proves it [v. 3; n. 1029].

1027. He says, therefore: It has been sated that he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and this should be avoided as contrary to virtue. Yet there are many who have no love for virtue and who do not detest things contrary to virtue. Such persons must be compelled to avoid evil by punishments. In regard to this he says: *Those who resist the divine ordinance will incur condemnation* for acting against the order of authority.

This can be understood in one way as referring to eternal damnation, which is incurred by those who refuse to be subject to authority in matters in which they should be subject. As an example of this, Dathan and Abiron, who resisted Moses and Aaron, were swallowed up by the earth, as it says in Num (16:20).

In another way it can be understood as referring to the punishments imposed by the authorities themselves: “The dread wrath of a king is like the growling of a lion; he who provokes him to anger forfeits his life” (Pr 20:2).

1028. But against this is the fact that the apostles and martyrs seem to have resisted rulers and authorities and did not receive damnation from God as a result but rather a reward.

The answer is that the Apostle is now speaking of one who resists a lower power as established by God. But the divine order requires that a lower power not be obeyed in opposition to a higher one, as a duke is not obeyed against a king. And every human

power is set under the divine power, so that no human power should be obeyed against God, as it says in Ac (5:29): “We must obey God rather than men.”

1029. Then, when he says, *For rulers*, he assigns the reason for what he had said.

First, he presents the reason;

secondly, from this reason he draws a useful teaching [v. 3b; n. 1031];

thirdly, he shows the necessity of this teaching [v. 4b; n. 1035].

1030. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that those who resist authority will incur condemnation, *for rulers*, who are here called powers, *are not a terror*, i.e., a cause of terror, *to good conduct*, i.e., because of good conduct, *but to bad*, i.e., because of bad conduct.

It seems that this should be understood with reference to the reason for establishing rulers. For the reason why rulers are established is in order that those who are not inclined by any love of virtue to avoid evil and do good, may do so by fear of punishment: “A king who sits on the throne of judgment winnows all evil with his eyes” (Pr 20:8). And according to this interpretation it says that rulers are not a terror to good conduct but to bad as regards what rulers do in virtue of their office, as Is 32(:8) says, “But the prince will devise such things as are worthy of a prince.”

This can also refer to evil rulers, who are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. For even though they sometimes unjustly persecute those who do good, the latter have no reason to fear; because if they endure it patiently, it turns out for their good: “Even if you do suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled” (I Pt 3:14).

From what is said here the reason can be assigned why those who resist authority incur condemnation, whether it be the punishment inflicted by rulers on those who rebel, or the damnation by which men are punished by God. For if rulers are a terror to bad conduct, it follows that those who resist their authority are acting wickedly and thus are the cause of their temporal and eternal punishment.

1031. Then when he says, *Would you have no fear*, he draws a useful teaching from what he had said, namely, how to avoid the terror of rulers.

First, he suggests by his question that this is desirable, saying: *Would you have no fear of him who is in authority?* As if to say: this should appeal to a person: “As the roar of a lion, so is the terror of a king” (Pr 20:2).

1032. Secondly, he shows how to avoid this fear, saying: *Do what is good*. For it says in Pr (16:13): “Righteous lips are the delight of a king,” and in Ps 101 (v. 6): “He who walks in the way that is blameless shall minister to me.”

1033. Thirdly, he shows the effect of this, saying: If you do what is good, you will not only avoid evil but *you will receive his approval*. This is obvious when one considers the reason why authority is established. For it is established not only to keep us from evil conduct through fear of punishment but also to induce us to good conduct through rewards, as it says in I Pt (2:14): “Be subject to governors as sent by the emperor to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right.” This is also true of evil rulers, whose unjust persecution ends in praise for those who endure it patiently: “We call those happy who were steadfast” (Jas 5:11).

1034. Fourthly, he assigns the reason, saying: *For he is God’s minister for your good*. This is clear in regard to the proper order of rulers. For they are under the

authority of God, the supreme ruler, as His ministers: “Because as ministers of his kingdom, you did not rule rightly” (Wis 6:4). But the ruler and the ministers work for the same end: “Like the magistrate of the people, so are his officials” (Sir 10:2). Therefore, just as God works for the good of those who do good, so also do rulers, if they perform their office properly.

Furthermore, even wicked rulers are God’s ministers for inflicting punishments according to God’s plan; although this is not their intention: “Ah, Assyria, the rod of my anger, the staff of my fury” (Is 10:5) “But he does not so intend” (v. 7). And also because such wicked rulers sometimes afflict good men, God permitting who profit thereby; for “we know that in everything God works for the good with those who love him” (Rom 8:28).

1035. Then when he says, *But if you do wrong*, he shows the necessity of this teaching.

For it has been stated that if you do right, you will not fear authority; *but if you do wrong, be afraid*, because you have reason to fear: “Destruction to evildoers” (Pr 10:29); “Wickedness is a cowardly thing, condemned by its own testimony” (Wis 17:11).

Secondly, he assigns the reason, saying: *for he does not bear the sword in vain*. He uses language in keeping with the practice of rulers who carried the instruments of punishment as signs of their power; for example, a bundle of rods for whipping, and axes or swords for killing: “Be afraid of the sword, for wrath brings the punishment of the sword” (Jb 19:29).

Thirdly, he explains the reason, saying: He carries the sword, because *he is God’s minister to execute his wrath*, i.e., God’s wrath, i.e., His just judgment, *on the*

wrongdoers: “Those who do evil are an abomination to kings, for the throne is established by righteousness” (Pr 16:12).

From this it is clear that it is not only lawful but meritorious for rulers to execute vengeance on the wicked, when it is done out of zeal for justice.

1036. Then when he says, *therefore, one must be subject*, he draws the main conclusion, saying: *Therefore*, i.e., for the reasons given, *one must be subject* to rulers of necessity, namely, because this is necessary for salvation, or be subject voluntarily to the necessity whereby the ruler’s power inclines you to do right of necessity; *not only to avoid God’s wrath*, which pertains to the first reason, because he who resists authority resists what God has appointed: “Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities” (Tit 3:1).

1037. Then when he says, *for the same reason*, he urges men to show the sign of their subjection to authority:

first, he mentions the sign of subjection;

secondly, he urges them to render the sign of subjection [v. 7; n. 1042].

1038. In regard to the first he does two things: first, he mentions the signs of subjection, saying: *For the same reason you also pay taxes*, i.e., because you are subject, you should pay taxes as a sign of that subjection. Therefore, in a complaining way it says in Lam (1:1); “She that was a princess among the cities has become a vassal.”

1039. Secondly, he assigns the reason, saying; *for the authorities are the minister of God, attending*, on behalf of God and the people, *to this very thing*, i.e., to receiving tribute.

As if to say: Everyone should make a living from his ministry, for it says in I Cor ((:7): “Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?” And therefore, since our rulers minister to God in governing, they should receive taxes from the people as wages for their ministry and should not look upon it as a reward. For the special reward of a ruler is praise and honor, as the Philosopher says in book five of the *Ethics*. When this does not satisfy him, he becomes a tyrant. But this should not be understood as referring only to human praise or honor, because such a reward would be futile, but to divine praise and honor, which is bestowed on those who rule well: “O monarchs over the people, honor wisdom, that you may reign forever” (Wis 6:21).

Furthermore, they receive these taxes as sustenance, and rulers labor for the peace of all. Hence it says in 2 Tim (2:1): “I urge that supplications be made for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life”; “Pray for the life of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, that we may live under his shadow” (Bar 1:11).

Clerics are free of this debt because of a privilege granted by rulers, which is in fact equitable by nature. Even among the Gentiles those who were devoted to divine things were free from taxation. For we read in Gen 47:(20-22) that Joseph subjected to Pharaoh the entire land of Egypt “except the land of the priests, which had been given them by the king, and to whom also a certain allowance of food was given out of the public stores.” And further down it says in the whole land of Egypt, the fifth part of the harvests was paid except for in the land of the priests, which was free from this condition.

But this is also equitable, because just as kings have care of the public good in temporal affairs, so God’s ministers in spiritual matters. And so by ministering to God in

spiritual matters, they are making a return to the king for his labor in procuring a peaceful life for them.

1041. But it should be noted that although he says that taxes are owed to rulers as a wage for their labors, rulers can sin in two ways by accepting taxes.

First, if they do not procure the people's welfare but are intent only on seizing their goods. Hence it says in Ez (34:si3): "You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the sheep."

Secondly, if they violently take more than the law permits and more than the people can bear. Hence it says in Mic (3:1): "Hear, you heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel! Is it not you who tear the skin from my people, and their flesh from their bones?"

1042. Then when he says, *Pay all*, he admonishes them to render the above-mentioned sign of subjection.

First, in general, saying: Inasmuch as taxes are owed to rulers, as to God's ministers, *pay all of them their dues*. From this it is clear that justice requires subjects to render rulers their due: "To the king was brought one who owed him ten thousand talents" (Mt 18:24); "Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Mt 22:21).

Secondly, he specifies debts that are paid publicly, saying: *taxes to whom taxes are due*, for these are paid to the ruler that he might govern the country in peace and quiet: "He saw that a resting place was good, and that the land was pleasant" (Gen 49:15). *Revenue to whom revenue is due*. This is paid to the ruler in certain places as

tolls, for the repair of roads and for safe travel. Or they are the expenses incurred, when the ruler travels through his country.

Secondly, he sets out those things which should be rendered interiorly. Here it should be noted that a ruler is owed fear and honor: fear, because he is lord and uses his power to prevent evil men from doing evil: "If I am the Lord, where is my fear?" (Mal 1:6). Hence he says: *fear to whom fear is due*: "My son, fear the Lord and the king" (Pr 24:21). But inasmuch as the ruler is like a father providing benefits, he deserves praise and honor: "If I am a father, where is my honor?" (Mal 1:6). Therefore, he adds: *honor to whom honor is due*: "Honor the king (I Pt 2:17). The opposite view is expressed in Lev (19:5): "You shall not defer to the powerful."

But this should be interpreted as forbidding a person to deviate from justice to benefit the powerful. Hence it continues: "but in justice shall you judge your neighbor."

Lecture 2

(8) [n. 1044] Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

(9) [n. 1050] The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this sentence, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

(10) [n. 1058] Love does no wrong; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

1044. Having shown how believers should observe justice toward superiors [n. 1016], the Apostle now shows how they should behave toward everyone generally.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he states his intention;

secondly, he gives a reason [v. 8b; n. 1048].

1045. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that you must pay your debts to all, not in part but entirely. And that is what he says: *Owe no one anything*. As if to say: you should pay all you owe to everyone so completely, *one anything*. As if to say: you should pay all you owe to everyone so completely, that nothing still owing remains.

And this for two reasons: first, because sin is committed in delaying to pay, as long as a person unjustly holds back what belongs to another. Hence it says in Lev (19:13): “The wages of a hired servant shall not remain with you all night until the morning.” And the same is true of other debts.

Secondly, because as long as a person owes, he is in a certain sense a slave and is obligated to the one to who he owes: “The borrower is the slave of the lender” (Pr 22:7).

1046. But there are some debts from which a man can never absolve himself. This happens in two ways: in one way on account of the excellence of the benefit for which equal payment cannot be made, as the Philosopher says of honor owed to God or parents, as it says in Ps 116 (v. 12): “What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me?” In another way on account of the debt’s cause, which always remains; or even because what is paid is never terminated but always increases as one pays.

1047. For these reasons the debt of fraternal love is paid in such a way that it is always owing.

First, because we owe love to our neighbor on account of God, Whom we can never recompense sufficiently. For it says in I Jn (4:2): “This commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.” Secondly, because the cause of love always remains, namely, being alike in nature and in grace: “Every animal loves its like, and every person his neighbor” (Sir 13:15). Thirdly, the cause love does not diminish but grows by loving: “It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more” (Phil 1:9).

Therefore, he says: *except to love one another*, because the debt of love is paid once in such a way that it always remains under the debt of a precept: “This is my commandment, that you love one another” (Jn 15:12).

1048. Then when he says, *He who loves his neighbor*, he assigns the reason for the statement that we are never released from the debt of love, namely, because the whole fulfillment of the Law consists in love.

Hence he does three things in regard to this:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he clarifies it [v. 9; n. 1050];

thirdly, he draws the conclusion intended [v. 10b; n. 1059].

1049. First, therefore, he says: The reason why we cannot expect to free ourselves from the debt of love, as we do from other debts is that *he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law*, i.e., the whole fulfillment of the Law depends on love of neighbor.

But this does not seem to be true. For it says in I Tim (1:5): “The end of the precept is love.” For a thing is made perfect when it attains its end; therefore, the whole perfection of the Law consists in love. But love as two acts, namely, the love of God and the love of neighbor; hence the Lord says in Mt (22:40) that the whole law and the prophets depend on the two precepts of love: one of which is concerned with the love of God and the other with the love of neighbor. Therefore, it does not seem that one who loves his neighbor fulfills the whole Law.

The answer is that love of neighbor pertains to love and fulfills the Law, when it is a love by which the neighbor is loved for God. So the love of God is included in the love of neighbor, just as the cause is included in its effect. For it says in I Jn (4:21): “this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.” Conversely, love of neighbor is included in love of God, as the effect in its cause; hence it says in the same place: “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar.”

That is why in Sacred Scripture sometimes mention is made only of the love of God, as though it is enough for salvation, as in Dt (10:12): “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him”; and sometimes mention is made of love of neighbor: “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 15:12).

1050. Then when he says, *the commandments*, he proves his proposition:

first, by induction;

secondly, by use of a middle term in a syllogism [v. 10; n. 1058].

1051. In regard to the first he proceeds inductively by enumerating certain precepts which fulfill the love of neighbor. And because the three precepts of the first tablet are more directly ordained to the love of God, he does not mention them; although they, too, are fulfilled in the love of neighbor, insofar as the love of God is included in the love of neighbor. But he enumerates the commands of the second tablet, omitting only the affirmative precept about honor to parents. By this it is understood that we should pay to all whatever we owe.

1052. He lists the negative precepts, which forbid a person to do evil to his neighbor. And this for two reasons.

First, because the negative precepts are more universal both as to time and as to persons. As to time, because the negative precepts oblige always and at every moment. For there is no time when one may steal or commit adultery. Affirmative precepts, on the other hand, oblige always but not at every moment, but at certain times and places: for a man is not obliged to honor his parents every minute of the day, but at certain times and places. Negative precepts are more universal as to persons, because no man may be harmed.

Secondly, because they are more obviously observed by love of neighbor than are the affirmative. For a person who loves another, rather refrains from harming him than gives him benefits, which he is sometimes unable to give.

1053. But a person does injury to his neighbor in three ways: by action, by word and by desire.

He does injury by action in three ways: first, against the neighbor's person, and this is forbidden when he says: *You shall not kill*. This also forbids any injury against the neighbor's person: "No murderer has eternal life abiding in him" I Jn (3:15).

Secondly, against a person's wife; and this is forbidden when he says: *You shall not commit adultery*. This also forbids fornication and any unlawful use of the genital organs: "God will judge fornicators and adulterers" (Heb 13:4).

Thirdly, against one's external goods, and this is forbidden when he says: *You shall not steal*. This also forbids any unjust taking of what belongs to another, either by force or by deceit: "Everyone who steals will be judged" (Zech 5:3).

1054. Injury committed by word against one's neighbor is forbidden when he says: *You shall not bear false witness*. This is forbidden not only in court cases but also outside, whether in the form of detraction or of insults: "The false witness will not go unpunished, and one who speaks lies will not escape (Pr 19:5).

Injury committed only by desire against one's neighbor is forbidden when he says: *You shall not covet* your neighbor's good; and this also forbids coveting another's wife: "For I would not have known covetousness" to be a sin, "if the law had not said, 'You shall not covet.'" (Rom 7:7).

1055. Having listed a number of precepts, he combines all others in one general precept, saying: *and any other commandment*, affirmative or negative, referring to God or to neighbor, *is summed up*, i.e., fulfilled, *in this sentence: You shall love your neighbor as yourself*.

