

Ten Homilies

on the

Epistle of John to the Parthians

by

St. Augustine of Hippo

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The Prologue.

You remember, holy brethren, that the Gospel according to John, read in orderly course of lessons, is the subject on which we usually discourse: but because of the now intervening solemnity of the holy days, on which there must be certain lessons recited in the Church, which so come every year that they cannot be other than they are: the order which we had undertaken is of necessity for a little while intermitted, not wholly omitted. But when I was thinking what matter of discourse upon the Scriptures, agreeable with the cheerfulness of these days, I might undertake with you, as the Lord shall vouchsafe to

grant, during the present week, being such a one as might be finished in these seven or eight days; the Epistle of blessed John occurred to me: that whereas we have for a while intermitted the reading of his Gospel, we may in discoursing upon his Epistle not go from his side: the rather, as in this same Epistle, which is very sweet to all who have a healthy taste of the heart to relish the Bread of God, and very meet to be had in remembrance in God's Holy Church, charity is above all commended. He has spoken many words, and nearly all are about charity. He who has in himself that which he is to hear, must needs rejoice at that which he hears. For so shall this reading be to that man, as oil upon flame; if that be there which may be nourished, it is nourished and grows and abides. Again, to some it ought to be as flame to fuel; that if he did not burn, by added discourse he may be set on fire. For in some that which is there, is nourished: in some it is kindled, if it is not there: that we all may rejoice in one charity. But where charity, there peace; and where humility, there charity. Now let us hear himself: and at his words, what the Lord suggests, that let us speak also to you, that you may well understand.

Homily 1.

1 John 1:1-2:11

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, and which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life: and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and show to you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us: the things which we have seen and heard declare we to you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and that our fellowship may be with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we to you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son shall cleanse us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. My little children, these things write I to you, that you sin not.

And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And in this we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says he knows Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we are perfect. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.

Beloved, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have heard. Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shines. He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. For he who hates his brother is in

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darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because the darkness has blinded his eyes."

1. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which

we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the word of life." Who is he that with hands handles the Word, except because "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us"? Now this Word which was made flesh that it might be handled, began to be flesh, of the Virgin Mary: but not then began the Word, for the Apostle says, "That which was from the beginning." See whether his epistle does not bear witness to his gospel, where you lately heard, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." Perchance, "Concerning the word of life" one may take as a sort of expression concerning Christ, not the very body of Christ which was handled with hands. See what follows: "And the Life was manifested." Christ therefore is "the word of life." And whereby manifested? For it was "from the beginning," only not manifested to men: but it was manifested to angels, who saw it and fed on it as their bread. But what says the Scripture? "Man ate angels' bread." Well then "the Life was manifested" in the flesh; because it exhibited in manifestation, that that which can be seen by the heart only, should be seen by the eyes also, that it might heal the hearts. For only by the heart is the Word seen: but the flesh is seen by the bodily eyes also. We had eyes to see the flesh, but had not eyes to see the Word: "the Word was made flesh," which we might see, so that

in us might be healed wherewith we might see the Word.

2. "And we have seen and are witnesses." Perhaps some of the brethren who are not acquainted with the Greek do not know what the word "witnesses" is in Greek: and yet it is a term much used by all, and had in religious reverence; for what in our tongue we call "witnesses," in Greek are "martyrs." Now where is the man that has not heard of martyrs, or where the Christian in whose mouth the name of martyrs dwells not every day and would that it so dwelt in the heart also, that we should imitate the sufferings of the martyrs, not persecute them with our cups? Well then, "We have seen and are witnesses," is as much as to say, We have seen and are martyrs. For it was for bearing witness of that which they had seen, and bearing witness of that which they had heard from them who had seen, that,

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while their testimony itself displeased the men against whom it was delivered, the martyrs suffered all that they did suffer. The martyrs are God's witnesses. It pleased God to have men for His witnesses, that men also may have God to be their witness. "We have seen," says he, "and are witnesses." Where have they seen? In the manifestation. What means, in the manifestation? In the sun, that is, in this light of

day. And how should He be seen in the sun who made the sun, except as "in the sun He has set His tabernacle; and Himself as a bridegroom going forth out of his chamber, exulted as a giant to run His course?" He before the sun, who made the sun, He before the day-star, before all the stars, before all angels, the true Creator, ("for all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made,") that He might be seen by eyes of flesh which see the sun, set His very tabernacle in the sun, that is, showed His flesh in manifestation of this light of day: and that Bridegroom's chamber was the Virgin's womb, because in that virginal womb were joined the two, the Bridegroom and the bride, the Bridegroom the Word, and the bride the flesh; because it is written, "And they two shall be one flesh;" and the Lord says in the Gospel, "Therefore they are no more two but one flesh. And Esaias remembers right well that they are two: for speaking in the person of Christ he says, "He has set a mitre upon me as upon a bridegroom, and adorned me with an ornament as a bride." One seems to speak, yet makes Himself at once Bridegroom and Bride; because "not two, but one flesh:" because "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us." To that flesh the Church is joined, and so there is made the whole Christ, Head and body.

3. "And we are witnesses, and show to you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us:" i.e., manifested among us: which might be more plainly expressed, manifested to us. "The things," therefore, "which we have seen and heard, we declare to you." Those saw the Lord Himself present in the flesh, and heard words from the mouth of the Lord, and told them to us. Consequently we also have heard, but have not seen. Are we then less happy than those who saw and heard? And how does he add, "That you also may have fellowship with us"? Those saw, we have not seen, and yet we are fellows; because we hold the faith in common. For there was one who did not believe even upon seeing, and would needs handle, and so

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believe, and said, "I will not believe except I thrust my fingers into the place of the nails, and touch His scars." And He did give Himself for a time to be handled by the hands of men, who always gives Himself to be seen by the sight of the angels; and that disciple did handle, and exclaimed, "My Lord, and my God!" Because he touched the Man, he confessed the God. And the Lord, to console us who, now that He sits in heaven, cannot touch Him with the hand, but only reach Him with faith, said to him, "Because you have seen, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen, and yet believe." We are here described,

we designated. Then let the blessedness take place in us, of which the Lord predicted that it should take place; let us firmly hold that which we see not; because those tell us who have seen. "That you also," says he, "may have fellowship with us." And what great matter is it to have fellowship with men? Do not despise it; see what he adds: "and our fellowship may be with God the Father, and Jesus Christ His Son. And these things," says he, "we write to you, that your joy may be full." Full joy he means in that fellowship, in that charity, in that unity.

4. "And this is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare to you." What is this? Those same have seen, have handled with their hands, the Word of life: He "was from the beginning," and for a time was made visible and palpable, the Only-begotten Son of God. For what thing did He come, or what new thing did He tell us? What was it His will to teach? Why did He do this which He did, that the Word should be made flesh, that "God over all things" should suffer indignities from men, that He should endure to be smitten upon the face by the hands which Himself had made? What would He teach? What would He show? What would He declare? Let us hear: for without the fruit of the precept the hearing of the story, how Christ was born, and how Christ suffered, is a mere pastime of the mind, not

a strengthening of it. What great thing hear thou? With what fruit you hear, see to that. What would He teach? What declare? Hear. That "God is light," says he, "and there is no darkness in Him at all." Hitherto, he has named indeed the light, but the words are dark: good is it for us that the very light which he has named should enlighten our hearts, and we should see what he has said. This it is that we declare, that "God is light, and there is no darkness in Him at all." Who would dare to say that there is darkness in God? Or what is the light? Or what

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darkness? Lest haply he speaks of such things as pertain to these eyes of ours. "God is light." Some man says, "The sun also is light, and the moon also is light, and a candle is light." It ought to be something far greater than these, far more excellent, and far more surpassing. How much God is distant from the creature, how much the Maker from the making, how much Wisdom from that which is made by Wisdom, far beyond all things must this light needs be. And haply we shall be near to it, if we get to know what this light is, and apply ourselves to it, that by it we may be enlightened; because in ourselves we are darkness, and only when enlightened by it can we become light, and not be put to confusion by it, being put to confusion by ourselves. Who is he that

is put to confusion by himself? He who knows himself to be a sinner. Who is he that by it is not put to confusion? He who by it is enlightened. What is it to be enlightened by it? He who now sees himself to be darkened by sins, and desires to be enlightened by it, draws near to it: whence the Psalm says, "Draw near to Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed." But you shall not be shamed by it, if, when it shall show you to yourself that you are foul, your own foulness shall displease you, that you may perceive its beauty. This is what He would teach.

5. And may it be that we say this over-hastily? Let the apostle himself make this plain in what follows. Remember what was said at the outset of our discourse, that the present epistle commends charity: "God is light," says he, "and in Him is no darkness at all." And what said he above? "That you may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship may be with God the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." But moreover, if "God be light, and in Him is no darkness at all, and we must have fellowship with Him," then from us also must the darkness be driven away, that there may be light created in us, for darkness cannot have fellowship with light. To this end, see what follows: "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie."

You have also the Apostle Paul saying, "Or what fellowship has light with darkness?" You say you have fellowship with God, and you walk in darkness; "and God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all:" then how should there be fellowship between light and darkness? At this point therefore a man may say to himself, What shall I do? how shall I be light? I live in sins and iniquities. There steals upon him, as it were,

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a desperation and sadness. There is no salvation save in the fellowship of God. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." But sins are darkness, as the Apostle says of the devil and his angels, that they are "rulers of this darkness." He would not call them of darkness, save as rulers of sins, having lordship over the wicked. Then what are we to do, my brethren? Fellowship with God must be had, other hope of life eternal is none; now "God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all:" now iniquities are darkness; by iniquities we are pressed down, that we cannot have fellowship with God: what hope have we then? Did I not promise to speak something during these days, that shall cause gladness? Which if I make not good, this is sadness. "God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all;" sins are darkness: what shall become of us? Let us hear, whether perhaps He will console, lift up, give hope,

that we faint not by the way. For we are running, and running to our own country; and if we despair of attaining, by that very despair we fail. But He whose will it is that we attain, that He may keep us safe in our own land, feeds us in the way. Hear we then: "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." Let us not say that we have fellowship with Him, if we walk in darkness. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." Let us walk in the light, as He is in the light, that we may be able to have fellowship with Him. And what are we to do about our sins? Hear what follows, "And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son shall purge us from all sin." Great assurance has God given! Well may we celebrate the Passover, wherein was shed the blood of the Lord, by which we are cleansed "from all sin!" Let us be assured: the "handwriting which was against us," the bond of our slavery, the devil held, but by the blood of Christ it is blotted out. "The blood," says he, "of His Son shall purge us from all sin." What means, "from all sin"? Mark: lo even now, in the name of Christ whom these here have now confessed, who are called infants, have all their sins been cleansed. They came in old, they went out new. How, came in old, went out new? Old men they came in, infants they went out. For the

old life is old age with all its dotage, but the new life is the infancy of regeneration. But what are we to do? The past sins are pardoned, not only to these but to us; and after the pardon and abolition of all sins, by living in this world in the midst of temptations, some haply have been contracted. Therefore what he can, let man do; let him confess

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himself to be what he is, that he may be cured by Him who always is what He is: for He always was and is; we were not and are.

6. For see what He says; "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Consequently, if you have confessed yourself a sinner, the truth is in you: for the Truth itself is light. Your life has not yet shone in perfect brightness, because there are sins in you; but yet you have already begun to be enlightened, because there is in you the confession of sins. For see what follows: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to purge us from all iniquity." Not only the past, but haply if we have contracted any from this life; because a man, so long as he bears the flesh, cannot but have some at any rate light sins. But these which we call light, do not make light of. If you make light of them when you weigh them, be afraid when you count them. Many light make one

huge sin: many drops fill the river; many grains make the lump. And what hope is there? Before all, confession: lest any think himself righteous, and, before the eyes of God who sees that which is, man, that was not and is, lift up the neck. Before all, then, confession; then, love: for of charity what is said? "Charity covers a multitude of sins." Now let us see whether he commends charity in regard of the sins which subsequently overtake us: because charity alone extinguishes sins. Pride extinguishes charity: therefore humility strengthens charity; charity extinguishes sins. Humility goes along with confession, the humility by which we confess ourselves sinners: this is humility, not to say it with the tongue, as if only to avoid arrogancy, lest we should displease men if we should say that we are righteous. This do the ungodly and insane: "I know indeed that I am righteous, but what shall I say before men? If I shall call myself righteous, who will bear it, who tolerate? let my righteousness be known to God: I however will say that I am a sinner, but only that I may not be found odious for arrogancy." Tell men what you are, tell God what you are. Because if you tell not God what you are, God condemns what He shall find in you. Would you not that He condemn you? Condemn yourself. Would you that He forgive? Acknowledge your sin, that you may be

able to say to God, "Turn Your face from my sins." Say also to Him those words in the same Psalm, "For I acknowledge my iniquity." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to

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purge us from all iniquity. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." If you say, I have not sinned, you make Him a liar, while you wish to make yourself true. How is it possible that God should be a liar, and man true, when the Scripture says the contrary, "Every man a liar, God alone true"? Consequently, God true through Himself, you true through God; because through yourself, a liar.

7. And lest haply he should seem to have given impunity for sins, in that he said, "He is faithful and just to cleanse us from all iniquity;" and men henceforth should say to themselves, Let us sin, let us do securely what we will, Christ purges us, is faithful and just, purges us from all iniquity: He takes from you an evil security, and puts in a useful fear. To your own hurt you would be secure; you must be solicitous. For "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," provided you always displease yourself, and be changing until you are perfected. Accordingly, what follows? "My little children, these things I

write to you, that you sin not." But perchance sin overtakes us from our mortal life: what shall be done then? What? shall there be now despair? Hear: "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiator for our sins." He then is the advocate; do your endeavour not to sin: if from the infirmity of this life sin shall overtake you, see to it straightway, straightway be displeased, straightway condemn it; and when you have condemned, you shall come assured to the Judge. There have you the advocate: fear not to lose your cause in your confession. For if oft-times in this life a man commits his cause to an eloquent tongue, and is not lost; you commit yourself to the Word, and shall you be lost? Cry, "We have an advocate with the Father."

8. See John himself observing humility. Assuredly he was a righteous and a great man, who from the Lord's bosom drank in the secrets of His mysteries; he, the man who by drinking from the Lord's bosom indited of His Godhead, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God:" he, being such a man as this, says not, You have an advocate with the Father; but, "If any man sin, we have an advocate," says he. He says not, you have; nor says, you have me; nor says, you have Christ Himself: but he puts Christ, not himself, and says, also,

"We have," not, you have. He chose rather to put himself in the number of sinners that he might have Christ for his advocate, than to put himself in Christ's stead as advocate, and to be found among the proud that shall be condemned. Brethren, Jesus Christ the righteous, even Him have we for our advocate with the Father; "He," even He, "is the propitiation for our sins." Whoever has held this fast, has made no heresy; Whoever has held this fast, has made no schism. For whence came schisms? When men say, "we" are righteous, when men say, "we" sanctify the unclean, "we" justify the ungodly; "we" ask, "we" obtain. But what says John? "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But some man will say: then do the saints not ask for us? Then do bishops and rulers not ask for the people? Yea, but mark the Scriptures, and see that rulers also commend themselves to the prayers of the people. Thus the apostle says to the congregation, "Praying withal for us also." The apostle prays for the people, the people prays for the apostle. We pray for you, brethren: but also pray for us. Let all the members pray one for another; let the Head intercede for all. Therefore it is no marvel that he here goes on and shuts the mouths of those who divide the Church of God. For he who has said, "We have Jesus Christ the righteous, and

He is the propitiation for our sins:" having an eye to those who would divide themselves, and would say, "Lo, here is Christ, lo, there;" and would show Him in a part who bought the whole and possesses the whole, he forthwith goes on to say, "Not our sins only, but also the sins of the whole world." What is this, brethren? Certainly "we have found it in the fields of the woods," we have found the Church in all nations. Behold, Christ "is the propitiation for our sins; not ours only, but also the sins of the whole world." Behold, you have the Church throughout the whole world; do not follow false justifiers who in truth are cutters off. Be in that mountain which has filled the whole earth: because "Christ is the propitiation for our sins; not only ours, but also the sins of the whole world," which He has bought with His blood.

9. "And in this," says he, "we know Him, if we keep His commandments." What commandments? "He who says, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." But still you ask, What commandments? "But whoso," says he, "keeps His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." Let us see

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whether this same commandment be not called love. For we were asking, what commandments, and he says, "But whoever keeps His

word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." Mark the Gospel, whether this be not the commandment: "A new commandment," says the Lord, "give I to you, that you love one another. In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we be perfected." Perfected in love, he calls them: what is perfection of love? To love even enemies, and love them for this end, that they may be brethren. For not a carnal love ought ours to be. To wish a man temporal weal, is good; but though that fail, let the soul be safe. Do you wish life to any that is your friend? You do well. Do you rejoice at the death of your enemy? You do ill. But haply both to your friend the life you wish him is not for his good, and to your enemy the death you rejoice at has been for his good. It is uncertain whether this present life be profitable to any man or unprofitable: but the life which is with God without doubt is profitable. So love your enemies as to wish them to become your brethren; so love your enemies as that they may be called into your fellowship. For so loved He who, hanging on the cross, said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." For he did not say, Father let them live long, me indeed they kill, but let them live. He was casting out from them the death which is for ever and ever, by His most merciful prayer, and by His most surpassing might. Many of them

believed, and the shedding of the blood of Christ was forgiven them. At first they shed it while they raged; now they drank it while they believed. "In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we are made perfect." Touching the very perfection of love of enemies, the Lord admonishing, says, "Be therefore perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect. He," therefore, "that says he abides in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." How, brethren? what does he advise us? "He who says he abides in Him," i.e., in Christ, "ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." Haply the advice is this, that we should walk on the sea? That be far from us! It is this then, that we walk in the way of righteousness. In what way? I have already mentioned it. He was fixed upon the cross, and yet was He walking in this very way: this way is the way of charity, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." If, therefore, you have learned to pray for your enemy, you walk in the way of the Lord.

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10. "Dearly beloved, I write to you no new commandment, but the old commandment which you had from the beginning." What commandment calls he "old? Which you had," says he, "from the beginning." "Old" then, in this regard, that you have already heard it:

otherwise he will contradict the Lord, where He says, "A new commandment give I to you, that you love one another." But why an "old" commandment? Not as pertaining to the old man. But why? "Which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have heard." Old then, in this regard, that you have already heard it. And the selfsame he shows to be new, saying, "Again, a new commandment write I to you." Not another, but the selfsame which he has called old, the same is also new. Why? "Which thing is true in Him and in you." Why old, you have already heard: i.e., because you knew it already. But why new? "Because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." Lo, whence it is new: because the darkness pertains to the old man, but the light to the new man. What says the Apostle Paul? "Put off the old man, and put on the new." And again what says he? "You were once darkness, but now light in the Lord."

11. "He who says he is in the light" - now he is making all clear that he has been saying - "he who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now." What! my brethren, how long shall we say to you, "Love your enemies"? See whether, what is worse, you do not hate your brethren. If you loved only your brethren, you would be

not yet perfect: but if you hate your brethren, what are you, where are you? Let each look to his own heart: let him not keep hatred against his brother for any hard word; on account of earthly contention let him not become earth. For whoever hates his brother, let him not say that he walks in the light. "He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now." Thus, some man who was a pagan has become a Christian; mark well: behold he was in darkness, while he was a pagan: now is he made henceforth a Christian; thanks be to God, say all joyfully; the apostle is read, where he says joyfully, "For you were once darkness, but now light in the Lord." Once he worshipped idols, now he worships God; once he worshipped the things he made, now he worships Him that made him. He is changed: thanks be to God, say all Christians with joyful greeting. Why? Because

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henceforth he is one who adores the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; one who detests demons and idols. Yet still is John solicitous about our convert: while many greet him with joy, by him he is still looked upon with apprehension. Brethren, let us gladly welcome a mother's solicitude. Not without cause is the mother solicitous about us when others rejoice: by the mother, I mean charity: for she dwelt in

the heart of John, when he spake these words. Why, but because there is something he fears in us, even when men now hail us with joy? What is it that he fears? "He who says he is in the light" - What is this? He who says now he is a Christian, - "and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now." Which there is no need to expound: but to be glad of it, if it is not so, or to bewail it, if it is.

12. "He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." I beseech you by Christ: God is feeding us, we are about to refresh our bodies in the name of Christ; they both are in some good measure refreshed, and are to be refreshed: let the mind be fed. Not that I am going to speak for a long time, do I say this; for the lesson is now coming to an end: but lest haply of weariness we should hear less attentively than we ought that which is most necessary. - "He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no scandal," or "no occasion of stumbling, in him." Who are those who take scandal or make scandal? Those who are offended in Christ, and in the Church. Those who are offended in Christ, are as if burnt by the sun, those in the Church as by the moon. But the Psalm says, "The sun shall not burn you by day, neither the moon by night: i.e., if you hold fast charity, neither in Christ shall you have occasion of falling, nor in

the Church; neither Christ shall you forsake, nor the Church. For he who forsakes the Church, how is he in Christ who is not in the members of Christ? How is he in Christ who is not in the body of Christ? Those therefore take scandal, or, occasion of falling, who forsake Christ or the Church. Whence do we understand that the Psalm in saying, "By day shall the sun not burn you, nor the moon by night," says it of this, that the burning means scandal, or occasion of stumbling? In the first place mark the similitude itself. Just as the person whom something is burning says, I cannot bear it, I cannot away with it, and draws back; so those persons who cannot bear some things in the Church, and withdraw themselves either from the name
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of Christ or from the Church, are taking scandal. For see how those took scandal as from the sun, those carnal ones to whom Christ preached of His flesh, saying, "He who eats not the flesh of the Son of Man and drinks His blood, shall have no life in him." Some seventy persons said, "This is a hard saying," and went back from Him, and there remained the twelve. All those the sun burnt, and they went back, not being able to bear the force of the Word. There remained therefore the twelve. And lest haply men should imagine that they

confer a benefit upon Christ by believing on Christ, and not that the benefit is conferred by Him upon them; when the twelve were left, the Lord said to them, "Will you also go?" That you may know that I am necessary to you, not you to me. But those whom the sun had not burnt, answered by the voice of Peter: "Lord, You have the word of eternal life; whither shall we go?" But who are those who the Church as the moon burns by night? Those who have made schisms. Hear the very word used in the apostle: "Who is offended, and I burn not?" In what sense then is it, that there is no scandal or occasion of stumbling in him that loves his brother? Because he who loves his brother, bears all things for unity's sake; because it is in the unity of charity that brotherly love exists. Some one, I know not who, offends you: whether it is a bad man, or as you suppose a bad man, or as you pretend a bad man: and do you desert so many good men? What sort of brotherly love is that which has appeared in these persons? While they accuse the Africans, they have deserted the whole world! What, were there no saints in the whole world? Or was it possible they should be condemned by you unheard? But oh! if you loved your brethren, there would be no occasion of stumbling in you. Hear the Psalm, what it says: "Great peace have those who love Your law, and there is to them

no occasion of stumbling." Great peace it says there is for those who love the law of God, and that is why there is to them no occasion of stumbling. Those then who take scandal, or, occasion of stumbling, destroy peace. And of whom says he that they take not and make not occasion of stumbling? Those who love God's law. Consequently they are in charity. But some man will say, "He said it of those who love God's law, not of the brethren." Hear what the Lord says: "A new commandment give I to you that you love one another." What is the Law but commandment? Moreover, how is it they do not take occasion of stumbling, but because they forbear one another? As Paul says,

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"Forbearing one another in love, studying to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." And to show that this is the law of Christ, hear the same apostle commending this very law. "Bear one another's burdens," says he, "and so shall you fulfil the law of Christ."

13. "For he who hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes." A great thing, my brethren: mark it, we beseech you. "He who hates his brother walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because the darkness has blinded his eyes." What so blind as these who hate their brethren? For that you

may know that they are blind, they have stumbled at a Mountain. I say the same things often, that they may not slip out of your memory. The Stone which was "cut out of the Mountain without hands," is it not Christ, who came of the kingdom of the Jews, without the work of man? Has not that Stone broken in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth, that is, all the dominations of idols and demons? Has not that Stone grown, and become a great mountain, and filled the whole earth? Do we point with the finger to this Mountain in like manner as the moon on its third day is pointed out to men? For example, when they wish people to see the new moon, they say, Lo, the moon! lo, where it is! and if there be some there who are not sharp-sighted, and say, Where? then the finger is put forth that they may see it.

Sometimes when they are ashamed to be thought blind, they say they have seen what they have not seen. Do we in this way point out the Church, my brethren? Is it not open? Is it not manifest? Has it not possessed all nations? Is not that fulfilled which so many years before was promised to Abraham, that in his seed should all nations be blessed? It was promised to one believer, and the world is filled with thousands of believers. Behold here the mountain filling the whole face of the earth! Behold the city of which it is said, "A city set upon a

mountain cannot be hid!"] But those stumble at the mountain, and when it is said to them, Go up; "There is no mountain," say they, and dash their heads against it sooner than seek a habitation there. Esaias was read yesterday; whoever of you was awake not with his eyes only but with his ear, and not the ear of the body but the ear of the heart, noted this; "In the last days shall the mountain of the house of the Lord be manifest, prepared upon the top of the mountains." What so manifest as a mountain? But there are even mountains unknown,

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because they are situated in one part of the earth. Which of you knows Mount Olympus? Just as the people who dwell there do not know our Giddaba. These mountains are in different parts of the earth. But not so that Mountain, for it has filled the whole face of the earth, and of it is said, "Prepared upon the top of the mountains." It is a Mountain above the tops of all mountains. "And," says he, "to it shall be gathered all nations." Who can fail to be aware of this Mountain? Who breaks his head by stumbling against it? Who is ignorant of the city set upon a mountain? But marvel not that it is unknown by these who hate the brethren, because they walk in darkness and know not whither they go, because the darkness has blinded their eyes. They do not see the

Mountain: I would not have you marvel; they have no eyes. How is it they have no eyes? Because the darkness has blinded them. How do we prove this? Because they hate the brethren, in that, while they are offended at Africans, they separate themselves from the whole earth: in that they do not tolerate for the peace of Christ those whom they defame, and do tolerate for the sake of Donatus those whom they condemn.

[1 John 1:5. God is Light; God is Love. - The Apostle gives in these two great words indications of the Divine essence, so far as it can be conveyed or suggested in human language. He had before said (John4:24), narrating the words of the Lord Jesus, "God is spirit" (not, a spirit). In this epistle he declares to us that God is light, and God is love. God is light, not "a light" (Luther) or even "the light," but "light" in the most absolute sense. In the text, Augustin forcibly employs this language in reference to sins; they, he says, are "our darkness." In the phrase of the apostle we may recognize a declaration altogether unrestricted and absolute with respect to the essence of God. Surely, He cannot be fully or adequately apprehended by man. Yet, He communicates Himself. He is revealed in His works; in them "the invisible things" of Him are clearly seen. His pure and glorious light

shines; darkness confines; light is diffusive, without limit: by the light emanating from Him, alone, is God seen (Philo). But God, adds the apostle, is love. Love has its source in God. It belongs to His essence, to His very nature. Like light it is diffusive; in its self-communication it begets love. Love discloses to us the personality of God. His love meets with returns from personal beings to whom it comes and whom it

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enters; he who loves is born of God and knows God. Apart from creation God is love, and before creation He had in Himself the perfect object of love; in the unity of the One God, in the communion of the Father and the Son, and the perfect response of love in and by the Holy Spirit (the activity of love is affirmed in Scripture of each person of the Holy Trinity), uniting both in the society and fellowship of love. Such love, manifested in the Gospel, encourages us to draw nigh in confidence to Him who is Love, and who may be loved. - J.H.M.]