1056. When he says, *your neighbor*, the reference is to all men and also the good angels, as Augustine says. For a neighbor is anyone who shows mercy to another, as it

says in Lk (10:36): “Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the men who fell among robbers? He said: ‘The one who showed mercy on him.’” And because a neighbor is neighbor to a neighbor, the consequence is that even a person shown mercy by another is said to be his neighbor. But the good angels show mercy to us; and we should show mercy to all men and receive it from them, when necessary. Hence it is clear that the good angels and all men are our neighbors, because the happiness toward which we are tending is already theirs, or they are tending toward it with us.

From this reason it is clear that devils are not our neighbors and that we are not commanded to love them, because they are entirely excluded from the love of God and are not included in the list of neighbors but of enemies.

1057. The phrase, *as yourself*, does not refer to equality of love, as though a person were bound to love his neighbor as much as himself. For this would be against the ordering of charity, by which a person is obliged to take more care of his own salvation than that of others: “He put love in order in me” (S of S 2:4). It refers, rather to a similarity of love, namely, that we should love our neighbor similarly as ourselves.

And this in three ways: first, as to the end of love, namely, that we love ourselves and our neighbor for the sake of God. Secondly, as to the form of love, namely, just as a person loves himself as willing good for himself, so he should love his neighbor by willing good things for him. But one who loves his neighbor in order to acquire some utility or love from him does not will good for his neighbor but wants to obtain a good for himself from his neighbor. This is the way a man is said to love irrational creatures, such as wine or a horse, namely, to use them. Thirdly, as to the effect of love, namely, that he

relieve the need of his neighbor, as he relieves his own; and that he do nothing unlawful out of love for his neighbor any more than he does out of love for himself.

1058. Then when he says, *Love does not wrong to a neighbor*, he clarifies his proposition with the following syllogism: One who loves his neighbor does no evil to him. But the aim of every precept of the Law is abstention from evil. Therefore, one who loves his neighbor fulfills the Law. That love of neighbor does no evil is gathered from I Cor (13:4): “Love does not work injury.”

No matter how evil is taken here, whether for evil acts or omissions, it could refer not only to negative precepts but also to affirmative. But inasmuch as love of neighbor includes love of God, it is understood that love of neighbor excludes evil both against one’s neighbor and against God. Thus, even the precepts of the first tablet are included.

1059. Finally, he draws the conclusion mainly intended, saying: *Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law*, i.e., the Law is fulfilled and made perfect by love; (Si 14:16), “Above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony” (Col 3:14).

Lecture 3

(11) [n. 1060] Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed;

(12) [n. 1066] the night is far gone, the day is at hand. [n. 1070] Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light;

(13) [n. 1073] let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, [n. 1074] not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.

(14) [n. 1079] But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

1060. After showing how man should behave in a pious manner toward God by using His gifts properly and paying his neighbor the debts owed him, the Apostle now shows how he should act with probity in regard to himself.

With respect to this he does two things:

first, he proposes the suitability of the time;

secondly, he exhorts them to virtuous works [v. 12b; n. 1070].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he mentions the suitability of the time;

secondly, he assigns the reason [v. 11b; n. 1063];

thirdly, he employs a figure of speech [v. 12; n. 1066].

1061. First, therefore he says: We have stated what you should do. And you should do it not only for the reasons already given, but also because *you know what hour it is*, i.e., you ought to consider the nature of the present here, because as it says in Ec (8:6): “Every matter has its time and way”; “Even the stork in the heavens knows her times; and the turtledove, swallow and crane keep the time of their coming; but my people know not the ordinance of the Lord” (Jer 8:70).

1062. He shows what the time is suitable for, when he says: *it is full time now for you to wake from sleep.* This is not a reference to the sleep of nature, sometimes called death, as in I Th (4:13): “We would not have you ignorant concerning those who are asleep” and sometimes the repose of the animal powers, as in Jn (11:12): “If he is asleep, he will recover.” Nor is it a reference to the sleep of grace, sometimes called the repose of eternal glory, as in Ps 4 (v. 9): “In peace I will lie down and sleep” and sometimes the rest of contemplation even in this life: “I slept, but my heart was awake” (Song 5:3).

But it is a reference to the sleep of guilt, as in Eph (5:14): “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,” or to the sleep of negligence, as in Pr (6:9): “How long will you lie there, O sluggard?” Therefore, it is full time now to wake from the sleep of guilt by doing penance: “Awake after you have rested” (Ps 127:2) and from the sleep of negligence by taking care to act properly: “Arise, O princes, oil the shield!” (Is 21:5); “Let not the hour for rising sadden you.” (Sir 32:15).

1063. Then when he says, *For salvation*, he assigns the reason for what he had said, saying: *For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.* The Apostle is referring to the salvation of eternal life about which it is said: “My salvation will be for ever” (Is 51:8).

Man is ordained to this salvation, first of all, by faith: “He that believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mk 16:16). But man gets closer and closer to it by good works and increased love: “Draw near to God and he will draw near to you” (Jas 4:8).

This, therefore, is what the Apostle says: It is full time now for you to rise from sleep, *for now*, when we have made progress by good works and increased love, *our*

salvation, namely of eternal life, *is nearer than when we first believed*, i.e., than when we originally received the faith.

1064. This nearness can be understood in two ways.

First, in regard to time, by which holy men, as they make progress in good works, draw closer to the end of this life, after which they receive their reward.

The other is the nearness of preparation, because by increased love and good works performed, a man is prepared for that salvation: “Those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast” (Mt 25:10).

1065. But inasmuch as the Church reads these words during Advent, they seemed to refer to the salvation which Christ worked during His first coming. Accordingly, we can understand the Apostle speaking in place of all believers since the beginning of the world. For as the time of Christ’s incarnation drew near, and the predictions of the prophets grew in number, it could be said: “Our salvation,” namely, Christ “is nearer now than when we believed,” i.e., when men in the very beginning stated to believe in the future coming of Christ: “Soon my salvation will come and my deliverance be revealed” (Is 56:11).

They can also be taken to refer to the time of mercy, when one begins willing to depart from past sins. For at that time he is closer to his salvation than previously, when he had a dead faith: “Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you” (Jas 4:7).

1066. Then when he says, *the night is far gone*, he uses a figure of speech to clarify his proposition. The import is that the entire time of the present life is compared to night on account of the darkness of ignorance with which the present life is

encumbered. “We are swallowed up in darkness” (Jb 33:4). Isaiah says of this night: “My soul yearns for thee in the night” (26:9).

But the state of future happiness is compared to day on account of God’s splendor with which the saints are enlightened: “the sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night, but he Lord will be your everlasting light” (Is 60:19). This day is referred to in Ps 118 (v. 24): “This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

1067. It can also be understood that the state of guilt is being compared to night on account of the darkness of guilt. About this darkness Ps 82 (v. 5) says: “They have neither knowledge nor understanding; they walk about in darkness.” About this night Wis (17:21) says: “Over those men alone heavy night was spread, an image of the darkness that was destined to receive them.”

But day is called the state of grace on account of the light of spiritual understanding which the righteous have, but the wicked lack: “Light dawns for the righteous” (Ps 97:11); “The light of righteousness did not shine on us” (Wis 5:6).

1068. Or it can be understood that the time before Christ’s incarnation is being compared to night, because it was not yet clear but wrapped in darkness: “We have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place” (2 Pt 1:19). About this night it says in Is (21:11): “Watchman, what of the night?” Hence, just as shadows appear at night, so during that time the practices of the Law were in vogue, but “these were only a shadow of what is to come” (Col 2:17).

But the time after Christ's incarnation is compared to day on account of the power of the spiritual sun in the world: "But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall shine" (Mal 4:2). Hence the Lord says: "I must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day" (Jn 9:4); then he adds: "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

1069. The saying, *the night is far gone*, can be taken for any of the three nights mentioned. For a large part of the life span of those to whom he was writing was already far gone; the night of guilt had passed, as had the period of the Law before Christ.

But it seems that the saying, *the day is at hand*, must be understood as referring to the day of future glory, which was at hand for the believers in Christ to whom he was writing, although it had not yet arrived for them.

In keeping with the foregoing explanation, the time of Christ's grace, although it had already arrived as regards the passage of time, is nonetheless described as drawing near through faith and devotion; just as it also says in Phil (4:5): "The Lord is near," and in Ps 145 (v. 18): "The Lord is near to all who call upon him."

It can also apply to those who begin to repent of their sins; for such persons the day of grace is at hand.

1070. Then when he says, *Let us then cast off*, he concludes the exhortation to an honorable life.

First he gives the exhortation;

secondly, he clarifies it [v. 13b; n. 1074].

In regard to an honorable life he touches on three things.

1071. First, the removal of vices, as he concludes: If the night is gone, *let us cast off the works of darkness*, because, as it says in Ec (8:6): “Every matter has its time and way.” Hence, when the night is gone, the deeds of the night should cease.

Here the works of sin are called works of darkness: first, because in themselves they lack the light of reason with which man’s works should be illumined: “The wise man has eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness” (Ec 2:14); secondly, they are performed in the dark: “The eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight” (Jb 24:15); thirdly, because by them a person is brought to darkness: “Cast them into the darkness outside” (Mt 22:13).

1072. Secondly, he summons them to put on the virtues. As if to say: Since the day is at hand, be dressed as suits the day and *put on the armor of light*, i.e., the virtues, which are called armor because they protect us: “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph 6:11).

They are called the armor of light, because they are decorated and perfected by the light of reason; hence it says in Pr (4:18): “The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn”; and because they are tested by light: “He who does what is true comes to the light” (Jn 3:2); and because others are enlightened by virtuous acts: “So let your light shine before men” (Mt 5:16).

1073. Thirdly, he urges them to use the virtues and make progress when he says: *Let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day*. For these two things seem suited to the day: first, becoming conduct, for in the day everyone tries to present himself becomingly before others. But not so in the night. Hence, it says in I Th (5:7): “For those who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we

belong to the day, let us be sober” hence it says in I Cor (14:40): “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

Secondly, man walks in the day not at night; hence it says in Jn (11:10): “If anyone walks in the night, he stumbles.” Therefore, because it is day, we should walk, i.e., advance from good to better: “Walk while you have the light” (Jn 12:35).

1074. Then when he says, *not in reveling*, he explains what he had said.

First, he explains how the works of darkness are to be cast off. These are sinful works, some of which he mentions. First, he mentions those which pertain to the corruption of the concupiscible appetite, whose corruption is intemperance in regard to pleasures of touch and to food. First, therefore, he excludes intemperate use of food when he says: *not in reveling*: “Be not among wine bibbers or among gluttonous eaters of meat” (Pr 23:20). This, of course, can be a mortal sin from the fact that according to the Law one is condemned to death for this sin. For it is said of a stubborn son: “This our son is stubborn and rebellious: he is a glutton and drunkard. Then they shall stone him to death with stones” (Dt 21:22).

One is said to pass the time in reveling, not if he eats with the magnificence that accords with his state, as King Ahasuerus commanded a splendid banquet to be prepared in honor of Esther, when she was made queen (Est 2:18), but when he does this beyond the limits of his state, and especially if his main interest centers on this, as those about whom it is said: “Such persons do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly” (Rom 16:18); “Their god is their belly” (Phil 3:19).

1075. Secondly, he excludes intemperance in drink, when he adds: *and drunkenness*, which refers to excessive drinking, which places a man outside the bounds of reason: “Wine created to make men glad, not drunk” (Sir 31:27).

It should be noted that drunkenness is a mortal sin *ex suo genere*, namely when a person gets drunk on purpose, because he seems to prefer the pleasure of wine to the full use of reason. Hence it says in Is (5:22): “Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink.” But if one gets drunk unintentionally, for example, because he was not aware of the strength of the wine or because he did not suspect he would get drunk on such wine, it is not a mortal sin, because he did not get drunk on purpose but accidentally. However, this cannot happen with persons who get drunk frequently. Hence, Augustine says that drunkenness is a mortal sin, if it is a frequent occurrence.

1076. Thirdly, he excludes intemperance in regard to bodily rest when he says: *not in debauchery* [literally: *not in beds*], i.e., not in excessive sleep, which he fittingly forbids after reveling and drunkenness, because it follows from them. Furthermore, there can be mortal sin in this, when for the sake of bodily rest and sleep, a person neglects what he ought to do and is inclined to commit evil deeds: “Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil upon their beds!” (Mic 2:1).

The Apostle’s words can also refer to the trappings of lust. Hence the harlot is quoted as saying: “I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon” (Pr 7:17).

1077. Therefore, fourthly, he fittingly excludes intemperance in regard to sex when he says: *and licentiousness*, i.e., venereal actions which are called shameful, because they do not avoid what is especially shameful and worthy of confusion: both

because all pleasures of touch, gluttony and lust are common to us and brutes, so that one who pursues them inordinately becomes bestial; and because it is especially in venereal acts that man's reason is totally absorbed by pleasure to such an extent that he cannot understand, as the Philosopher says in the *Ethics*.³⁶ Hence it says in Hos(4:11): "Harlotry and drunkenness and wine take away the understanding"; "They did not repent over their licentiousness and fornication and uncleanness" (Rev 9:21).

1078. Then he excludes those sins which pertain to the corruption of the irascible appetite when he says: *not in contentions*. Contention, as Ambrose says, is an attack on the truth, performed with confident shouting. It is also possible that these words forbid all quarreling, not only in words but also in deeds, which very frequently begin with words: "It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife" (Pr 20:3).

Contention generally arises from envy; therefore he adds: *and jealousy*. Hence it says in Jas (3:16): "Where jealousy and selfish ambitions exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

1079. Secondly, he explains how we should put on the armor of light, saying: *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ* in Whom all the virtues were present most abundantly according to Is (4:1): "Seven women shall take hold of one man."

We put on Jesus Christ, first, by receiving the sacrament: "All you who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ" (Gal 3:27).

Secondly, by imitation. For a person who imitates Christ is said to put on Christ, because, just as a man is covered by a garment and is seen under its color, so in one who imitates Christ the works of Christ appear. Therefore, we put on the armor of light, when we put on Christ.

³⁶ See Aristotle's *Ethics*, book 2, chapter 8.

1080. Thirdly, he explains what it is to walk becomingly as in the day when he says: *make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires*. For the beauty of becoming conduct lies in the fact that man does not prefer the flesh to the spirit but the spirit to the flesh: “We are not debtors to the flesh that we should live according to the flesh” (Rom 8:12).

It should be noted that he does not say “Make no provision for the flesh” absolutely, because everyone is bound to take care of the body in order to sustain nature: “No one hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it” (Eph 5:29); but he adds, *to gratify its desires*, so that we do not follow the disorderly desires of the flesh: “Walk by the Spirit and do not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal 5:16).

Chapter 14

Lecture 1

(1) [n. 1081] As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions.

(2) [n. 1083] One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables.

(3) [n. 1089] Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him.

(4) [n. 1092] Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Master is able to make him stand.

- (5) [n. 1097] One man esteems one day as better than another, while another man esteems all days alike. Let every one be fully convinced in his own mind.
- (6) [n. 1099] He who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. He also who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; while he who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God.
- (7) [n. 1101] None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself.
- (8) [n. 1103] If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.
- (9) [n. 1104] For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.
- (10) [n. 1105] Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God;
- (11) [n. 1106] for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God."
- (12) [n. 1112] So each of us shall give account of himself to God.
- (13a) [n. 1114] Then let us no more pass judgment on one another.

1081. After showing how one ought to become perfect [n. 953], the Apostle now shows how the perfect should act toward the imperfect.

First, he shows that they ought not scandalize or judge them;

secondly, that they ought to uphold them, in chapter 15 [n. 1142].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he forbids improper judgments;

secondly, he forbids placing stumbling blocks before the weak [v. 13b; n. 1115].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he gives an admonition;

secondly, he explains it [v. 2; n. 1083];

thirdly, he assigns a reason [v. 3b; n. 1090].

1082. In regard to the first it should be noted that in the early Church some of the Jews converted to Christ believed that the practices of the Law must be observed along with the Gospel, as is clear from Ac (v. 15). These the Apostle calls “weak in the faith of Christ,” as though not yet perfectly believing that faith in Christ is sufficient for salvation. He calls those perfect or strong in faith who believed that the faith of Christ was to be observed without the practices of the Law. And there were some of both types among the believers in Rome.

Therefore, the Apostle addresses the perfect in faith, saying: We have said that you should put on the Lord Jesus Christ, *but welcome*, i.e., join to yourselves in a spirit of charity and support, *the man who is weak in faith*, to whom can be applied the words of Wis (9:5): “I am a man who is weak and short-lived, with little understanding of judgment and laws”; “Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you” (Rom 15:7); “Help a poor man for the commandment’s sake” (Sir 29:9). *But not for disputes of opinions*, i.e., not discussing the fact that one’s opinion is contrary to another’s. For those who observed the practices of the Law considered as violators those who did not observe them; and those who did not observe them despised as errant and ignorant those who did observe them: “Their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them” (Rom 2:15).

1083. Then when he says, *One believes*, he explains what he had said:

first, he shows who are weak in faith;

secondly, how disputes over opinions are to be avoided [v. 3; n. 1089].

1084. In regard to the first it should be noted that among the observances of the Law one dealt with distinguishing among foods, because some foods were forbidden in the Law, as is clear from Lev (11:2ff). Therefore, the Apostle mentions this in particular, saying: *One believes*, namely, the one perfect in faith, *that he may eat anything*, since he does not consider himself bound to the observance of the Law: “Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man” (Mt 15:11); “Everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving” (I Tim 4:4).

1085. It was not because they were naturally unclean that certain foods were forbidden in the Old Law. For just as in the case of words the word, “fool” signifies something not good, although the word itself is good, so in the case of animals, some animal is good according to its nature but evil in what it signifies, as a pig which signifies uncleanness. Therefore, the ancients were forbidden to eat its flesh, for in avoiding it they signified avoidance of uncleanness. For the entire life of that earlier people was centered on figures. But with the coming of Christ, Who is the truth, the figures ceased.

1086. He adds in regard to the weak: while the weak man eats only vegetables. As if to say: He eats those foods which involve nothing unclean forbidden in the Law. For among the classes of animals, say of land, sky and water, some classes were permitted and some forbidden; but no herbs or trees were forbidden, as is clear in Lev (v. 11).

There can be two reasons for this: one is that the produce of the earth had been granted man to eat from the beginning: “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food” (Gen 1:29). But the first permission to eat flesh seems to have been granted after the flood. Hence it says in Gen (9:3): “As I gave you the green plants, I give you everything,” I.e., types of animals.

The other reason is that in Paradise man had transgressed the first prohibition about abstaining from certain fruits of the earth, as is clear in Gen (v. 3); for this reason a similar prohibition was not repeated.

1087. But since the practices of the Law ceased during the passion of Christ, it seems out of place for the Apostle to permit those weak in faith to abstain from foods forbidden in the Law, a practice no longer granted to Christians by the Church.

But according to Augustine, three periods of time respecting the practices of the Law must be distinguished. The first is the time before Christ, when the practices of the Law were in full vigor and still alive. The second is the time after the passion of Christ but before the spreading of the Gospel, when the practices were dead, because no one was bound by them; and when they were practiced, no one benefited by them. Although dead, they were not death-dealing, because the Jews converted to Christ could practice them without sin. It is to this time that the Apostle refers here. The third is the time after the spreading of the Gospel, when the practices of the Law were not only dead but death-dealing, so that whoever practiced them sinned mortally.

1088. The Gloss [of Lombard, col. 1512] explains this in another way, namely, that the weak person is the one prone to fall into sensual vices. Such a person should be

advised to eat vegetables, i.e., mild and meager foods, which do not ferment vices, and to abstain from foods which stimulate sensual desire. But a stronger person believes that he can eat anything without danger. This difference appears between Christ's disciples, who did not fast because they were strengthened by Christ's presence, and the disciples of John the Baptist, who fasted. Hence, too, those who perform penances abstain from certain foods, not because they are unclean, but in order to restrain sensual desire.

1089. Then when he says, *Let him who eats*, he explains how to avoid differences of opinion.

First, in regard to the perfect he says: *Let him who eats*, namely, with a secure conscience or even without danger of sensual desire, *not despise him who abstains* from certain foods, as weak in faith or prone to sensual vices: "Woe to you, despiser, will you not be despised in turn?" (Is 33:1); "He who rejects you rejects me" (Lk 10:16).

Secondly, in regard to the weak, saying: *and let him who abstains* from certain foods, either because he is weak in faith or because he is prone to sensual desire, *not pass judgment on him who eats* as though he were a transgressor of the Law or as rushing headlong into sensual vices: "Judge not that you may not be judged" (Mt 7:1); "You have no excuse, O man, when you judge another" (Rom 2:1).

1090. Then when he says, *for God has welcomed him*, he assigns two reasons why we should abstain from false judgment.

The second is given at *his Master* [v. 4b; n. 1094];

the third at *You who judge* [v. 10; n. 1105].

The first reason is based on the authority of the one judging, hence:

first, he shows that this authority belongs to God [v. 3c];

secondly, he concludes that judgment does not belong to men [v. 4; n. 1092].

1091. First, therefore, he says: I have been correct in saying that one who eats should not judge him who does not, *for God has welcomed him*: “I took two staff,” i.e., two peoples (Zech 11:7); “He drew me out of many waters” (Ps 18:16).

But the one who is drawn to the judgment of a superior should not be judged by an inferior.

1092. Therefore, he concludes, *Who are you*, i.e., of what authority and power are you, *to pass judgment on the servant of another?* For a judge must have authority, as it says in Ex (2:14): “Who made you a prince and a judge over us?” “Man, who made me a judge or divider over you” (Lk 12:14).

1093. But from this reasoning it seems to follow that a man’s judgment about another man is illicit.

The answer is that a man’s judgment is licit, as long as he acts with divinely granted authority. Hence, it says in Dt (1:16): “Hear them and judge what is righteous,” and later he adds, “Judgment is God’s,” i.e., passed with God’s authority. But if someone desires to usurp judgment over matters not divinely granted him to judge, the judgment is rash, just as if a judge delegated by the Pope wished to go beyond the limits of his mandate. But God has reserved to Himself the judging of hidden things, which are mainly the thoughts of the heart and the future. Therefore, if anyone presumed to judge about these matters, the judgment would be rash. Hence Augustine says in The Lord’s Sermon on the Mount: “A judgment is rash in these two cases, since there is uncertainty about the intention with which something was done, or uncertainty about the future of one who now seems to be good or evil.”

1094. Then when he says: *It is before his own master that he stands or falls*, he presents the second reason, which is taken from the end of merit or demerit.

For one could say that although a man has no authority to judge, he should involve himself in the judgment of another on account of the harm or benefit that comes from it. But the Apostle says here that this pertains to God rather than to man. And so even for this reason we should leave to God judgments about our neighbor, unless we are acting in His stead in judging by authority committed to us.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he gives an example [v. 5; n. 1097];

thirdly, he proves the proposition [v. 6; n. 1099].

1095. In regard to the first he does two things: first, he proposes that whatever happens to man pertains to God when he says: *Before his master he stands*, i.e., by doing right: “Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem” (Ps 122:2, *or falls*, i.e., by sinning: “Fallen, no more to rise is the virgin Israel” (Am 5:1).

He presents it as a disjunctive, stands *or* falls, on account of the uncertainty, for many seem to fall who stand, and vice versa, as it says in Ec (8:10): “then I saw the wicked buried; they used to go in and out of the holy place and were praised in the city, where they had done such things.” But the Apostle is speaking here in terms of a likeness to a human servant, to whose master pertains everything done in regard to him.

Nor should we suppose that God is harmed or benefited, if a man stands or falls. For it says in Jb (35:6): “If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against him. If you are righteous, what do you give him.” But in relation to men acts of righteousness look

to God's glory: "That they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Mt 5:16). The fact that we fall by sinning is for men the occasion for blaspheming God: "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles" (Rom 2:24).

Or the words *It is before his own master that he stands or falls* should be explained as regarding the judgment of his Master: "The one who judges me is the Lord" (1Cor 4:4).

1096. Secondly, he shows that it pertains to God to judge a man, saying, *And he will be upheld*. As if to say: Even though someone now falls by sinning, it is possible that he will stand again. And this will certainly happen, if he has been predestined: "Will he not rise again from where he lies?" (Ps 41:8); "Rejoice not over me, O my enemy, when I fall, I shall rise (Mic 7:8).

For this reason if we see someone obviously sinning, we should not despise him and rashly judge that he will never rise again; rather, we should presume that he will stand again, not considering the human condition but God's power. Hence, when he says: *For God is able to make him stand*, we should presume that He will make him stand again on account of His goodness: "The Spirit entered into me and set me upon my feet" (Ez 3:24), just as Paul said earlier: "And even the others, if they do not persist in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again (11:23).

1097. Then when he says, *one man esteems*, he exemplifies what he had said. First, he proposes that human opinions vary, saying: I say that he stands or falls before his own master, because *one man esteems one day as better than another*, i.e., he judges between one day and another, so that he abstains on one day and not on another. This seems to refer to those weak in faith, who suppose that the practices of the Law must still

be observed. For it says in Lev (23:27): “on the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; and you shall afflict yourselves on this day.” And in Jdt (8:6) it is stated that Judith fasted all the days of her life, except on Sabbaths, new moons and feasts of the house of Israel.

Another man esteems all days alike as far as observing the practices of the Law were concerned, because these had now ceased. Hence this seems to refer to the perfect in faith: “Bless his name from day to day” (Ps 96:2).

This can also refer to cases of abstaining performed to control sensual desires. Some abstain in this manner every day; for example, those who always abstain from meat or wine or fast, although some abstain on certain days and not on others: “For everything there is a season” (Ec 3:1).

1098. Secondly, he shows that all these things can pertain to the glory of God, saying: *Let everyone be fully convinced in his own mind*, i.e., be left to his own judgment: “God made man from the beginning and left him in the hands of his own counsel” (Sir 15:14).

But this seems to apply to things that are not of themselves evil. In things that are of themselves evil, however, man must not be left to follow his own mind. But that a person discriminates between days seems to be evil of itself according to the first explanation. For it says in Gal (4:10): “You observe days and months and seasons and years! I fear that I have labored over you in vain.” And he is speaking there about those who claimed that days must be observed according to the ceremonies of the Law.

The answer is that the Apostle is speaking here in regard to that time in which it was lawful for Jews converted to the faith to observe the practices of the Law. But in

regard to the second explanation it seems to be illicit for him to say: “Another man esteems all days alike.” For there are some days on which it is unlawful to fast. For Augustine says in a letter to Casulanus: “Whoever things that a fast should be decreed on the Lord’s day would not be a small scandal to the Church, and rightfully so. For on those days about which the Church or Sacred Scripture has decreed nothing definite, the customs of the people of God and the decrees of the major authorities must be considered the Law. And in the Decrees it is written: If on account of a public penance received from a priest a presbyter were to fast without any other need on the Lord’s day, let him be anathema.”

But one should understand that the Apostle is speaking here about those abstinences that can be licitly undertaken on any day without clashing with the common custom, or with the customs established by those in authority [*a maioribus*].

1099. Then when he says, *he who observes*, he proves his proposition, namely, that each one stands or falls before his own master. And he does this in three ways.

First, he proves it by appealing to the act of believers;

secondly, by their intention [v. 7; n. 1101];

thirdly, by their condition [v. 8; n. 1103].

1100. First, therefore, he proves how each of the faithful stands or falls before his master, because in everything he does according to his conscience, he gives thanks to God. Hence he says: *He who observes the day* by abstaining one day and refraining from it on another day, *observes it in honor of the Lord*, i.e., he discriminates between foods out of reverence for God, just as we ourselves distinguish between the vigils of feasts when we

fast, and the feast days when we break the fast out of reverence for God: “Why is any day better than another and light better than light” (Sir 33:7).

Then he speaks with respect to those who esteem all days alike,. Some of these ceased from fasting every day, as Mt (9:14) says that Christ’s disciples did not fast. Hence he says: *He also who eats*, namely, every day, *eats in honor of the Lord*, i.e., to the glory of God; which is proved by the fact that *he gives thanks to God*, namely, for the food he eats: “Some enjoin abstinence from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving” (I Tim 4:3); “The poor shall eat and be filled” (Ps 22:26).

Finally in regard to those who look on days in such a way that they abstain every day, he says: *He who abstains every day abstains in honor of the Lord*. This is clear, because *he gives thanks to God*, Who gave him the will and virtue to abstain: “Give thanks in all circumstances” (I Th 5:18).

But what the Apostle says here about those who abstain every day or cease abstaining should be understood with respect to that time when this was not contrary to the decrees of major authorities or to the common customs of the people of God.

1101. Then when he says, *None of us lives to himself*, he proves the same thing from the intention of believers.

First, he rejects an inordinate intention, saying: I am correct in saying that everyone stands or falls before his master, for *none of us lives to himself* in his natural or in his supernatural life, about which it says in Heb (2:4): “My just man lives by faith.” *To himself*, i.e., for himself, because that would be to enjoy himself: “Not seeking what is useful for me” (I Cor 10:33); “Not to us, O Lord, not to us give the glory” (Ps 114:9); *to himself*, i.e., according to his own rule, as those who say: “Let our might be our law of

right” (Wis 2:11); *to himself*, i.e., according to his own judgment: “I do not even judge myself” (I Cor 4:3).

And none of us dies to himself, namely, a bodily death or a spiritual death by sinning, or even a spiritual death where⁹in one dies to his vices, as in baptism, as it says above (6:7): “He who has died is freed from sin.” For *to himself*, i.e., to his own judgment or for himself or by his example: “The death he died he died to sin once for all” (Rom 6:10); and a few verses later: “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin.

1102. Secondly, he describes the right intention of believers, saying: *If we live* with our bodily life, *we live to the Lord*, i.e., to the glory of the Lord; *and if we die* a bodily death, *we die to the Lord*, i.e., to the honor of the Lord: “Christ will be magnified in my body whether through death or through life” (Phil 1:20).

1103. Then when he says, *so then*, he clarifies his proposition by considering the condition of believers.

First he concludes from the foregoing the condition of the faithful, namely, that they are not their own but someone else’s. For those who are their own are free men; they live to themselves and die to themselves.

Therefore, because it has been stated that the faithful do not live or die to themselves but to the Lord, he concludes: *so then, whether live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s*, servants, as it were, of Him Who has power over life and death: “You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men” (I Cor 7:23); “You were bought with a great price” (I Cor 6:20); “We are yours, O David, and with you, O son of Jesse!” (I Chr 12:18).

1104. Secondly, he assigns the cause of this condition, saying: *For to this end Christ died and lived again*, i.e., by His death and resurrection He obtained the right *to be Lord of the living*, because He rose to begin a new and perpetual life, *and of the dead*, because by dying He destroyed our death: “He died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who for their sake died and arose (2 Cor 5:15).

Thus, therefore, by all the foregoing the Apostle has proved that each one stands or falls before his master, namely, by the fact that believers give thanks to God and that they live and die to the Lord and that in life and in death we are the Lord’s.

1105. Then when he says, *Why do you*, he presents the third reason, which is based on the future judgment.

In regard to this he does three things: first, he suggests that a judgment at present is unnecessary, saying: *Why do you pass judgment*, i.e., of what use or need is your judgment, *on your brother*, rashly judging hidden matters not committed to your judgment? *Or you*, who are judged, *why do you despise your brother*, regarding as nothing the fact that you are judged by him? “Why does each one despise his brother?” (Mic 2:10).

1106. Secondly, he foretells the future judgment of Christ: As if to say: I am correct in stating why you pass judgment, because you should not fear that anyone will remain unjudged. *For we shall all stand before the tribunal of Christ*. The tribunal of Christ is so called on account of His judiciary power, as it says in Mt (25:20): “When the Son of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the glorious throne.”

He says that *we shall all stand*, as if to be judged, both good and evil in regard to reward or punishment: “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil according to what he has done in the body” (2 Cor 5:10).

But as to the proceedings not all will stand to be judged, but some will sit as judges: “You will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Mt 19:28).

1107. Thirdly, when he says, *for it is written*, he proves what he had said:

first, he appeals to an authority;

secondly, he draws the conclusion [v. 12; n. 1112].