[Fellowship. - The primary object of the apostle's communication in this epistle (1 John 1:3), is that his readers may have fellowship with the apostolic body, and, in connection with them, fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. St. John's message contemplates both a human and a Divine fellowship. The union among believers is

described and emphasized, and he points also to the manifold blessings that flow from the Divine fellowship. The fruits of this revelation - of the disclosures of the love of God, - the apostle intimates are not for that age only, but for all who should afterwards believe; a thought which Augustin brings out in the text by adducing the history of Thomas (John 20:24-29), and the consolation administered to him by the Lord, with the wider comfort for all His disciples: "Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet believe." The life, "even the life eternal," is manifested in this joyous fellowship, which is set forth by St. John in different forms of expression; it is reciprocal. "Hereby we know that we abide in Him and He in us" (1 John 4:13). Again, it is presented as the abiding of man in God: "By this we know that we are in Him" (2:5). "We know that the Son of God has come, and we are in Him is true" (5:20). Again, the twofold fellowship (human and Divine), is represented as the abiding of God (or Christ) in man. "If we love one another, God abides in us" (4:12). Among the results of this Divine-human fellowship, the apostle names, confidence, growing purity and love (2:28; 3:3, 10). - J.H.M.]

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Homily 2.

1 John 2. 12-17

"I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven through His name. I write to you, fathers, because you have known Him that is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, children, because you have known the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he who does the will of God abides for ever (even as God also abides for ever).

1. All things that are read from the Holy Scriptures in order to our instruction and salvation, we should hear with earnest heed. Yet most of all must those things be commended to our memory, which are of most force against heretics; whose insidious designs cease not to circumvent all that are weaker and more negligent. Remember that

our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ both died for us, and rose again; died, to wit, for our offences, rose again for our justification. Even as you have just heard concerning the two disciples whom He met with in the way, how "their eyes were dimmed that they should not know Him:" and He found them despairing of the redemption that was in Christ, and deeming that now He had suffered and was dead as a man, not accounting that as Son of God He ever lives; and deeming too that He was so dead in the flesh as not to come to life again, but just as one of the prophets: as those of you who were attentive have just now heard their own words. Then "He opened to them the Scriptures, beginning at Moses," and going through all the prophets, showing them that all He had suffered had been foretold, lest they should be more staggered if the Lord should rise again, and the more fail to believe Him, if these things had not been told before concerning Him.

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For the firmness of faith is in this, that all things which came to pass in Christ were foretold. The disciples, then, knew Him not, save "in the breaking of bread." And truly he who eats and drinks not judgment to himself in the breaking of bread knows Christ. Afterward also those eleven "thought they saw a spirit." He gave Himself to be handled by

them, who also gave Himself to be crucified; to be crucified by enemies, to be handled by friends: yet the Physician of all, both of the ungodliness of those, and of the unbelief of these. For you heard when the Acts of the Apostles were read, how many thousands of Christ's slayers believed. If those believed afterwards who had killed, should not those believe who for a little while doubted? And yet even in regard of them, (a thing which you ought especially to observe, and to commit to your memory, because that which shall make us strong against insidious errors, God has been pleased to put in the Scriptures, against which no man dares to speak, who in any sort wishes to seem a Christian), when He had given Himself to be handled by them, that did not suffice Him, but He would also confirm by means of the Scriptures the heart of those who believe: for He looked forward to us who should be afterwards; seeing that in Him we have nothing that we can handle, but have that which we may read. For if those believed only because they held and handled, what shall we do? Now, Christ is ascended into heaven; He is not to come save at the end, to judge the quick and the dead. Whereby shall we believe, but by that whereby it was His will that even those who handled Him should be confirmed? For He opened to them the Scriptures and showed them that it was

necessary for Christ to suffer, and that all things should be fulfilled which were written of Him in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms. He embraced in His discourse the whole ancient text of the Scriptures. All that there is of those former Scriptures tells of Christ; but only if it find ears. He also "opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." Whence we also must pray for this, that He would open our understanding.

2. But what did the Lord show written of Him in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms? What did He show? Let Himself say. The evangelist has put this briefly, that we might know what in all that great compass of the Scriptures we ought to believe and to understand. Certainly there are many pages, and many books; the

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contents of them all is this which the Lord briefly spake to His disciples. What is this? That "it was necessary for Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day." You have it now concerning the Bridegroom, that "it was necessary for Christ to suffer, and to rise again:" the Bridegroom has been set forth to us. Concerning the Bride, let us see what He says; that you, when you know the Bridegroom and the Bride, may not without reason come to the marriage. For every

celebration is a celebration of marriage: the Church's nuptials are celebrated. The King's Son is about to marry a wife, and that King's Son is Himself a King: and the guests frequenting the marriage are themselves the Bride. Not, as in a carnal marriage, some are guests, and another is she who is married; in the Church those who come as guests, if they come to good purpose, become the Bride. For all the Church is Christ's Bride, of which the beginning and first fruits is the flesh of Christ: there was the Bride joined to the Bridegroom in the flesh. With good reason when He would betoken that same flesh, He brake bread, and with good reason "in the breaking of bread," the eyes "of the disciples were opened, and they knew Him." Well then, what did the Lord say was written of Him in the Law and Prophets and Psalms? That "it was necessary for Christ to suffer." Had He not added, "and to rise again," well might those mourn whose eyes were dimmed; but "to rise again" is also foretold. And wherefore this? Why was it necessary for Christ to suffer and to rise again? Because of that Psalm which we especially commended to your attention on the fourth day, the first station, of last week. Why was it necessary for Christ to suffer and to rise again? For this reason: "All the ends of the earth shall be reminded and converted to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the

nations shall worship before Him." For that you may know that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and to rise again; in this place also what has He added, that after setting forth the Bridegroom He might also set forth the Bride? "And that there be preached," says He, "in His name, repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." You have heard, brethren; hold it fast. Let no man doubt concerning the Church, that it is "throughout all nations:" let no man doubt that it began at Jerusalem, and has filled all nations. We know the field where the Vine is planted: but when it is grown we know it not, because it has taken up the whole. Whence did it begin? "At Jerusalem." Whither has it come? To "all nations." A few remain: it

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shall possess all. In the mean time, while it is taking possession of all, it has seemed good to the Husbandman to cut off some unprofitable branches, and they have made heresies and schisms. Let not the branches that are cut off induce you to be cut off: rather exhort those who are cut off that they be grafted in again. It is manifest that Christ has suffered, is risen again, and is ascended into heaven: made manifest also is the Church, because there is "preached in His name repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations." Whence did

it begin? "Beginning at Jerusalem." The man hears this; foolish and vain, and (how, shall I express it?) worse than blind! so great a mountain, and he does not see it; a candle set upon a candlestick, and he shuts his eyes against it!

3. When we say to them, If you are Catholic Christians, communicate with that Church from which the Gospel is spread abroad over the whole earth: communicate with that Jerusalem: when this we say to them, they make answer to us, we do not communicate with that city where our King was slain, where our Lord was slain: as though they hate the city where our Lord was slain. The Jews slew Him whom they found on earth, these scorn Him that sits in heaven! Which are the worse; those who despised Him because they thought Him man, or those who scorn the sacraments of Him whom now they confess to be God? But they hate, forsooth, the city in which their Lord was slain! Pious men, and merciful! they much grieve that Christ was slain, and in men they slay Christ! But He loved that city, and pitied it: from it He bade the preaching of Him begin, "beginning at Jerusalem." He made there the beginning of the preaching of His name: and you shrink back with horror from having communion with that city! No marvel that being cut off you hate the root. What said He to His disciples? "Sit still

in the city, because I send my promise upon you." Behold what the city is that they hate! Haply they would love it, if Christ's murderers dwelt in it. For it is manifest that all Christ's murderers, i.e., the Jews, are expelled from that city. That which had in it those who were fierce against Christ, has now those who adore Christ. Therefore these men hate it, because Christians are in it. There was it His will that His disciples should tarry, and there that He should send to them the Holy Ghost. Where had the Church its commencement, but where the Holy Ghost came from heaven, and filled the hundred and twenty sitting in 24

one place? That number twelve was made tenfold. They sat, a hundred and twenty persons, and the Holy Ghost came, "and filled the whole place, and there came a sound, as it were the rushing of a mighty wind, and there were cloven tongues like as of fire." You have heard the Acts of the Apostles: this was the lesson read today: "They began to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." And all who were on the spot, Jews who were come from divers nations, recognised each his own tongue, and marvelled that those unlearned and ignorant men had on the sudden learned not one or two tongues, but the tongues of all nations whatever. There, then, where all tongues

sounded, there was it betokened that all tongues should believe. But these men, who much love Christ, and therefore refuse to communicate with the city which killed Christ, so honour Christ as to affirm that He is left to two tongues, the Latin and the Punic, i.e. African. Christ possess only two tongues! For there are but these two tongues on the side of Donatus, more they have not. Let us awake, my brethren, let us rather see the gift of the Spirit of God, and let us believe the things spoken before concerning Him, and let us see fulfilled the things spoken before in the Psalm: "There are neither speeches nor discourses, but their voices are heard among them." And lest haply the case be so that the tongues themselves came to one place, and not rather that the gift of Christ came to all tongues, hear what follows: "Into all the earth is their sound gone out, and to the ends of the world their words." Why this? Because "in the sun has He set His tabernacle," i.e., in the open light. His tabernacle, His flesh: His tabernacle, His Church: "in the sun" it is set; not in the night, but in the day. But why do those not acknowledge it? Return to the lesson at the place where it ended yesterday, and see why they do not acknowledge it: "He who hates his brother, walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because the darkness has blinded his eyes." For us

then, let us see what follows, and not be in darkness. How shall we not be in darkness? If we love the brethren. How is it proved that we love the brotherhood? By this, that we do not rend unity, that we hold fast charity.

4. "I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you through His name." Therefore, "little children," because in forgiveness of sins you have your birth. But through whose name are sins

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forgiven? Through Augustin's? No, therefore neither through the name of Donatus. Be it your concern to see who is Augustin, or who Donatus: no, not through the name of Paul, not through the name of Peter. For to those who divided to themselves the Church, and out of unity essayed to make parties, the mother charity in the apostle travailing in birth with her little ones, exposes her own bowels, with words as it were rends her breasts, bewails her children whom she sees borne out dead, recalls to the one Name those who would needs make them many names, repels them from the love of her that Christ may be loved, and says, "Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" What says he? "I would not that you be mine, that so you may be with me: be with me; all we are His who died

for us, who was crucified for us": whence here also it is said, "Your sins are forgiven you through His name," not through the name of any man.

5. "I write to you, fathers." Why first sons? "Because your sins are forgiven you through His name," and you are regenerated into a new life, therefore sons. Why fathers? "Because you have known Him that is from the beginning:" for the beginning has relation to fatherhood.

Christ new in flesh, but ancient in Godhead. How ancient think we?

how many years old? Think we, of greater age than His mother?

Assuredly of greater age than His mother, for "all things were made by Him." If all things, then did the Ancient make the very mother of whom the New should be born. Was He, think we, before His mother only?

Yea, and before His mother's ancestors is His antiquity. The ancestor of His mother was Abraham; and the Lord says, "Before Abraham I

am." Before Abraham, say we? The heaven and earth, ere man was, were made. Before these was the Lord, nay rather also is. For right

well He says, not, Before Abraham I was, but, "Before Abraham I Am."

For that of which one says, "was," is not; and that of which one says,

"will be," is not yet: He knows not other than to be. As God, He knows

"to be:" "was," and "will be," He knows not. It is one day there, but a day that is for ever and ever. That day yesterday and tomorrow do not

set in the midst between them: for when the 'yesterday' is ended, the

'to-day' begins, to be finished by the coming tomorrow.' That one day there is a day without darkness, without night, without spaces, without measure, without hours. Call it what you will: if you will, it is a day; if you will, a year; if you will, years. For it is said of this same,

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"And your years shall not fail." But when is it called a day? When it is said to the Lord, "To-day have I begotten You." From the eternal Father begotten, from eternity begotten, in eternity begotten: with no beginning, no bound, no space of breadth; because He is what is, because Himself is "He who Is." This His name He told to Moses: " You shall say to them, He who Is has sent me to you." Why speak then of "before Abraham"? why, before Noe? why, before Adam? Hear the Scripture: "Before the day-star have I begotten You." In fine, before heaven and earth. Why? Because "all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made." By this know you the "fathers:" for they become fathers by acknowledging "That which is from the beginning."

6. "I write to you, young men." There are sons, are fathers, are young men: sons, because begotten; fathers, because they acknowledge the Beginning; why young men? "Because you have overcome the wicked one." In the sons, birth: in the fathers, antiquity: in the young men,

strength. If the wicked one is "overcome" by the young men, he fights with us. Fights, but not conquers. Why? Because we are strong, or because He is strong in us who in the hands of the persecutors was found weak? He has made us strong, who resisted not His persecutors. "For He was crucified of weakness, but He lives by the power of God."

7. "I write to you, children." Whence children? "Because you have known the Father. I write to you fathers:" he enforces this, and repeats, "Because you have known Him who is from the beginning." Remember that you are fathers: if you forget "Him that is from the beginning," you have lost your fatherhood. "I write to you, young men." Again and again consider that you are young men: fight, that you may overcome: overcome, that you may be crowned: be lowly, that you fall not in the fight. "I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one."

8. All these things, my brethren, - "because we have known that which is from the beginning, because we are strong, because we have known the Father," - do all these, while they in a manner commend knowledge, not commend charity? If we have known, let us love: for

knowledge without charity saves not. "Knowledge puffs up, charity edifies." If you have a mind to confess and not love, you begin to be like the demons. The demons confessed the Son of God, and said, "What have we to do with You?" and were repulsed. Confess and embrace. For those feared for their iniquities; love you Him that forgives your iniquities. But how can we love God, if we love the world? He prepares us therefore to be inhabited by charity. There are two loves: of the world, and of God: if the love of the world inhabit, there is no way for the love of God to enter in: let the love of the world make way, and the love of God inhabit; let the better have place. You loved the world: love not the world: when you have emptied your heart of earthly love, you shall drink in love Divine: and thenceforth begins charity to inhabit you, from which can nothing of evil proceed. Hear you therefore his words, how he goes to work in the manner of one who makes a clearance. He comes upon the hearts of men as a field that he would occupy: but in what state does he find it? If he finds a wood, he roots it up; if he finds the field cleared, he plants it. He would plant a tree there, charity. And what is the wood he would root up? Love of the world. Hear him, the rooter up of the wood! "Love not the world," (for this comes next,) "neither the things that are in

the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

9. You have heard that "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Let not any say in his heart that this is false, brethren: God says it; by the Apostle the Holy Ghost has spoken; nothing more true: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Would you have the Father's love, that you may be joint-heir with the Son? Love not the world. Shut out the evil love of the world, that you may be filled with the love of God. You are a vessel; but as yet you are full. Pour out what you have, that you may receive what you have not. Certainly, our brethren are now born again of water and of the Spirit: we also some years ago were born again of water and of the Spirit. Good is it for us that we love not the world, lest the sacraments remain in us to damnation, not as means of strengthening to salvation. That which strengthens to salvation is, to have the root of charity, to have the "power of godliness," not "the form" only. Good is the form, holy the form: but what avails the form, if

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it hold not the root? The branch that is cut off, is it not cast into the fire? Have the form, but in the root. But in what way are you rooted so

that you are not rooted up? By holding charity, as says the Apostle Paul, "rooted and grounded in charity." How shall charity be rooted there, amid the overgrown wilderness of the love of the world? Make clear riddance of the woods. A mighty seed you are about to put in: let there not be that in the field which shall choke the seed. These are the uprooting words which he has said: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

10. "For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," three things he has said, which are not of the Father, but are of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he who does the will of God abides for ever, even as He abides for ever." Why am I not to love what God made? What do you want? Whether will you love the things of time, and pass away with time; or not love the world, and live to eternity with God? The river of temporal things hurries one along: but like a tree sprung up beside the river is our Lord Jesus Christ. He assumed flesh, died, rose again, ascended into heaven. It was His will to plant Himself, in a manner, beside the river of the things of time. Are you rushing down the stream to the headlong deep? Hold fast the tree. Is love of the

world whirling you on? Hold fast Christ. For you He became temporal, that you might become eternal; because He also in such sort became temporal, that He remained still eternal. Something was added to Him from time, not anything went from His eternity. But you were born temporal, and by sin were made temporal: you were made temporal by sin, He was made temporal by mercy in remitting sins. How great the difference, when two are in a prison, between the criminal and him who visits him! For upon a time a person comes to his friend and enters in to visit him, and both seem to be in prison; but they differ by a wide distinction. The one, his cause presses down: the other, humanity has brought thither. So in this our mortal state, we were held fast by our guiltiness, He in mercy came down: He entered in to the captive, a Redeemer not an oppressor. The Lord for us shed His blood, redeemed us, changed our hope. As yet we bear the mortality of the flesh, and take the future immortality upon trust: and on the sea

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we are tossed by the waves, but we have the anchor of hope already fixed upon the land.

11. But let us "not love the world, neither the things that are in the world. For the things that are in the world, are the lust of the flesh,

and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." These three are they: lest haply any man say, "The things that are in the world, God made: i.e. heaven and earth, the sea: the sun, the moon, the stars, all the garniture of the heavens. What is the garniture of the sea? all creeping things. What of the earth? animals, trees, flying creatures. These are in the world, God made them. Why then am I not to love what God has made?" Let the Spirit of God be in you, that you may see that all these things are good: but woe to you if you love the things made, and forsake the Maker of them! Fair are they to you: but how much fairer He who formed them! Mark well, beloved. For by similitudes you may be instructed: lest Satan steal upon you, saying what he is wont to say, Take your enjoyment in the creature of God; why made He those things but for your enjoyment? And men drink themselves drunken, and perish, and forget their own Creator: while not temperately but lustfully they use the things created, the Creator is despised. Of such says the apostle: "They worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever." God does not forbid you to love these things, howbeit, not to set your affections upon them for blessedness, but to approve and praise them to this end, that you may love your Creator. In the same manner, my brethren, as if a

bridegroom should make a ring for his bride, and she having received the ring, should love it more than she loves the bridegroom who made the ring for her: would not her soul be found guilty of adultery in the very gift of the bridegroom, albeit she did but love what the bridegroom gave her? By all means let her love what the bridegroom gave: yet should she say, "This ring is enough for me, I do not wish to see his face now:" what sort of woman would she be? Who would not detest such folly? who not pronounce her guilty of an adulterous mind? You love gold in place of the man, love a ring in place of the bridegroom: if this be in you, that you love a ring in place of your bridegroom, and have no wish to see your bridegroom; that he has given you an earnest, serves not to pledge you to him, but to turn away your heart from him! For this the bridegroom gives earnest, that in his

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earnest he may himself be loved. Well then, God gave you all these things: love Him that made them. There is more that He would fain give you, that is, His very Self that made these things. But if you love these - what though God made them - and neglect the Creator and love the world; shall not your love be accounted adulterous?

12. For "the world" is the appellation given not only to this fabric

which God made heaven and earth, the sea, things visible and invisible: but the inhabitants of the world are called the world, just as we call a "house" both the walls and those who inhabit therein. And sometimes we praise a house, and find fault with the inhabitants. For we say, A good house; because it is marbled and beautifully ceiled: and in another sense we say, A good house: no man there suffers wrong, no acts of plunder, no acts of oppression, are done there. Now we praise not the building, but those who dwell within the building: we call it "house," both this and that. For all lovers of the world, because by love they inhabit the world, just as those inhabit heaven, whose heart is on high while in the flesh they walk on earth: I say then, all lovers of the world are called the world. The same have only these three things, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, vain glory of life." For they lust to eat, drink, cohabit: to use these pleasures. Not surely, that there is no allowed measure in these things, or that when it is said, Love not these things, it means that you are not to eat, or not to drink, or not to beget children? This is not the thing said. Only, let there be measure, because of the Creator, that these things may not bind you by your loving of them: lest you love that for enjoyment, which you ought to have for use. But you are not put to the proof except when two

things are propounded to you, this or that: Do you want righteousness or gains? I have nowhere to live, have nothing to eat, have nothing to drink. But what if you can not have these but by iniquity? Is it not better to love that which you lose not, than to lose yourself by iniquity? You see the gain of gold, the loss of faith you see not. This then, says he to us, is "the lust of the flesh," i.e. the lusting after those things which pertain to the flesh, such as food, and carnal cohabitation, and all other such like.

13. "And the lust of the eyes:" by "the lust of the eyes," he means all curiosity. Now how wide is the scope of curiosity! This it is that works

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in spectacles, in theatres, in sacraments of the devil, in magical arts, in dealings with darkness: none other than curiosity. Sometimes it tempts even the servants of God, so that they wish as it were to work a miracle, to tempt God whether He will hear their prayers in working of miracles; it is curiosity: this is "lust of the eyes;" it "is not of the Father." If God has given the power, do the miracle, for He has put it in your way to do it: for think not that those who have not done miracles shall not pertain to the kingdom of God. When the apostles were rejoicing that the demons were subject to them, what said the Lord to

them? "Rejoice not in this, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven." In that He would have the apostles to rejoice, wherein you also rejoice. Woe to you truly if your name be not written in heaven! Is it woe to you if you raise not the dead? is it woe to you if you walk not on the sea? is it woe to you if you cast not out demons? If you have received power to do them, use it humbly, not proudly. For even of certain false prophets the Lord has said that "they shall do signs and prodigies." Therefore let there be no "ambition of the world," which is Pride. The man wishes to make much of himself in his honours: he thinks himself great, whether because of riches, or because of some power.

14. These three there are, and you can find nothing whereby human cupidity can be tempted, but either by the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life. By these three was the Lord tempted of the devil. By the lust of the flesh He was tempted when it was said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, speak to these stones that they become bread," when He hungered after His fast. But in what way repelled He the tempter, and taught his soldier how to fight? Mark what He said to him: "Not by bread alone does man live, but by every word of God." He was tempted also by the lust of the eyes concerning a

miracle, when he said to Him, "Cast yourself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning you: and in their hands they shall bear you up, lest at any time you dash your foot against a stone." He resisted the tempter, for to do the miracle, would only have been to seem either to have yielded, or to have done it from curiosity; for He wrought when He would, as God, howbeit as healing the weak. For if He had done it then, He might have been thought to wish only to do a miracle. But lest men should think this, mark what He answered; and
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when the like temptation shall happen to you, say you also the same: "Get behind me, Satan; for it is written, You shall not tempt the Lord your God:" that is, if I do this I shall tempt God. He said what He would have you to say. When the enemy suggests to you, "What sort of man, what sort of Christian, are you? Have you done one miracle, or by your prayers have the dead been raised, or have you healed the fevered? if you were truly of any moment, you would do some miracle:" answer and say: "It is written, You shall not tempt the Lord your God:" therefore I will not tempt God, as if I should belong to God if I do a miracle, and not belong if I do none: and what becomes then of His words, "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven"? By

"pride of life" how was the Lord tempted? When he carried Him up to a high place, and said to Him, "All these will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me." By the loftiness of an earthly kingdom he wished to tempt the King of all worlds: but the Lord who made heaven and earth trod the devil under foot. What great matter for the devil to be conquered by the Lord? Then what did He in the answer He made to the devil but teach you the answer He would have you to make? "It is, written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve." Holding these things fast, you shall not have the concupiscence of the world: by not having concupiscence of the world, neither shall the lust of the flesh, nor the lust of the eyes, nor the pride of life, subjugate you: and you shall make place for Charity when she cometh, that you may love God. Because if love of the world be there, love of God will not be there. Hold fast rather the love of God, that as God is for ever and ever, so you also may remain for ever and ever: because such is each one as is his love. If you love earth, you shall be earth. If you love God, what shall I say? you shall be a god? I dare not say it of myself, let us hear the Scriptures: "I have said, You are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High." If then you would be gods and sons of the Most High, "Love not the world, neither the things that are

in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all the things that are in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world:" i.e. of men, lovers of the world. "And the world passes away, and the lusts thereof: but he who does the will of God abides for ever, even as God also abides for ever."

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Homily 3.

1 John 2:18-27

"Children, it is the last hour: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us: if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But you have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things. I write to you, not because you know not the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? [He is antichrist, that denies the Father and the Son.] Whoever denies the Son, the same has neither the Father nor the Son: and he who acknowledges the Son has both the Father and the Son. Let that therefore abide in you, which you have heard from the beginning. If that which you have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, you also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written to you concerning those who seduce you; that you may know that you have an unction, and that the unction which you have received of him may abide in you. And you

need not that any man teach you; because His unction teaches you of all things."

1. "Children, it is the last hour." In this lesson he addresses the children that they may make haste to grow, because "it is the last hour." Age or stature of the body is not at one's own will. A man does not grow in respect of the flesh when he wills, any more than he is born when he wills: but where the being born rests with the will, the growth also rests with the will. No man is "born of water and the Spirit," except he is willing. Consequently if he wills, he grows or makes increase: if he wills, he decreases. What is it to grow? To go onward by proficiency. What is it to decrease? To go backward by deficiency. Whoever knows that he is born, let him hear that he is an infant; let him eagerly cling to the breasts of his mother, and he grows apace. Now his mother is the Church; and her breasts are the two Testaments of the Divine Scriptures. Hence let him suck the milk of all

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the things that as signs of spiritual truths were done in time for our eternal salvation, that being nourished and strengthened, he may attain to the eating of solid meat, which is, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Our milk is

Christ in His humility; our meat, the selfsame Christ equal with the Father. With milk He nourishes you, that He may feed you with bread: for with the heart spiritually to touch Christ is to know that He is equal with the Father.

2. Therefore it was that He forbade Mary to touch Him, and said to her, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to the Father." What is this? He gave Himself to be handled by the disciples, and did He shun Mary's touch? Is not He the same that said to the doubting disciple, "Reach hither your fingers, and feel the scars"? Was He at that time ascended to the Father? Then why does He forbid Mary, and says, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to the Father?" Or are we to say, that He feared not to be touched by men, and feared to be touched by women? The touch of Him cleanses all flesh. To whom He willed first to be manifested, by them feared He to be handled? Was not His resurrection announced by women to the men, that so the serpent should by a sort of counterplot be overcome? For because he first by the woman announced death to man, therefore to men was also life announced by a woman. Then why was He unwilling to be touched, but because He would have it to be understood of that spiritual touch? The spiritual touch takes place from a pure heart. That person does of

a pure heart reach Christ with his touch who understands Him
coequal with the Father. But whoever does not yet understand Christ's
Godhead, that person reaches but to the flesh, reaches not to the
Godhead. Now what great matter is it, to reach only to that which the
persecutors reached to, who crucified Him? But that is the great thing,
to understand the Word God with God, in the beginning, by whom all
things were made: such as He would have Himself to be known when
He said to Philip, "Am I so long time with you, and have you not known
me, Philip? He who sees me, sees also the Father."