1108. First, therefore, he says: I have stated that all of us will stand before the tribunal of Christ. This is clear from the testimony of Sacred Scripture: *for it is written* (Is 45:23): *As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.*

Our text has this: “I have sworn by myself that to me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear.”

1109. Three things are stated in these words: first, the oath sometimes used by God to show that what is said is as solid as the unchangeableness of God’s plan and not changeable as things foretold according to lower causes, as prophecies that threaten. Hence it says in Ps 110 (v. 4): “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind.” But men, as the Apostle says in Heb (6:16), “swear by a greater than themselves.” But because God has none greater than Himself on which the strength of His truth depends, He swears by Himself.

Furthermore, God is life itself and the source of life, as it says in Dt (30:20): “He is your life and the length of your days”; “With thee is the fountain of life” (Ps 36:9). Therefore, the formula of the Lord’s oath is, *as I live*. As if to say: I swear by the life I uniquely live.

1110. Secondly, the coming subjection of the creature to God is foretold, when it is said: *every knee shall bow to me*, i.e., to Christ. In this is designated the complete subjection of the rational creature to Christ. For men are wont to signify subjection by bending the knee. Hence it says in Phil (2:11): “At the name of Jesus every knee should bend in heaven and on the earth and under the earth.

1111. Thirdly, he foretells the confession of faith by which all will confess the glory of Christ. Hence he continues: *and every tongue shall give praise to God*, i.e., will confess that Christ is God, as it says in Phil (2:11): “Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Every tongue can be understood as the expression of the knowledge of men or of angels, as it says in I Cor (13:1): “If I speak in the tongue of men and of angels.”

This is fulfilled now in this life, not as to each man but as to the classes of each man. From each class of men some are not subjected to Christ and confess Him by faith, but in the future judgment all and each will be subjected to Him: the good voluntarily and the evil unwillingly. Hence, it says in Heb (2:8): “Now in subjecting everything to him, he left nothing outside his control.”

1112. Then when he says, *so each of us*, he draws the conclusion from the foregoing.

First, the conclusion intended from what he had just said, saying: Therefore, from the fact that every knee will bend before Christ, *each of us shall give an account of himself before God*, i.e., before the tribunal of Christ: “On the day of judgment every man shall render an account for every careless word he uttered” (Mt 12:36); “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants” (Mt 18:23).

1113. But it seems that not everyone will give an account of himself, but one for someone else: “Obey your leaders and submit to them. For they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give an account” (Heb 13:17).

The answer is that in the very fact that prelates will render an account for others, they will render an account for their own actions, which they⁶ should have performed for their subjects. For if they have done what their duties demanded, they will not be held accountable, if their subjects perished. But they would be held accountable, if they neglected to do what their office required. Hence it says in Ez (3:18ff): “If I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I shall require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness, he shall die in his iniquity, but you will have saved your life.”

1114. Secondly, he draws the conclusion chiefly intended from the entire preceding part, saying: *Then let us no more pass judgment on one another*, i.e., with a rash judgment, which is included in the reason given above: “Do not pronounce judgment before the time” (I Cor 4:5).

Lecture 2

(13b) [n. 1115] Then let us no more pass judgment on one another, but rather decide never to put a hindrance or scandal in the way of a brother.

(14) [n. 1117] I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is common in itself; but it is common for any one who thinks it common.

(15) [n. 1122] If your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food one for whom Christ died.

(16) [n. 1126] So do not let your good be spoken of as evil.

(17) [n. 1127] For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit;

(18) [n. 1129] he who thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.

(19) [n. 1130] Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

(20a) [n. 1131] Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God.

1115. After forbidding human judgments [n. 1081], the Apostle now forbids putting stumbling blocks before one's neighbor.

First, he presents his proposition;

secondly, he clarifies it [v. 15; n. 1122].

1116. In regard to the first he does three things: first, he teaches that stumbling blocks must be avoided, saying: I have said that you should not judge one another, but everyone ought to judge his own actions. And this is what he says: *but rather decide never to put a hindrance or scandal in the way of a brother.* A scandal, as Jerome says in

his commentary on Matthew, means a hindrance or injury which we can call a “striking of the foot.” Hence a scandal is an illegal word or deed presenting the occasion of ruin to someone after the manner of a stone against which one strikes his foot and falls.

A scandal is more serious than a hindrance, for the latter can be anything which merely retards forward movement; but a scandal, i.e., a striking, seems to exist when someone is disposed for a fall. Therefore, we should not place a hindrance before our brother by doing anything that will draw him from the path of righteousness: “Take the hindrance out of my people’s path” (Is 57:14). Nor should we place a scandal before a brother by doing something that might incline him to sin: “Woe to the man by whom scandal comes” (Mt 18:7).

1117. Secondly, he teaches that what was considered a stumbling block was of its very nature and in itself lawful.

In regard to this it should be noted that, as was stated above, there were among the Romans some Jews converted to Christ who distinguished among foods without distinction – this of itself was lawful. Hence he says: *I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself.*

On this point it should be known, as Jerome says in his commentary on Matthew, that the Jewish people, boasting that they are God’s portion, call unclean the food which all men use, e.g., the flesh of swine, hares and food of that sort. Furthermore, the nations which used such foods were not God’s portion; consequently, such food was unclean.

The words *nothing is common* amount to the same thing as saying “Nothing is unclean.”

The Apostle says that nothing is unclean, because he knows that it is so according to the nature of things, as he says in I Tim (4:4): Everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with thanksgiving.” Secondly, he says that he is persuaded in Christ Jesus that in itself nothing is unclean, namely, because foods of their very nature never were unclean, but they were avoided for a time as unclean in keeping with a commandment of the Law as a figure. But Christ removed this by fulfilling all figures. Therefore, the Apostle, relying on his confidence in the Lord Jesus, asserts that nothing is common or unclean of itself: “What God has cleansed, you must not call common” (Ac 10:15).

1118. Thirdly, he shows how this could be unlawful accidentally, inasmuch as it is against the conscience of the eater. Hence he says: It has been stated that nothing is unclean; but it must be understood that if one has an erroneous conscience and thinks that some food is unclean, then for him it is unclean and so it is unlawful for him, as if the food were really unclean: “To the pure all things are pure, but to the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure; their minds and consciences are corrupted” (Tit 1:15).

1119. So it is clear that something licit in itself becomes illicit for one who does it against his conscience, even though his conscience is erroneous. It is reasonable that this be so, for acts are judged according to the will of the performer. But the will is moved by the thing apprehended. Hence the will tends toward what the apprehensive power represents to it, and it is according to this that the action is qualified or specified. Therefore, if a person’s reason judges that something is sinful and the will is drawn to it as something to be done, it is clear that the person has a will to commit a sin. For this reason his external action, which is informed from the will, is a sin. For the same reason,

if one thinks that something venially sinful is a mortal sin, if he does it while his conscience is in that state, it is clear that he has chosen to sin mortally; consequently, his action is a mortal sin on account of his choice.

But if someone afterwards has an erroneous conscience through which he believes that something lawful he did was a sin, or something venial was mortal, it is not on that account a sin or mortal, because the will and the action are not informed by a succeeding apprehension but by the one preceding the will and the action.

1120. There is no doubt about what we have said, but there can be doubt whether if someone has an erroneous conscience whereby he believes that something which is a mortal sin is necessary for salvation; for example, if he thinks that he is sinning mortally, unless he steals or fornicates, should such a conscience bind him, so that if he acted against it, he would sin mortally.

It would seem that he would not be bound. First, because God's law, which forbids stealing and fornication, bind him more strongly than conscience.

Secondly, because this position would put him in a perplexed state, for he would sin by fornicating and by not fornicating.

The answer is that an erroneous conscience binds, even in matters per se evil. For conscience, as has been said, binds to such an extent that from the fact that one acts against his conscience, it follows that he has the will to sin. Therefore, if someone believes that not to fornicate is a sin and chooses not to fornicate, he chooses to sin mortally; and so he sins mortally. This also applies to what the Apostle says here. For it is clear that distinguishing among foods as though necessary for salvation was unlawful, because even before the spreading of the Gospel, it was not lawful for the converted Jews

to observe the practices of the Law by putting their hope in them, as though they were necessary for salvation, as Augustine said above [n. 1087]. Yet the Apostle says here that if a person's conscience compels him to distinguish between foods, i.e., regards some food as unclean, and he does not distinguish among them, i.e., by abstaining from them, he sins as though he were eating unclean food. And so an erroneous conscience obliges, even in matters that are *per se* illicit.

The answer to the first objection about the law of God is that the binding force of even an erroneous conscience and that of the law of God are the same. For conscience does not dictate something to be done or avoided, unless it believes that it is against or in accordance with the law of God. For the law is applied to our actions only by means of our conscience.

The answer to the second objection is that nothing forbids a person to be perplexed in certain circumstances, although no one is perplexed absolutely. For example, a fornicating priest sins mortally whether he celebrates Mass or does not celebrate, when is obliged by his office. Yet absolutely speaking, he is not perplexed, because he can confess and then celebrate. Similarly, someone can get rid of an erroneous conscience and abstain from sin.

1121. There is still another difficulty.

For one is not said to place a stumbling block by doing a good work, even though someone takes the good work as a stumbling block, as Mt (15:12) says that the Pharisees took the words of Jesus as a stumbling block. But not to discriminate among foods is a good work; therefore, it should not be avoided just because someone with a erroneous conscience makes a stumbling block of it. For according to this, Catholics would have to

abstain from meat and marriage to prevent heretics from being offended according to their erroneous conscience.

The answer is that someone can place a stumbling block before another not only by doing something evil but also by doing something which has the appearance of evil: “Abstain from all appearances of evil” (I Th 5:22). Now something is said to have the appearance of evil in two ways: first, according to the opinion of those cut off from the Church; secondly, according to the opinion of those still tolerated by the Church. But those weak in faith, considering that the practices of the Law should be observed, were still tolerated by the Church before the spread of the Gospel. Therefore, foods forbidden by the Law were not to be eaten, if they were a stumbling block. Heretics, however, are not tolerated by the Church; therefore, this reasoning does not apply to them.

1122. Then when he says, *if your brother*, he clarifies what he had said:

first, that scandals must not be placed before a brother;

secondly, how something is common [v. 20b; n. 1132].

1123. In regard to the first he presents four arguments, the first of which is taken on the part of charity, saying: *If your brother is being injured* by the fact that he thinks you are sinning *by the food you eat*, which he considers unclean, *you are no longer walking in love*, according to which a person loves his neighbor as himself. So you should avoid saddening him and not prefer food to your brother’s peace of mind: “Love does not seek its own” (I Cor 13:5).

1124. Then when he says, *Do not let your food*, he presents the second argument taken on the part of Christ’s death.

For he seems to put little value on Christ's death who voids its fruit for the sake of food. Hence he says: *Do not let your food*, of which you eat all without distinction, *cause the ruin of one*, i.e., be a stumbling block *for whom*, i.e., for whose salvation, *Christ died*: "Christ died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust" (I Pt 3:18).

He says that the victim of the stumbling block suffers ruin, because it involves him in sin. For the victim is one who makes a stumbling block the occasion of ruin: "So by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died" (I Cor 8:11).

1125. Then when he says, *So do not let*, he presents the third reason, which is taken on the part of the gifts of spiritual grace.

First, he shows what impropriety follows against such gifts from the fact that we place a stumbling block;

secondly, he clarifies what he had said [v. 17; n. 1127];

thirdly, he draws a conclusion [v. 19; n. 1130].

1126. In regard to the first it should be noted that because some ate all foods without distinction in the early Church and thus set an obstacle before the weak, this impropriety followed, namely, that the weak blasphemed the faith of Christ, asserting that it fostered greediness in regard to food, contrary to the commandment of the Law. Therefore, the Apostle says: Although the Lord Jesus declared that nothing is unclean, *we should not let our good*, i.e., the faith and grace of Christ, through which you have obtained freedom from the ceremonies of the Law, *be blasphemed* by the weak who declare that it caters to man's gluttony: "They blaspheme that honorable name by which

you are called” (Jas 2:7); concerning this good it says in Ps 73 (v. 6): “For me it is good to be near God.”

1127. Then when he says, *For the kingdom*, he explains what he had said, namely, in what our good consists.

First, he shows in what it does not consist, saying: *The kingdom of God is not food and drink*. Here the kingdom of God means that through which God reigns in us and through which we arrive at His kingdom. Mt (6:10) says of this: “Thy kingdom come” and Mic (4:7): “The Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion.” We are joined to God and subjected to Him through our intellect and affections, as it says in Jn (4:24): “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” This is why the kingdom of God is considered mainly in things interior to man and not exterior. Hence Lk (17:21) says: “The kingdom of God is within you.

But things which are exterior and pertain to the body pertain to the kingdom of God to the extent that through them the interior affections are ordered or disordered in regard to those things in which the kingdom of God mainly consists. Hence, since food and drink pertain to the body, they do not of themselves pertain to the kingdom of God, but only inasmuch as we use them or abstain from them. Hence it says in I Cor (8:8): “Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.”

Yet the use of or abstinence from food and drink pertains to the kingdom of God, insofar as a man’s affections are ordered or disordered in regard to them. Hence Augustine says in *Gospel Questions* [book 2, question 11], and is provided here in the Gloss [of Lombard, col. 1517]: “Wisdom is justified in her children who understand that

righteousness does not consist in eating or in abstaining, but in tolerating need with equanimity and in temperance not destroying itself by abundance and by unsuitable ways of eating. It makes no difference,” as is said in the Gloss “how, what, or how much one takes, provided he does it according to the habits of the men among whom he lives and for the needs of his person and health; but with how much power and severity of mind he suffers the lack of these, either when he should or of necessity must be deprived of them.

1128. Secondly, he shows in what our good consists, namely, in the kingdom of God, saying: *Righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*. Here *righteousness* refers to external works, whereby a man renders to each person what is his due and the intention of doing such works, as it says in Mt (6:33): “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” *Peace* refers to the effect of justice [righteousness]. For peace is particularly disturbed, when one man does not give to another what he owes him. Hence it says in Is (32:17): “Peace is a work of justice.” *Joy* must be referred to the manner in which the works of justice are to be accomplished; for as the Philosopher says in book one of the *Ethics*, “A man is not just who does not take joy in acts of justice.” Hence Ps 100 (v. 2) says: “Serve the Lord with gladness.”

The cause of this joy is expressed when says: *in the Holy Spirit*. For it is by the Holy Spirit that the love of God is poured into us, as was said above (5:5). For joy in the Holy Spirit is what charity produces; for example, when one rejoices in the good of God and neighbor. Hence it says in I Cor (13:6): “Charity does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right” and in Gal (5:22): “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.

The three things mentioned here are possessed imperfectly in this life, but perfectly when the saints will possess the kingdom God prepared for them, as it says in

Mt (25:34). In that kingdom perfect righteousness will exist without any sin: “All your people are righteous” (Is 60:21). There will be perfect peace without any disquiet or fear: “My people will abide in a peaceful habitation” (Is 32:18). There will be joy there: “They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Is 35:1).

1129. Then he proves what he had said, namely, that the kingdom of God consists in these things. For the man who seems to belong to the kingdom of God is one who is pleasing to God and approved by holy men. But this happens to the man in whom are found righteousness, peace and joy. Therefore, the kingdom of God consists in them. He says, therefore: It has been stated that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit; *therefore, he who thus serves Christ*, Who is the king of this kingdom: “He has transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son (Col 1:13), so that one who lives in righteousness, joy and peace *is pleasing to God*, Who is the founder of this kingdom: “There was one who pleased God and was loved by him” (Wis 4:10) *and approved by men*, i.e., approved by the members of this kingdom: “Who has been tested by it and found perfect” (Sir 31:10).

1130. Then when he says, *Let us then*, he infers the intended admonition. Inasmuch as the kingdom of God consists in righteousness, peace and spiritual joy, *let us then*, in order to arrive at the kingdom of God, *pursue* the path of peace, i.e., strive to accomplish the things through which we conserve the peace of Christians: “Strive for peace and holiness” (Heb 12:14). *Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding*, i.e., things by which we upbuild one another, i.e., by which we preserve what is good and are stimulated to become better: “Strive to excel in building up the Church” (I Cor 14:12).