3. But lest any be sluggish to go forward, let him hear: "Children, it is
the last hour." Go forward, run, grow; "it is the last hour." This same
last hour is long; yet it is the last. For he has put "hour" for "the last
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time;" because it is in the last times that our Lord Jesus Christ is to
come. But some will say, How the last times? how the last hour?
Certainly antichrist will first come, and then will come the day of
judgment. John perceived these thoughts: lest people should in a
manner become secure, and think it was not the last hour because
antichrist was to come, he said to them, "And as you have heard that
antichrist is to come, now are there come many antichrists." Could it

have many antichrists, except it were "the last hour"?

4. Whom has he called antichrists? He goes on and expounds.

"Whereby we know that it is the last hour." By what? Because "many antichrists are come. They went out from us;" see the antichrists!

"They went out from us:" therefore we bewail the loss. Hear the consolation. "But they were not of us." All heretics, all schismatics went out from us, that is, they go out from the Church; but they would not go out, if they were of us. Therefore, before they went out they were not of us. If before they went out they were not of us; many within are not gone out, but yet are antichrists. We dare to say this: and why, but that each one while he is within may not be an antichrist? For he is about to describe and mark the antichrists, and we shall see them now. And each person ought to question his own conscience, whether he is an antichrist. For antichrist in our tongue means, contrary to Christ. Not, as some take it, that antichrist is to be so called because he is to come ante Christum, before Christ, i.e. Christ to come after him: it does not mean this, neither is it thus written, but Antichristus, i.e. contrary to Christ. Now who is contrary to Christ you already perceive from the apostle's own exposition, and understand that none can go out but antichrists; whereas those who are not

contrary to Christ, can in no wise go out. For he who is not contrary to Christ holds fast in His body, and is counted therewith as a member.

The members are never contrary one to another. The entire body consists of all the members. And what says the apostle concerning the agreement of the members? "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one member be glorified, all the members rejoice with it." If then in the glorifying of a member the other members rejoice with it, and in its suffering all the members suffer, the agreement of the members has no antichrist. And there are those who inwardly are in such sort in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ - seeing

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His body is yet under cure, and the soundness will not be perfect save in the resurrection of the dead - are in such wise in the body of Christ, as bad humours. When these are vomited up, the body is relieved: so too when bad men go out, then the Church is relieved. And one says, when the body vomits and casts them out, These humours went out of me, but they were not of me. How were not of me? Were not cut out of my flesh, but oppressed my breast while they were in me.

5. "They went out from us; but," be not sad, "they were not of us." How prove you this? If they had been of us, they would doubtless have

continued with us. Hence therefore you may see, that many who are not of us, receive with us the Sacraments, receive with us baptism. receive with us what the faithful know they receive, Benediction, the Eucharist, and whatever there is in Holy Sacraments: the communion of the very altar they receive with us, and are not of us. Temptation proves that they are not of us. When temptation comes to them, as if blown by a wind they fly abroad; because they were not grain. But all of them will fly abroad, as we must often tell you, when once the fanning of the Lord's threshing-floor shall begin in the day of judgment. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." For would you know, beloved, how most certain this saying is, that they who haply have gone out and return, are not antichrists, are not contrary to Christ? Whoever are not antichrists, it cannot be that they should continue without. But of his own will is each either an antichrist or in Christ. Either we are among the members, or among the bad humours. He who changes himself for the better, is in the body, a member: but he who continues in his badness, is a bad humour; and when he is gone out, then they who were oppressed will be relieved. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they

would no doubt have continued with us: but (they went out), that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." That he has added, "that they might be made manifest," is, because even when they are within they are not of us; yet they are not manifest, but by going out are made manifest. "And you have an unction from the Holy One, that you may be manifest to your selves." The spiritual unction is the Holy Spirit Himself, of which the Sacrament is in the visible unction. Of this unction of Christ he says, that all who have it know the

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bad and the good; and they need not to be taught, because the unction itself teaches them.

6. "I write to you not because you know not the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth." Behold, we are admonished how we may know antichrist. What is Christ? Truth. Himself has said "I am the Truth." But "no lie is of the truth." Consequently, all who lie are not yet of Christ. He has not said that some lie is of the truth, and some lie not of the truth. Mark the sentence. Do not fondle yourselves, do not flatter yourselves, do not deceive yourselves, do not cheat yourselves: "No lie is of the truth." Let us see then how antichrists lie, because there is more than one kind of lying. "Who is a liar, but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?" One is the meaning of the word

"Jesus," another the meaning of the word "Christ:" though it is one Jesus Christ our Saviour, yet "Jesus" is His proper name. Just as Moses was so called by his proper name, as Elias, as Abraham: so as His proper name our Lord has the name "Jesus:" but "Christ" is the name of His sacred character. As when we say, Prophet, as when we say, Priest; so by the name Christ we are given to understand the Anointed, in whom should be the redemption of the whole people. The coming of this Christ was hoped for by the people of the Jews: and because He came in lowliness, He was not acknowledged; because the stone was small, they stumbled at it and were broken. But "the stone grew, and became a great mountain;" and what says the Scripture? "Whoever shall stumble at this stone shall be broken; and on whoever this stone shall come, it will grind him to powder." We must mark the difference of the words: it says, he who stumbles shall be broken; but he on whom it shall come, shall be ground to powder. At the first, because He came lowly, men stumbled at Him: because He shall come lofty to judgment, on whoever He shall come, He will grind him to powder. But not that man will He grind to powder at His future coming, whom He broke not when He came. He who stumbled not at the lowly, shall not dread the lofty. Briefly you have heard it, brethren:

he who stumbled not at the lowly, shall not dread the lofty. For to all bad men is Christ a stone of stumbling; whatever Christ says is bitter to them.

7. For hear and see. Certainly all who go out from the Church, and are
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cut off from the unity of the Church, are antichrists; let no man doubt it: for the apostle himself has marked them, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." Therefore, whoever continue not with us, but go out from us, it is manifest that they are antichrists. And how are they proved to be antichrists? By lying. "And who is a liar, but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?" Let us ask the heretics: where do you find a heretic that denies that Jesus is the Christ? See now, my beloved, a great mystery. Mark what the Lord God may have inspired us withal, and what I would fain work into your minds. Behold, they went out from us, and turned Donatists: we ask them whether Jesus be the Christ; they instantly confess that Jesus is the Christ. If then that person is an antichrist, who denies that Jesus is the Christ, neither can they call us antichrists, nor we them; therefore, neither they went out from us, nor we from them. If then we have not gone

out one from another, we are in unity: if we be in unity, what means it that there are two altars in this city? what, that there are divided houses, divided marriages? that there is a common bed, and a divided Christ? He admonishes us, he would have us confess what is the truth: - either they went out from us, or we from them. But let it not be imagined that we have gone out from them. For we have the testament of the Lord's inheritance, we recite it, and there we find, "I will give You the nations for Thine inheritance, and for Your possessions the ends of the earth." We hold fast Christ's inheritance; they hold it not, for they do not communicate with the whole earth, do not communicate with the universal body redeemed by the blood of the Lord. We have the Lord Himself rising from the dead, who presented Himself to be felt by the hands of the doubting disciples: and while they yet doubted, He said to them, "It was necessary for Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name" - Where? which way? to what persons? - "through all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Our minds are set at rest concerning the unity of the inheritance! Whoever does not communicate with this inheritance, is gone out.

8. But let us not be made sad: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have

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continued with us." If then they went out from us, they are antichrists; if they are antichrists, they are liars; if they are liars, they deny that Jesus is the Christ. Once more we come back to the difficulty of the question. Ask them one by one; they confess that Jesus is the Christ. The difficulty that hampers us comes of our taking what is said in the Epistle in too narrow a sense. At any rate you see the question; this question puts both us and them to a stand, if it is not understood.

Either we are antichrists, or they are antichrists; they call us antichrists, and say that we went out from them; we say the like of them. But now this epistle has marked out the antichrists by this cognizance: "Whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ," that same "is an antichrist." Now therefore let us enquire who denies; and let us mark not the tongue, but the deeds. For if all be asked, all with one mouth confess that Jesus is the Christ. Let the tongue keep still for a little while, ask the life. If we shall find this, if the Scripture itself shall tell us that denial is a thing done not only with the tongue, but also with the deeds, then assuredly we find many antichrists, who with the

mouth profess Christ, and in their manners dissent from Christ.

Where find we this in Scripture? Hear Paul the Apostle; speaking of such, he says, "For they confess that they know God, but in their deeds deny Him." We find these also to be antichrists: whoever in his deeds denies Christ, is an antichrist. I listen not to what he says, but I look what life he leads. Works speak, and do we require words? For where is the bad man that does not wish to talk well? But what says the Lord to such? "You hypocrites, how can you speak good things, while you are evil?" Your voices you bring into my ears: I look into your thoughts. I see an evil will there, and you make a show of false fruits. I know what I must gather, and whence; I do not "gather figs of thistles," I do not gather "grapes of thorns;" for "every tree is known by its fruit." A more lying antichrist is he who with his mouth professes that Jesus is the Christ, and with his deeds denies Him. A liar in this, that he speaks one thing, and does another.

9. Now therefore, brethren, if deeds are to be questioned, not only do we find many antichrists gone out; but many not yet manifest, who have not gone out at all. For as many as the Church has within it that are perjured, defrauders, addicted to black arts, consulters of fortune-tellers, adulterers, drunkards, usurers, boy-stealers, and all the other

vices that we are not able to enumerate; these things are contrary to the doctrine of Christ, are contrary to the word of God. Now the Word of God is Christ: whatever is contrary to the Word of God is in Antichrist. For Antichrist means, "contrary to Christ." And would you know how openly these resist Christ? Sometimes it happens that they do some evil, and one begins to reprove them; because they dare not blaspheme Christ, they blaspheme His ministers by whom they are reprov'd: but if you show them that you speak Christ's words, not your own, they endeavour all they can to convict you of speaking your own words, not Christ's: if however it is manifest that you speak Christ's words, they go even against Christ, they begin to find fault with Christ: "How," say they, "and why did He make us such as we are?" Do not persons say this every day, when they are convicted of their deeds? Perverted by a depraved will, they accuse their Maker. Their Maker cries to them from heaven, (for the same made us, who new-made us:) What made I you? I made man, not avarice; I made man, not robbery; I made man, not adultery. You have heard that my works praise me. Out of the mouth of the Three Children, it was the hymn itself that kept them from the fires." The works of the Lord

praise the Lord, the heaven, the earth, the sea, praise Him; praise Him all things that are in the heaven, praise Him angels, praise Him stars, praise Him lights, praise Him whatever swims, whatever flies, whatever walks, whatever creeps; all these praise the Lord. Have you heard there that avarice praises the Lord? Have you heard that drunkenness praises the Lord? That luxury praises, that frivolity praises Him? Whatever you hear not in that hymn give praise to the Lord, the Lord made not that thing. Correct what you have made, that what God made in you may be saved. But if you will not, and love and embrace your sins, you are contrary to Christ. In or out the church, you are an antichrist; in or out the church, you are chaff. But why are you not out? Because you have not fallen in with a wind to carry you away.

10. These things are now manifest, my brethren. Let no man say, I do not worship Christ, but I worship God His Father. "Every one who denies the Son, has neither the Son nor the Father; and he who confesses the Son, has both the Son and the Father." He speaks to you that are grain: and let those who were chaff, hear, and become grain.

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Let each one, looking well to his own conscience, if he is a lover of the

world, be changed; let him become a lover of Christ, that he is not an antichrist. If one shall tell him that he is an antichrist, he is wroth, he thinks it a wrong done to him; perchance, if he is told by him that strives with him that he is an antichrist, he threatens an action at law. Christ says to him, Be patient; if you have been falsely spoken of, rejoice with me, because I also am falsely spoken of by the antichrists: but if you are truly spoken of, come to an understanding with your own conscience; and if you fear to be called this, fear more to be it.

11. "Let that therefore abide in you, which you have heard from the beginning. If that which you have heard from the beginning shall abide in you, you also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us." For haply you might ask about the wages, and say, Behold, "that which I have heard from the beginning I keep safe in me, I comply therewith; perils, labours, temptations, for the sake of this continuance, I bear up against them all: with what fruit? what wages? what will He hereafter give me, since in this world I see that I labour among temptations? I see not here that there is any rest: mere mortality weighs down the soul, and the corruptible body presses it down to lower things: but I bear all things, that "that which I have heard from the beginning" may "remain" in me; and that I may

say to my God, "Because of the words of Your lips have I kept hard ways." to what wages then? Hear, and faint not. If you were fainting in the labours, upon the promised wages be strong. Where is the man that shall work in a vineyard, and shall let slip out of his heart the reward he is to receive? Suppose him to have forgotten, his hands fail. The remembrance of the promised wages makes him persevering in the work: and yet he who promised it is a man who can deceive your expectation. How much more strong ought you to be in God's field, when He who promised is the Truth, Who can neither have any successor, nor die, nor deceive him to whom the promise was made! And what is the promise? Let us see what He has promised. Is it gold which men here love much, or silver? Or possessions, for which men lavish gold, however much they love gold? Or pleasant lands, spacious houses, many slaves, numerous beasts? Not these are the wages, so to say, for which he exhorts us to endure in labour. What are these wages called? "eternal life." You have heard, and in your joy you have cried

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out: love that which you have heard, and you are delivered from your labours into the rest of eternal life. Lo, this is what God promises; "eternal life." Lo, this what God threatens; eternal fire. What to those

set on the right hand? "Come, you blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." To those on the left, what? "Go into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." You do not yet love that: at least fear this.

12. Remember then, my brethren, that Christ has promised us eternal life: "This," says he, "is the promise which He has promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written to you concerning them which seduce you." Let none seduce you to death: desire the promise of eternal life. What can the world promise? Let it promise what you will, it makes the promise perchance to one who tomorrow shall die. And with what face will you go hence to Him that abides for ever? "But a powerful man threatens me, so that I must do some evil." What does he threaten? Prisons, chains, fires, torments, wild beasts: aye, but not eternal fire? Dread that which One Almighty threatens; love that which One Almighty promises; and all the world becomes vile in our regard, whether it promise or terrify. "These things have I written to you concerning them which seduce you; that you may know that you have an unction, and the unction which we have received from Him may abide in you." In the unction we have the sacramental sign [of a thing unseen], the virtue itself is invisible; the invisible unction is the

Holy Ghost; the invisible unction is that charity, which, in whoever it is, shall be as a root to him: however burning the sun, he cannot wither. All that is rooted is nourished by the sun's warmth, not withered.

13. "And you have no need that any man teach you, because His unction teaches you concerning all things." Then to what purpose is it that "we," my brethren, teach you? If "His unction teaches you concerning all things," it seems we labour without a cause. And what mean we, to cry out as we do? Let us leave you to His unction, and let His unction teach you. But this is putting the question only to myself: I put it also to that same apostle: let him deign to hear a babe that asks of him: to John himself I say, Had those the unction to whom you were speaking? You have said, "His unction teaches you concerning all

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things." To what purpose have you written an Epistle like this? what teaching did you give them? what instruction? what edification? See here now, brethren, see a mighty mystery. The sound of our words strikes the ears, the Master is within. Do not suppose that any man learns ought from man. We can admonish by the sound of our voice; if there be not One within that shall teach, vain is the noise we make.

Aye, brethren, have you a mind to know it? Have you not all heard this present discourse? and yet how many will go from this place untaught! I, for my part, have spoken to all; but they to whom that Unction within speaks not, they whom the Holy Ghost within teaches not, those go back untaught. The teachings of the master from without are a sort of aids and admonitions. He who teaches the hearts, has His chair in heaven. Therefore says He also Himself in the Gospel: "Call no man your master upon earth; One is your Master, even Christ." Let Him therefore Himself speak to you within, when not one of mankind is there: for though there be some one at your side, there is none in your heart. Yet let there not be none in your heart: let Christ be in your heart: let His unction be in the heart, lest it be a heart thirsting in the wilderness, and having no fountains to be watered withal. There is then, I say, a Master within that teaches: Christ teaches; His inspiration teaches. Where His inspiration and His unction is not, in vain do words make a noise from without. So are the words, brethren, which we speak from without, as is the husbandman to the tree: from without he works, applies water and diligence of culture; let him from without apply what he will, does he form the apples? does he clothe the nakedness of the wood with a shady covering of leaves? does he

do any thing like this from within? But whose doing is this? Hear the husbandman, the apostle: both see what we are, and hear the Master within: "I have planted, Apollos has watered; but God gave the increase: neither he who plants is any thing, neither he who waters, but He who gives the increase, even God." This then we say to you: whether we plant, or whether we water, by speaking we are not anything; but He who gives the increase, even God: that is, "His unction which teaches you concerning all things."

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Homily 4.

1 John 2:27-3:8

"And it is true, and lies not. Even as it has taught you, abide in it. And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be put to shame by Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, know that every one who does righteousness is born of Him. Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it knew not Him, us also the world knows not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it is not manifested what we shall be. We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure. Whoever commits sin commits also iniquity. Sin is iniquity. And you know that He was manifested to take away sin; and in Him is no sin. Whoever abides in Him sins not: whoever sins has not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man seduce you. He who does righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He who commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sins from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested; that He might destroy the

works of the devil."

1. You remember, brethren, that yesterday's lesson was brought to a close at this point, that "you have no need that any man teach you, but the unction itself teaches you concerning all things." Now this, as I am sure you remember, we so expounded to you, that we who from without speak to your ears, are as workmen applying culture from without to a tree, but we cannot give the increase nor form the fruits: but only He who created and redeemed and called you, He, dwelling in you by faith and the Spirit, must speak to you within, else vain is all our noise of words. Whence does this appear? From this: that while many hear, not all are persuaded of that which is said, but only they to whom God speaks within. Now they to whom He speaks within, are those who give place to Him: and those give place to God, who "give not place to the devil." For the devil wishes to inhabit the hearts of men, and speak there the things which are able to seduce. But what

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says the Lord Jesus? "The prince of this world is cast out." Whence cast? out of heaven and earth? out of the fabric of the world? Nay, but out of the hearts of the believing. The invader being cast out, let the Redeemer dwell within: because the same redeemed, who created.

And the devil now assaults from without, not conquers Him that has possession within. And he assaults from without, by casting in various temptations: but that person consents not thereto, to whom God speaks within, and the unction of which you have heard.

2. "And it is true," namely, this same unction; i.e. the very Spirit of the Lord which teaches men, cannot lie: "and is not false. Even as it has taught you, abide you in the same. And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall be manifested, we may have boldness in His sight, that we be not put to shame by Him at His coming." You see, brethren: we believe on Jesus whom we have not seen: they announced Him, that saw, that handled, that heard the word out of His own mouth; and that they might persuade all mankind of the truth thereof, they were sent by Him, not dared to go of themselves. And whither were they sent? You heard while the Gospel was read, "Go, preach the Gospel to the whole creation which is under heaven." Consequently, the disciples were sent "everywhere:" with signs and wonders to attest that what they spake, they had seen. And we believe on Him whom we have not seen, and we look for Him to come. Those who look for Him by faith, shall rejoice when He comes: those who are without faith, when that which now they see not is come, shall be

ashamed. And that confusion of face shall not be for a single day and so pass away, in such sort as those are wont to be confounded, who are found out in some fault, and are scoffed at by their fellowmen. That confusion shall carry those who are confounded to the left hand, that to them it may be said, "Go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Let us abide then in His words, that we be not confounded when He cometh. For Himself says in the Gospel to those who had believed on Him: "If you shall abide in my word, then are you verily my disciples." And, as if they had asked, With what fruit? "And," says He, "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." For as yet our salvation is in hope, not in deed: for we do not already possess that which is promised, but we hope for it to come. And "faithful is He who promised;" He deceives not you: only do not faint,

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but wait for the promise. For He, the Truth, cannot deceive. Be not a liar, to profess one thing and do another; keep the faith, and He keeps His promise. But if you keep not the faith, your own self, not He who promised, has defrauded you.

3. "If you know that He is righteous, know that every one who does righteousness is born of Him." The righteousness which at present is

ours is of faith. Perfect righteousness is not, save only in the angels: and scarce in angels, if they be compared with God: yet if there be any perfect righteousness of souls and spirits which God has created, it is in the angels, holy, just, good, by no lapse turned aside, by no pride falling, but remaining ever in the contemplation of the Word of God, and having nothing else sweet to them save Him by whom they were created; in them is perfect righteousness: but in us it has begun to be, of faith, by the Spirit. You heard when the Psalm was read, "Begin to the Lord in confession." "Begin," says it; the beginning of our righteousness is the confession of sins. You have begun not to defend your sin; now have you made a beginning of righteousness: but it shall be perfected in you when to do nothing else shall delight you, when "death shall be swallowed up in victory," when there shall be no itching of lust, when there shall be no struggling with flesh and blood, when there shall be the palm of victory, the triumph over the enemy; then shall there be perfect righteousness. At present we are still fighting: if we fight we are in the lists; we smite and are smitten; but who shall conquer, remains to be seen. And that man conquers, who even when he smites presumes not on his own strength, but relies upon God that cheers him on. The devil is alone when he fights against

us. If we are with God, we overcome the devil: for if you fight alone with the devil, you will be overcome. He is a skilful enemy: how many palms has he won! Consider to what he has cast us down! That we are born mortal, comes of this, that he in the first place cast down from Paradise our very original. What then is to be done, seeing he is so well practised? Let the Almighty be invoked to your aid against the devices of the devil. Let Him dwell in you, who cannot be overcome, and you shall securely overcome him who is wont to overcome. But to overcome whom? Those in whom God dwells not. For, that you may know it, brethren; Adam being in Paradise despised the commandment of God, and lifted up the neck, as if he desired to be his
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own master, and were loath to be subject to the will of God: so he fell from that immortality, from that blessedness. But there was a certain man, a man now well skilled, though a mortal born, who even as he sat on the dunghill, putrefying with worms, overcame the devil: yea, Adam himself then overcame: even he, in Job; because Job was of his race. So then, Adam, overcome in Paradise, overcame on the dunghill. Being in Paradise, he gave ear to the persuasion of the woman which the devil had put into her: but being on the dunghill he said to Eve,

"You have spoken as one of the foolish women." There he lent an ear, here he gave an answer: when he was glad, he listened, when he was scourged, he overcame. Therefore, see what follows, my brethren, in the Epistle: because this is what it would have us lay to heart, that we may overcome the devil indeed, but not of ourselves. "If you know that He is righteous," says it, "know that every one who does righteousness is born of Him:" of God, of Christ. And in that he has said, "is born of Him," he cheers us on. Already therefore, in that we are born of Him, we are perfect.

4. Hear. "Behold what manner of love the Father has given us, that we should be called sons of God, and be (such)." For whoever are called sons, and are not sons, what profits them the name where the thing is not? How many are called physicians, who know not how to heal! how many are called watchers, who sleep all night long! So, many are called Christians, and yet in deeds are not found such; because they are not this which they are called, that is, in life, in manners, in faith, in hope, in charity. But what have you heard here, brethren? "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be, the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it has not known Him, us also the world knows not."

There is a whole world Christian, and a whole world ungodly; because throughout the whole world there are ungodly, and throughout the whole world there are godly: those know not these. In what sense, think we, do they not know them? They deride those who live good lives. Mark well and see: for haply there are such also among you. Each one of you who now lives godly, who despises worldly things, who does not choose to go to spectacles, who does not choose to make himself drunken as it were by solemn custom, yea, what is worse, under countenance of holy days to make himself unclean: the man

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who does not choose to do these things, how is he derided by those who do them! Would he be scoffed at if he were known? But why is he not known? "The world knows Him not." Who is "the world"? Those inhabitants of the world. Just as we say, "a house;" meaning, its inhabitants. These things have been said to you again and again, and we forbear to repeat them to your disgust. By this time, when you hear the word "world," in a bad signification, you know that you must understand it to mean only lovers of the world because through love they inhabit, and by inhabiting have become entitled to the name.

Therefore the world has not known us, because it has not known Him.

He walked here Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh; He was God, He was latent in weakness. And wherefore was He not known? Because He reproveth all sins in men. They, through loving the delights of sins, did not acknowledge the God: through loving that which the fever prompted, they did wrong to the Physician.

5. For us then, what are we? Already we are begotten of Him; but because we are such in hope, he says, "Beloved, now are we sons of God." Now already? Then what is it we look for, if already we are sons of God? "And not yet," says he, "is it manifested what we shall be." But what else shall we be than sons of God? Hear what follows: "We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is." Understand, my beloved. It is a great matter: "We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." In the first place mark, what is called "is." You know what it is that is so called. That which is called "is," and not only is called but is so, is unchangeable: It ever remains, It cannot be changed, It is in no part corruptible: It has neither proficiency, for It is perfect; nor has deficiency, for It is eternal. And what is this? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And what is this? "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be

equal with God." To see Christ in this sort, Christ in the form of God, Word of God, Only-Begotten of the Father, equal with the Father, is to the bad impossible. But in regard that the Word was made flesh, the bad also shall have power to see Him: because in the day of judgment the bad also will see Him; for He shall so come to judge, as He came to be judged. In the selfsame form, a man, but yet God: for "cursed is every one who puts his trust in man." A man, He came to be judged, a

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man, He will come to judge. And if He shall not be seen, what is this that is written, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced?" For of the ungodly it is said, that they shall see and be confounded. How shall the ungodly not see, when He shall set some on the right hand, others on the left? To those on the right hand He will say, "Come, you blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom:" to those on the left He will say, "Go into everlasting fire." They will see but the form of a servant, the form of God they will not see. Why? because they were ungodly; and the Lord Himself says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Therefore, we are to see a certain vision, my brethren, "which neither eye has seen, nor ear has heard, nor has entered into the heart of man:" a certain vision, a vision surpassing all earthly beauty, of

gold, of silver, of groves and fields; the beauty of sea and air, the beauty of sun and moon, the beauty of the stars, the beauty of angels: surpassing all things: because from it are all things beautiful.

6. What then shall "we" be, when we shall see this? What is promised to us? "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." The tongue has done what it could, has sounded the words: let the rest be thought by the heart. For what has even John himself said in comparison of That which Is, or what can be said by us men, who are so far from being equal to his merits? Return we therefore to that unction of Him, return we to that unction which inwardly teaches that which we cannot speak: and because you cannot at present see, let your part and duty be in desire. The whole life of a good Christian is a holy desire. Now what you long for, you do not yet see: although by longing, you are made capable, so that when that is come which you may see, you shall be filled. For just as, if you would fill a bag, and know how great the thing is that shall be given, you stretch the opening of the sack or the skin, or whatever else it is; you know how much you would put in, and see that the bag is narrow; by stretching you make it capable of holding more: so God, by deferring our hope, stretches our desire; by the desiring, stretches the mind; by stretching, makes it

more capacious. Let us desire therefore, my brethren, for we shall be filled. See Paul widening, as it were, his heart, that it may be able to receive that which is to come. He says, namely, "Not that I have already received, or am already perfect: brethren, I deem not myself to have apprehended." Then what are you doing in this life, if you have not yet

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apprehended? "But this one thing [I do]; forgetting the things that are behind, reaching forth to the things that are before, upon the strain I follow on to the prize of the high calling." He says he reaches forth, or stretches himself, and says that he follows "upon the strain." He felt himself too little to take in that "which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man." This is our life, that by longing we should be exercised. But holy longing exercises us just so much as we prune off our longings from the love of the world. We have already said, "Empty out that which is to be filled." With good you are to be filled: pour out the bad. Suppose that God would fill you with honey: if you are full of vinegar, where will you put the honey? That which the vessel bore in it must be poured out: the vessel itself must be cleansed; must be cleansed, albeit with labour, albeit with hard rubbing, that it may become fit for that thing, whatever it is. Let us say

honey, say gold, say wine; whatever we say it is, being that which cannot be said, whatever we would fain say, It is called - God. And when we say "God," what have we said? Is that one syllable the whole of that we look for? So then, whatever we have had power to say is beneath Him: let us stretch ourselves to Him, that when He shall come, He may fill us. For "we shall be like Him; because we shall see Him as He is."