1131. Then when he says, *Do not for the sake of food*, he presents the fourth argument, which is taken from our reverence for God's works, to which we owe this reverence in the sense that what God does we should not destroy for some bodily convenience: And this is what he says: *Do not for the sake of food*, which is used by the body, *destroy the work of God*. This, of course, does not mean just any work of God. For all the things which serve as man's food are God's works, as the produce of the earth and the flesh of animals, which have been granted to man for food, as it says in Gen (1:29; 9:3). It means the work of grace which He works in us in a special way: "God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil 2:13). Therefore, we should not for the sake of food destroy this work of God in our neighbor, as they seemed to do who disturbed and placed stumbling blocks before the brethren by eating all foods without distinction.

Lecture 3

(20b) [n. 1132] Everything is indeed clean, but it is evil for the one who places eats by a hindrance;

(21) [n. 1134] it is right not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that hinders or scandalizes or weakens your brother.

(22) [n. 1136] Do you have faith? Keep it between yourself and God; happy is he who has no reason to judge himself for what he approves.

(23) [n. 1139] But he who has doubts is condemned, if he eats, because he does not act from faith; for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

1132. After presenting a reason to show that we should not set a stumbling block before our neighbor by eating all foods indiscriminately [n. 1122], the Apostle now shows how certain foods can be clean and unclean. In regard to this he does two things.

First, he states which things are clean of their very nature, saying: *Everything, indeed, which can pertain to man's food is clean*, namely, of its very nature, because of its very nature it does not have the power to defile a man's soul, as it says in Mt (15:11): "Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man"; and in I Tim (4:4): "Everything created by God is good." But certain things were declared unclean under the Law not of their nature but by reason of what they signified, as is clear in Lev (11:2ff). But Christ even removed this uncleanness by fulfilling the figures of the Old Law. Hence it was said to Peter: "What God has cleansed, you must not call common," i.e., unclean (Ac 10:15).

Secondly [n. 1133], when he says, *but it is wrong*, he shows how some food can become unclean for a man, namely, it stains his soul to eat it; and this in two ways:

first, when a person by eating all food indiscriminately puts a stumbling block before his neighbor;

secondly, when he eats food contrary to his conscience [v. 22b; n. 1138].

1133. In regard to the first he does three things: first, he shows what is evil in taking food, saying: Although all things are by their nature good, *nevertheless, it is wrong for anyone to make others fall* by what he eats: "Woe to the world for stumbling blocks" (Mt 18:7).

Secondly, he shows what is good in eating foods of this sort, saying: *It is good not to eat meat or drink wine*, the first of which seems to be the principal food and the second the principal drink.

He says that it is good to abstain from these either to tame the desires of the flesh, as it says in Eph (5:18): “Do not get drunk with wine, for in that is debauchery,” or even to make a man more apt for contemplating spiritual things: “I have thought to deprive myself of wine, that I might give my mind to wisdom” (Ec 2:3).

But this is not what the Apostle intends to say here, but that it is good not to use these, if they are a stumbling block to the brethren. This is apparent from what he says: *or do anything that makes your brother stumble*. What I say, I say not only about wine and meat, namely, that it is good not to use them, but I say it of any other food; *your brother is upset*, i.e., disturbed about you, as if you were acting unlawfully. By this his peace is disturbed *or he sees a stumbling block*, i.e., is tempted to fall into sin; wherefore, his righteousness is injured *or is weakened*, i.e., begins at least to wonder whether what is done is lawful, so that his spiritual joy is lessened.

1135. But since it is lawful to use these foods, if one must abstain from using them for fear of putting a stumbling block before his neighbor, then by the same token it seems that one should abstain from all lawful things which are not necessary for salvation, as righteousness, peace and spiritual joy are necessary. So it seems that it is not lawful for a man to demand his due for fear of putting a stumbling block before his neighbor.

The answer is that if the stumbling block [scandal] proceeds from the weakness or ignorance of those scandalized on account of it, then to avoid this scandal a man should abstain from lawful things, if they are not necessary for salvation. For this is scandal of little ones, which the Lord commands us to avoid: “See that you do not despise one of these little ones” (Mt 18:10). But if scandal of this sort arises from the malice of those

scandalized, such scandal is Pharisaical and the Lord taught that it should be ignored. Hence, to avoid scandal of this sort, it is not necessary to abstain from lawful things.

But yet in regard to scandal of little ones, it should be noted that to avoid it, a person is bound to postpone the use of lawful things, until this scandal can be removed by explaining one's conduct. But if the scandal still remains after such an explanation, then it would seem to proceed not from ignorance or from weakness but from malice, so that it will now be Pharisaical scandal.

1136. Thirdly, he rejects an excuse. For someone might say: Although my neighbor may be scandalized at my eating all foods indiscriminately, yet to profess my faith, which tells me that it is lawful, I will use food indiscriminately.

But the Apostle rejects this reasoning, saying: *You*, who would use all foods indiscriminately, *have the faith*, through which it is clear that it is lawful to use these foods. This faith is good and praiseworthy, *but keep it between you and God*, Whom such faith pleases: "God is well pleased with faith and meekness" (Sir 18:14). As if to say: It is not fitting to manifest your faith by an outward work, when this becomes a stumbling block to your neighbor.

1137. But this seems to be contradicted by something he said above (10:10): "Man believes with his heart and so is justified; and he confesses with his lips and so is saved." Therefore, it does not seem to be enough to keep the faith in your heart between yourself and God, but it should be manifested by confessing it before one's neighbor.

The answer is that among the matters of faith some have not been perfectly manifested by the Church, as in the early Church it had not been perfectly declared to men that Jewish converts were not bound to observe the practices of the Law, and as in

the time of Augustine the Church had not yet declared that the soul was not transferred from the parent.³⁷ Hence, in cases of this kind it is enough for a man to keep his faith between himself and God. Nor should he manifest his faith, if it scandalizes his neighbor, except perhaps among those who have to decide about the faith.

But certain things of faith have already been determined by the Church. In such matters it is not enough to keep your faith between yourself and God, but one should confess it before his neighbor, no matter what scandal might arise, because doctrinal truth must not be set aside on account of scandal, just as Christ did not set aside the truth of His teaching just because the Pharisees were scandalized, as it says in Mt (15:12ff).

It should also be noted that although in such matters a person should manifest his faith by oral confession, he is not required to manifest it by performing the outward work. Thus, if someone hold by faith that the use of marriage is licit, he is not required as a manifestation of his faith to use it. And so it is also not required of those who have correct faith, that they manifest their faith by the use of foods. For they could manifest it by word.

1138. Then when he says, *happy is he*, he shows how the use of foods becomes unclean for certain persons from the fact that it is against their conscience.

In regard to this he does three things [nn. 1139, 1140]: first, he shows what is good in this matter, in order, namely, that a person not have remorse of conscience from something he does not do. Hence, he says: *Happy is he who has no reason to judge himself*, i.e., whose conscience neither chides nor condemns him *for what he approves to be done*.

³⁷ Cf. Augustine, *De libero Arbitrio*, book 3, ch. 21.

This, of course, supposes that he approves with right faith that which is to be done. But if he uses a false opinion in approving something to be done, say if he deems it a service to God to kill Christ's disciples, as it says in Jn (16:2), he is not excused just because he does not judge himself in this matter. Indeed, he would be happier if his conscience were to rebuke him on this point, because he would thereby have been restrained more from sin. But we should understand that the Apostle is speaking here of lawful things. For it pertains to man's glory that his conscience not rebuke him: "Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience" (I Cor 1:12); "My heart does not reproach me for any of my days" (Jb 27:6).

1139. Secondly, he shows what is evil in this matter, namely, that one acts against his conscience. Hence he says: *But he who has doubts*, i.e., has the false opinion that he must discriminate among foods, *if he eats*, namely, food which he regards as unlawful, *is condemned*, because so far as in him lies, he has the will to do what is unlawful; and so, "because he sinned, he is self-condemned" (Tit 3:110).

1140. Thirdly, he assigns the cause of what he had said, saying: *because he does not act from faith*; therefore, he is condemned.

Here faith can be taken in two ways: in one way of faith as a virtue; in another way, so that conscience is called faith. These two meanings differ only as particular and universal. For what we hold by faith universally, for example, that the use of foods is lawful or unlawful, conscience applies to a deed performed or to be performed.

It is said, therefore, that he who eats and distinguishes is condemned, because this is not from faith but against faith, i.e., against a truth of faith and against the conscience of the eater: "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb 11:6). That this is a

sufficient reason for condemnation is shown when he says: *Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.* From this it seems that, as a Gloss says, “The entire life of unbelievers is sin,” just as the entire life of believers is meritorious, inasmuch as it is directed to the glory of God, as it says in I Cor (10:31): “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

1141. But it should be noted that the believer’s relation to good differs from the unbeliever’s relation to evil. For there is nothing of condemnation in a person who has living faith, as was said above (8:1). But in the unbeliever along with his unbelief is the good of his nature. Therefore, when an unbeliever does something good from the dictate of reason and does not refer it to an evil end, he does not sin. However, his deed is not meritorious, because it was not enlivened by grace. This is what a Gloss says: “Nothing is good without the supreme good, i.e., no good is meritorious without God’s grace, and where knowledge of eternal life and unchangeable truth is lacking, which knowledge comes by faith, virtue in the best behavior is false, inasmuch as it is not referred to the end of eternal happiness. But when an unbeliever does something from the fact that he is an unbeliever, it is clear that he sins.” Hence when a Gloss says: “Every deed which is not from faith is a sin,” it must be understood in the following way: Everything against faith or against conscience is a sin, and if it seems of its nature to be good, as when a pagan in honor of his gods preserves virginity or gives an alms, he sins by this very fact: “To the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure; their very minds and consciences are corrupted” (Tit 1:15).

Chapter 15

Lecture 1

(1) [n. 1142] We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves;

(2) [n. 1143] let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him.

(3) [n. 1145] For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me."

(4) [n. 1148] For whatever was written was written for our instruction, that by patience and by the consolation of the scriptures we might have hope.

(5) [n. 1149] May the God of patience and consolation grant you to be of one mind with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,

(6) that with one mind and with one mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(7) [n. 1150] Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the honor of God.

(8) [n. 1153] For I tell you that Christ Jesus became a servant of the circumcision on account of the truthfulness of God, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,

(9) [n. 1155] and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will praise thee among the Gentiles, and sing to thy name";

(10) [n. 1159] and again it is said, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people";

(11) [n. 1160] and again, "Praise the Lord, all Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him";

(12) [n. 1161] and further Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, he who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles hope."

(13) [n. 1162] May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

1142. The Apostle taught above that the stronger should avoid scandalizing the weak [n. 1081]; here he teaches that the stronger should bear with the failings of the weak.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he proposes an admonition;

secondly, he clarifies it [v. 2; 1143].

This admonition contains two parts: the first pertains to external behavior. Hence he says: Not only should we avoid scandalizing the weak, but *we who are stronger* in faith ought to *bear with the failings of the weak*. For as in a material edifice certain stronger material is selected to support the edifice's entire weight, upon which weaker material is set, as are the foundation and pillars, so in the spiritual edifice of the Church stronger men are not only chosen but made stronger to support the weight of the others. Hence it says in Ps 75 (v. 4): "I have strengthened its pillars" and in Gal (6:2): "Bear one another's burdens." But the stronger support the failings of the weak, when they endure the shortcomings of the weak patiently and, so far as they can, try to help them.

The second pertains to the internal intention. Hence it is said: *And we should not please ourselves*, i.e., always desire the fulfillment of what pleases us, but we should

condescend to the wills of others, so as to do what pleases them and is useful to them:

“Just as I try to please all men in everything I do” (I Cor 10:33).

1143. Then when he says, *let each of us*, he clarifies his admonition:

first, in regard to the second part;

secondly, in regard to the first [v. 7; 1150].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he explains what he had said;

secondly, he presents a reason [v. 3; 1145].

1144. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that we should not please ourselves, precisely because *each of us* who are stronger, *ought to please our weak neighbor*, i.e., condescend to him in matters that please him, but not in matters that are evil, as some request in Is (30:10): “Speak to us smooth things.” Hence he adds: *for his good*.

Similarly, we should not have the intention of pleasing men for the sake of human favor or glory, since it says in Ps 53 (v. 5): “god will scatter the bones of those who please men,” but for the honor of God and the benefit of our neighbor. Hence he adds: *to edify him*, i.e., because we condescend to their will, they are strengthened in the faith and love of Christ: “Let us pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding” (Rom 14:19).

1145. Then when he says, *For Christ*, he assigns the reason for what he had said and uses the example of Christ:

first, he mentions the example of Christ:

secondly, he shows that we should imitate this example [v. 4; 1148];

thirdly, he adds a prayer so that we can fulfill it [v. 5; n. 1149].

1146. In regard to the first he does two things: first, he presents the example, saying: It has been stated that we should not please ourselves, i.e., according to our own private will; *for Christ*, Who is our head, *did not please himself*, when he chose to suffer for our salvation and do things contrary to His own will, namely, His natural human will, in order to accomplish the divine will, which was common to Him and the Father: “Not my will but thine be done” (Mt 26:42).

1147. Secondly, he appeals to an authority, saying: *But as it is written* in a Psalm in the person of Christ speaking to the Father: O Father, *the reproaches of those*, i.e., the Jews, *who reproached thee*, i.e., blasphemed you by their evil works and by contradicting the truth of your doctrine, *has fallen on me*, because they willed to oppress me, because I instructed them about your will and rebuked their evil deeds: “They have hated both me and my Father” (Jn 15:24).

This can also refer to the sins of the whole human race, because all sins in a way reproach God, inasmuch as God’s law is scorned by them: “Thy have forsaken the Lord, they have blasphemed the hold One of Israel” (Is 14:4). Thus, therefore, the reproaches of those reproaching God fell on Christ, inasmuch as He died for the sins of all: “The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Is. 1:4); “He bore our sins in his body on the tree” (I Pt 2:24).

1148. Then when he says, *For whatever was written*, he shows that we must imitate this example of Christ, saying: *For whatever was written* in Sacred Scripture about Christ or His members *was written for our instruction*. There was no need to write

this except for our instruction: “All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for correction and for training in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16).

But what is contained in Scripture for our instruction is shown when he says: *that by patience and the consolation of the scriptures*, i.e., which the Scriptures contain. For in Sacred Scripture is contained the patience of the saints in enduring evils: “You have heard of the patience of Job” (Jas 5:11). In them is also contained consolation, which God gave them, as it says in Ps 94 (v. 19): “When the cares of my heart are many, thy consolations cheer my soul.” Hence it also says in I Pet (1:11): “predicting the sufferings of Christ,” which pertains to patience, “and the subsequent glory,” which pertains to consolation.

What the fruit of this doctrine will be for us he indicates when he says: *that we might have hope*. For by the instruction from Sacred Scripture that those who suffered tribulations patiently for God were divinely consoled, we receive the hope that we ourselves will be consoled, if we have been patient in them: “If he should slay me, I will hope in him” (Jb 13:15).

1149. Then when he says, *May the God of patience*, because it seemed exceedingly difficult for a mere man to be able to imitate the example of Christ, as it says in Ec (2:12): “What is man that he should be able to follow the king, his maker?” he makes use of a prayer, saying: *May the God of patience*, i.e., the giver, Ps 71 (v. 5): “You are my patience,” *and of encouragement*, i.e., who bestows spiritual consolation: 2 Cor (1:3): “The Father of mercies and God of all comfort, *grant you to live in such harmony with one another*, i.e., that you agree with one another: “Agree with one another, live in peace” (2 Cor 13:11), not consenting in sin, *but in accord with Christ*

Jesus, of Whom it is said: “He is our peace, who has made us both one” (Eph 2:14).

That, by the fact that you agree on the same things, *together you may with one voice*, i.e., with one confession of the voice coming from unity of faith, I Cor (1:10): “I appeal that all of you agree,” *glorify the God*, Creator of all things, *and Father of Jesus Christ*, through Whom He adopted us as His sons: “Those who honor me I will honor” (I Sam 2:30); “If I am a father, where is my honor?” (Mal 1:6).

1150. Then when he says, *Therefore, welcome one another*, he clarifies the first part of the admonition in which he had said that the stronger should bear with the failings of the weak.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he resumes the admonition;

secondly, he presents a reason from the example of Christ [v. 7b; n. 1152];

thirdly, he adds a reason [v. 13; n. 1162].

1151. First, therefore, he says: *Therefore*, i.e., because the things that have been written are directed to our instruction, namely, the examples of Christ and the other saints, *welcome one another* in the love of charity, namely, so that one bears things that pertain to another, just as he would like to be helped as far as charity permits, and so that one may bear with another to help and enable him to advance: “Welcome the man who is weak in faith” (Rom 14:1).

1152. Then when he says, *as Christ*, he assigns a reason from the example of Christ.

First, he presents the example, saying: *as Christ welcomed you*, i.e., took you under His care and protection: “Behold, my servant whom I uphold” (Is 42:1); “He has

helped Israel, his servant, in remembrance of his mercy” (Lk 1:54). And this *for the glory of God*, to Whom he referred all things: “I honor my Father and you dishonor me” (Jn 8:49).

From this we are given to understand that we should bear up on another in things pertaining to the honor of God.

1153. Secondly, when he says, *For I tell*, he clarifies what he had said:

first, with respect to the Jews;

secondly with respect to the Gentiles [v. 9; n. 1155].

1154. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that Christ welcomed you who are assembled in the unity of faith composed of Jews and Gentiles. And this is clear with respect to both: *I tell you, therefore, that Christ became a servant to the circumcised*, for He is the author of everyone’s faith, as it says in Heb (12:2): “Looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.” But He showed Himself in person only to the Jews, as it says in Mt (15:24): “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel”; and in Is (42:2): “His voice will not be heard outside.” And this *to show God’s truthfulness*, i.e., that the truth of God’s promise may be acknowledged: “God is truthful” (Rom 3:4). Hence he continues: *in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs*: “He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spoke from the mouth of his holy prophets” (Lk 1:69); “For all the promises of God find their Yes in him” (2 Cor 1:20).

1155. Then when he says, *and in order that*, he shows that even the Gentiles were accepted by Christ:

first, he states his proposition;

secondly, he confirms it with an authority [v. 9b; 1158].

1156. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that Christ accepted the Jews in order that the promises made to the patriarchs be fulfilled. But the promises were not made to the Gentiles. Hence, this does not apply to the Gentiles, because they were accepted on account of mercy. And this is what he says: *that the Gentiles should glorify God for the mercy* extended to them by Christ; because, although He did not preach to them in person, He sent them His disciples, who exercised their ministry among them as He had done among the Jews: “Go, therefore, and teach all nations” (Mt 28:19); “The earth is full of the Lord’s mercy” (Ps 33:5); “His mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation” (Lk 1:50).

1157. Thus, the Apostle attributes the conversion of the Jews to God’s truth but that of the Gentiles to His mercy. But Ps 25 (v. 10) says: “All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth,” which seems to contradict this.

The answer is that in ascribing the call of the Jews to God’s truth He does not exclude mercy, because the Apostle himself, who was born of the Jews, says: “I received mercy” (I Tim 1:13). It was also an act of mercy that God made the promises to the patriarchs about the salvation of their descendants. Similarly, in ascribing the call of the Gentiles to God’s mercy He does not exclude God’s truth entirely, because it also pertained to divine truth that He should fulfill His intention concerning the salvation of the Gentiles. Of this intention the Apostle says in Eph (3:9): “It was a mystery hidden for ages in God.” But one form of truth, namely, the fulfillment of promises, is considered in the call of the Jews, that is not considered in the call of the Gentiles, to whom the promises were not made.

1158. Then when he says, *As it is written*, he confirms with an authority what he had said about the conversion of the Gentiles.

For although the call had not been promised to the Gentiles, it was not unplanned but was foretold by the predictions of the prophets.

He adduces four authorities, the first of which contains Christ's thanksgiving to the "Father for the conversion of the Gentiles achieved by Him. Hence he says: *As it is written*, (Ps 18), *Thou didst make me the head of the gentiles* (v. 43); *thou didst exalt me above my adversaries* (v. 48). O, God the Father, I, Christ, *will praise you* with thanksgiving *among the Gentiles*, for the conversion of the Gentiles accomplished through me and *I will sing* with new exaltation of mind *to your name*, which has been manifested to them, as it says in Jn (17:6): "I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gavest me."

Or in another way: *I will praise you among the Gentiles*, i.e., I will make the Gentiles confess to you with a confession of faith: "Let the peoples praise thee, O God, let all the peoples praise thee" (Ps 67:5) *and I will sing to your name*, i.e., I will make the Gentiles sing to you a song which consists in the exultation of a renewed spirit: "O, sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth" (Ps 96:1).

1159. The second authority contains the coalescence of Gentiles and Jews. Hence, he says: *And again it is said*: "O Gentiles, once alienated from the commonwealth of Israel" (Eph 2:12); *Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people*, i.e., adopt a common joy together with the Jews, who were once His people: "They rejoice before thee as with joy at the harvest" (Is 9:3); "There shall be one flock and one shepherd" (Jn 10:16).

1160. The third authority contains the devotion of the Gentiles to God. Hence he adds: *And again* it is written in Ps 117 (v. 4): *Praise the Lord, all Gentiles*, i.e., confess His goodness: “From the rising of the sun to its setting the name of the Lord is to be praised” (Ps 113:3); *and let all the peoples*, not only the Jewish people, *praise him*, i.e., confess His greatness, i.e., that His greatness exceeds all praise: “When you praise the Lord, exalt him as much as you can; for he will surpass even that” (Si 43:30); “From the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the Gentiles” (Mal 1:11).

1161. The fourth authority contains the reverence of the Gentiles toward Christ. Hence he continues: *And again Isaiah says (11:10) ‘The root of Jesse shall come.’* Here he foretells the origin of Jesus, that He will be born of the seed of Jesse. For Jesse was David’s father. Therefore he says: *The root of Jesse will come*, from whose seed Christ will be born: “In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the people” (Is 11:10). Or Christ will be the root of Jesse, because although He came from Jesse according to bodily origin, yet it was His power that sustained him and gave him grace: “It is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you” (Rom 11:18).

Then he touches on Christ’s office, adding: *He who rises* with such excellent grace that He is able *to rule the Gentiles* by leading them to divine worship, which no one had been able to do previously: “I will make the Gentiles your heritage. You shall rule them with a rod of iron” (Ps 2:8).

Finally, he mentions the devotion of the Gentiles to Christ, saying: *In him shall the Gentiles hope*, i.e., to obtain through Him the inheritance of heavenly glory: “We have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (I Pt 1:3).

1162. Then when he says, *May the Lord of hope*, he adds a prayer, saying: It has been stated that the Gentiles will hope in Christ, *the God of hope*, i.e., who pours this hope in us: “My hope, O Lord (Ps 71:5). Or *the God of hope*, i.e., the one to hope in, *may he fill you with all you*, i.e., spiritual, which is concerned with God: “The joy of the Lord is your strength” (Neh 8:10) *and peace*, through which a man is at peace in himself and with God and his neighbor: “Great peace have they who love your law” (Ps 119:165) *in believing*. As if to say: So that along with believing you may have peace and joy, which are effects of charity, as it says in Gal (5:22): “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.”

Hence it is clear that he wishes them to have from God, the giver of hope, not only faith but charity, through which faith works, as it says in Gal (5:6) lest their faith be unformed and dead: “Faith without works is dead” (Jas 2:26). *So that* by the fullness of these virtues *you may abound*, by progressing from good to better, not only *in hope* but also *in the power of the Holy Spirit*, i.e., in charity, which is poured forth in your hearts by the Holy Spirit, as was said above (5:5); “God is able to provide you with every grace in abundance” (2 Cor 7:8).

Lecture 2

(14) [n. 1163] I myself am satisfied about you, my brethren, that you yourselves are full of love, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another.

(15) [n. 1165] But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace [n. 1167] given me by God

(16) to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, sanctifying the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

(17) [n. 1168] I have therefore glory in Christ Jesus towards God.

(18) [n. 1171] For I will not venture to speak of any of those things that Christ does not work through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed,

(19) by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit, [n. 1172] so that from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum I have replenished the gospel of Christ.

(20) [n. 1173] And I have so preached this gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on another man's foundation,

(21) [n. 1175] but as it is written, "They shall see who have never been told of him, and they shall understand who have never heard of him."

1163. After instructing the Romans with general admonitions, the Apostle now begins to write certain familiar matters to them.

First, matters pertaining to himself;

secondly, matters pertaining to others, in chapter 16 [n. 1193].

In regard to the first he does three things:

first, he excuses his presumption in instructing and correcting them;

secondly, he excuses his tardiness in not visiting them [v. 22; n. 1178];

thirdly, he seeks the favor of their prayers [v. 30; n. 1188].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he excludes a wrong interpretation of the reason for instructing and correcting them;

secondly, he assigns the true cause [v. 15; n. 1165].

1164. In regard to the first it should be noted that someone could believe that the Apostle wrote to the Romans, because he thought there was no one there who could instruct and correct them. But he excludes this, saying: *I myself am satisfied, my brethren*, by things I have heard about you that you are capable of admonishing those among you who need admonishing.

Two things are required of one who would admonish properly: first, that he admonish not from anger or hatred but from love, as it says in Ps 141 (v. 5): “Let a good man rebuke me in kindness,” and in Gal (6:1): “you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.” As to this he says: *because you yourselves are full of goodness*: “Fill your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim,” i.e., with the fire of charity (Ez 10:2).

Secondly, knowledge of the truth is required, because some have zeal for God in correcting, but it is not enlightened, as he said above (10:2). That is why he adds: *filled with all knowledge*, i.e., human and divine, of the Old Law and of the New: “In every way you were enriched with all speech and all knowledge” (I Cor 1:5).

From this he concludes: *so that you may be able* on account of the love and knowledge, fittingly *to instruct one another*. For because “we all offend in many ways” (Jas 3:2), it is fitting that we admonish one another, as it says in Si (17:14): “He gave commandment to each of them concerning his neighbor.”

1165. Then when he says, *But on some points*, he gives the true cause why he had admonished and corrected them.

In regard to this he does two things:

first, he shows that this belongs to the authority committed to him by his apostolate;

secondly, how he used this power [v. 17; n. 1168].

1166. He says, therefore: *But very boldly*, i.e., securely, *I have written to you* by attacking your errors and shortcomings, which of course could be ascribed to bold presumption, inasmuch as I did not fear your displeasure: “He goes out boldly to meet the weapons” (Jb 39:21).

But this presumption is excused for three reasons: first, on account of the condition of those to whom he wrote, because even though among the Romans there were some to whom such rebukes seemed bold and presumptuous, there were others who needed a sharp rebuke on account of their insolent disposition: “Rebuke them sharply” (Tit 1:13). And this is what he says: *in part*. As if to say: my writing does not seem to be bold to all of you but only to a part of you. Or it can be understood as meaning, *on some points*, on which he rebukes them. But it can also mean some part of the Church, i.e., which is with me.

Secondly, the boldness is excused because of the Apostle’s intention. For he was not writing to them as though he regarded them as ignorant, but in order to jog their memories. And this is what he adds: *by way of reminder*, as though they had forgotten things they once knew: “Recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings” (Heb 10:32).

Thirdly, he is excused because of his apostolic authority which required this. Hence, he adds: *because of the grace* of the apostolate committed to me: “By the grace of God I am what I am” (I Cor 15:10).

1167. First, he describes the author of this grace when he says: *which was given me by God*. As if to say: not by men: “Paul an apostle, not from men nor through men” (Gal 1:1).

Secondly, he specified that grace when he says: *to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles*, i.e., to serve God in the conversion of the Gentiles, i.e., to serve God in the conversion of the Gentiles: “One should regard us as ministers of Christ” (I Cor 4:11); “Inasmuch as I am a minister of Christ, I will honor my ministry” (Rom 11:13).

Thirdly, he shows the function of this grace when he says: *sanctifying the gospel of God*, i.e., showing that it is holy by the word of truth and the work of a good life and of miracles: “In the word of truth, the gospel which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world, is bearing fruit and growing” (Col 1:6); “All the words of my mouth are righteous” (Pr 8:8).

Fourthly, he presents the end of this grace when he says: *so that the offering of the Gentiles may be made*, i.e., the nations converted by my ministry, in which he offered, as it were, a sacrifice and oblation to God, as it says in Phil (2:17): “Even if I am to be poured as a libation upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.” *May be made acceptable*, namely, to God through a right intention: “Then wilt thou delight in right sacrifices, oblations and holocausts” (Ps 51:20) – *and sanctified by the Holy Spirit*, i.e., by charity and the other gifts of the Holy Spirit: “you

were sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” (I Cor 6:11).

1168. Then when he says, *in Christ Jesus*, he shows how he used his apostolic authority.

First, he mentions the fruit it produced;

secondly, the greatness of this fruit [v. 19b; n. 1172];

thirdly, he shows the difficulty [v. 20; n. 1173].

1169. In regard to the first he does three things: first, he gives glory to God for the fruit he produced, saying: *Therefore*, because I have received such a grace and have carefully executed that for which it had been given to me, *I have glory*, i.e., merit worthy of glory, as a faithful minister: “I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting” (I Cor 9:15). But I do not attribute this glory chiefly to myself; rather I have it *in Christ Jesus*, i.e., through Christ Jesus, by Whose power I was able to bring forth fruit: “Without me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:5). And because all things were handed over to Him by the Father, as it says in Mt (11:27), the Father abiding in Him also does the works (Jn 14:10). Therefore, he finally refers this glory to the Father, saying: *to God*, namely, the Father: “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give glory” (Ps 115:1).

Then he assigns the reason for what he had said, saying: *For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought through me*. As if to say: I will not speak about the fruit produced through me, if it was not produced by me. Otherwise, I would have no glory with God, even if with men. What I do relate are things not as

accomplished chiefly through me, but as done by Christ through me: “O Lord, thou hast wrought for us all our works” (Is 27:12).

1170. Secondly, he mentions the fruit itself, saying: *to win obedience from the Gentiles*. As if to say: My glory is this, that I have made the Gentiles obey the faith: “To bring about the obedience of faith among all the nations” (Rom 1:5); “As soon as they heard of me they obeyed me” (Ps 18:44).

1171. Thirdly, he shows how he had brought the Gentiles to this obedience. But because he had said above (10:10): “Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ,” he now says: *by word*, i.e., by the word of preaching the faith.

But the arguments favoring the faith preached are the good life of the preachers; in regard to this he says: *and by deed*, as though I brought you to the faith through right deeds: “That they may see your good works” (Mt 5:16); and miraculous works, by which God bears witness to the doctrine preached, as it says in Mk (16:20): “the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it.” Hence he adds: *by the power of signs*, i.e., of minor miracles, such as healing the sick, *and wonders* i.e., major miracles, which portend or manifest something great from their grandeur.

But all this would be insufficient, unless the Holy Spirit stirred the hearts of their hearers to believe. Hence, it says in Act (10:44) that while Peter was speaking the words of faith, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. Therefore, he adds: *by the power of the Holy Spirit*: “While God also bore witness by signs and wonders and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his own will” (Heb 2:4).

1172. Then when he says, *so that from Jerusalem*, he shows the magnitude of the fruit by the multitude of places in which he preached, saying: *So that beginning from*

Jerusalem, where at the commencement of his conversion he preached in the Jewish synagogues, as it says in Ac (9:28). Thus, he fulfilled the word in Is (2:30): “Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the law from Jerusalem,” *as far as Illyricum*, which is on the Adriatic Sea across from Italy, *I have fully preached the gospel of Christ*, i.e., I filled all those places with the preaching of the Gospel. But lest anyone suppose that he followed a straight path from Jerusalem to Illyricum to preach the gospel, he adds: from Jerusalem *as far round* as Illyricum, namely, because he preached to the Gentiles in every direction around him and converted them to the faith: “Who has cleft a channel for the torrents of rain? (Jb 38:25).