7. "And every one who has this hope in Him." You see how he has set us our place, in "hope." You see how the Apostle Paul agrees with his fellow-apostle, "By hope we are saved. But hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man sees, why does he hope for? For if what we see not, we hope for, by patience we wait for it." This very patience exercises desire. Continue you, for He continues: and persevere in walking, that you may reach the goal: for that to which you tend will not remove. See: "And every one who has this hope in Him, purifies himself even as He is pure." See how he has not taken away free-will, in that he says, "purifies himself." Who purifies us but God? Yea, but God does not purify you if you are unwilling. Therefore, in that you join your will to God, in that you purify yourself. You purify yourself, not by yourself, but by Him who comes to inhabit you. Still, because

you do somewhat therein by the will, therefore is somewhat attributed to you. But it is attributed to you only to the end you should say, as in the Psalm, "Be my helper, forsake me not." If you say, "Be my

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helper," you do somewhat: for if you are doing nothing, how should He be said to "help" you?

8. "Every one who does sin, does also iniquity." Let no man say, Sin is one thing, iniquity another: let no man say, I am a sinful man, but not a doer of iniquity. For, "Every one who does sin, does also iniquity. Sin is iniquity." Well then, what are we to do concerning sins and iniquities? Hear what He says: "And you know that He was manifested to take away sin; and sin in Him is not." He, in Whom sin is not, the same is come to take away sin. For were there sin in Him, it must be taken away from Him, not He take it away Himself. "Whoever abides in Him, sins not." In so far as he abides in Him, in so far sins not. "Whoever sins has not seen Him, neither known Him." A great question this: "Whoever sins has not seen Him, neither known Him." No marvel. We have not seen Him, but are to see; have not known Him, but are to know: we believe on One we have not known. Or haply, by faith we have known, and by actual beholding have not yet known? But then in

faith we have both seen and known. For if faith does not yet see, why are we said to have been enlightened? There is an enlightening by faith, and an enlightening by sight. At present, while we are on pilgrimage, "we walk by faith, not by sight," or, actually beholding. Therefore also our righteousness is "by faith, not by sight." Our righteousness shall be perfect, when we shall see by actual beholding. Only, in the meanwhile, let us not leave that righteousness which is of faith, since "the just lives by faith," as says the apostle. "Whoever abides in Him, sins not." For, "whoever sins, has not seen Him, neither known Him." That man who sins, believes not: but if a man believes, so far as pertains to his faith, he sins not.

9. "Little children, let no man seduce you. He who does righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous." What, on hearing that we are "righteous as He is righteous," are we to think ourselves equal with God? You must know what means that "as:" thus he said a while ago, "Purifies himself even as He is pure." Then is our purity like and equal to the purity of God, and our righteousness to God's righteousness? Who can say this? But the word "as," is not always wont to be used in the sense of equality. As, for example, if, having seen this large church, a person should wish to build a smaller church, but with the same

relative dimensions: as, for example, if this be one measure in width and two measures in length, he too should build his church one measure in width and two measures in length: in that case one sees that he has built it "as" this is built. But this church has, say, a hundred cubits in length, the other thirty: it is at once "as" this, and yet unequal. You see that this "as" is not always referred to parity and equality. For example, see what a difference there is between the face of a man and its image from a mirror: there is a face in the image, a face in the body: the image exists in imitation, the body in reality. And what do we say? Why, "as" there are eyes here, so also there; "as" ears here, so ears also there. The thing is different, but the "as" is said of the resemblance. Well then, we also have in us the image of God; but not that which the Son equal with the Father has: yet except we also, according to our measure, were "as" He, we should in no respect be said to be like Him. "He purifies us," then, "even as He is pure:" but He is pure from eternity, we pure by faith. We are "righteous even as He is righteous;" but He is so in His immutable perpetuity, we righteous by believing on One we do not see, that so we may one day see Him. Even when our righteousness shall be perfect, when we shall be equal to the angels, not even then shall it be equalled with Him. How far then is

it from Him now, when not even then it shall be equal!

10. "He who does sin, is of the devil, because the devil sins from the beginning." "Is of the devil:" you know what he means: by imitating the devil. For the devil made no man, begat no man, created no man: but whoever imitates the devil, that person, as if begotten of him, becomes a child of the devil; by imitating him, not literally by being begotten of him. In what sense are you a child of Abraham, not that Abraham begat you? In the same sense as the Jews, the children of Abraham, not imitating the faith of Abraham, are become children of the devil: of the flesh of Abraham they were begotten, and the faith of Abraham they have not imitated. If then those who were thence begotten were put out of the inheritance, because they did not imitate, you, who are not begotten of him, are made a child, and in this way shall be a child of him by imitating him. And if you imitate the devil, in such wise as he became proud and impious against God, you will be a child of the devil: by imitating, not that he created you or begat you.

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11. "To this end was the Son of God manifested." Now then, brethren, mark! All sinners are begotten of the devil, as sinners. Adam was made by God: but when he consented to the devil, he was begotten of the devil; and he begat all men such as he was himself. With lust itself

we were born; even before we add our sins, from that condemnation we have our birth. For if we are born without any sin, wherefore this running with infants to baptism that they may be released? Then mark well, brethren, the two birth-stocks, Adam and Christ: two men are; but one of them, a man that is man; the other, a Man that is God. By the man that is man we are sinners; by the Man that is God we are justified. That birth has cast down to death; this birth has raised up to life: that birth brings with it sin; this birth sets free from sin. For to this end came Christ as Man, to undo the sins of men. "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He may undo the works of the devil."

12. The rest I commend to your thoughts, my beloved, that I may not burden you. For the question we labour to solve is even this - that we call ourselves sinners: for if any man shall say that he is without sin, he is a liar. And in the Epistle of this same John we have found it written, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." For you should remember what went before: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And yet, on the other hand, in what follows you are told, "He who is begotten of God sins not: he who does sin has not seen Him, neither known Him. - Every one who does sin is of the devil:" sin is not of God: this affrights us

again. In what sense are we begotten of God, and in what sense do we confess ourselves sinners? Shall we say, because we are not begotten of God? And what do these Sacraments in regard to infants? What has John said? "He who is begotten of God, sins not." And yet again the same John has said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us!" A great question it is, and an embarrassing one; and may I have made you intent upon having it solved, my beloved. Tomorrow, in the name of the Lord, what He will give, we will discourse thereof.

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Homily 5.

1 John 3:9-18

"Whoever is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whoever is not righteous is not of God, neither he who loves not his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate us. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who loves not abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer: and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. In this we know love, that He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's good, and sees his brother have need, and shuts up his bowels of compassion from him, how can the love of God dwell in him? My little children, let us not love only in word and in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

1. Hear intently, I beseech you, because it is no small matter that we

have to cope withal: and I doubt not, because you were intent upon it yesterday, that you have with even greater intentness of purpose come together to-day. For it is no slight question, how he says in this Epistle, "Whoever is born of God, sins not," and how in the same Epistle he has said above, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." What shall the man do, who is pressed by both sayings out of the same Epistle? If he shall confess himself a sinner, he fears lest it be said to him, Then are you not born of God; because it is written, "Whoever is born of God, sins not." But if he shall say that he is just and that he has no sin, he receives on the other side a blow from the same Epistle, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Placed then as he is in the midst, what he can say and what confess, or what profess, he cannot find. To profess himself to be without sin, is full of peril; and not only full of peril, but also full of error: "We deceive ourselves," says he, "and the truth is not

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in us, if we say that we have no sin." But oh that you had none, and said this! for then would you say truly, and in uttering the truth would have not so much as a vestige of wrong to be afraid of. But, that you do ill if you say so, is because it is a lie that you say. "The truth," says he,

"is not in us, if we say that we have no sin." He says not, "Have not had;" lest haply it should seem to be spoken of the past life. For the man here has had sins: but from the time that he was born of God, he has begun not to have sins. If it were so, there would be no question to embarrass us. For we should say, We have been sinners, but now we are justified: we have had sin, but now we have none. He says not this: but what says he? "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And then after a while he says on the other hand, "Whoever is born of God sins not." Was John himself not born of God? If John was not born of God, John, of whom you have heard that he lay in the Lord's bosom; does any man dare engage for himself that in him has taken place that regeneration which it was not granted to that man to have, to whom it was granted to lie in the bosom of the Lord? The man whom the Lord loved more than the rest, him alone had He not begotten of the Spirit?

2. Mark now these words. As yet, I am urging it upon you, what straits we are put to that by putting your minds on the stretch, that is, by your praying for us and for yourselves, God may make enlargement, and give us an outlet: lest some man find in His word an occasion of his own perdition, that word which was preached and put in writing

only for healing and salvation. "Every man," says he, "that does sin, does also iniquity." Lest haply you make a distinction, "Sin is iniquity." Lest you say, A sinner I am, but not a doer of iniquity, "Sin is iniquity. And you know that to this end was He manifested, that He should take away sin; and there is no sin in Him." And what does it profit us, that He came without sin? "Every one who sins not, abides in Him: and every one who sins, has not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man seduce you. He who does righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous." This we have already said, that the word "as" is wont to be used of a certain resemblance, not of equality. "He who does sin is of the devil, because the devil sins from the beginning." This too we have already said, that the devil created no man, nor begat any, but his imitators are, as it were, born of him. "To

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this end was the Son of God manifested, that He should undo the works of the devil." Consequently, to undo (or loose) sins, He who has no sin. And then follows: "Every one who is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God:" he has drawn the cord tight! - Belike, it is in regard of some one sin that he has said, "Does not sin," not in regard of all sin:

that in this that he says, "Whoever is born of God, does not sin," you may understand some one particular sin, which that man who is born of God cannot commit: and such is that sin that, if one commit it, it confirms the rest. What is this sin? To do contrary to the commandment. What is the commandment? "A new commandment give I to you, that you love one another." Mark well! This commandment of Christ is called, "love." By this love sins are loosed. If this love be not kept, the not holding it is at once a grievous sin, and the root of all sins.

3. Mark well, brethren; we have brought forward somewhat in which, to those who have good understanding, the question is solved. But do we only walk in the way with those who run more swiftly? Those that walk more slowly must not be left behind. Let us turn the matter every way, in such words as we can, in order that it may be brought within reach of all. For I suppose, brethren, that every man is concerned for his own soul, who does not come to Church without cause, who does not seek temporal things in the Church, who does not come here to transact secular business; but comes here in order that he may lay hold upon some eternal thing, promised to him, whereunto he may attain: he must needs consider how he shall walk in the way, lest he is

left behind, lest he go back, lest he go astray, lest by halting he do not attain. Whoever therefore is in earnest, let him be slow, let him be swift, yet let him not leave the way. This then I have said, that in saying, "Whoever is born of God sins not," it is probable he meant it of some particular sin: for else it will be contrary to that place: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." In this way then the question may be solved. There is a certain sin, which he who is born of God cannot commit; a sin, which not being committed, other sins are loosed, and being committed, other sins are confirmed. What is this sin? To do contrary to the commandment of Christ, contrary to the New Testament. What is the new

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commandment? "A new commandment give I to you, that you love one another." Whoever does contrary to charity and contrary to brotherly love, let him not dare to glory and say that he is born of God: but whoever is in brotherly love, there are certain sins which he cannot commit, and this above all, that he should hate his brother. And how fares it with him concerning his other sins, of which it is said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?" Let him hear that which shall set his mind at rest from another

place of Scripture; "Charity covers a multitude of sins."

4. Charity therefore we commend; charity this Epistle commends. The Lord, after His resurrection, what question put He to Peter, but, "do you love me?" And it was not enough to ask it once; a second time also He put none other question, a third time also none other. Although when it came to the third time, Peter, as one who knew not what was the drift of this, was grieved because it seemed as if the Lord did not believe him; nevertheless both a first time and a second, and a third He put this question. Thrice fear denied, thrice love confessed. Behold Peter loves the Lord. What is he to do for the Lord? For think not that he in the Psalm did not feel himself at a loss what to do: "What shall I render to the Lord for all the benefits He has done to me?" He who said this in the Psalm, marked what great things had been done for him by God; and sought what he should render to God, and could find nothing. For whatever you would render, from Him did you receive it to render. And what did he find to offer in return? That which, as we said, my brethren, he had received from Him, that only found he to offer in return. "I will receive the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord." For who had given him the cup of salvation, but He to whom he wished to offer in return? Now to receive the cup of

salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord, is to be filled with charity; and so filled, that not only you shall not hate your brother, but shall be prepared to die for your brother. This is perfect charity, that you are prepared to die for your brother. This the Lord exhibited in Himself, who died for all, praying for them by whom He was crucified, and saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But if He alone has done this, He was not a Master, if He had no disciples. Disciples who came after Him have done this. Men were stoning Stephen, and he knelt down and said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their

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charge." He loved those who were killing him; since for them also he was dying. Hear also the Apostle Paul: "And I myself," says he, "will be spent for your souls." For he was among those for whom Stephen, when by their hands he was dying, besought forgiveness. This then is perfect charity. If any man shall have so great charity that he is prepared even to die for his brethren, in that man is perfect charity. But as soon as it is born, is it already quite perfect? That it may be made perfect, it is born; when born, it is nourished; when nourished, it is strengthened; when strengthened, it is perfected; when it has come to perfection, what says it? "To me to live is Christ, and to die is

gain. I wished to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is needful for you." For their sakes he was willing to live, for whose sakes he was prepared to die.

5. And that you may know that it is this perfect charity which that man violates not, and against which that man sins not, who is born of God; this is what the Lord says to Peter; "Peter, do you love me?" And he answers, "I love." He says not, If you love me, shew kindness to me. For when the Lord was in mortal flesh, He hungered, He thirsted: at that time when He hungered and thirsted, He was taken in as a guest; those who had the means, ministered to Him of their substance, as we read in the Gospel. Zacchæus entertained Him as his guest: he was saved from his disease by entertaining the Physician. From what disease? The disease of avarice. For he was very rich, and the chief of the publicans. Mark the man made whole from the disease of avarice: "The half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man, I will restore him fourfold." That he kept the other half, was not to enjoy it, but to pay his debts. Well, he at that time entertained the Physician as his guest, because there was infirmity of the flesh in the Lord, to which men might show this kindness; and this, because it was His will to grant this very thing to those who did Him

kind service; for the benefit was to those who did the service, not to Him. For, could He to whom angels ministered require these men's kindness? Not even His servant Elias, to whom He sent bread and flesh by the ravens upon a certain occasion had need of this; and yet that a religious widow might be blessed, the servant of God is sent, and he whom God in secret did feed, is fed by the widow. But still, although by the means of these servants of God, those who consider their need get

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good to themselves, in respect of that reward most manifestly set forth by the Lord in the Gospel: "He who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward: and he who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward: and whoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say to you, He shall in no wise lose his reward:" although, then, those who do this, do it to their own good: yet neither could this kind office be done to Him when about to ascend into Heaven. What could Peter, who loved Him, render to Him? Hear what. "Feed my sheep:" i.e. do for the brethren, that which I have done for you. I redeemed all with my blood: hesitate not to die for confession of the truth, that the rest may

imitate you.

6. But this, as we have said, brethren, is perfect charity. He who is born of God has it. Mark, my beloved, see what I say. Behold, a man has received the Sacrament of that birth, being baptized; he has the Sacrament, and a great Sacrament, divine, holy, ineffable. Consider what a Sacrament! To make him a new man by remission of all sins! Nevertheless, let him look well to the heart, whether that be thoroughly done there, which is done in the body; let him see whether he have charity, and then say, I am born of God. If however he have it not, he has indeed the soldier's mark upon him, but he roams as a deserter. Let him have charity; otherwise let him not say that he is born of God. But he says, I have the Sacrament. Hear the Apostle: "If I know all mysteries, and have all faith, so that I can remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

7. This, if you remember, we gave you to understand in beginning to read this Epistle, that nothing in it is so commended as charity. Even if it seems to speak of various other things, to this it makes its way back, and whatever it says, it will needs bring all to bear upon charity. Let us see whether it does so here. Mark: "Whoever is born of God does not commit sin." We ask, what sin? because if you understand all sin, it

will be contrary to that place, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Then let him say what sin; let him teach us; lest haply I may have rashly said that the sin here is the violation of charity, because he said above, "He who hates his

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brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because the darkness has blinded his eyes." But perhaps he has said something in what comes afterwards, and has mentioned charity by name? See that this circuit of words has this end, has this issue. "Whoever is born of God, sins not, because His seed remains in him." The "seed" of God, i.e. the word of God: whence the apostle says, "I have begotten you through the Gospel. And he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Let him tell us this, let us see in what we cannot sin. "In this are manifested the children of God and the children of the devil. Whoever is not righteous is not of God, neither he who loves not his brother." Aye, now indeed it is manifest of what he speaks: "Neither he who loves not his brother." Therefore, love alone puts the difference between the children of God and the children of the devil. Let them all sign themselves with the sign of the cross of Christ; let them all respond, Amen; let all sing Alleluia; let all be baptized, let all

come to church, let all build the walls of churches: there is no discerning of the children of God from the children of the devil, but only by charity. Those who have charity are born of God: those who have it not, are not born of God. A mighty token, a mighty distinction! Have what you will; if this alone you have not, it profits you nothing: other things if you have not, have this, and you have fulfilled the law. "For he who loves another has fulfilled the law," says the apostle: and, "Charity is the fulfilling of the law." I take this to be the pearl which the merchant man in the Gospel is described to have been seeking, who "found one pearl, and sold all that he had, and bought it." This is the pearl of price, Charity, without which whatever you may have, profits you nothing: which if alone you have, it suffices you. Now, with faith you see, then with actual beholding you shall see. For if we love when we see not, how shall we embrace it when we see! But wherein must we exercise ourselves? In brotherly love. You may say to me, I have not seen God: can you say to me, I have not seen man? Love your brother. For if you love your brother whom you see, at the same time you shall see God also; because you shall see Charity itself, and within dwells God.

8. "Whoever is not righteous is not of God, neither he who loves not

his brother." "For this is the message:" mark how he confirms it: "For this is the message which we heard from the beginning, that we

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should love one another." He has made it manifest to us that it is of this he speaks; whoever acts against this commandment, is in that accursed sin, into which those fall who are not born of God. "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And why did he slay him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." Therefore, where envy is, brotherly love cannot be. Mark, my beloved. He who envies, loves not. The sin of the devil is in that man; because the devil through envy cast man down. For he fell, and envied him that stood. He did not wish to cast man down that he himself might stand, but only that he might not fall alone. Hold fast in your mind from this that he has subjoined, that envy cannot exist in charity. You have it openly, when charity was praised, "Charity envies not." There was no charity in Cain; and had there been no charity in Abel, God would not have accepted his sacrifice. For when they had both offered, the one of the fruits of the earth, the other of the offspring of the flock; what think you, brethren, that God slighted the fruits of the earth, and loved the offspring of the flock? God had not

regard to the hands, but saw in the heart: and whom He saw offer with charity, to his sacrifice He had respect; whom He saw offer with envy, from his sacrifice He turned away His eyes. By the good works, then, of Abel, he means only charity: by the evil works of Cain he means only his hatred of his brother. It was not enough that he hated his brother and envied his good works; because he would not imitate, he would kill. And hence it appeared that he was a child of the devil, and hence also that the other was God's righteous one. Hence then are men discerned, my brethren. Let no man mark the tongue, but the deeds and the heart. If any do not good for his brethren, he shews what he has in him. By temptations are men proved.

9. "Marvel not, brethren, if the world hate us." Must one often be telling you what "the world" means? Not the heaven, not the earth, nor these visible works which God made; but lovers of the world. By often saying these things, to some I am burdensome: but I am so far from saying it without a cause, that some may be questioned whether I said it, and they cannot answer. Let then, even by thrusting it upon them, something stick fast in the hearts of those who hear. What is "the world"? The world, when put in a bad sense, is, lovers of the world: the world, when the word is used in praise, is heaven and earth, and

the works of God that are in them; whence it is said, "And the world was made by Him." Also, the world is the fullness of the earth, as John himself has said, "Not only for our sins is He the propitiator, but (for the sins) of the whole world:" he means, "of the world," of all the faithful scattered throughout the whole earth. But the world in a bad sense, is, lovers of the world. Those who love the world, cannot love their brother.

10. "If the world hate us: we know" - What do we know? - "that we have passed from death to life" - How do we know? "Because we love the brethren." Let none ask man: let each return to his own heart: if he find there brotherly love, let him set his mind at rest, because he is "passed from death to life." Already he is on the right hand: let him not regard that at present his glory is hidden: when the Lord shall come, then shall he appear in glory. For he has life in him, but as yet in winter; the root is alive, but the branches, so to say, are dry: within is the substance that has the life in it, within are the leaves of trees, within are the fruits: but they wait for the summer. Well then, "we know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who loves not, abides in death." Lest you should think it a

light matter, brethren, to hate, or, not to love, hear what follows:

"Every one who hates his brother, is a murderer." How now, if any made light of hating his brother, will he also in his heart make light of murder? He does not stir his hands to kill a man; yet he is already held by God a murderer; the other lives, and yet this man is already judged as his slayer! "Every one who hates his brother is a murderer: and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."

11. "In this know we love:" he means, perfection of love, that perfection which we have bidden you lay to heart: "In this know we love, that He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Lo here, whence that came: "Peter, do you love me? Feed My sheep." For, that you may know that He would have His sheep to be so fed by him, as that he should lay down his life for the sheep, straightway said He this to him: "When you were young, you girded yourself, and walked whither you would: but when you shall be old, you shall stretch forth your hands, and another shall gird you, and carry you whither you would not. This spake He," says the evangelist,

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"signifying by what death he should glorify God;" so that to whom He had said, Feed my sheep," the same He might teach to lay down his life for His sheep.

12. Whence begins charity, brethren? Attend a little: to what it is perfected, you have heard; the very end of it, and the very measure of it is what the Lord has put before us in the Gospel: "Greater love has no man," says He, "than that one lay down his life for his friends." Its perfection, therefore, He has put before us in the Gospel, and here also it is its perfection that is put before us: but you ask yourselves, and say to yourselves, When shall it be possible for us to have "this" charity? Do not too soon despair of yourself. Haply, it is born and is not yet perfect; nourish it, that it be not choked. But you will say to me, And by what am I to know it? For to what it is perfected, we have heard; whence it begins, let us hear. He goes on to say: "But whoever has this world's good, and sees his brother have hunger, and shuts up his bowels of compassion from him, how can the love of God dwell in him?" Lo, whence charity begins withal! If you are not yet equal to the dying for your brother, be even now equal to the giving of your means to your brother. Even now let charity smite your bowels, that not of vainglory you should do it, but of the innermost marrow of mercy; that you consider him, now in want. For if your superfluities you can not give to your brother, can you lay down your life for your brother? There lies your money in your bosom, which thieves may take from

you; and though thieves do not take it, by dying you will leave it, even if it leave not you while living: what will you do with it? Your brother hungers, he is in necessity: belike he is in suspense, is distressed by his creditor: he is your brother, alike you are bought, one is the price paid for you, you are both redeemed by the blood of Christ: see whether you have mercy, if you have this world's means. Perchance you say, "What concern is it to me? Am I to give my money, that he may not suffer trouble?" If this be the answer your heart makes to you, the love of the Father abides not in you. If the love of the Father abide not in you, you are not born of God. How boast you to be a Christian? You have the name, and have not the deeds. But if the work shall follow the name, let any call you pagan, show you by deeds that you are a Christian. For if by deeds you do not show yourself a Christian, all men may call you a Christian yet; what does the name profit you where the

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thing is not forthcoming? "But whoever has this world's good, and sees his brother have need, and shuts up his bowels of compassion from him, how can the love of God dwell in him?" And then he goes on: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

13. I suppose the thing is now made manifest to you my brethren: this great and most concerning secret and mystery. What is the force of charity, all Scripture sets forth; but I know not whether any where it is more largely set forth than in this Epistle. We pray you and beseech you in the Lord, that both what you have heard you will keep in memory, and will come to that which is yet to be said, until the epistle be finished, with earnestness, and with earnestness hear the same. But open your heart for the good seed: root out the thorns, that that which we are sowing in you be not choked, but rather that the harvest may grow, and that the Husbandman may rejoice and make ready the barn for you as for grain, not the fire as for the chaff.

["Cannot sin," &c. - Augustin maintains that the one sin which the Christian cannot commit is violation of charity; he cannot do otherwise than love, and do acts that flow from love, if he is a Christian. No doubt this indicates a great truth, for love expresses the inner essence of the believer's life and character. But the strong language of the apostle is not met by this partial statement. Better acknowledge the apparent contradiction between "does not commit sin," "cannot sin," and "if we say, we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." The apostle does not solve the problem. Meyer, who

discards many explanations of the first two phrases, - as, sinning knowingly and wilfully, committing mortal sins and many others specified by him, thinks that the solution lies in the fact simply that the apostle desires to emphasize the contrast between born of God and a sinner. He does not show how emphasizing a contrast explains a contradiction (which he discovers in the passage). Jonathan Edwards and Ezek. Hopkins, following many others with whom Westcott coincides, judge that the alleged impossibility of sinning relates to total character, or prevailing habit; the Christian may be surprised, overtaken, beguiled by sin, but fights against sin, does not consent to sin with his whole heart; "he does not wish sin." It has been added

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that as to his nature - renewed; as to the new life - life from the Spirit of God, - his divine sonship and sin are irreconcilable contraries. In part, these suggestions and definitions may meet the difficulty which the apostle, doubtless wishing to present a high ideal of the life of one born from above, leaves for practical solution by those who have passed from death to life. - J.H.M.]

[Love; beneficence. - Augustin throughout these homilies amply vindicates his own declaration that the epistle on which he is

commenting relates largely to charity; and his glowing words not only exhibit love as one star in the constellation of Christian graces, but as a deep and joyous principle and centre of life, "a well of water" within, from which refreshing streams of beneficence will spontaneously gush forth. He controverts those in his day who taught that it was enough to have the truth, to possess right opinions, and that such need not be forward in sacrificing aught for the truth's sake, or to help their brethren. And in kindly reproof of such indolent and ignorant self seeking, he points the earnest believer to whom comes the lofty utterance of the apostle, lay down life, if need be, for your brother, and who shrinks from such a test, to a lower evidence of the Christ-like mind, within the reach of all, and from which all may go up higher - "help your brother in his necessity, relieve his wants; if not ready to do this for the brother before your eyes, how can you pretend love to the unseen Father and Friend?" As the apostle's reprehension of errorists in his day is applicable in refutation of many false opinions rife in our times, so his and Augustin's fervent commendation of the surpassing excellence of love, and the absolute need, for the believer, of uniformly and constantly manifesting it in act and life, can never be superfluous, can never grow old. Indifference as to doctrine, and careless coldness

with respect to the sufferings of others, against both of which St. John lifts up his voice, if not peculiar to our day and nation, are yet deplorable evils among us, demanding energetic and practical protests from those who love the truth and love man. - J.H.M.]