1173. Then when he says, *thus making*, he shows how difficult it is to produce this fruit, for it is difficult to convert those entirely ignorant to the faith.

First, therefore, he mentions the difficulty, saying: *thus making it my ambition to preach the Gospel*, *not*, indeed, *where Christ has already been named*, i.e., not among those who had heard the name of Christ: “People whom I had not known served me” (Ps 18:43); “Behold, you shall call nations that you know not, and nations that knew you not shall run to you” (Is 55:5).

1174. Then he gives the reason, saying: *lest I build on another man’s foundation*.

Another man’s foundation can be interpreted in two ways: in one way heretical doctrine, which is alien to the foundation of the true faith: in this sense the word, *lest*, is taken causally. For the Apostle willed to preach to those who had not heard the name of Christ with the intention, because if his hearers had heard the teachings of false apostles, it would have been more difficult to lead them back to the truth. Hence, it says in Mt (7:26): “The man is foolish who builds his house on sand.”

In another way, *another's foundation* can mean the doctrine of the true faith preached by others. Then the word, *lest*, is taken in a consecutive sense. For the Apostle did not avoid preaching to those to whom others had preached; thus he preached to the Romans, whom Peter had previously instructed. But when he preached to those who had heard nothing about Christ, the result was that he was not building on another's foundation, but he himself laid the first foundation of the faith: "As a wise architect, I laid a foundation" (I Cor 3:10).

1175. Secondly, he cites an authority for what he had said, saying: *But as it is written (Is 52:15): They shall see who have never been told of him and they shall understand who have never heard of him.* In these words the prophet seems to predict that the Gentiles will arrive at a more excellent way of knowing God than the Jews, who knew Him before.

1176. First, therefore, he shows its excellence with respect to the knowledge's cause which is twofold, namely, the words heard and the things seen. For these two senses are capable of discipline.

The Jews, therefore, arrived at a knowledge of Christ's mysteries by words announced to them by the prophets: "The prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired about this salvation; they inquired what person or time was indicated by the spirit of Christ within them when predicting the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory" (I Pt 1:10).

But the Gentiles see such mysteries of Christ really fulfilled; hence, he adds: *Because the Gentiles to whom nothing had been announced by the prophets concerning him, i.e., concerning Christ, as it had been announced to the Jews, will see the things*

now fulfilled: “Many prophets and kings desired to see what you see and did not see it” (Lk 10:24).

1177. Secondly, he shows its excellence in regard to the manner of knowing, because the Jews had only heard the announcements of the prophets: “We have heard tidings from God and a message has been sent among the nations” (Ob 1:1). But the Gentiles obtained understanding from seeing. Hence, it is stated: *and they*, namely, the Gentiles, *who previously had not heard* about the Christ foretold by the prophets, *shall understand*, namely, the truth of the faith: “And now, O kings, understand” (Ps 2:10).

Lecture 3

(22) [n. 1178] This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you.

(23) [n. 1180] But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you,

(24) when I shall begin to take my journey into Spain I hope that as I pass I shall see you and be sped on my journey there by you, if first, in part, I shall have enjoyed you.

(25) [n. 1183] At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem with aid for the saints.

(26) [n. 1184] For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem;

(27) [n. 1185] they were pleased to do it, and indeed they are in debt to them, for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual things, they ought also to be of service to them in carnal things.

(28) [n. 1186] When therefore I have completed this, and have delivered to them this fruit, I shall go on by way of you to Spain;

(29) [n. 1187] and I know that when I come to you I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

(30) [n. 1188] I appeal to you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf,

(31) [n. 1191] that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,

(32) so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company.

(33) [n. 1192] The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

1178. After excusing himself for the presumption which could have been ascribed to him for instructing and correcting the Romans [n. 1163], the Apostle now explains why he has postponed visiting them.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he mentions a past hindrance;

secondly, his intention to visit [v. 23; n. 1180];

thirdly, he promises some fruit from his visit [v. 29; n. 1187].

1179. First, therefore, he says: It has been stated that I have preached the Gospel in many places in which the name of Christ had not been known. *This is the reason why up to now I have so often been hindered by such an occupation from coming to you.*

This hindrance has continued until now; hence he adds: *and am prevented up to the present moment*. This can refer to the vast number of occupations he had had in other places or even to divine providence, through which the Apostle was prevented from visiting them and also directed toward the salvation of others: “They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia” (Ac 16:6). Hence above (1:13) he had said: “I often intended to come to you, but thus far have been prevented.” And this is what is said in Jb (37:12) about the clouds, by which preachers are signified: “They turn round and round by his guidance, to accomplish all that he commands them.”

1180. Then when he says, *but now*, he clarifies his intention to visit them:

first, he promises to visit them;

secondly, he tells why he must delay [v. 25; n. 1183];

thirdly, he mentions the goal of his visit [v. 28; n. 1186].

1181. First, therefore, he says: Until now I have been prevented, *but now since I no longer have any room for work*, i.e., any need to remain *in these regions*, in which the faith was established by me, *and since I have longed for many years to come to you*, as he said above (1:11): “I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift.” *As I go to Spain*—whither he planned to go in order to lay the foundations of the faith even in such a faraway place: “I will give you as a light to the nations that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth” (Is 49:6) -- *hope to see you in passing*. Thus, he gives them to understand that he wasn’t planning to go to them principally, because he considered that they had been sufficiently instructed by the teaching of Peter, who was the first apostle to preach to the Romans.

And because the Romans then held dominion over the entire west, he hoped with their help and guidance to set out for Spain; hence, he adds: *and to be sped on my journey there by you*. Yet he intended to spend some time with them, because he adds: *if I shall have enjoyed you*, i.e., been consoled, as he said in (1:12): “that we may be mutually encouraged.” And this *in part*, i.e., a part of time, because he planned to be consoled with them for a time.

1182. But against this is what Augustine says in his book *On Christian Doctrine*, that only those things should be enjoyed that make us blessed, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.³⁸ Therefore it is unfitting for the Apostle to say that he will enjoy the Romans.

The answer is that, as Augustine says in the same place, a man should not be enjoyed in himself but in God, in line with the letter to Philemon (v. 20): “Yes, brother, I will enjoy you in the Lord,” which means to delight in a man on account of God. And this is how we should understand what is said here, *if I shall have enjoyed*, namely in God.

Or *in part* can refer to the good, whom he could enjoy in God. For the other part, namely, the wicked, he could not enjoy but could grieve over, as it says in 2 Cor (12:21): “Lest when I come God may humble me before you and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned before.”

1183. Then when he says, *At present, however*, he tells why he must postpone his visit.

³⁸ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, book 1, chapter 4.

In regard to this he does three things: first, he gives the reason, saying: *At present, however, I am setting out*, i.e., I am not coming to you at once, because *I am setting out for Jerusalem to minister to the saints*.

In this regard what is written in Ac (4:34ff) should be noted, namely, that the Jews converted to the faith at the very beginning sold their possessions and lived in common from the revenue which, when it was exhausted and a great famine was imminent (Ac 11:27), the disciples, i.e., Christians, from different parts of the world, according to the amount each had, proposed to send help to the brethren residing in Judea. This they did, sending it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Paul.

Therefore, the alms which the faithful brought to Jerusalem he calls ministering to the saints: “When I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me” (I Cor 16:3).

1184. Secondly, he explains what he had said about the ministry to the saints, saying: *For Macedonia and Achaia*, i.e., the faithful from both regions converted by him, *have been pleased to make a collection*, i.e., to collect something, *for the poor* of Christ, i.e., for the use of the poor who are *among the saints*: “Give to the godly man, but do not help the sinner” (Sir 12:4), *who are in Jerusalem* living in poverty: “It is superfluous for me to write to about the suffering of the saints. For I know about your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia: (2 Cor 9:1).

1185. Thirdly, he assigns the reasons, the first of which is good pleasure; hence he says: *For they were pleased to do it*: Each must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion” (2 Cor 9:7).

The second cause is debt; hence he adds: *and indeed they are in debt to them*: “Pay all of them their due” (Rom 13:7). He assigns the reason for the debt, saying: *for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings*, i.e., of the Jews, namely, the blessings of divine knowledge and of the promises and of grace, as he says above (9:4): “To them belong the sonship and the glory” and in (11:17): “You were grafted in their place to share the richness of the olive tree.” They were also made partakers of their spiritual blessings, because the Jews had sent them preachers. *They ought also to be of service to them in material blessings*: “In dividing by lot, give and take” (Si 14:15); “Take a psalm,” i.e., spiritual things, “and give the timbrel,” i.e., temporal things (Ps 81:2).

From this is taken the argument that expenses are owed not only to those who preach but also to those who send preachers.

1186. Then when he says, *when, therefore*, he mentions the place from which he will come to them, saying: *When, therefore, I have completed this*, namely, ministering to the saints, *and have delivered to them this fruit*, i.e., the alms of the Gentiles, which is a fruit of their conversion: “Israel is an abundant vine that yields its fruit” (Hos 10:1); *I shall go on by way of you to Spain*.

But the Apostle seems to be saying something false here; for there is no record of his ever being in Spain. For he had been arrested in Jerusalem and taken to Rome in chains, as it says in Ac (c. 28), where he was killed along with Peter.

Some, therefore, say that as it says in Ac (28:16): “and when we come to Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself with the soldier that guarded him,” and later it says

that he remained for two whole years in his dwelling; during that time, they say, he went to Spain.

But because this is not certain, it can be said better that the Apostle did not say something false, because he intended to do what he said. Consequently, his words must be understood as suggesting his intention and not a future event about which he was not certain. Hence he was not able to predict this except under the condition which James mentions: “Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills’ and ‘If we shall live, we shall do this or that’” (Jas 4:15). And so the Apostle excuses himself in 2 Cor (1:17) for not visiting them, as he had promised: “Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans like a worldly man, ready to say Yes and No at once?” (2 Cor 1:17). And so, since he failed to do from a just cause what he had promised, he declares himself immune from levity, carnality and falseness.

And this is how Pope Gelasius resolves the question, as can be found in the decretals:³⁹ “Blessed Paul therefore should not be thought to deceive—God forbid!—or to show himself an adversary because, although he had promised to go to Spain, he did not fulfill that promise, being occupied by divine providence with more important matters. As far as his own will was concerned, he said in truth that he wanted to do it. But as regards the secrets of God’s plan—which as a man he could know, even though we was filled with the spirit of God—he did not in fact do it, being prevented by the heavenly plan.” For even though he had the prophetic spirit, not all things are revealed to the prophets, as is clear in 2 King 4(:27), where Elijah says, “Her soul is in bitterness, and the Lord has concealed it from me, and has not told it to me.”

³⁹ Part 2, case 22, question 2, can. 5.

1187. Then when he says, *and I know*, he foretells the fruit of his visit, saying: *and I know*, namely, from my confidence in God's grace, *that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ*, i.e., Christ will give His blessing more abundantly to you in my coming, about which it says in Ps 84 (v. 7): "They shall go from strength to strength," and which Laban said to Jacob (Gen 32:7): "I have learned that God blessed me because of you."

1188. Then [n. 1163] when he says, *I appeal to you, brethren*, he asks them for the favor of their prayers:

first, he seeks their prayers;

secondly, he prays for them [v. 31; n. 1192].

1189. In regard to the first he does three things: first, he urges them to pray for him for three reasons.

First, from divine charity when he says: *I appeal to you, brethren*: "For love's sake I prefer to appeal to you" (Phlm 1:9).

Secondly, from their reverence for Christ, of Whom he was a minister, saying: *by our Lord Jesus Christ*, in Whom we are all one as stated above (12:5).

Thirdly, from the gift of the Holy Spirit, which was handed over to his ministry; hence he adds: *by the love of the spirit, which the Holy Spirit pours forth in our hearts*, as was stated above (5:5).

1190. Secondly, he asks the help of their prayers, saying: *that you help me in your prayers for me to God*, namely, poured out for me: "A brother helped is like a strong city" (Pr 18:19).

Bu as the Gloss [of Lombard, col. 1526] says, the Apostle does not say this because he has less merit than others inferior to him, but he follows due order. First, that prayer be said by the Church for its ruler, as he says in I Tim (2:1): “First of all, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high position.” Secondly, because many of the least, when they are assembled together, obtain more merit. Therefore, it is impossible that the prayers of many be ineffective” (Mt (18:19): “If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.” Thirdly, that when many pray, many thanksgivings are heard, as it says in 2 Cor (1:11): “You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted.

1191. Thirdly, he mentions things he wishes to be obtained by him, the first of which pertains to the enemies he had in Judea; hence he says: *that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea*, who particularly attacked and hated Paul, because he confidently preached the end of the legal observances: “They have been told about you that you teach that Moses should be forsaken” (Ac 21:21). The second pertains to those into whose ministry he went. And this is what he adds: *and that my service*, i.e., the alms I minister to them, *may be acceptable to the saints who are in Jerusalem*, i.e., that from this they may be induced to pray for the Gentiles from whom they receive. The third pertains to those to whom he was writing: hence he adds: *so that I may come to you with joy, and this by God’s will*, against which he wanted to do nothing: “Asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you” (Rom 1:10) *and be refreshed in your company*, i.e., that from your presence I may receive refreshment from my tribulations.

1192. Then when he says, *the God of peace*, he shows that he is praying for them, saying: *The God of peace*, i.e., the giver of peace, *be with you all*, by the fact that you are at peace with one another: “Agree with one another and the God of peace will be with you” (2Cor 13:11). He adds, *Amen*, i.e., let it be so: “Let the people say, ‘Amen’” (Ps 106:48).

Chapter 16

Lecture 1

- (1) [n. 1193] I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is in the ministry of the church at Cenchreae,
- (2) [n. 1195] that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a helper of many and of myself as well.
- (3) [n. 1198] Greet Prisca and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus,
- (4) [n. 1199] who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I but also all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks;
- (5) greet also the church in their house. [n. 1200] Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the firstfruits of Asia for Christ.
- (6) [n. 1201] Greet Mary, who has worked hard among you.
- (7) [n. 1202] Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners; they are men of note among the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.
- (8) [n. 1203] Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.
- (9) [n. 1204] Greet Urbanus, our helper in Christ, and my beloved Stachys.
- (10) [n. 1205] Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the home of Aristobulus.
- (11) [n. 1206] Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus.
- (12) [n. 1207] Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.

(13) [n. 1208] Greet Rufus, elect in the Lord, also his mother and mine.

(14) [n. 1209] Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren who are with them.

(15) [n. 1210] Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

(16) [n. 1211] Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

1193. After mentioning certain personal matters about himself to the Romans to whom he was writing, the Apostle now presents certain personal matters pertaining to others.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he suggests what they should do for others;

secondly, he tells what other do to them [v. 23; n. 1221];

thirdly, he ends the epistle with thanksgiving [v. 25; n. 1223].

In regard to the first he does two things:

first, he indicates whom they should welcome;

secondly, he shows whom they should avoid [v. 17; n. 1213].

In regard to the first he requests that certain persons in particular be welcomed;

secondly, he points out in a general way how to greet them [v. 16; n. 1211];

thirdly, he greets them on the part of the faithful [v. 21; n. 1212].

1194. In regard to the first he mentions a certain Corinthian woman who went to Rome. He recommends her to them, describing her, first of all, by name, saying: *I*

commend to you Phoebe, who although devoted to God, did not have sufficient influence not to need letters of recommendation, as he once said of himself: “Do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation?” (2 Cor 3:1).

Secondly, he describes her religion and faith, saying *our sister*. For all the women believers were called sisters and all the men brothers: “You are all brothers” (Mt 23:8).

Thirdly, from her pious activity, when he says: *who is in the ministry of the church at Cenchreae*, a port city of the Corinthians, where some Christians were gathered whom this woman had served, just as it was said of Christ Himself (Lk 8:3) that certain women provided for Him out of their means. And about the widow to be enrolled I Tim (5:10) says: “If she has shown hospitality and has washed the feet of the saints.”

1195. Then he mentions two things he wants done for her, the first of which is that she be honorably received. And this is what he says: *that you may receive her in the Lord*, i.e., for the love of God, *as befits the saints*, for it says in Mt (10:41): “He who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.”