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Homily 6.

1 John 3:19-4:3

"And herein we know that we are of the truth, and assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart think ill of us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart think not ill of us, then have we confidence toward God. And whatever we ask, we shall receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do in His sight those things that please Him. And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment. And he who keeps His commandments shall dwell in Him, and He in him. And herein we know that He abides in us, by the Holy Spirit which He has given us. Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into this world. In this is known the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the antichrist, of whom you have heard that he should come; and even now already is he in this world."

1. If you remember, brethren, yesterday we closed our sermon at this

sentence, which without doubt was necessary and is necessary to abide in your heart, seeing it was the last you heard. "My little children, let us not love only in word and in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Then he goes on: "And herein we know that we are of the truth, and assure our hearts before Him." "For if our heart think ill of us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things." He had said, "Let us not love only in word and in tongue, but in work and in truth:" we are asked, In what work, or in what truth, is he known that loves God, or loves his brother? Above he had said up to what point charity is perfected: what the Lord says in the Gospel, "Greater love than this has no man, that one lay down his life for his friends," this same had the apostle also said: "As He laid down His life for us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." This is the perfection of charity, and greater can not at all be found. But because it is not perfect in all, and that man ought not to despair in whom it is not perfect, if that be

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already born which may be perfected: and of course if born, it must be nourished, and by certain nourishments of its own must be brought to its proper perfection: therefore, we have asked concerning the commencement of charity, where it begins, and there have

straightway found: "But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother have need, and shuts up his heart of compassion from him, how dwells the love of the Father in him?" Here then has this charity, my brethren, its beginning: to give of one's superfluities to him that has need to him that is in any distress; of one's temporal abundance to deliver his brother from temporal tribulation. Here is the first rise of charity. This, being thus begun, if you shall nourish with the word of God and hope of the life to come, you will come at last to that perfection, that you shall be ready to lay down your life for your brethren.

2. But, because many such things are done by men who seek other objects, and who love not the brethren; let us come back to the testimony of conscience. How do we prove that many such things are done by men who love not the brethren? How many in heresies and schisms call themselves martyrs! They seem to themselves to lay down their lives for their brethren. If for the brethren they laid down their lives, they would not separate themselves from the whole brotherhood. Again, how many there are who for the sake of vainglory bestow much, give much, and seek therein but the praise of men and popular glory, which is full of windiness, and possesses no stability!

Seeing, then, there are such, where shall be the proof of brotherly charity? Seeing he wished it to be proved, and has said by way of admonition, "My little children, let us not love only in word and in tongue; but in deed and in truth;" we ask, in what work, in what truth? Can there be a more manifest work than to give to the poor? Many do this of vainglory, not of love. Can there be a greater work than to die for the brethren? This also, many would fain be thought to do, who do it of vainglory to get a name, not from bowels of love. It remains, that that man loves his brother, who before God, where God alone sees, assures his own heart, and questions his heart whether he does this indeed for love of the brethren; and his witness is that eye which penetrates the heart, where man cannot look. Therefore Paul the Apostle, because he was ready to die for the brethren, and said, "I will

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myself be spent for your souls," yet, because God only saw this in his heart, not the mortal men to whom he spake, he says to them, "But to me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or at man's bar." And the same apostle shows also in a certain place, that these things are oft done of empty vainglory, not upon the solid ground of love: for speaking of the praises of charity he says, "If I distribute all

my goods to the poor, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not charity, it profits me nothing." Is it possible for a man to do this without charity? It is. For those who have divided unity, are persons that have not charity. Seek there, and you shall see many giving much to the poor; shall see others prepared to welcome death, insomuch that where there is no persecutor they cast themselves headlong: these doubtless without charity do this. Let us come back then to conscience, of which the apostle says: "For our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience." Let us come back to conscience, of which the same says, "But let each prove his own work, and then he shall have glorying in himself and not in another." Therefore, let each one of us "prove his own work," whether it flow forth from the vein of charity, whether it is from charity as the root that his good works sprout forth as branches. "But let each prove his own work, and then he shall have glorying in himself and not in another," not when another's tongue bears witness to him, but when his own conscience bears it.

3. This it is then that he enforces here. "In this we know that we are of the truth, when in deed and in truth" we love, "not only in words and in tongue: and assure our heart before Him." What means, "before

Him?" Where He sees. Whence the Lord Himself in the Gospel says: "Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: otherwise you have no reward with your Father which is in heaven." And what means, "Let not your left hand know what your right hand does:" except that the right hand means a pure conscience, the left hand the lust of the world? Many through lust of the world do many wonderful things: the left hand works, not the right. The right hand ought to work, and without knowledge of the left hand, so that lust of the world may not even mix itself therewith when by love we work aught that is good. And where do we get to know this? You are before God: question your heart, see what you have done, and what

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therein was your aim; your salvation, or the windy praise of men. Look within, for man cannot judge whom he cannot see. If "we assure our heart," let it be "before Him." Because "if our heart think ill of us," i.e. accuse us within, that we do not the thing with that mind it ought to be done withal, "greater is God than our heart, and knows all things." You hide your heart from man: hide it from God if you can! How shall you hide it from Him, to whom it is said by a sinner, fearing and confessing, "Whither shall I go from Your Spirit? and from Your face

whither shall I flee?" He sought a way to flee, to escape the judgment of God, and found none. For where is God not? "If I shall ascend," says he, "into heaven, You are there: if I shall descend into hell, You are there." Whither will you go? whither will you flee? Wilt you hear counsel? If you would flee from Him, flee to Him. Flee to Him by confessing, not from Him by hiding: hide you can not, but confess you can. Say to Him, " You are my place to flee to;" and let love be nourished in you, which alone leads to life. Let your conscience bear you witness that your love is of God. If it is of God, do not wish to display it before men; because neither men's praises lift you to heaven, nor their censures put you down from thence. Let Him see, who crowns you: be He your witness, by whom as judge you are crowned. "Greater is God than our heart, and knows all things."

4. "Beloved, if our heart think not ill of us, we have confidence towards God:" - What means, "If our heart think not ill"? If it make true answer to us, that we love and that there is genuine love in us: not feigned but sincere; seeking a brother's salvation, expecting no emolument from a brother, but only his salvation - "we have confidence toward God: and whatever we ask, we shall receive of Him, because we keep His commandments." - Therefore, not in the sight of men, but where God

Himself sees, in the heart - "we have confidence," then, "towards God: and whatever we ask, we shall receive of Him:" howbeit, because we keep His commandments. What are "His commandments"? Must we be always repeating? "A new commandment give I to you, that you love one another." It is charity itself that he speaks of, it is this that he enforces. Whoso then shall have brotherly charity, and have it before God, where God sees, and his heart being interrogated under righteous examination make him none other answer than that the genuine root of charity is there for good fruits to come from; that man

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has confidence with God, and whatever he shall ask, he shall receive of Him, because he keeps His commandments.

5. Here a question meets us: for it is not this or that man, or you or I that come in question, - for if I have asked any thing of God and receive it not, any person may easily say of me, "He has not charity:" and of any man soever of this present time, this may easily be said; and let any think what he will, a man of man: - not we, but those come more in question, those men of whom it is on all hands known that they were saints when they wrote, and that they are now with God. Where is the man that has charity, if Paul had it not, who said, "Our mouth is

open to you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged; you are not straitened in us:" who said, "I will myself be spent for your souls:" and so great grace was in him, that it was manifested that he had charity. And yet we find that he asked and did not receive. What say we, brethren? It is a question: look attentively to God: it is a great question, this also. Just as, where it was said of sin, "He who is born of God sins not:" we found this sin to be the violating of charity, and that this was the thing strictly intended in that place: so too we ask now what it is that he would say. For if you look but to the words, it seems plain: if you take the examples into the account, it is obscure. Than the words here nothing can be plainer. "And whatever we ask, we shall receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." "Whatever we ask," says he, "we shall receive of Him." He has put us sorely to straits. In the other place also he would put us to straits, if he meant all sin: but then we found room to expound it in this, that he meant it of a certain sin, not of all sin; but of a sin which "whoever is born of God commits not:" and we found that this same sin is none other than the violation of charity. We have also a manifest example from the Gospel, when the Lord says, "If I had not come, they had not had sin." How? Were the Jews innocent

when He came to them, because He so speaks? Then if He had not come, would they have had no sin? Then did the Physician's presence make one sick, not take away the fever? What madman even would say this? He came not but to cure and heal the sick. Therefore when He said, "If I had not come, they had not had sin," what would He have to be understood, but a certain sin in particular? For there was a sin which the Jews would not have had. What sin? That they believed not

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on Him, that when he had come they despised Him. As then He there said "sin," and it does not follow that we are to understand all sin, but a certain sin: so here also not all sin, lest it is contrary to that place where he says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:" but a certain sin in particular, that is, the violation of charity. But in this place he has bound us more tightly: "If we shall ask," he has said, "if our heart accuse us not, and tell us in answer, in the sight of God, that true love is in us;" "Whatever we ask, we shall receive of Him."

6. Well now: I have already told you, my, beloved brethren, let no man turn toward us. For what are we? or what are you? What, but the Church of God which is known to all? And, if it please Him, in that

Church are we; and those of us who by love abide in it, there let us persevere, if we would show the love we have. But then the apostle Paul, what evil are we to think of him? He not love the brethren! He not have within himself the testimony of his conscience in the sight of God! Paul not have within him that root of charity whence all good fruits proceeded! What madman would say this? Well then: where find we that the apostle asked and did not receive? He says himself: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me. For which thing I besought the Lord thrice, that He would take it from me. And He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you: for strength is made perfect in weakness." Lo, he was not heard in his prayer that the "angel of Satan" should be taken from him. But why? Because it was not good for him. He was heard, then, for salvation, when he was not heard according to his wish. Know, my beloved, a great mystery: which we urge upon your consideration on purpose that it may not slip from you in your temptations. The saints are in all things heard to salvation: they are always heard in that which respects their eternal salvation; it is this that they desire: because in regard of this, their prayers are always heard.

7. But let us distinguish God's different ways of hearing prayer. For we find some not heard for their wish, heard for salvation: and again some we find heard for their wish, not heard for salvation. Mark this difference, hold fast this example of a man not heard for his wish but

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heard for salvation. Hear the apostle Paul; for what is the hearing of prayer to salvation, God Himself showed him: "Sufficient for you," says He, "is my grace; for strength is perfected in weakness." You have besought, have cried, have thrice cried: the very cry you raised once for all I heard, I turned not away my ears from you; I know what I should do: you would have it taken away, the healing thing by which you are burned; I know the infirmity by which you are burdened. Well then: here is a man who was heard for salvation, while as to his will he was not heard. Where find we persons heard for their will, not heard for salvation? Do we find, think we, some wicked, some impious man, heard of God for his will, not heard for salvation? If I put to you the instance of some man, perchance you will say to me, "It is you that call him wicked, for he was righteous; had he not been righteous, his prayer would not have been heard by God." The instance I am about to allege is of one, of whose iniquity and impiety none can doubt. The

devil himself: he asked for Job, and received. Have you not here also heard concerning the devil, that "he who commits sin is of the devil"? Not that the devil created, but that the sinner imitates. Is it not said of him, "He stood not in the truth"? Is not even he "that old serpent," who, through the woman pledged the first man in the drink of poison? Who even in the case of Job, kept for him his wife, that by her the husband might be, not comforted, but tempted? The devil asked for a holy man, to tempt him; and he received: the apostle asked that the thorn in the flesh might be taken from him, and he received not. But the apostle was more heard than the devil. For the apostle was heard for salvation, though not for his wish: the devil was heard for his wish, but for damnation. For that Job was yielded up to him to be tempted, was in order that by his standing the proof the devil should be tormented. But this, my brethren, we find not only in the Old Testament books, but also in the Gospel. The demons besought the Lord, when He expelled them from the man, that they might be permitted to go into the swine. Should the Lord not have power to tell them not to approach even those creatures? For, had it not been His will to permit this, they were not about to rebel against the King of heaven and earth. But with a view to a certain mystery, with a certain

ulterior meaning, He let the demons go into the swine: to show that the devil has dominion in those who lead the life of swine. Demons then were heard in their request; was the apostle not heard? Or rather
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(what is truer) shall we say, The apostle was heard, the demons not heard? Their will was effected; his weal was perfected.

8. Agreeably with this, we ought to understand that God, though He give not to our will, does give for our salvation. For suppose the thing you have asked be to your hurt, and the Physician knows that it is to your hurt; what then? It is not to be said that the physician does not give ear to you, when, perhaps, you ask for cold water, and if it is good for you, he gives it immediately, if not good, he gives it not. Had he no ears for your request, or rather, did he give ear for your weal, even when he gainsaid your will? Then let there be in you charity, my brethren; let it be in you, and then set your minds at rest: even when the thing you ask for is not given you, your prayer is granted, only, you know it not. Many have been given into their own hands, to their own hurt: of whom the apostle says, "God gave them up to their own hearts' lusts." Some man has asked for a great sum of money; he has received, to his hurt. When he had it not, he had little to fear; no

sooner did he come to have it, than he became a prey to the more powerful. Was not that man's request granted to his own hurt, who would needs have that for which he should be sought after by the robber, whereas, being poor, none sought after him? Learn to beseech God that you may commit it to the Physician to do what He knows best. Confess the disease, let Him apply the means of healing. Only hold fast charity. For He will needs cut, will needs burn; what if you cry out, and are not spared for your crying under the cutting, under the burning and the tribulation, yet He knows how far the rottenness reaches. You would have Him even now take off His hands, and He considers only the deepness of the sore; He knows how far to go. He does not attend to you for your will, but he does attend to you for your healing. Be you sure, then, my brethren, that what the apostle says is true: "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered: for He makes intercession for the saints." How is it said, "The Spirit itself intercedes for the saints," but as meaning the charity which is wrought in you by the Spirit? For therefore says the same apostle: "The charity of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us." It is charity that groans, it is charity that

prays: against it He who gave it cannot shut His ears. Set your minds at

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rest: let charity ask, and the ears of God are there. Not that which you wish is done, but that is done which is advantageous. Therefore, "whatever we ask," says he, "we shall receive of Him," I have already said, If you understand it to mean, "for salvation," there is no question: if not for salvation, there is a question, and a great one, a question that makes you an accuser of the apostle Paul. "Whatever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do these things that are pleasing in His sight:" within, where He sees.

9. And what are those commandments? "This," says he, "is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another." You see that this is the commandment: you see that whoever does aught against this commandment, does the sin from which "every one who is born of God" is free. "As He gave us commandment:" that we love one another. "And he who keeps His commandment" - ye see that none other thing is bidden us than that we love one another - "And he who keeps His commandment shall abide in Him, and He in him." "And in this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He has given us. Is it not manifest that this is

what the Holy Ghost works in man, that there should be in him love and charity? Is it not manifest, as the Apostle Paul says, that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us"? For [our apostle] was speaking of charity, and was saying that we ought in the sight of God to interrogate our own heart. "But if our heart think not ill of us:" i.e. if it confess that from the love of our brother is done in us whatever is done in any good work. And then besides, in speaking of the commandment, he says this: "This is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment." "And he who does His commandment abides in Him, and He in him. In this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He has given us." If in truth you find that you have charity, you have the Spirit of God in order to understand: for a very necessary thing it is.

10. In the earliest times, "the Holy Ghost fell upon those who believed: and they spake with tongues," which they had not learned, "as the Spirit gave them utterance." These were signs adapted to the time. For it was necessary for there to be that betokening of the Holy Spirit in all

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tongues, to shew that the Gospel of God was to run through all

tongues over the whole earth. That thing was done for a betokening, and it passed away. In the laying on of hands now, that persons may receive the Holy Ghost, do we look that they should speak with tongues? Or when we laid the hand on these infants, did each one of you look to see whether they would speak with tongues, and, when he saw that they did not speak with tongues, was any of you so wrong-minded as to say, These have not received the Holy Ghost; for, had they received, they would speak with tongues as was the case in those times? If then the witness of the presence of the Holy Ghost is not now given through these miracles, by what is it given, by what does one get to know that he has received the Holy Ghost? Let him question his own heart. If he love his brother the Spirit of God dwells in him. Let him see, let him prove himself before the eyes of God, let him see whether there be in him the love of peace and unity, the love of the Church that is spread over the whole earth. Let him not rest only in his loving the brother whom he has before his eyes, for we have many brethren whom we do not see, and in the unity of the Spirit we are joined to them. What marvel that they are not with us? We are in one body, we have one Head, in heaven. Brethren, our two eyes do not see each other; as one may say, they do not know each other. But in the

charity of the bodily frame do they not know each other? For, to shew you that in the charity which knits them together they do know each other; when both eyes are open, the right may not rest on some object, on which the left shall not rest likewise. Direct the glance of the right eye without the other, if you can. Together they meet in one object, together they are directed to one object: their aim is one, their places diverse. If then all who with you love God have one aim with you, heed not that in the body you are separated in place; the eyesight of the heart you have alike fixed on the light of truth. Then if you would know that you have received the Spirit, question your heart: lest haply you have the sacrament, and have not the virtue of the sacrament. Question your heart. If love of your brethren be there, set your mind at rest. There cannot be love without the Spirit of God: since Paul cries, "The love of God is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us."

11. "Beloved, believe not every spirit." Because he had said, "In this we

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know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He has given us." But how this same Spirit is known, mark this: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they be from God." And who is he

that proves the spirits? A hard matter has he put to us, my brethren! It is well for us that he should tell us himself how we are to discern them. He is about to tell us: fear not: but first see; mark: see that hereby is expressed the very thing that vain heretics taunt us withal. Mark, see what he says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they be from God." The Holy Spirit is spoken of in the Gospel by the name of water; where the Lord "cried and said, If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink. He who believes on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." But the evangelist has expounded of what He said this: for he goes on to say, "But this spake He of the Spirit, which those who believed on Him should receive." Why did not the Lord baptize many? But what says he? "For the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." Then seeing those had baptism, and had not yet received the Holy Ghost, whom on the day of Pentecost the Lord sent from heaven, the glorifying of the Lord was first waited for, so that the Spirit might be given. Even before He was glorified, and before He sent the Spirit, He yet invited men to prepare themselves for the receiving of the water of which He said, "Whoever thirsts, let him come and drink;" and, "He who believes on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

What means, "Rivers of living water"? What is that water? Let no man ask me; ask the Gospel. "But this," says it, "He said of the Spirit, which they should receive that should believe on Him." Consequently, the water of the sacrament is one thing: another, the water which betokens the Spirit of God. The water of the sacrament is visible: the water of the Spirit invisible. That washes the body, and betokens that which is done in the soul. By this Spirit the soul itself is cleansed and fed. This is the Spirit of God, which heretics and all that cut themselves off from the Church, cannot have. And whoever do not openly cut themselves off, but by iniquity are cut off, and being within, whirl about as chaff and are not grain; these have not this Spirit. This Spirit is denoted by the Lord under the name of water: and we have heard from this epistle, "Believe not every spirit;" and those words of Solomon bear witness, "From strange water keep far." What means, "water"? Spirit. Does water always signify spirit? Not always: but in

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some places it signifies the Spirit, in some places it signifies baptism, in some places signifies peoples, in some places signifies counsel: thus you find it said in a certain place, "Counsel is a fountain of life to those who possess it." So then, in divers places of the Scriptures, the term

"water" signifies divers things. Now however by the term water you have heard the Holy Spirit spoken of, not by an interpretation of ours but by witness of the Gospel, where it says, "But this said He of the Spirit, which they should receive that should believe on Him." If then by the name of water is signified the Holy Spirit, and this epistle says to us, "Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they be of God;" let us understand that of this it is said, "From strange water keep far, and from a strange fountain drink not." What means, "From a strange fountain drink not"? A strange spirit believe not.

12. There remains then the test by which it is to be proved to be the Spirit of God. He has indeed set down a sign, and this, belike, difficult: let us see, however. We are to recur to that charity; it is that which teaches us, because it is the unction. However, what says he here? "Prove the spirits, whether they be from God: because many false prophets have gone out into this world." Now there are all heretics and all schismatics. How then am I to prove the spirit? He goes on: "In this is known the Spirit of God." Wake up the ears of your heart. We were at a loss; we were saying, Who knows? who discerns? Behold, he is about to tell the sign. "Hereby is known the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the antichrist, of whom you have heard that he should come; and even now already is he in this world." Our ears, so to say, are on the alert for discerning of the spirits; and we have been told something, such that thereby we discern not a whit the more. For what says he? "Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, is of God." Then is the spirit that is among the heretics, of God, seeing they "confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh"? Aye, here perchance they lift themselves up against us, and say: You have not the Spirit from God; but we confess "that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:" but the apostle here has said that those have not the Spirit of God, who confess not "that Jesus Christ came in the flesh." Ask the Arians: they confess "that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:" ask

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the Eunomians; they confess "that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:" ask the Macedonians; they confess "that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:" put the question to the Cataphryges; they confess "that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:" put it to the Novatians; they confess "that Jesus Christ came in the flesh." Then have all these heresies the Spirit of God? Are they then no false prophets? Is there then no deception there, no seduction there? Assuredly they are antichrists; for "they

went out from us, but were not of us."

13. What are we to do then? By what to discern them? Be very attentive; let us go together in heart, and knock. Charity herself keeps watch; for it is none other than she who shall knock, she also that shall open: anon you shall understand in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Already you have heard that it was said above, "Whoever denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, the same is an antichrist." There also we asked, Who denies? because neither do we deny, nor do those deny. And we found that some do in their deeds deny; and we brought testimony from the apostle, who says, "For they confess that they know God, but in their deeds deny Him." Thus then let us now also make the enquiry in the deeds not in the tongue. What is the spirit that is not from God? That "which denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." And what is the spirit that is from God? That "which confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." Who is he that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh? Now, brethren, to the mark! let us look to the works, not stop at the noise of the tongue. Let us ask why Christ came in the flesh, so we get at the persons who deny that He is come in the flesh. If you stop at tongues, why, you shall hear many a heresy confessing that Christ is come in the flesh: but the truth

convicts those men. Why came Christ in the flesh? Was He not God? Is it not written of Him, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God?" Was it not He who did feed angels, is it not He who does feed angels? Did He not in such sort come hither, that He departed not thence? Did He not in such sort ascend, that He forsook not us? Why then came He in the flesh? Because it was necessary for us to have the hope of resurrection shown to us. God He was, and in flesh He came; for God could not die, flesh could die; He came then in the flesh, that He might die for us. But how died He for us? "Greater charity than this has no man, that a man lay down his life

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for his friends." Charity therefore brought Him to the flesh. Whoever therefore has not charity denies that Christ is come in the flesh. Here then you now question all heretics. Did Christ come in the flesh? "He did come; this I believe, this I confess." Nay, this you deny. "How do I deny? You hear that I say it!" Nay, I convict you of denying it. You say with the voice, deny with the heart; say in words, deny in deeds.

"How," say you, "do I deny in deeds?" Because the end for which Christ came in the flesh, was, that He might die for us. He died for us, because therein He taught much charity. "Greater charity than this has no man,

that a man lay down his life for his friends." You have not charity, seeing you for your own honour divide unity. Therefore by this understand the spirit that is from God. Give the earthen vessels a tap, put them to the proof, whether haply they be cracked and give a dull sound: see whether they ring full and clear, see whether charity be there. You take yourself away from the unity of the whole earth, you divide the Church by schisms, you rend the Body of Christ. He came in the flesh, to gather in one, you make an outcry to scatter abroad. This then is the Spirit of God, which says that Jesus is come in the flesh, which says, not in tongue but in deeds, which says, not by making a noise but by loving. And that spirit is not of God, which denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; denies, here also, not in tongue but in life; not in words but in deeds. It is manifest therefore by what we may know the brethren. Many within are in a sort within; but none without except he is indeed without.

14. Nay, and that you may know that he has referred the matter to deeds, he says, "And every spirit which does away with Christ that He came in the flesh, is not of God." A doing away in deeds is meant. What has he shown you? "That denies:" in that he says, "does away" (or, "unmakes"). He came to gather in one, you come to unmake. You

would pull Christ's members asunder. How can it be said that you deny not that Christ is come in the flesh, who rend asunder the Church of God which He has gathered together? Therefore you go against Christ; you are an antichrist. Be you within, or be you without, you are an antichrist: only, when you are within, you are hidden; when you are without, you are made manifest. You unmake Jesus and deny that He came in the flesh; you are not of God. Therefore He says in the Gospel: "Whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall

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teach so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." What is this breaking? What this teaching? A breaking in the deeds and a teaching as it were in words. " You that preach men should not steal, do you steal?" Therefore he who steals breaks or undoes the commandment in his deed, and as it were teaches so: "he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven," i.e. in the Church of this present time. Of him it is said, "What they say do you; but what they do, that do not you. But he who shall do, and shall teach so, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." From this, that He has here said, fecerit, "shall do," while in opposition to this He has there said solverit, meaning non fecerit, "shall not do, and shall teach so" - to break, then, is, not to do - what

does He teach us, but that we should interrogate men's deeds, not take their words upon trust? The obscurity of the things compels us to speak much at length, chiefly that that which the Lord deigns to reveal may be brought within reach even of the brethren of slower understanding, because all were bought by the blood of Christ. And I am afraid the epistle itself will not be finished during these days as I promised: but as the Lord will, it is better to reserve the remainder, than to overload your hearts with too much food.

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Homily 7.

1 John 4:4-12

"Now are you of God, little children, and have overcome him: because greater is He who is in you, than he that is in this world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God: he who knows God hears us; he who is not of God hears not us. From this know we the spirit of truth, and [the spirit] of error. Dearly, beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one who loves is born of God, and knows God. He who loves not knows not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God in us, that God sent His only-begotten Son into this world, that we may live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the Atoner for our sins. Dearly beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man has seen God at any time."

1. So is this world to all the faithful seeking their own country, as was the desert to the people Israel. They wandered indeed as yet, and were seeking their own country: but with God for their guide they could not wander astray. Their way was God's bidding. For where they went about during forty years, the journey itself is made up of a very

few stations, and is known to all. They were retarded because they were in training, not because they were forsaken. That therefore which God promises us is ineffable sweetness and a good, as the Scripture says, and as you have often heard by us rehearsed, which "eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man." But by temporal labours we are exercised, and by temptations of this present life are trained. However, if you would not die of thirst in this wilderness, drink charity. It is the fountain which God has been pleased to place here that we faint not in the way: and we shall more abundantly drink thereof, when we are come to our own land. The Gospel has just been read; now to speak of the very words with which the lesson ended, what other thing heard you but concerning charity? For we have made an agreement with our God in prayer, that if we would that He should forgive us our sins, we also should forgive the sins which may have been committed against us. Now that which

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forgives is none other than charity. Take away charity from the heart; hatred possesses it, it knows not how to forgive. Let charity be there, and she fearlessly forgives, not being straitened. And this whole epistle which we have undertaken to expound to you, see whether it

commends ought else than this one thing, charity. Nor need we fear lest by much speaking thereof it come to be hateful. For what is there to love, if charity come to be hateful? It is by charity that other things come to be rightly loved; then how must itself be loved! Let not that then which ought never to depart from the heart, depart from the tongue.

2. "Now," says he, "are you little children of God, and have overcome him:" whom but Antichrist? For above he had said, "Whoever unmakes Jesus Christ and denies that He is come in the flesh is not of God." Now we expounded, if you remember, that all those who violate charity deny Jesus Christ to have come in the flesh. For Jesus had no need to come but because of charity: as indeed the charity we are commending is that which the Lord Himself commends in the Gospel, "Greater love than this can no man have, that a man lay down his life for his friends." How was it possible for the Son of God to lay down His life for us without putting on flesh in which He might die? Whoever therefore violates charity, let him say what he will with his tongue, his life denies that Christ is come in the flesh; and this is an antichrist, wherever he may be, wherever he have come in. But what says the apostle to them who are citizens of that country for which we sigh?

"You have overcome him." And whereby have they overcome?

"Because greater is He who is in you, than he that is in this world."

Lest they should attribute the victory to their own strength, and by arrogance of pride should be overcome, (for whoever the devil makes proud, he overcomes,) wishing them to keep humility, what says he?

"You have overcome him." Every man now, at hearing this saying, "You have overcome," lifts up the head, lifts up the neck, wishes himself to be praised. Do not extol yourself; see who it is that in you has overcome. Why have you overcome? "Because greater is He who is in you, than he that is in the world." Be humble, bear your Lord; the beast for Him to sit on. Good is it for you that He should rule, and He guide. For if you have not Him to sit on you, you may lift up the neck, may strike out the heels: but woe to you without a ruler, for this

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liberty sends you among the wild beasts to be devoured!

3. "These are of the world." Who? The antichrists. You have already heard who they be. And if you are not such, you know them, but whoever is such, knows not. "These are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them." Who are those who "speak of the world"? Mark who are against charity. Behold, you have

heard the Lord saying, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your trespasses. But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." It is the sentence of Truth: or if it is not Truth that speaks, gainsay it. If you are a Christian and believe Christ, He has said, "I am the truth." This sentence is true, is firm. Now hear men that "speak of the world." "And will you not avenge yourself? And will you let him say that he has done this to you? Nay: let him feel that he has to do with a man." Every day are such things said, Those who say such things, "of the world speak they, and the world hears them." None say such things but those that love the world, and by none are such things heard but by those who love the world. And you have heard that to love the world and neglect charity is to deny that Jesus came in the flesh. Or say if the Lord Himself in the flesh did that? if, being buffeted, He willed to be avenged? if, hanging on the cross, He did not say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"? But if He threatened not, who had power; why do you threaten, why are you inflated with anger, who are under power of another? He died because it was His will to die, yet He threatened not; you know not when you shall die, and do you threaten?

4. "We are of God." Let us see why; see whether it is for any other thing than charity. "We are of God: he who knows God hears us; he who is not of God hears not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and of error:" namely by this, that he who hears us has the spirit of truth; he who hears not us, has the spirit of error. Let us see what he advises, and let us choose rather to hear him advising in the spirit of truth, and not antichrists, not lovers of the world, not the world. If we are born of God, "beloved," he goes on - see above from what: "We are of God: he who knows God hears us; he who is not of God hears not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and of error:" aye, now, he makes us eagerly attentive: to be told that he who knows God, hears; but he who

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knows not, hears not; and that this is the discerning between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error: well then, let us see what he is about to advise; in what we must hear him - "Beloved, let us love one another." Why? because a man advises? "Because love is of God." Much has he commended love, in that he has said, "Is of God:" but he is going to say more; let us eagerly hear. At present he has said, "Love is of God; and every one who loves is born of God, and knows God. He who loves not knows not God." Why? "For God is love" [Love is God]. What more

could be said, brethren? If nothing were said in praise of love throughout the pages of this epistle, if nothing whatever throughout the other pages of the Scriptures, and this one only thing were all we were told by the voice of the Spirit of God, "For Love is God;" nothing more ought we to require.

5. Now see that to act against love is to act against God. Let no man say, "I sin against man when I do not love my brother, (mark it!) and sin against man is a thing to be taken easily; only let me not sin against God." How sin you not against God, when you sin against love? "Love is God." Do "we" say this? If we said, "Love is God," haply some one of you might be offended and say, What has he said? What meant he to say, that "Love is God"? God "gave" love, as a gift God bestowed love. "Love is of God: Love IS God." Look, here have you, brethren, the Scriptures of God: this epistle is canonical; throughout all nations it is recited, it is held by the authority of the whole earth, it has edified the whole earth. You are here told by the Spirit of God, "Love is God." Now if you dare, go against God, and refuse to love your brother!

6. In what sense then was it said a while ago, "Love is of God;" and now, "Love IS God?" For God is Father and Son and Holy Ghost: the Son, God of God, the Holy Ghost, God of God; and these three, one God, not three Gods. If the Son be God, and the Holy Ghost God, and that

person loves in whom dwells the Holy Ghost: therefore "Love is God;" but "IS God," because "Of God." For you have both in the epistle; both, "Love is of God," and, "Love is God." Of the Father alone the Scripture has it not to say, that He is "of God:" but when you hear that expression, "Of God," either the Son is meant, or the Holy Ghost.

Because while the apostle says, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us:" let us understand that

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He who subsists in love is the Holy Ghost. For it is even this Holy Spirit, whom the bad cannot receive, even He is that Fountain of which the Scripture says, "Let the fountain of your water be your own, and let no stranger partake with you." For all who love not God, are strangers, are antichrists. And though they come to the churches, they cannot be numbered among the children of God; not to them belongs that Fountain of life. To have baptism is possible even for a bad man; to have prophecy is possible even for a bad man. We find that king Saul had prophecy: he was persecuting holy David, yet was he filled with the spirit of prophecy, and began to prophesy. To receive the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord is possible even for a bad man: for of such it is said, "He who eats and drinks unworthily, eats

and drinks judgment to himself." To have the name of Christ is possible even for a bad man; i.e. even a bad man can be called a Christian: as they of whom it is said, "They polluted the name of their God." I say, to have all these sacraments is possible even for a bad man; but to have charity, and to be a bad man, is not possible. This then is the peculiar gift, this the "Fountain" that is singly one's "own." To drink of this the Spirit of God exhorts you, to drink of Himself the Spirit of God exhorts you.

7. "In this was manifested the love of God in us." Behold, in order that we may love God, we have exhortation. Could we love Him, unless He first loved us? If we were slow to love, let us not be slow to love in return. He first loved us; not even so do we love. He loved the unrighteous, but He did away the unrighteousness: He loved the unrighteous, but not to unrighteousness did He gather them together: He loved the sick, but He visited them to make them whole. "Love," then, "is God." "In this was manifested the love of God in us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we may live through Him." As the Lord Himself says: "Greater love than this can no man have, that a man lay down his life for his friends:" and there was proved the love of Christ towards us, in that He died for us: how is the

love of the Father towards us proved? In that He "sent His only Son" to die for us: so also the apostle Paul says: "He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not with Him also freely given us all things?" Behold the Father delivered up Christ; Judas delivered Him up; does it not seem as if the thing done were of
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the same sort? Judas is one who delivered up, [or, a traitor]: is God the Father that? God forbid! You say. I do not say it, but the apostle says, "He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." Both the Father delivered Him up, and He delivered up Himself. The same apostle says: "Who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me." If the Father delivered up the Son; and the Son delivered up Himself, what has Judas done? There was a delivering up by the Father; there was a delivering up by the Son; there was a delivering up by Judas: the thing done is the same, but what is it that distinguishes the Father delivering up the Son, the Son delivering up Himself, and Judas the disciple delivering up his Master? This: that the Father and the Son did it in love, but Judas did this in treacherous betrayal. You see that not what the man does is the thing to be considered; but with what mind and will he does it. We find God the Father in the same deed in which

we find Judas; the Father we bless, Judas we detest. Why do we bless the Father, and detest Judas? We bless charity, detest iniquity. How great a good was conferred upon mankind by the delivering up of Christ! Had Judas this in his thoughts, that therefore he delivered Him up? God had in His thoughts our salvation by which we were redeemed; Judas had in his thoughts the price for which he sold the Lord. The Son Himself had in His thoughts the price He gave for us, Judas in his the price he received to sell Him. The diverse intention therefore makes the things done diverse. Though the thing be one, yet if we measure it by the diverse intentions, we find the one a thing to be loved, the other to be condemned; the one we find a thing to be glorified, the other to be detested. Such is the force of charity. See that it alone discriminates, it alone distinguishes the doings of men.

8. This we have said in the case where the things done are similar. In the case where they are diverse, we find a man by charity made fierce; and by iniquity made winningly gentle. A father beats a boy, and a boy-stealer caresses. If you name the two things, blows and caresses, who would not choose the caresses, and decline the blows? If you mark the persons, it is charity that beats, iniquity that caresses. See what we are insisting upon; that the deeds of men are only discerned by the root of

charity. For many things may be done that have a good appearance, and yet proceed not from the root of charity. For thorns also have flowers: some actions truly seem rough, seem savage; howbeit they
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are done for discipline at the bidding of charity. Once for all, then, a short precept is given you: Love, and do what you will: whether you hold your peace, through love hold your peace; whether you cry out, through love cry out; whether you correct, through love correct; whether you spare, through love do you spare: let the root of love be within, of this root can nothing spring but what is good.

9. "In this is love - in this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into this world, that we may live through Him. - In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us:" we did not love Him first: for to this end loved He us, that we may love Him: "And sent His Son to be the Atoner for our sins: i.e. one who sacrifices. He sacrificed for our sins. Where did He find the sacrifice? Where did He find the victim which he would offer pure? Other He found none; His own self He offered. "Beloved, if God so loved us we ought also to love one another. Peter," says He, "do you love me?" And he said, "I love." "Feed my sheep."

10. "No man has seen God at any time:" He is a thing invisible; not with the eye but with the heart must He be sought. But just as if we wished to see the sun, we should purge the eye of the body; wishing to see God, let us purge the eye by which God can be seen. Where is this eye? Hear the Gospel: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." But let no man imagine God to himself according to the lust of his eyes. For so he makes to himself either a huge form, or a certain incalculable magnitude which, like the light which he sees with the bodily eyes, he makes extend through all directions; field after field of space he gives it all the bigness he can; or, he represents to himself like as it were an old man of venerable form. None of these things do you imagine. There is something you may imagine, if you would see God; "God is love." What sort of face has love? what form has it? what stature? what feet? what hands has it? no man can say. And yet it has feet, for these carry men to church: it has hands; for these reach forth to the poor: it has eyes; for thereby we consider the needy: "Blessed is the man," it is said, "who considers the needy and the poor." It has ears, of which the Lord says, "He who has ears to hear let him hear." These are not members distinct by place, but with the understanding he who has charity sees the whole at once. Inhabit, and you shall be

inhabited; dwell, and you shall be dwelt in. For how say you, my brethren? who loves what he does not see? Now why, when charity is praised, do you lift up your hands, make acclaim, praise? What have I shown you? What I produced, was it a gleam of colours? What I propounded, was it gold and silver? Have I dug out jewels from hid treasures? What of this sort have I shown to your eyes? Is my face changed while I speak? I am in the flesh; I am in the same form in which I came forth to you; you are in the same form in which you came hither: charity is praised, and you shout applause. Certainly you see nothing. But as it pleases you when you praise, so let it please you that you may keep it in your heart. For mark well what I say brethren; I exhort you all, as God enables me, to a great treasure. If there were shown you a beautiful little vase, embossed, inlaid with gold, curiously wrought, and it charmed your eyes, and drew towards it the eager desire of your heart, and you were pleased with the hand of the artificer, and the weight of the silver, and the splendour of the metal; would not each one of you say, "O, if I had that vase!" And to no purpose you would say it, for it would not rest with you to have it. Or if one should wish to have it, he might think of stealing it from

another's house. Charity is praised to you; if it please you, have it, possess it: no need that you should rob any man, no need that you should think of buying it; it is to be had freely, without cost. Take it, clasp it; there is nothing sweeter. If such it is when it is but spoken of, what must it be when one has it?

11. If any of you perchance wish to keep charity, brethren, above all things do not imagine it to be an abject and sluggish thing; nor that charity is to be preserved by a sort of gentleness, nay not gentleness, but tameness and listlessness. Not so is it preserved. Do not imagine that you then love your servant when you do not beat him, or that you then love your son when you give him not discipline, or that you then love your neighbour when you do not rebuke him: this is not charity, but mere feebleness. Let charity be fervent to correct, to amend: but if there be good manners, let them delight you; if bad, let them be amended, let them be corrected. Love not in the man his error, but the man: for the man God made, the error the man himself made. Love that which God made, love not that which the man himself made.

When you love that, you take away this: when you esteem that, you

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amend this. But even if you are severe at any time, let it be because of

love, for correction. For this cause was charity betokened by the Dove which descended upon the Lord. That likeness of a dove, the likeness in which came the Holy Ghost, by whom charity should be shed forth into us: wherefore was this? The dove has no gall: yet with beak and wings she fights for her young; hers is a fierceness without bitterness. And so does also a father; when he chastises his son, for discipline he chastises him. As I said, the kidnapper, in order that he may sell, inveigles the child with bitter endearments; a father, that he may correct, does without gall chastise. Be such to all men. See here, brethren, a great lesson, a great rule: each one of you has children, or wishes to have; or if he has altogether determined to have no children after the flesh, at least spiritually he desires to have children: - what father does not correct his son? what son does not his father discipline? And yet he seems to be fierce with him. It is the fierceness of love, the fierceness of charity: a sort of fierceness without gall after the manner of the dove, not of the raven. Whence it came into my mind, my brethren, to tell you, that those violators of charity are those who have made the schism: as they hate charity itself, so they hate also the dove. But the dove convicts them: it comes forth from heaven, the heavens open, and it abides on the head of the Lord. Why this?

That John may hear, "This is He who baptizes." Away, you robbers; away, you invaders of the possession of Christ! On your own possessions, where you will needs be lords, you have dared to fix the titles of the great Owner. He recognizes His own titles; He vindicates to Himself His own possession. He does not cancel the titles, but enters in and takes possession. So in one who comes to the Catholic Church, his baptism is not cancelled, that the title of the commander be not cancelled: but what is done in the Catholic Church? The title is acknowledged; the Owner enters in under His own titles, where the robber was entering in under titles not his own.

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Homily 8.

1 John 4:12-16

"If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love will be perfected in us. In this know we that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and are witnesses that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has to us. God is love; and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him."

1. Love is a sweet word, but sweeter the deed. To be always speaking of it, is not in our power: for we have many things to do, and divers businesses draw us different ways, so that our tongue has not leisure to be always speaking of love: as indeed our tongue could have nothing better to do. But though we may not always be speaking of it, we may always keep it. Just as it is with the Alleluia which we sing at this present time, are we always doing this? Not one hour, I do not say for the whole space of it, do we sing Alleluia, but barely during a few moments of one hour, and then give ourselves to something else. Now Alleluia, as you already know, means, Praise you the Lord. He who

praises God with his tongue, cannot be always doing this: he who by his life and conduct praises God, can be doing it always. Works of mercy, affections of charity, sanctity of piety, incorruptness of chastity, modesty of sobriety, these things are always to be practised: whether we are in public, or at home; whether before men, or in our chamber; whether speaking, or holding our peace; whether occupied upon something, or free from occupation: these are always to be kept, because all these virtues which I have named are within. But who is sufficient to name them all? There is as it were the army of an emperor seated within in your mind. For as an emperor by his army does what he will, so the Lord Jesus Christ, once beginning to dwell in our inner man, (i.e. in the mind through faith), uses these virtues as His ministers. And by these virtues which cannot be seen with eyes, and yet when they are named are praised - and they would not be praised except they were loved, not loved except they were seen; and

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if not loved except seen, they are seen with another eye, that is, with the inward beholding of the heart - by these invisible virtues, the members are visibly put in motion: the feet to walk, but whither? whither they are moved by the good will which as a soldier serves the

good emperor: the hands to work; but what? that which is bidden by charity which is inspired within by the Holy Ghost. The members then are seen when they are put in motion; He who orders them within is not seen: and who He is that orders them within is known almost alone to Him that orders, and to him who within is ordered.

2. For, brethren, you heard just now when the Gospel was read, at least if you had for it the ear not only of the body but also of the heart. What said it? "Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them." Did He mean to say this, that whatever good things we do, we should hide them from the eyes of men, and fear to be seen? If you fear spectators you will not have imitators: you ought therefore to be seen. But you must not do it to the end you may be seen. Not there should be the end of your joy, not there the goal of your rejoicing, that you should account yourself to have got the whole fruit of your good work, when you are seen and praised. This is nothing. Despise yourself when you are praised, let Him be praised in you who works by you. Therefore do not for your own praise work the good you do: but to the praise of Him from whom you have the power to do good. From your self you have the ill doing, from God you have the well doing. On the other hand, see perverse men, how preposterous

they are. What they do well, they will needs ascribe to themselves; if they do ill, they will needs accuse God. Reverse this distorted and preposterous proceeding, which puts the thing, as one may say, head downwards, which makes that undermost which is uppermost, and that upwards which is downwards. Do you want to make God undermost and yourself uppermost? You go headlong, not elevate yourself; for He is always above. What then? you well, and God ill? nay rather, say this, if you would speak more truly, I ill, He well; and what I do well from Him is the well-doing: for from myself whatever I do is ill. This confession strengthens the heart, and makes a firm foundation of love. For if we ought to hide our good works lest they be seen of men, what becomes of that sentence of the Lord in the sermon which He delivered on the mount? Where He said this, there He also said a

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little before, "Let your good works shine before men." And He did not stop there, did not there make an end, but added, "And glorify your Father which is in Heaven." And what says the apostle? "And I was unknown by face to the Churches of Judea which were in Christ: but they heard only, That he who persecuted us in times past, now preaches the faith which once he destroyed. And in me they glorified God." See how he also, in regard that he became so widely known did

not set the good in his own praise, but in the praise of God. And as for him, in his own person, that he was one who laid waste the Church, a persecutor, envious, malignant, it is himself that confesses this, not we that reproach him therewith. Paul loves to have his sins spoken of by us, that He may be glorified who healed such a disease. For it was the hand of the Physician that cut and healed the greatness of the sore.

That voice from heaven prostrated the persecutor, and raised up the preacher; killed Saul, and quickened Paul. For Saul was the persecutor of a holy man; thence had this man his name, when he persecuted the Christians: afterward of Saul he became Paul. What does the name Paulus mean? Little. Therefore when he was Saul, he was proud, lifted up; when he was Paul, he was lowly, little. Thus we say, I will see you "paulo post," i.e. after a little while. Hear that he was made little: "For I am the least of the apostles; and, To me the least of all saints," he says in another place. So was he among the apostles as the hem of the garment: but the Church of the Gentiles touched it, as did the woman which had the flux, and was made whole.

3. Then, brethren, this I would say, this I do say, this if I might I would not leave unsaid: Let there be in you now these works, now those, according to the time, according to the hours, according to the days.

Are you always to be speaking? always to keep silence? always to be refreshing the body? always to be fasting? always to be giving bread to the needy? always to be clothing the naked? always to be visiting the sick? always to be bringing into agreement those who disagree? always to be burying the dead? No: but now this, now that. These things are taken in hand, and they stop: but that which as emperor commands all the forces within neither has beginning nor ought to stop. Let charity within have no intermission: let the offices of charity be exhibited according to the time. Let "brotherly love" then, as it is written, let "brotherly love continue."

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4. But perchance it will have struck some of you all along, while we have been expounding to you this epistle of blessed John, why it is only "brotherly" love that he so emphatically commends. "He who loves his brother," says he: and, "a commandment is given us that we love one another." Again and again it is of brotherly love that he speaks: but the love of God, i.e. the love with which we ought to love God, he has not so constantly named; howbeit, he has not altogether left it unspoken. But concerning love of an enemy, almost throughout the epistle, he has said nothing. Although he vehemently preaches up

and commends charity to us, he does not tell us to love our enemies, but tells us to love our brethren. But just now, when the Gospel was read, we heard, "For if you love those who love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans this?" How is it then that John the apostle, as the thing of great concern to us in order to a certain perfection, commends brotherly love; whereas the Lord says it is not enough that we love our brethren, but that we ought to extend that love so that we may reach even to enemies? He who reaches even to enemies does not overleap the brethren. It must needs, like fire, first seize upon what is nearest, and so extend to what is further off. A brother is nearer to you than any chance person. Again, that person has more hold upon you whom you know not, who yet is not against you, than an enemy who is also against you. Extend your love to those who are nearest, yet do not call this an extending: for it is almost loving yourself, to love those who are close to you. Extend it to the unknown, who have done you no ill. Pass even them: reach on to love your enemies. This at least the Lord commands. Why has the apostle here said nothing about loving an enemy.

5. All love, whether that which is called carnal, which is wont to be called not "dilectio" but "amor:" (for the word "dilectio" is wont to be used of better objects, and to be understood of better objects:) yet all

love, dear brethren, has in it a wishing well to those who are loved. For we ought not so to love, nor are we able so to love, (whether "diligere" or "amare:" for this latter word the Lord used when He said, "Petra, amas me?" "Peter, do you love me?") we ought not so to love men, as we hear gluttons say, I love thrushes. You ask why he loves them? That he may kill, that he may consume. He says he loves, and to this end loves he them, that they may cease to be; to this end loves he

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them, that he may make away with them. And whatever we love in the way of food, to this end love we it, that it may be consumed and we recruited. Are men to be so loved as to be consumed? But there is a certain friendliness of well wishing, by which we desire at some time or other to do good to those whom we love. How if there be no good that we can do? The benevolence, the wishing well, of itself suffices him that loves. For we ought not to wish men to be wretched, that we may be enabled to practise works of mercy. You give bread to the hungry: but better it were that none hungered, and you had none to give to. You clothe the naked: oh that all were clothed, and this need existed not! You bury the dead: oh that it were come at last, that life where none shall die! You reconcile the quarrelling: oh that it were

here at last, that eternal peace of Jerusalem, where none shall disagree! For all these are offices done to necessities. Take away the wretched; there will be an end to works of mercy. The works of mercy will be at an end: shall the ardour of charity be quenched? With a truer touch of love you love the happy man, to whom there is no good office you can do; purer will that love be, and far more unalloyed. For if you have done a kindness to the wretched, perchance you desire to lift up yourself over against him, and wish him to be subject to you, who have done the kindness to him. He was in need, you bestowed; you seem to yourself greater because you bestowed, than he upon whom it was bestowed. Wish him your equal, that you both may be under the One Lord, on whom nothing can be bestowed.

6. For in this the proud soul has passed bounds, and, in a manner, become avaricious. For, "The root of all evils is avarice;" and again it is said, "The beginning of all sin is pride." And we ask, it may be, how these two sentences agree: "The root of all evils is avarice;" and, "The beginning of all sin is pride." If pride is the beginning of all sin, then is pride the root of all evils. Now certainly, "the root of all evils is avarice." We find that in pride there is also avarice, (or grasping;) for man has passed bounds: and what is it to be avaricious to go beyond

that which sufficeth. Adam fell by pride: "the beginning of all sin is pride," says it: did he fall by grasping? What more grasping, than he whom God could not suffice? In fact, my brethren, we read how man was made after the image and likeness of God: and what said God of him? "And let him have power over the fishes of the sea, and over the
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fowl of the heaven, and over all cattle which move upon the earth." Said He, Have power over men? "Have power," says He: He has given him natural power: "have power" over what? "over the fishes of the sea, the fowl of the heaven, and all moving things which move upon the earth." Why is this power over these things a natural power? Because man has the power from this; that he was made after the image of God. And in what was he made after God's image? In the intellect, in the mind, in the inner man; in that he understands truth, distinguishes between right and wrong, knows by whom he was made, is able to understand his Creator, to praise his Creator: he has this intelligence, who has prudence. Therefore when many by evil lusts wore out in themselves the image of God, and by perversity of their manners extinguished the very flame, so to say, of intelligence, the Scripture cried aloud to them, "Become not as the horse and mule

which have no understanding." That is to say, I have set you above the horse and mule; you, I made after my image, I have given you power over these. Why? Because they have not the rational mind: but you by the rational mind are capable of truth, understand what is above you: be subject to Him that is above you, and beneath you shall those things be over which you was set. But because by sin man deserted Him whom he ought to be under, he is made subject to the things which he ought to be above.

7. Mark what I say: God, man, beasts: to wit, above you, God; beneath you, the beasts. Acknowledge Him that is above you, that those that are beneath you may acknowledge you. Thus, because Daniel acknowledged God above him, the lions acknowledged him above them. But if you acknowledge not Him that is above you, you despise your superior, you become subject to your inferior. Accordingly, how was the pride of the Egyptians quelled? By the means of frogs and flies. God might have sent lions: but a great man may be scared by a lion. The prouder they were, the more by the means of things contemptible and feeble was their wicked neck broken. But Daniel, lions acknowledge, because he was subject to God. What the martyrs who were cast to the wild beasts to fight with them, and were torn by

the teeth of savage creatures, were they not under God? or were those three men servants of God, and the Maccabees not servants of God? The fire acknowledged as God's servants the three men, whom it

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burned not, neither hurt their garments; and did it not acknowledge the Maccabees? It acknowledged the Maccabees; it did, my brethren, acknowledge them also. But there was need of a scourge, by the Lord's permission: He has said in Scripture, "He scourges every son whom He receives." For think you, my brethren, the iron would have pierced into the vitals of the Lord unless He had permitted it, or that He would have hung fastened to the tree, unless it had been His will? Did not His own creature acknowledge Him? Or did He set an ensample of patience to His faithful ones? You see then, God delivered some visibly, some He delivered not visibly: yet all He spiritually delivered, spiritually deserted none. Visibly He seemed to have deserted some, some He seemed to have rescued. Therefore rescued He some, that you may not think that He had not power to rescue. He has given proof that He has the power, to the end that where he does it not, you may understand a more secret will, not surmise difficulty of doing. But what, brethren? When we shall have come out of all these snares of

mortality, when the times of temptation shall have passed away, when the river of this world shall have fled by, and we shall have received again that "first robe," that immortality which by sinning we have lost, "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption," that is, this flesh shall have put on incorruption, "and this mortal shall have put on immortality;" the now perfected sons of God, in whom is no more need to be tempted, neither to be scourged, shall all creatures acknowledge: subjected to us shall all things be, if we here be subjected to God.

8. So then ought the Christian to be, that he glory not over other "men." For God has given it you to be over the beasts, i.e. to be better than the beasts. This have you by nature; you shall always be better than a beast. If you wish to be better than another man, you will begrudge him when you shall see him to be your equal. You ought to wish all men to be your equals; and if by wisdom you surpass any, you ought to wish that he also may be wise. As long as he is slow, he learns from you; as long as he is untaught, he has need of you; and you are seen to be the teacher, he the learner; therefore you seem to be the superior, because you are the teacher; he the inferior, because the learner. Except you wish him your equal, you wish to have him always

a learner. But if you wish to have him always a learner, you will be an

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envious teacher. If an envious teacher, how will you be a teacher? I pray you, do not teach him your envy. Hear the apostle speaking of the bowels of charity: "I would that all were even as I." In what sense did he wish all to be his equals? In this was he superior to all, that by charity he wished all to be his equals. I say then, man has past bounds; he would needs be greedy of more than his due, would be above men, he who was made above the beasts: and this is pride.