Instead of *as befits the saints* [*digne sanctis*], some books have “worthily enough” [*digne satis*], i.e., fittingly; but those texts do not agree with the Greek.

The second is that they be solicitous in helping her; hence he adds: *and help her*, namely, by affording advice and aid in any enterprise she may need you. For she possibly had something to settle in Caesar’s curia.

1196. But something in I Th (4:11) seems to be opposed to this recommendation, for it says: “Take care of your own business.” As if to say: do not get involved in other people’s affairs.

The answer is that one can help in another’s affairs in the ways: first, in a worldly way, i.e., for the favor of men or for gain; and this does not befit God’s servants. “No soldier of God gets entangled in civilian pursuits” (2 Tim 2:4).

In another way someone may help in another’s affairs out of piety; for example, to help the needy and the wretched, and this is religious according to Jas (1:27): Religion pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from this world.” It is in this way that the Apostle speaks here.

1197. Finally, the Apostle tells why this is owed to her, saying: *She has been a help of many of myself as well*: “Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds” (Is 3:10); “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Mt 5:7).

1198. Then he recommends other persons connected with him to be greeted, saying: *Greet Prisca and Aquila*, who was her husband, but he mentions her first, perhaps because of the greater devotion of her faith, *my fellow workers in Christ*, i.e., in preaching the faith of Christ.

For he stayed with them in Corinth, as is found in Acts (18:1-3).

1199. *Who risked their necks for my life*, i.e., put themselves in danger of death to save my life, an indication of the greatest charity: “Greater love has no man than that he lay down his life for his friends” (Jn 15:13).

This seems to have happened at Corinth where Paul suffered persecution, as is found in Acts (18:6). Or perhaps it is better to say that others exposed themselves to danger for the Apostle. For what is read in Acts (18:21) occurred when Prisca and Aquila left Rome for Corinth. But the Apostle wrote this, when he thought they were still at Rome.

Now the Apostle's life was necessary not so much for himself as for others, as he says in Phil (1:24): "But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on our account." Therefore he continues: *to whom not only I give thanks but also all the Church of the Gentiles*, whose apostle and teacher I am: "A teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth" (I Tim 2:7); *greet also the church in their house*. For they had many believers assembled in their house.

1200. Then he wants another person joined to him by love to be greeted, saying: *Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert in Asia for Christ*. This lent him great dignity: "You have come to the assembly of the firstborn, who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb 12:23). But at that time he was in Rome.

1201. Then he says: *Greet Mary, who has worked hard among you* to restore concord among them, and when she failed in her endeavor, she notified the Apostle: "The fruit of good labors is renowned." (Wis 3:15). Then he says, *Greet Andronicus and Junias*, whom he describes, first, from their race when he says: *my kinsmen*. This shows that they were Jews, about whom he said above (9:3): "They are my kinsmen by race." Secondly, from the suffering they endured for Christ, saying "and my fellow prisoners." For they had been in prison once with the Apostle: "with far more imprisonments" (2Cor 11:23). Thirdly, from their authority when he says: *they are men of note among the*

apostles, i.e., noble among the preachers. Fourthly, from the time, when he says: *and they were in Christ before me*. For they had been converted before the Apostle and thus were owed greater respect: “Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as you would a father” (I Tim 5:1).

1203. Then he says, *Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord*, beloved in the love of charity, which is in Christ: “God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus” (Phil 1:8).

1204. Then he says, *Greet Urbanas, our fellow worker in Christ*, i.e., in preaching the faith: “A brother helped is like a strong city” (Pr 18:19), *and my beloved Stachys*. He mentions them together, perhaps because they lived together or were connected in some other way.

1205. Then he says, *Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ*, perhaps through certain tribulations: “When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold” (Jb 23:10).

1206. Then he says, *Greet all who of the house*, i.e., of the family, *of Aristobulus*, in whose house many believers were gathered whom he does not greet, perhaps because they were absent for some reason. Then he says, *Greet my kinsman Herodion*, who from the designation is said to be Jewish.

Then he says, *Greet all who belong to the family of Narcissus*, who is said to have been a presbyter and wandered through desert places to comfort the faithful. Hence the Apostle, knowing that he was away, did not ask that he be greeted but his family.

Yet there were some unbelievers in this family, and therefore to note the difference, he says: *who are in the Lord*, because he was asking only believers to be

greeted: “If anyone comes to you and does not bring the doctrine, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting” (2 Jn v. 10).

1207. Then he says, *Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord*, i.e., in ministering to the saints, which the Lord regards as done to Himself, as it says in Mt (25:40): “As you did it to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it to me.”

Then he says, *Greet the beloved Persis*, whom the Apostle especially loved for his devotion. Hence he adds: *who has worked hard in the Lord*, i.e., by exhorting others and ministering to the saints, and even in poverty and other spiritual works: “In toil and hardship, in hunger and thirst” (2 Cor 11:27).

1208. Then he says, *Greet Rufus, elect in the Lord*, i.e., in the grace of Christ: “He chose us in him before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4); *also his mother*, according to the flesh, *and mine*, because she was his mother as a benefactor. For she had served the Apostle at one time, although she was not in Rome: “Older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, in all purity” (I Tim 5:2).

1209. Then he says, *Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and all the brethren who are with them*. He greets them together, because they lived together in harmony: “God gives the lonely a home to live in” (Ps 68:6).

1210. Then he says, *Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the saints who are with them*, i.e., sanctified in the faith of Christ: “You were washed, you were sanctified” (I Cor 6:11).

1211. Then he shows them in general how to greet others, saying: *Greet one another with a holy kiss*, which he says to distinguish it from a sensual kiss, about which

Pr (7:13) says: “She seizes him and kisses him”; and to distinguish it from a deceitful kiss, about which Pr (27:6) says: “Better are wounds from a friend than the fraudulent kisses of an enemy.”

The holy kiss is given as a sign of the Blessed Trinity: “O that he would kiss me with the kiss of his mouth” (Song 1:2). From this the custom arose in the Church whereby the faithful give one another the kiss of peace during the solemnities of the Mass.

1212. Then he greets them on behalf of the other churches, saying: *all the churches of Christ greet you*, i.e., those assembled in the name and faith of Christ, because all wish your salvation and pray for you: “Pray for one another, that you may be saved” (Jas 5:16).

Lecture 2

(17) [n. 1213] I appeal to you, brethren, to observe those who create dissensions and difficulties, in opposition to the doctrine which you have been taught; avoid them.

(18) [n. 1218] For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own belly, and by sweet words and blessings they deceive the hearts of the innocent.

(19) [n. 1219] For while your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I would have you wise as to what is good and simple as to what is evil;

(20) [n. 1220] then the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

(21) [n. 1221] Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

(22) I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord.

(23) Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

(24) [n. 1222] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

(25) [n. 1223] Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for eternal ages

(26) [n. 1226] but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith

(27) [n. 1227] to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be honor and glory unto the ages of ages! Amen.

1213. After indicating whom they should greet, the Apostle now shows them whom to avoid.

In regard to this he does three things:

first, he teaches whom they should avoid;

secondly, he gives the reason [v. 18; n. 1218];

thirdly, he promises them divine help to implement this [v. 20; n. 1220].

1214. And because those whom he wished them to avoid crept in deceptively under the cloak of piety, as it says in Mt (7:15): They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves," he urges them to be cautious, saying: *I appeal*

to you, brethren, to observe those who create dissensions and difficulties in opposition to the doctrine you have been taught.

1215. Here, first of all, it should be noted that to observe is nothing more than to consider carefully: which, of course, is sometimes taken in a good sense and sometimes in an evil sense.

It is taken in an evil sense when someone carefully considers the condition and progress of someone in order to inflict harm, as it says in Ps 37 (v. 12): “The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth against him,” and in Lk (14:1) it says: “And they were watching him.”

In a good sense it is taken in one way, when one considers God’s precepts to obey them: “Observe him and hearken to his voice” (Ex 23:21). In another way, when a person considers good men to imitate them, as it says in Phil (3:17): “Brethren, join in imitating me and mark those who so live as you have an example in us.”

Thirdly, the evil are observed as persons to be avoided; and that is the way it is taken here.

1216. For there were certain Jewish converts to the faith who preached that the practices of the Law must be observed. From this followed dissensions and sects in the Church, since some adhered to their error but others continued in the true faith: “Dissension, sects....” (Gal 5:20). Then followed hindrances and stumbling blocks already discussed in v. 14, while some would judge others and some would spurn others who caused dissensions and hindrances: “Remove every obstruction from my people’s way” (Is 57:14). But he says: *in opposition to the doctrine you have been taught* by the true apostles of Christ, to show that such dissensions and stumbling blocks derive from

false doctrine: “If anyone is preaching to you a Gospel other than the one I preached to you, let him be accursed” (Gal 1:9).

1217. Secondly, he warns them that once known they should be avoided; hence he says: *Avoid them*, i.e., fly from their doctrine and company: “Depart from me, you evildoers” (Ps 119:115).

1218. Then when he says, *For such persons*, he assigns two reasons for what he had said, the first of which is taken on the part of those whom he wants avoided.

First, he describes their condition, saying: *Such persons do not serve our Lord Christ but their own bellies*. For they preached not for the glory of Christ but for revenue, in order to fill their belly: “For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their god is their belly” (Phil 3:18).

Secondly, he describes their deception, saying: *by fair and flattering words they deceive the hearts of the simpleminded*, i.e., of the innocent and inexperienced: “The simple believe everything” (Pr 14:15). By fair words they pretend to be holy: “They speak peace with their neighbor, while mischief is in their hearts” (Ps 28:3). *And blessings*, with which they bless and flatter those who follow them: “My people, those who call you blessed mislead you” (Is 3:12); “I will curse your blessings” (Mal 2:2).

1219. He assigns the second reason from a trait of the Romans, who found it easy to follow good and evil.

First, he commends them for their readiness to accept the good, saying: *Your obedience*, by which you obey the faith so easily, *is known in every place* on account of the dominion the Romans then exercised over other nations. Hence, anything done by the

Romans was easily divulged to others. “Your faith is proclaimed in all the world” (Rom 1:8). *Therefore, I rejoice over you*, because you obey the faith; and this in charity, about which he says in I Cor (13:6) that love does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right.

Secondly, he cautions them against evil, saying: *I would have you wise in what is good*, (5:21); *and guileless as to what is evil*, lest through some simplicity you slip into evil, that your simplicity be such that you deceive no one into evil: “Be wise as serpents and simple as doves” (Mt 10:16). On the other hand it is said of certain persons: “They are skilled in doing evil, but how to do good they know not” (Jer 4:22).

1220. Then when he says, *Then the God of peace*, he promises them divine help against such deceivers.

First, he makes the promise when he says: *But the God of peace*, i.e., its author, Who hates the dissensions they cause, *will crush Satan*, i.e., the devil, who is trying to deceive you through these false apostles, *under your feet*, because you will overcome him by your wisdom. And he will do this *soon*, namely, when he comes: “Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy” (Lk 10:19); “You shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet” (Mal 4:3).

Secondly, he says a prayer to obtain this when he says: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*, which is enough to guard you: “My grace is sufficient for you” (2 Cor 12:9).

1221. Then when he says, *Timothy*, he greets them on the part of others, saying: *Timothy, my fellow worker greets you*: “I have sent you Timothy, who is my dearest and

faithful son in the preaching of the gospel” (I Cor 4:17). He adds: *so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen*, who were Jews.

Tertius, Paul’s secretary, was allowed to greet the Romans personally with Paul’s consent. Hence he adds: *I, Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord*.

Then when he says: *Gaius, who is my host*, was the person to whom John wrote in his third letter commending the charity he exercised toward the saints; *and host to the whole church*, namely, who were assembled in his house or who were in that region. Then he says: *Erastus, the city treasurer*, i.e., who guarded the city’s money, *and your brother Quartus greet you*.

1222. Then he greets them on his own, saying: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen*.

1223. He finishes the epistle with thanksgiving, saying: *now to him*, namely, to God Who is the Trinity, *who is able to strengthen you*: “After you have suffered a little, he will himself restore, establish and strengthen you” (I Pt 5:10); and this in the faith which is *according to the Gospel*, namely according to the Gospel I preach: “Whether, then, it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed” (I Cor 15:11); and also *according to the preaching of Jesus Christ*, Who first preached the Gospel, as it says in Heb (2:3): “It was declared at first by the Lord. Hence Mt (4:23) states that Jesus went about preaching the Gospel of the kingdom.

1224. Then he adds, *according to the revelation of the mystery*, i.e., the secret, which can refer to what he had said, namely, “according to my Gospel,” either because the secret of the divine incarnation is revealed in the Gospel, in accord with the above (1:17), “in it the justice of God is revealed”; or because the Gospel was revealed to the

Apostle himself: “God has revealed to us through the Spirit” (I Cor 2:10). Of this secret it says in Is 24(:16), “My secret to myself.”

Or it can be referred better to the word he had used, “to strengthen.” As if to say: God can strengthen you in my Gospel and preaching; and this according to the revelation of the mystery, i.e., of the secret, namely, about the conversion of the Gentiles, as he says in Eph (3:8): “To me the least of saints this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the mystery hidden for ages in God.”

1225. Hence, he continues: *kept secret for eternal ages*, namely, because it had been hidden among men that the Gentiles were to be converted to the faith. He calls these “eternal ages,” as though lasting a long time, because this was hidden from the beginning of the world: “Glorious art thou, more wonderful than the eternal mountains” (Ps 76:4). It can be said that the long ages are eternity itself about which Is (57:15) says: “The high and lofty One who inhabits eternity.” So that just as the simple essence of God is described in terms of a likeness to bodily dimensions, as Jb (11:9) says: “its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea,” so His simple eternity is called eternal times, inasmuch as it contains all times.

1226. Then he continues: *But which*, namely, the mystery, *is now disclosed*, i.e., about the conversion of the Gentiles, *through the prophetic writings*, i.e., as the prophets foretold. Hence, he says in Eph (3:5ff): “This mystery was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that is, now the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body...”

But it was made known by fulfillment of a work proceeding from God’s command. Hence, *according to the command of the eternal God*, Who by an eternal

decree accomplishes His will in time. This command of God *to bring about the obedience of faith* is made known *to all nations*, i.e., that all nations should obey the faith: “to bring about the obedience of faith among the nations” (Rom 1:5).

1227. But if we speak of the incarnation, the text can be constructed thus: *of the mystery, I say, kept secret for eternal ages*, because previously it was not so manifest. *Which mystery has now been made known through the prophetic writings*, which predicted this, *according to a command of the eternal God*, who willed the mystery of the incarnation to become known, and this *to bring about obedience to the faith among all nations*. A mystery, I say, known *to the wise God alone*, because He alone knew it and knew those to whom He wished it to be revealed,” for as it says in I Cor (2:11): “no one knows the things of God except the spirit of God.” Or it can be understood of Him Who alone is wise, i.e., by His very nature, as it says in Mk (10:18): “No one is good but God alone.” This does not exclude the Son, because the perfection of the whole Trinity is the same; just as, conversely, when it is said: “No one knows the Father but he Son” (Mt 11:27), the Father is not excluded from knowledge of Himself.

1228. He adds, *through Jesus Christ*. This does not mean that the Father is wise through Jesus Christ; because, since in God to be wise is the same as to be, it would follow that the Father would be wise through the Son – which is fallacious. But this must be referred to what he had said above (v. 26): “it is now disclosed.” Namely, through Jesus Christ. *To whom*, i.e., to Jesus Christ, *be honor and glory*, through the reverence paid by every creature: “At the name of Jesus every knee shall bend” (Phil 2:10), *and glory* namely, in regard to the full godhead, as Phil (2:11) says: “And every tongue

confess that Jesus Christ is Lord in the glory of God the Father,” not for a time, *but for evermore*: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb 13:8).

To confirm its truth he adds: *Amen*.

1229. Or it can be constructed thus: Known to the only wise God, to whom be glory through Jesus Christ, who glorified God, as it says in Jn (17:4): “I glorified thee on earth.”

It should be noted that this construction is defective and should be completed thus: to him who is able, etc., be honor and glory through Jesus Christ, to whom is honor and glory. But if “to whom” is left out, the construction is plain.