9. And see what great works pride does. Lay it up in your hearts, how much alike, how much as it were upon a par, are the works it does, and the works of charity. Charity feeds the hungry, and so does pride: charity, that God may be praised; pride, that itself may be praised. Charity clothes the naked, so does pride: charity fasts, so does pride: charity buries the dead, so does pride. All good works which charity wishes to do, and does; pride, on the other hand, drives at the same, and, so to say, keeps her horses up to the mark. But charity is between her and it, and leaves not place for ill-driven pride; not ill-driving, but ill-driven. Woe to the man whose charioteer is pride, for he must needs go headlong! But that, in the good that is done, it may not be

pride that sets us on, who knows? who sees it? where is it? the works we see: mercy feeds, pride also feeds; mercy takes in the stranger, pride also takes in the stranger; mercy intercedes for the poor, pride also intercedes. How is this? In the works we see no difference. I dare to say somewhat, but not I; Paul has said it: charity dies, that is, a man having charity confesses the name of Christ, suffers martyrdom: pride also confesses, suffers also martyrdom. The one has charity, the other has not charity. But let him that has not charity hear from the apostle: "If I distribute all my goods to the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing." So then the divine Scripture calls us off from the display of the face outwardly to that which is within; from this surface which is vaunted before men, it calls us off to that which is within. Return to your own conscience, question it. Do not consider what blossoms outwardly, but what root there is in the ground. Is lust rooted there? A show there may be of good deeds, truly good works there cannot be. Is charity rooted there? Have no fear: nothing evil can come of that. The proud caresses, love is severe. The one clothes, the other smites. For the one clothes in order to please men, the other smites in order to correct by discipline. More

accepted is the blow of charity than the alms of pride. Come then within, brethren; and in all things, whatever you do, look to God your witness. See, if He sees, with what mind you do it. If your heart accuse you not that you do it for the sake of display, it is well: fear you not. But when you do good, fear not lest another see you. Fear you lest you do it to the end that you may be praised: let the other see it, that God may be praised. For if you hide it from the eyes of man, you hide it from the imitation of man, you withdraw from God His praise. Two are there to whom you do the alms: two hunger; one for bread, the other for righteousness. Between these two famishing souls: - as it is written, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled:" - between these two famishing persons you the doer of the good work are set; if charity does the work by occasion of the one, therein it has pity on both, it would succour both. For the one craves what he may eat, the other craves what he may imitate. You feed the one, give yourself as a pattern to the other; so have you given alms to both: the one you have caused to thank you for killing his hunger, the other you have made to imitate you by setting him an example.

10. Shew mercy then, as men of merciful hearts; because in loving

enemies also, you love brethren. Think not that John has given no precept concerning love of our enemy, because he has not ceased to speak of brotherly love. You love brethren. "How," say you, "do we love brethren?" I ask why you love an enemy. Why do you love him? That he may be whole in this life? what if it is not expedient for him? That he may be rich? what if by his very riches he shall be blinded? That he may marry a wife? what if he shall have a bitter life of it? That he may have children? what if they shall be bad? Uncertain therefore are these things which you seem to wish for your enemy, in that you love him; they are uncertain. Wish for him that he may have with you eternal life; wish for him that he may be your brother: when you love him, you love a brother. For you love in him not what he is, but what you wish that he may be. I once said to you, my beloved, if I mistake not: There is a log of timber lying in sight; a good workman has seen the log, not yet planed, just as it was hewn from the forest, he has taken a liking to it, he would make something out of it. For indeed he did not love it to this end that it should always remain thus. In his art he has seen what

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it shall be, not in his liking what it is; and his liking is for the thing he will make of it, not for the thing it is. So God loved us sinners. We say that God loved sinners: for He says, "Those who are whole need not

the Physician, but those who are sick." Did He love us sinners to the end we should still remain sinners? As timber from the wood our Carpenter saw us, and had in His thoughts the building He would make thereof, not the unwrought timber that it was. So too you see your enemy striving against you, raging, biting with words, exasperating with abuse, harassing with hatred: you have regard to this in him, that he is a man. You see all these things that are against you, that they were done by man; and you see in him that he was made by God. Now that he was made man, was God's doing: but that he hates you, is his doing; that he has ill-will at you, is his doing. And what say you in your mind? Lord, be merciful to him, forgive him his sins, strike terror into him, change him. You love not in him what he is, but what you wish him to be. Consequently, when you love an enemy, you love a brother. So, perfect love is the loving an enemy: which perfect love is in brotherly love. And let no man say that John the apostle has admonished us somewhat less, and the Lord Christ somewhat more. John has admonished us to love the brethren; Christ has admonished us to love even enemies. Mark to what end Christ has bidden you to love your enemies. That they may remain always enemies? If He bade it for this end, that they should remain enemies,

you hate, not love. Mark how He Himself loved, i.e. because He would not that they should be still the persecutors they were, He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Whom He willed to be forgiven, them He willed to be changed: whom He willed to be changed, of enemies He deigned to make brethren, and did in truth make them so. He was killed, was buried, rose again, ascended into heaven: sent the Holy Ghost to His disciples: they began with boldness to preach His name, they did miracles in the name of Him that was crucified and slain: those slayers of the Lord saw them; and they who in rage had shed His blood, by believing drank it.

11. These things have I said, brethren, and somewhat at length: yet because charity was to be more earnestly commended to you, beloved, in this way was it to be commended. For if there be no charity in you, we have said nothing. But if it is in you, we have as it were cast oil

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upon the flames. And in whom it was not, perchance by words it has been kindled. In one; that which was there has grown; in another, that has begun to be, which was not. To this end therefore have we said these things, that you are not slow to love your enemies. Does any man rage against you? he rages, you pray; he hates, you pity. It is the

fever of his soul that hates you: he will be whole, and will thank you. How do physicians love those who are sick? Is it the sick that they love? If they love them as sick, they wish them to be always sick. To this end love they the sick; not that they should still be sick, but that from being sick they should be made whole. And how much have they very often to suffer from the frenzied! What abusive language! Very often they are even struck by them. He attacks the fever, forgives the man. And what shall I say, brethren? does he love his enemy? Nay, he hates his enemy, the disease; for it is this that he hates, and loves the man by whom he is struck: he hates the fever. For by whom or by what is he struck? by the disease, by the sickness, by the fever. He takes away that which strives against him, that there may remain that from which he shall have thanks. So do the same. If your enemy hate you, and unjustly hate you; know that the lust of the world reigns in him, therefore he hates you. If you also hate him, you on the other hand render evil for evil. What does it, to render evil for evil? I wept for one sick man who hated you; now I bewail you, if you also hate. But he attacks your property; he takes from you I know not what things which you have on earth: therefore you hate him, because he puts you to straits on earth. Be not straitened, remove to heaven above; there

shall you have your heart where there is wide room, so that you may not be straitened in the hope of life eternal. Consider what the things are that he takes from you: not even them would he take from you, but by permission of Him who "scourges every son whom He receives." He, this same enemy of thine, is in a manner the instrument in the hands of God, by which you may be healed. If God knows it to be good for you that he should despoil you, He permits him; if He knows it to be good for you that you should receive blows, He permits him to smite you: by the means of Him He cares for you: wish you that he may be made whole.

12. "No man has seen God at any time." See, beloved: "If we love one another, God will dwell in us, and His love will be perfected in us."

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Begin to love; you shall be perfected. Have you begun to love? God has begun to dwell in you: love Him that has begun to dwell in you, that by more perfect indwelling He may make you perfect. "In this we know that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit." It is well: thanks be to God! We come to know that He dwells in us. And whence come we to know this very thing, to wit, that we do know that He dwells in us? Because John himself has said this:

"Because He has given us of His Spirit." Whence know we that He has given us of His Spirit? This very thing, that He has given you of His Spirit, whence come you to know it? Ask your own bowels: if they are full of charity, you have the Spirit of God. Whence know we that by this you know that the Spirit of God dwells in you? "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us."

13. "And we have seen, and are witnesses, that God has sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world." Set your minds at rest, you that are sick: such a Physician is come, and do you despair? Great were the diseases, incurable were the wounds, desperate was the sickness. Dost you note the greatness of your ill, and not note the omnipotence of the Physician? You are desperate, but He is omnipotent; Whose witnesses are these that first were healed, and that announce the Physician: yet even they are made whole in hope rather than in the reality. For so says the apostle: "For by hope we are saved." We have begun therefore to be made whole in faith: but our wholeness shall be perfected "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality." This is hope, not the reality. But he who rejoices in hope shall hold the reality also: whereas he who has not

the hope, shall not be able to attain to the reality.

14. "Whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God." Now we may say it in not many words; "Whoever shall confess;" not in word but in deed, not with tongue but with the life. For many confess in words, but in deeds deny: "And we have known and believed the love which God has in us." And again, by what have you come to know this? "Love is God." He has already said it above, behold he says it again. Love could not be more exceedingly commended to you than that it should be called God. Haply you were

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ready to despise a gift of God. And do you despise God? "Love is God: and he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God dwells in him." Each mutually inhabits the other; He who holds, and he who is holden. You dwell in God, but that you may be holden: God inhabits you, but that He may hold you, lest you fall. Lest haply you imagine that you become a house of God in such sort as your house supports your flesh: if the house in which you are withdraw itself from under you, you fall; but if you withdraw yourself, God falls not. When you forsake Him, He is none the less; when you have returned to Him, He is none the greater. You are healed, on Him you will bestow nothing; you are made clean,

you are new-made, you are set right: He is a medicine to the unhealthy, is a rule for the crooked, is light for the darkened, is a habitation for the deserted. All therefore is conferred on you: see you imagine not that ought is conferred upon God by your coming to Him: no, not so much as a slave. Shall God, forsooth, not have servants if you like not, if all like not? God needs not the servants, but the servants need God: therefore says the Psalm, "I have said to the Lord, you are my God." He is the true Lord. And what says it? "For of my goods You have no need." You need the good you have by your servant. Your servant needs the good he has by you, that you may feed him; you also need the good you have by your servant, that he may help you. You can not draw water for yourself, can not cook for yourself, can not run before your horse, can not tend your beast. You see that you need the good you have by your servant, you need his attendance. Therefore you are not a true lord, while you have need of an inferior. He is the true Lord, who seeks nothing from us; and woe to us if we seek not Him! He seeks nothing from us: yet He sought us, when we sought not Him. One sheep had strayed; He found it, He brought it back on His shoulders rejoicing. And was the sheep necessary for the Shepherd, and not rather the Shepherd necessary for the sheep? - The more I

love to speak of charity, the less willing am I that this epistle should be finished. None is more ardent in the commending of charity. Nothing more sweet is preached to you, nothing more wholesome drunk by you: but only thus if by godly living you confirm in you the gift of God. Be not ungrateful for His so great grace, who, though He had one Only Son, would not that He should be alone a Son; but, that He might have brethren, adopted to Him those who should with Him possess life eternal.

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1 John 4:15. [Life; "the Life eternal." - The Epistle begins and ends with Life, announced and promised (the word occurs thirteen times in the one hundred and ten verses). The intermediate presentation of Love, as the grand efflux from the inner, spiritual life, gives the main theme of St. John, and it is of this that Augustin delights to speak in these discourses. The life of an intelligent being is in conscious dependence on God. In the fullest sense, "in Him we live." Death and life are among the striking contrasts named in the epistle: "the death," "the life," - "the death that is truly death, the life that is truly life." This life is in Christ. He not only brings it and imparts it, but He is "our Life." The living and life-giving Christ is manifested in this epistle, and also the death that exists where there is no union, by love, to Him. The Life,

eternal (to distinguish it from the life that now is, the life bounded by sense and time), is not mere prolongation of existence. We must use sensuous images in order to apprehend the idea, but we are to remember that they are not realities in the spiritual order. The life which Christ gives, enabling men to have life in Him, cannot exist apart from Himself; His seal remains in them, and He abides in them. The "life eternal," while future as to its full realization, is present, is begun here and now. "He who believes on the Son has eternal life," and its possession is matter of actual knowledge to those who have this life; "we know that we abide in Him and He in us" (1 John 5:13). It is a life which unites heaven and earth, bringing into this stage of being "the powers of the world to come." A life that satisfies, while it enkindles desire and aspiration: it gives strength to bear present ills in the joyous and assured hope of "a life beyond life."] - J.H.M.

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Homily 9.

1 John 4:17-21

"Herein is love made perfect in us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has torment. He who fears is not made perfect in love. Let us love Him, because He first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he who loves not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he sees not? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loves God love his brother also."

1. You remember, beloved, that of the epistles of John the apostle the last past remains to be handled by us and expounded to you, as the Lord vouchsafes. Of this debt then we are mindful: and you ought to be mindful of your claim. For indeed this same charity, which in this epistle is chiefly and almost alone commended, at once makes us most faithful in paying our debts, and you most sweet in exacting your rights. I have said, most sweet in exacting, because where charity is not, he who exacts is bitter: but where charity is, both he who exacts is sweet, and he of whom it is exacted, although he undertakes some labour, yet charity makes the very labour to be almost no labour, and

light. Do we not see how, even in dumb and irrational animals, where the love is not spiritual but carnal and natural, with great affection the mother yields herself to her young ones when they will have the milk which is their right: and however impetuously the suckling rushes at the teats, yet that is better for the mother than that it should not suck nor exact that which of love is due? Often we see great calves driving their heads at the cow's udders with a force that almost lifts up the mother's body, yet does she not kick them off; nay, if the young one be not there to suck, the lowing of the dam calls for it to come to the teats. If then there be in us that spiritual charity of which the apostle says, "I became small in the midst of you even as a nurse cherishing her young ones;" we love you the more when you are exacting. We like not the sluggish, because for the languid ones we are afraid. We have been obliged, however, to intermit the continuous reading of this epistle, because of certain stated lessons coming between, which must

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needs be read on their holy days, and the same preached upon. Let us now come back to the order which was interrupted; and what remains, holy brethren, receive you with all attention. I know not whether charity could be more magnificently commended to us, than

that it should be said, "Charity is God." Brief praise, yet mighty praise: brief in utterance, mighty in meaning! How soon is it said, "Love is God!" This also is short: if you count it, it is one: if you weigh it, how great is it! "Love is God, and he who dwells," says he, "in love, dwells in God, and God dwells in him." Let God be your house, and you be a house of God; dwell in God, and let God dwell in you. God dwells in you, that He may hold you: you dwell in God, that you may not fall; for thus says the apostle of this same charity, "Charity never fails." How should He fall whom God holds?

2. "Herein is our love made perfect in us that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world." He tells how each may prove himself, what progress charity has made in him or rather what progress he has made in charity. For if charity is God, God is capable neither of proficiency nor of deficiency: that charity is said to be making proficiency in you, means only that you make proficiency in it. Ask therefore what proficiency you have made in charity, and what your heart will answer you, that you may know the measure of your profiting. For he has promised to show us in what we may know Him, and has said, "In this is love made perfect in us." Ask, in what? "That we have boldness in the day of judgment." Whoever

has boldness in the day of judgment, in that man is charity made perfect. What is it to have boldness in the day of judgment? Not to fear lest the day of judgment should come. There are men who do not believe in a day of judgment; these cannot have boldness in a day which they do not believe will come. Let us pass these: may God awaken them, that they may live; why speak we of the dead? They do not believe that there will be a day of judgment; they neither fear nor desire what they do not believe. Some man has begun to believe in a day of judgment: if he has begun to believe, he has also begun to fear. But because he fears as yet, because he has not yet boldness in the day of judgment, not yet is charity in that man made perfect. But for all that, is one to despair? In whom you see the beginning, why despair of the end? What beginning do I see? (say you.) That very fear. Hear the

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Scripture: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Well then, he has begun to fear the day of judgment: by fearing let him correct himself, let him watch against his enemies, i.e. his sins; let him begin to come to life again inwardly, and to mortify his members which are upon the earth, as the apostle says, "Mortify your members which are upon the earth." By the members upon earth he means

spiritual wickedness: for he goes on to expound it, "Covetousness, uncleanness," and the rest which he there follows out. Now in proportion as this man who has begun to fear the day of judgment, mortifies his members which are upon the earth, in that proportion the heavenly members rise up and are strengthened. But the heavenly members are all good works. As the heavenly members rise up, he begins to desire that which once he feared. Once he feared lest Christ should come and find in him the impious whom He must condemn; now he longs for Him to come, because He shall find the pious man whom He may crown. Having now begun to desire Christ's coming, the chaste soul which desires the embrace of the Bridegroom renounces the adulterer, becomes a virgin within by faith, hope, and charity. Now has the man boldness in the day of judgment: he fights not against himself when he prays, "Your kingdom come." For he who fears lest the kingdom of God should come, fears lest his prayer be heard. How can he be said to pray, who fears lest his prayer be heard? But he who prays with boldness of charity, wishes now that He may come. Of this same desire said one in the Psalm, "And you, Lord, how long? Turn, Lord, and deliver my soul." He groaned at being so put off. For there are men who with patience submit to die; but there are some perfect

who with patience endure to live. What do I mean? When a person still desires this life, that person, when the day of death comes, patiently endures death: he struggles against himself that he may follow the will of God, and in his mind desires that which God chooses, not what man's will chooses: from desire of the present life there comes a reluctance against death, but yet he takes to him patience and fortitude, that he may with an even mind meet death; he dies patiently. But when a man desires, as the apostle says, "to be dissolved and to be with Christ," that person, not patiently dies, but patiently lives, delightedly dies. See the apostle patiently living, i.e. how with patience he here, not loves life, but endures it. "To be dissolved," says he, "and to be with Christ, is far better: but to continue in the flesh is
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necessary for your sakes." Therefore, brethren, do your endeavour, settle it inwardly with yourselves to make this your concern, that you may desire the day of judgment. No otherwise is charity proved to be perfect, but only when one has begun to desire that day. But that man desires it, who has boldness in it, whose conscience feels no alarm in perfect and sincere charity.

3. "In this is His love perfected in us, that we may have boldness in the

day of judgment." Why shall we have boldness? "Because as He is are we also in this world." You have heard the ground of your boldness: "Because as He is," says the apostle, "are we also in this world." Does he not seem to have said something impossible? For is it possible for man to be as God? I have already expounded to you that "as" is not always said of equality, but is said of a certain resemblance. For how say you, As I have ears, so has my image? Is it quite so? and yet you say "so, as." If then we were made after God's image, why are we not so as God? Not to equality, but relatively to our measure. Whence then are we given boldness in the day of judgment? "Because as He is, are we also in this world." We must refer this to the same charity, and understand what is meant. The Lord in the Gospel says, "If you love those who love you, what reward shall you have? do not the publicans do this?" Then what would He have us do? "But I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you." If then He bids us love our enemies, whence brings He an example to set before us? From God Himself: for He says, "That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven." How does God this? He loves His enemies, "Who makes His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and rains upon the just and the unjust." If this then be the perfection to which

God invites us, that we love our enemies as He loved His; this is our boldness in the day of judgment, that "as He is, so are we also in this world:" because, as He loves His enemies in making His sun to rise upon good and bad, and in sending rain upon the just and unjust, so we, since we cannot bestow upon them sun and rain, bestow upon them our tears when we pray for them.

4. Now therefore concerning this same boldness, let us see what he says. Whence do we understand that charity is perfect? "There is no fear in charity." Then what say we of him that has begun to fear the

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day of judgment? If charity in him were perfect, he would not fear. For perfect charity would make perfect righteousness, and he would have nothing to fear: nay rather he would have something to desire; that iniquity may pass away, and God's kingdom come. So then, "there is no fear in charity." But in what charity? Not in charity begun: in what then? "But perfect charity," says he, "casts out fear." Then let fear make the beginning, because "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Fear, so to say, prepares a place for charity. But when once charity has begun to inhabit, the fear which prepared the place for it is cast out. For in proportion as this increases, that decreases: and the more this comes to be within, is the fear cast out. Greater charity, less

fear; less charity, greater fear. But if no fear, there is no way for charity to come in. As we see in sewing, the thread is introduced by means of the bristle; the bristle first enters, but except it come out the thread does not come into its place: so fear first occupies the mind, but the fear does not remain there, because it enters only in order to introduce charity. When once there is the sense of security in the mind, what joy have we both in this world and in the world to come! Even in this world, who shall hurt us, being full of charity? See how the apostle exults concerning this very charity: "Who shall separate us from the charity of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" And Peter says: "And who will harm you, if you are followers of that which is good? - There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has torment." The consciousness of sins torments the heart: justification has not yet taken place. There is that in it which itches, which pricks. Accordingly in the Psalm what says he concerning this same perfection of righteousness? " You have turned for me my mourning into joy: You have put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; to the end that my glory may sing to you, and that I be not pricked." What is this, "That I be not pricked?" That

there be not that which shall goad my conscience. Fear does goad: but fear not: charity enters in, and she heals the wound that fear inflicts.

The fear of God so wounds as does the leech's knife; it takes away the rottenness, and seems to make the wound greater. Behold, when the rottenness was in the body, the wound was less, but perilous: then comes the knife; the wound smarted less than it smarts now while the leech is cutting it. It smarts more while he is operating upon it than it

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would if it were not operated upon; it smarts more under the healing operation, but only that it may never smart when the healing is effected. Then let fear occupy your heart, that it may bring in charity; let the cicatrice succeed to the leech's knife. He is such a Healer, that the cicatrices do not even appear: only do you put yourself under His hand. For if you are without fear, you can not be justified. It is a sentence pronounced by the Scriptures; "For he who is without fear, cannot be justified." Needs then must fear first enter in, that by it charity may come. Fear is the healing operation: charity, the sound condition. "But he who fears is not made perfect in love." Why? "Because fear has torment;" just as the cutting of the surgeon's knife has torment.

5. But there is another sentence, which seems contrary to this if it have not one who understands. Namely, it is said in a certain place of the Psalms, "The fear of the Lord is chaste, enduring forever." He shows us an eternal fear, but a chaste. But if he there shows us an eternal fear, does this epistle perchance contradict him, when it says, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear?" Let us interrogate both utterances of God. One is the Spirit, though the books two, though the mouths two, though the tongues two. For this is said by the mouth of John, that by the mouth of David: but think not that the Spirit is more than one. If one breath fills two pipes [of the double-flute], cannot one Spirit fill two hearts, move two tongues? But if two pipes filled by one breathing sound in unison, can two tongues filled with the Spirit or Breathing of God make a dissonance? There is then a unison there, there is a harmony, only it requires one who can hear. Behold, this Spirit of God has breathed into and filled two hearts, has moved two tongues: and we have heard from the one tongue, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear;" we have heard from the other, "The fear of the Lord is chaste, enduring for ever." How is this? The notes seem to jar. Not so: rouse your ears: mark the melody. It is not without cause that in the one place there is added that word,

chaste, in the other it is not added: but because there is one fear which is called chaste, and there is another fear which is not called chaste.

Let us mark the difference between these two fears, and so understand the harmony of the flutes. How are we to understand, or how to distinguish? Mark, my beloved. There are men who fear God,

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lest they be cast into hell, lest haply they burn with the devil in everlasting fire. This is the fear which introduces charity: but it comes that it may depart. For if you as yet fear God because of punishments, not yet do you love Him whom you in such sort fear. You do not desire the good things, but are afraid of the evil things. Yet because you are afraid of the evil things, you correct yourself and begin to desire the good things. When once you have begun to desire the good, there shall be in you the chaste fear. What is the chaste fear? The fear lest you lose the good things themselves. Mark! It is one thing to fear God lest He cast you into hell with the devil, and another thing to fear God lest He forsake you. The fear by which you fear lest you are cast into hell with the devil, is not yet chaste; for it comes not from the love of God, but from the fear of punishment: but when you fear God lest His presence forsake you, you embrace Him, you long to enjoy God

Himself.

6. One cannot better explain the difference between these two fears, the one which charity casts out, the other chaste, which endures for ever, than by putting the case of two married women, one of whom, you may suppose, is willing to commit adultery, delights in wickedness, only fears lest she be condemned by her husband. She fears her husband: but because she yet loves wickedness, that is the reason why she fears her husband. To this woman, the presence of her husband is not grateful but burdensome; and if it chance she live wickedly, she fears her husband, lest he should come. Such are those who fear the coming of the day of judgment. Put the case that the other loves her husband, that she feels that she owes him chaste embraces, that she stains herself with no uncleanness of adultery; she wishes for the presence of her husband. And how are these two fears distinguished? The one woman fears, the other also fears. Question them: they seem to make one answer: question the one, Dost you fear your husband? she answers, I do. Question the other, whether she fears her husband; she answers, I do fear him. The voice is one, the mind diverse. Now then let them be questioned, Why? The one says, I fear my husband, lest he should come: the other says, I fear my

husband, lest he depart from me. The one says, I fear to be condemned: the other, I fear to be forsaken. Let the like have place in the mind of Christians, and you find a fear which love casts out, and

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another fear, chaste, enduring for ever.

7. Let us speak then first to these who fear God, just in the manner of that woman who delights in wickedness; namely, she fears her husband lest he condemn her; to such let us first speak. O soul, who fears God lest He condemn you, just as the woman fears, who delights in wickedness: fears her husband, lest she be condemned by her husband: as you are displeased at this woman, so be displeased at yourself. If perchance you have a wife, would you have your wife fear you thus, that she be not condemned by you? that delighting in wickedness, she should be repressed only by the weight of the fear of you, not by the condemnation of her iniquity? You would have her chaste, that she may love you, not that she may fear you. Show yourself such to God, as you would have your wife be to you. And if you have not yet a wife, and wish to have one, you would have her such. And yet what are we saying, brethren? That woman, whose fear of her husband is to be condemned by her husband, perhaps does not

commit adultery, lest by some means or other it come to her husband's knowledge, and he deprive her of this temporal light of life: now the husband can be deceived and kept in ignorance; for he is but human, as she is who can deceive him. She fears him, from whose eyes she can be hid: and do you not fear the face ever upon you of your Husband? "The countenance of the Lord is against those who do evil." She catches at her husband's absence, and haply is incited by the delight of adultery; and yet she says to herself, I will not do it: he indeed is absent, but it is hard to keep it from coming in some way to his knowledge. She restrains herself, lest it come to the knowledge of a mortal man, one who, it is also possible, may never know it, who, it is also possible, may be deceived, so that he shall esteem a bad woman to be good, esteem her to be chaste who is an adulteress: and do you not fear the eyes of Him whom no man can deceive? Do you not fear the presence of Him who cannot be turned away from you? Pray God to look upon you, and to turn His face away from your sins; "Turn away Your face from my sins." But whereby do you merit that He should turn away His face from your sins, if you turn not away your own face from your sins? For the same voice says in the Psalm: "For I acknowledge my iniquity, and my sin is ever before me."

Acknowledge, and He forgives.

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8. We have addressed that soul which has as yet the fear which endures not for ever, but which love shuts out and casts forth: let us address that also which has now the fear which is chaste, enduring for ever. Shall we find that soul, think you, that we may address it? think you, is it here in this congregation? is it, think you, here in this chancel? think you, is it here on earth? It cannot but be, only it is hidden. Now is the winter: within is the greenness in the root. Haply we may get at the ears of that soul. But wherever that soul is, oh that I could find it, and instead of its giving ear to me, might myself give ear to it! It should teach me something, rather than learn of me! A holy soul, a soul of fire, and longing for the kingdom of God: that soul, not I address, but God Himself addresses, and thus consoles while patiently it endures to live here on earth: " You would that I should even now come, and I know that you wish I should even now come: I know what you are, such that without fear you may wait for my advent; I know that is a trouble to you: but even longer wait, endure; I come, and come quickly." But to the loving soul the time moves slowly. Hear her singing, like a lily as she is from amid the thorns; hear her sighing and

saying, "I will sing, and will understand in a faultless way: when will you come to me?" But in a faultless way well may she not fear; because "perfect love casts out fear." And when He is come to her embrace, still she fears, but in the manner of one who feels secure. What does she fear? She will beware and take heed to herself against her own iniquity, that she sin not again: not lest she be cast into the fire, but lest she be forsaken by Him. And there shall be in in her - what? the "chaste fear, enduring for ever." We have heard the two flutes sounding in unison. That speaks of fear, and this speaks of fear: but that, of the fear with which the soul fears lest she be condemned; this, of the fear with which the soul fears lest she be forsaken. That is the fear which charity casts out: this, the fear that endures for ever.

9. "Let us love, because He first loved us." For how should we love, except He had first loved us? By loving we became friends: but He loved us as enemies, that we might be made friends. He first loved us, and gave us the gift of loving Him. We did not yet love Him: by loving we are made beautiful. If a man deformed and ill-featured love a beautiful woman, what shall he do? Or what shall a woman do, if,

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being deformed and ill-featured and black-complexioned, she love a

beautiful man? By loving can she become beautiful? Can he by loving become handsome? He loves a beautiful woman, and when he sees himself in a mirror, he is ashamed to lift up his face to her his lovely one of whom he is enamoured. What shall he do that he may be beautiful? Does he wait for good looks to come? Nay rather, by waiting old age is added to him, and makes him uglier. There is nothing then to do, there is no way to advise him, but only that he should restrain himself, and not presume to love unequally: or if perchance he does love her, and wishes to take her to wife, in her let him love chastity, not the face of flesh. But our soul, my brethren, is unlovely by reason of iniquity: by loving God it becomes lovely. What a love must that be that makes the lover beautiful! But God is always lovely, never unlovely, never changeable. Who is always lovely first loved us; and what were we when He loved us but foul and unlovely? But not to leave us foul; no, but to change us, and of unlovely make us lovely. How shall we become lovely? By loving Him who is always lovely. As the love increases in you, so the loveliness increases: for love is itself the beauty of the soul. "Let us love, because He first loved us." Hear the apostle Paul: "But God showed His love in us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us:" the just for the unjust, the beautiful for

the foul. How find we Jesus beautiful? " You are beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men; grace is poured upon your lips." Why so? Again see why it is that He is fair; "Beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men:" because "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." But in that He took flesh, He took upon Him, as it were, your foulness, i.e. your mortality, that He might adapt Himself to you, and become suited to you, and stir you up to the love of the beauteousness within. Where then in Scripture do we find Jesus uncomely and deformed, as we have found Him comely and "beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men?" where find we Him also deformed? Ask Esaias: "And we saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness." There now are two flutes which seem to make discordant sounds: howbeit one Spirit breathes into both. By this it is said, "Beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men:" by that it is said in Esaias, "We saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness." By one Spirit are both flutes filled, they make no dissonance. Turn not away your ears, apply the understanding. Let us

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ask the apostle Paul, and let him expound to us the unison of the two flutes. Let him sound to us the note, "Beauteous in loveliness

surpassing the sons of men. - Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Let him sound to us also the note, "We saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness. - He made Himself of no reputation, taking upon Him the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and in fashion found as man. He had no form nor comeliness," that He might give you form and comeliness. What form? what comeliness? The love which is in charity: that loving, you may run; running, may love. You are fair now: but stay not your regard upon yourself, lest you lose what you have received; let your regards terminate in Him by whom you were made fair. Be you fair only to the end He may love you. But direct your whole aim to Him, run you to Him, seek His embraces, fear to depart from Him; that there may be in you the chaste fear, which endures for ever. "Let us love, because He first loved us."

10. "If any man say, I love God." What God? Why do we love? "Because He first loved us," and gave us to love. He loved us ungodly, to make us godly; loved us unrighteous, to make us righteous; loved us sick, to make us whole. Ask each several man; let him tell you if he love God. He cries out, he confesses: I love, God knows. There is another question to be asked. "If any man say, I love God, and hates his brother,

he is a liar." By what prove you that he is a liar? Hear. "For he who loves not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he sees not?" What then? does he who loves a brother, love God also? He must of necessity love God, must of necessity love Him that is Love itself. Can one love his brother, and not love Love? Of necessity he must love Love. What then? because he loves Love, does it follow that he loves God? Certainly it does follow. In loving Love, he loves God. Or have you forgotten what you said a little while ago, "Love is God"? If "Love is God," whoever loves Love, loves God. Love then your brother, and feel yourself assured. You can not say, "I love my brother, but I do not love God." As you lie, if you say "I love God," when you love not your brother, so you are deceived when you say, I love my brother, if you think that you love not God. Of necessity must you who love your brother, love Love itself: but "Love is God:" therefore of necessity must he love God, whoever loves his brother. But if you love not the brother

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whom you see, how can you love God whom you see not? Why does he not see God? Because he has not Love itself. That he does not see God, is, because he has not love: that he has not love, is, because he loves not his brother. The reason then why he does not see God, is, that he

has not Love. For if he has Love, he sees God, for "Love is God:" and that eye is becoming more and more purged by love, to see that Unchangeable Substance, in the presence of which he shall always rejoice, which he shall enjoy to everlasting, when he is joined with the angels. Only, let him run now, that he may at last have gladness in his own country. Let him not love his pilgrimage, not love the way: let all be bitter save Him that calls us, until we hold Him fast, and say what is said in the Psalm: " You have destroyed all who go a-whoring from You" - and who are those who go a-whoring? those who go away and love the world: but what shall you do? he goes on and says: - "but for me it is good to cleave to God." All my good is, to cling to God, freely. For if you question him and say, For what do you cling to Him? and he should say, That He may give me - Give you what? It is He who made the heaven, He who made the earth: what shall He give you? Already you are cleaving to Him: find something better, and He shall give it you.

11. "For he who loves not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he sees not? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loves God love his brother also." Marvellous fine talk it was, that you said, "I love God," and hate your brother! O murderer,

how do you love God? Have you not heard above in this very epistle, "He who hates his brother is a murderer"? Yea, but I do verily love God, however I hate my brother. You do verily not love God, if you hate your brother. And now I make it good by another proof. This same apostle has said, "He gave us commandment that we should love one another." How can you be said to love Him whose commandment you hate? Who shall say, I love the emperor, but I hate his laws? In this the emperor understands whether you love him, that his laws be observed throughout the provinces. Our Emperor's law, what is it? "A new commandment give I to you, that you love one another." You say then, that you love Christ: keep His commandment, and love your brother. But if you love not your brother, how can you be said to love Him whose commandment you hate? Brethren, I am never satiated in

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speaking of charity in the name of the Lord. In what proportion you have an insatiable desire of this thing, in that proportion we hope the thing itself is growing in you, and casting out fear, that so there may remain that chaste fear which is for ever permanent. Let us endure the world, endure tribulations, endure the stumbling-blocks of temptations. Let us not depart from the way; let us hold the unity of

the Church, hold Christ, hold charity. Let us not be plucked away from the members of His Spouse, not be plucked away from faith, that we may glory in His coming: and we shall securely abide in Him, now by faith, then by sight, of whom we have so great earnest, even the gift of the Holy Spirit.

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Homily 10.

1 John 5:1-3

"Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one who loves Him that begat Him, loves Him also that is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, because we love God, and do His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."

1. I Suppose you remember, those of you who were present yesterday, to what place in the course of this epistle our exposition has reached: namely, "He who loves not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he sees not? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loves God, love his brother also." Thus far we discoursed. Let us see then what comes next in order. "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Who is he that believes not that Jesus is the Christ? He who does not so live as Christ commanded. For many say, "I believe:" but faith without works saves not. Now the work of faith is Love, as Paul the apostle says, "And faith which works by love." Your past works indeed, before you did believe, were either none, or if they seemed good, were nothing worth. For if they were none, you were as a man without feet, or with sore feet unable to

walk: but if they seemed good, before you believed, you ran indeed, but by running aside from the way you went astray instead of coming to the goal. It is for us, then, both to run, and to run in the way. He who runs aside from the way, runs to no purpose, or rather runs but to toil. He goes the more astray, the more he runs aside from the way. What is the way by which we run? Christ has told us, "I am the Way." What the home to which we run? "I am the Truth." By Him you run, to Him you run, in Him you run. But, that we might run by Him, He reached even to us: for we were afar off, foreigners in a far country. Not enough that we were in a far country, we were feeble also that we could not stir. A Physician, He came to the sick: a Way, He extended Himself to those who were in a far country. Let us be saved by Him, let us walk in Him. This it is to "believe that Jesus is the Christ," as Christians believe, who are not Christians only in name, but in deeds and in life, not as the devils believe. For "the devils also believe and tremble," as the

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Scripture tells us. What more could the devils believe, than that they should say, "We know who you are, the Son of God?" What the devils said, the same said Peter also. When the Lord asked them who He was, and whom did men say that He was, the disciples made answer to

Him, "Some say that you are John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He says to them, But whom say you that I am? And Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." And this he heard from the Lord: "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood has not revealed it to you, but my Father which is in heaven." See what praises follow this faith. " You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." What means, "Upon this rock I will build my Church"? Upon this faith; upon this that has been said, " You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Upon this rock," says He, "I will build my Church." Mighty praise! So then, Peter says, " You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God:" the devils also say, "We know who you are, the Son of God, the Holy One of God." This Peter said, this also the devils: the words the same, the mind not the same. And how is it clear that Peter said this with love? Because a Christian's faith is with love, but a devil's without love. How without love? Peter said this, that he might embrace Christ; the devils said it, that Christ might depart from them. For before they said, "We know who you are, the Son of God," they said, "What have we to do with you? Why are you come to destroy us before the time?" It is one thing then to confess Christ that you may hold Christ, another thing to

confess Christ that you may drive Christ from you. So then you see, that in the sense in which he here says, "Whoso believes," it is a faith of one's own, not as one has a faith in common with many. Therefore, brethren, let none of the heretics say to you, "We also believe." For to this end have I given you an instance from the case of devils, that you may not rejoice in the words of believing, but search well the deeds of the life.

2. Let us see then what it is to believe in Christ; what to believe that Jesus, He is the Christ. He proceeds: "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." But what is it to believe that? "And every one who loves Him that begat Him, loves Him also that is begotten of Him." To faith he has straightway joined love, because faith without love is nothing worth. With love, the faith of a Christian; without love,

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the faith of a devil: but those who believe not, are worse than devils, more stupid than devils. Some man will not believe in Christ: so far, he is not even upon a par with devils. A person does now believe in Christ, but hates Christ: he has the confession of faith in the fear of punishment, not in love of the crown: thus the devils also feared to be punished. Add to this faith love, that it may become a faith such as the

Apostle Paul speaks of, a "faith which works by love:" you have found a Christian, found a citizen of Jerusalem, found a fellow-citizen of the angels, found a pilgrim sighing in the way: join yourself to him, he is your fellow-traveller, run with him, if indeed you also are this. "Every one who loves Him that begat Him, loves Him also that is begotten of Him." Who "begat"? The Father. Who "is begotten"? The Son. What says he then? "Every one who loves the Father, loves the Son."

3. "In this we know that we love the sons of God." What is this, brethren? Just now he was speaking of the Son of God, not of sons of God: lo, here one Christ was set before us to contemplate, and we were told, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one who loves Him that begat," i.e. the Father, "loves Him also that is begotten of Him," i.e. the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. And he goes on: "In this we know that we love the sons of God;" as if he had been about to say, "In this we know that we love the Son of God." He has said, "the sons of God," whereas he was speaking just before of the Son of God - because the sons of God are the Body of the Only Son of God, and when He is the Head, we the members, it is one Son of God. Therefore, he who loves the sons of God, loves the Son of God, and he who loves the Son of God, loves the Father; nor can any love the Father

except he love the Son, and he who loves the sons, loves also the Son of God. What sons of God? The members of the Son of God. And by loving he becomes himself a member, and comes through love to be in the frame of the body of Christ, so there shall be one Christ, loving Himself. For when the members love one another, the body loves itself.

"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." And then he goes on to say, "Now you are the body of Christ, and members."

John was speaking just before of brotherly love, and said, "He who loves not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he sees not?" But if you love your brother, haply you love your brother

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and love not Christ? How should that be, when you love members of Christ? When therefore you love members of Christ, you love Christ; when you love Christ, you love the Son of God; when you love the Son of God, you love also the Father. The love therefore cannot be separated into parts. Choose what you will love; the rest follow you.

Suppose you say, I love God alone, God the Father. You lie: if you love, you love Him not alone; but if you love the Father, you love also the Son. Behold, say you, I love the Father, and I love the Son: but this only,

the Father God and the Son God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father, that Word by which all things were made, and "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us:" this alone I love. You lie; for if you love the Head, you love also the members; but if you love not the members, neither love you the Head. Dost you not quake at the voice uttered by the Head from Heaven on behalf of His members, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute ME?" The persecutor of His members He called His persecutor: His lover, the lover of His members. Now what are His members, you know, brethren: none other than the Church of God. "In this we know that we love the sons of God, in that we love God." And how? Are not the sons of God one thing, God Himself another? But he who loves God, loves His precepts. And what are the precepts of God? "A new commandment give I to you, that you love one another." Let none excuse himself by another love, for another love; so and so only is it with this love: as the love itself is compacted in one, so all that hang by it does it make one, and as fire melts them down into one. It is gold: the lump is molten and becomes some one thing. But unless the fervour of charity be applied, of many there can be no melting down into one. "That we love God," by this "we know that we love the sons of

God."

4. And by what do we know that we love the sons of God? By this, "that we love God, and do His commandments." We sigh here, by reason of the hardness of doing the commandments of God. Hear what follows.

O man, at what toil you in loving? In loving avarice. With toil is that loved which you love: there is no toil in loving God. Avarice will enjoin you labours, perils, sore hardships and tribulations; and you will do its bidding. To what end? That you may have that with which you shall fill your chest, and lose your peace of mind. You did feel yourself

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haply more secure before you had it, than since you did begin to have. See what avarice has enjoined you. You have filled your house, and are in dread of robbers; have gotten gold, lost your sleep. See what avarice has enjoined you. Do, and you did. What does God enjoin you! Love me. You love gold, you will seek gold, and perchance not find it: whoever seeks me, I am with him. You will love honour, and perchance not attain to it: who ever loved me, and did not attain? God says to you, you would make you a patron, or a powerful friend: you seek a way to his favour by means of another inferior. Love me, says God to you: favour with me is not had by making interest with some

other: your love itself makes me present to you. What sweeter than this love, brethren? It is not without reason that you heard just now in the Psalm, "The unrighteous told me of delights, but not as is Your law, O Lord." What is the Law of God? The commandment of God. What is the commandment of God? That "new commandment," which is called new because it makes new: "A new commandment give I to you, that you love one another." Hear because this is the law of God. The apostle says, "Bear one another's burdens, and so shall you fulfil the law of Christ." This, even this, is the consummation of all our works; Love. In it is the end: for this we run: to it we run; when we are come to it, we shall rest.

5. You have heard in the Psalm, "I have seen the end of all perfection." He has said, I have seen the end of all perfection: what had he seen? Think we, had he ascended to the peak of some very high and pointed mountain, and looked out thence and seen the compass of the earth, and the circles of the round world, and therefore said, "I have seen the end of all perfection"? If this be a thing to be praised, let us ask of the Lord eyes of the flesh so sharp-sighted, that we shall but require some exceeding high mountain on earth, that from its summit we may see the end of all perfection. Go not far: lo, I say to you, it is here; ascend

the mountain, and see the end. Christ is the Mountain; come to Christ: you see thence the end of all perfection. What is this end? Ask Paul: "But the end of the commandment is charity, from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned:" and in another place, "Charity is the fullness," or fulfilment, "of the law." What so finished and terminated as "fullness"? For, brethren, the apostle here uses end in a way of praise. Think not of consumption, but of consummation. For it

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is in one sense that one says, I have finished my bread, in another, I have finished my coat. I have finished the bread, by eating it: the coat, by making it. In both places the word is "end," "finish:" but the bread is finished by its being consumed, the coat is finished by being made: the bread, so as to be no more; the coat, so as to be complete.

Therefore in this sense take you also this word, end, when the Psalm is read and you hear it said, "On the end, a Psalm of David." You are for ever hearing this in the Psalms, and you should know what you hear.

What means, "On the end"? - "For Christ is the end of the law to every one who believes." And what means, "Christ is the end"? Because Christ is God, and "the end of the commandment is charity," and "Charity is God:" because Father and Son and Holy Ghost are One.

There is He the End to you; elsewhere He is the Way. Do not stick fast in the way, and so never come to the end. Whatever else you come to, pass beyond it, until you come to the end. What is the end? It is good for me to "hold fast in God." Have you laid fast hold on God? you have finished the way: you shall abide in your own country. Mark well!

Some man seeks money: let not it be the end to you: pass on, as a traveller in a strange land. But if you love it, you are entangled by avarice; avarice will be shackles to your feet: you can make no more progress. Pass therefore this also: seek the end. You seek health of the body: still do not stop there. For what is it, this health of the body, which death makes an end of, which sickness debilitates, a feeble, mortal, fleeting thing? Seek that, indeed, lest haply ill-health hinder your good works: but for that very reason, the end is not there, for it is sought in order to something else. Whatever is sought in order to something else, the end is not there: whatever is loved for its own sake, and freely, the end is there. You seek honours; perchance seek them in order to do something, that you may accomplish something, and so please God: love not the honour itself, lest you stop there. You seek praise? If you seek God's, you do well; if you seek your own, you do ill; you stop short in the way. But behold, you are loved, are praised:

think it not joy when in yourself you are praised; be praised in the Lord, that you may sing, "In the Lord shall my soul be praised." You deliver some good discourse, and your discourse is praised. Let it not be praised as yours, the end is not there. If you set the end there, there is an end of you: but an end, not that you be perfected, but that you be consumed. Then let not your discourse be praised as coming from

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you, as being thine. But how praised? As the Psalm says, "In God will I praise the discourse, in God will I praise the word." Hereby shall that which there follows come to pass in you: "In God have I hoped, I will not fear what man can do to me." For when all things that are your are praised in God, no fear lest your praise be lost, since God fails not.

Pass therefore this also.

6. See, brethren, how many things we pass, in which is not the end.

These we use as by the way; we take as it were our refreshment at the halting places on our journey, and pass on. Where then is the end?

"Beloved, we are sons of God, and it has not yet appeared what we shall be;" here is this said, in this epistle. As yet then, we are on the

way; as yet, wherever we come, we must pass on, until we attain to

some end. "We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him,

for we shall see Him as He is. That is the end; there perpetual praising, there Alleluia always without fail. This, then is the end he has spoken of in the Psalm: "I have seen the end of all perfection:" and as though it were said to him, What is the end you have seen? "Your commandment, exceeding broad." This is the end: the breadth of the commandment. The breadth of the commandment is charity, because where charity is, there are no straits. In this breadth, this wide room, was the apostle when he said, "Our mouth is open to you, O you Corinthians, our heart is enlarged: you are not straitened in us." In this, then, is "Your commandment exceeding broad." What is the broad commandment? "A new commandment give I to you, that you love one another." Charity, then, is not straitened. Would you not be straitened here on earth? Dwell in the broad room. For whatever man may do to you, he shall not straiten you; because you love that which man cannot hurt: love God, love the brotherhood, love the law of God, love the Church of God: it shall be for ever. You labour here on earth, but you shall come to the promised enjoyment. Who can take from you that which you love? If no man can take from you that which you love, secure you sleep: or rather secure you watch, lest by sleeping you lose that which you love. For not without reason is it said, "Enlighten my

eyes, lest at any time I sleep in death." Those who shut their eyes against charity, fall asleep in the lusts of carnal delights. Be wakeful, therefore. For then are the delights, to eat, to drink, to wanton in luxury, to play, to hunt; these vain pomps all evils follow. Are we

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ignorant that they are delights? who can deny that they delight? But more beloved is the law of God. Cry against such persuaders: "The unrighteous have told me of delights: but not so as is your law, O Lord." This delight remains. Not only remains as the goal to which you may come, but also calls you back when you stray.

7. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."

Already you have heard, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." See how He would not have you divide yourself over a multitude of pages: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." On what two commandments? " You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. And, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." See here of what commandments this whole epistle talks. Therefore hold fast love, and set your minds at rest. Why do you fear lest you do evil to

some man? Who does evil to the man he loves? Love: it is impossible to do this without doing good. Kindness does it, not fierceness. For discipline you do this; because your kindness of love will not let you leave him undisciplined. And indeed there come somehow these different and contrary results, that sometimes hatred uses winning ways, and charity shows itself fierce. A person hates his enemy, and feigns friendship for him: he sees him doing some evil, he praises him: he wishes him to go headlong, wishes him to go blind over the precipice of his lusts, haply never to return; he praises him, "For the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul;" he applies to him the unction of adulation; behold, he hates, and praises. Another sees his friend doing something of the same sort; he calls him back; if he will not hear, he uses words even of castigation, he scolds, he quarrels: there are times when it comes to this, that one must even quarrel! Behold, hatred shows itself winningly gentle, and charity quarrels! Stay not your regard upon the words of seeming kindness, or the seeming cruelty of the rebuke; look into the vein they come from; seek the root whence they proceed. The one is gentle and bland that he may deceive, the other quarrels that he may correct. Well then, it is not for us, brethren, to enlarge your heart: obtain from God the gift to

love one another. Love all men, even your enemies, not because they are your brethren, but that they may be your brethren; that you may

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be at all times on fire with brotherly love, whether toward him that is become your brother, or towards your enemy, so that, by being beloved, he may become your brother. Wherever you love a brother, you love a friend. Now is he with you, now is he knit to you in unity, yea catholic unity. If you are living aright, you love a brother made out of an enemy. But you love some man who has not yet believed Christ, or, if he has believed, believes as the devils: you rebuke his vanity. Love, with a brotherly love: he is not yet a brother, but you love to the end he may be a brother. Well then, all our love is a brotherly love, towards Christians, towards all His members. The discipline of charity, my brethren, its strength, flowers, fruit, beauty, pleasantness, food, drink, meat, embracing, has in it no satiety. If it so delight us while in a strange land, in our own country how shall we rejoice!

8. Let us run then, my brethren, let us run, and love Christ. What Christ? Jesus Christ. Who is He? The Word of God. And how came He to the sick? "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us." It is complete then, which the Scripture foretold, "Christ must suffer, and rise again

the third day from the dead." His body, where is it? His members, where toil they? Where must you be, that you may be under your Head? "And that repentance and remission of sins be preached in His name through all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." There let your charity be spread abroad. Christ says, and the Psalm, i.e. the Spirit of God, "Your commandment is exceeding broad:" and forsooth some man will have charity to be confined to Africa! Extend your charity over the whole earth if you will love Christ, for Christ's members are over all the earth. If you love but a part, you are divided: if you are divided, you are not in the body; if you are not in the body, you are not under the Head. What profits it you that you believe and are broken!! You adore Him in the Head, blaspheme Him in the Body. He loves His Body. If you have cut yourself off from His Body, the Head has not cut itself off from its Body. To no purpose do you honour me, cries your Head to you from on high, to no purpose do you honour me. It is all one as if a man would kiss your head and tread upon your feet: perchance with nailed boots he would crush your feet, while he will clasp your head and kiss it: would you not cry out in the midst of the words with which he honours you, and say, What are you doing, man? you tread on me. You would not mean, You tread on my head; for the

head he honoured; but more would the head cry out for the members trodden upon, than for itself because it was honoured. Does not the head itself cry out, I will none of your honour; do not tread on me? Now say if you can, How have I trodden upon you? say that to the head: I wanted to kiss you, I wanted to embrace you. But see you not, O fool, that what you would embrace does in virtue of a certain unity, which knits the whole frame together, reach to that which you tread upon? Above you honour me, beneath you tread upon me. That on which you tread pains more than that which you honour rejoices. In what sort does the tongue cry out? "It hurts me." It says not, "It hurts my foot," but, "It hurts me," says it. O tongue, who has touched you? who has struck? who has goaded? who has pricked? No man, but I am knit together with the parts that are trodden upon. How would you have me not be pained, when I am not separate?

9. Our Lord Jesus Christ, then, ascending into heaven on the fortieth day, did for this reason commend to us His Body where it would continue to lie, because He saw that many would honour Him for that He is ascended into heaven: and saw that their honouring Him is useless if they trample upon His members here on earth. And lest any

one should err, and, while he adored the Head in heaven should trample upon the feet on earth, He told us where would be His members. For being about to ascend, He spake His last words on earth: after those same words He spake no more on earth. The Head about to ascend into heaven commended to us His members on earth and departed. Thenceforth you find not Christ speaking on earth; you find Him speaking, but from heaven. And even from heaven, why? Because His members on earth were trodden upon. For to the persecutor Saul He said from on high, "Saul, Saul, why persecute you me?" I am ascended into heaven, but still I lie on earth: here I sit at the right hand of the Father, but there I yet hunger, thirst, and am a stranger. In what manner then did He commend to us His Body, when about to ascend into heaven? When the disciples asked Him, saying, "Lord, will you at this time present yourself, and when shall be the kingdom of Israel?" He made answer, now at the point to depart, "It is not for you to know the time which the Father has put in His own power: but you shall receive strength of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses to me." See where His Body is spread

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abroad, see where He will not be trodden upon: "You shall be

witnesses to me, to Jerusalem, and to Judea, and even to all the earth."

Lo, where I lie that am ascending! For I ascend, because I am the Head:

my Body lies yet beneath. Where lies? Throughout the whole earth.

Beware you strike not, beware you hurt not, beware you trample not:

these be the last words of Christ about to go into heaven. Look at a

sick man languishing on his bed, lying in his house, and worn out with

sickness, at death's door, his soul as it were even now between his

teeth: who, anxious, it may be, about something that is dear to him,

which he greatly loves, and it comes into his mind, calls his heirs, and

says to them, I pray you, do this. He, as it were, detains his soul by a

violent effort, that it may not depart ere those words be made sure.

When he has dictated those last words, he breathes out his soul, he is

borne a corpse to the sepulchre. His heirs, how do they remember the

last words of the dying man? How, if one should stand up and say to

them, Do it not: what would they say? "What? shall I not do that which

my father, in the act of breathing out his soul, commanded me with his

last breath, the last word of his that sounded in my ears when my

father was departing this life? Whatever other words of his I may not

regard, his last have a stronger hold upon me: since which I never saw

him more, never more heard speech of his." Brethren, think with

Christian hearts; if to the heirs of a man, his words spoken when about to go to the tomb are so sweet, so grateful, so weighty, what must we account of the last words of Christ, spoken not when about to go back to the tomb, but to ascend into heaven! As for the man who lived and is dead, his soul is hurried off to other places, his body is laid in the earth, and whether these words of his be done or not, makes no difference to him: he has now something else to do, or something else to suffer: either in Abraham's bosom he rejoices, or in eternal fire he longs for a drop of water, while his corpse lies there senseless in the sepulchre; and yet the last words of the dying man are kept. What have those to look for, who keep not the last words of Him that sits in heaven, who sees from on high whether they be despised or not despised? The words of Him, who said, "Saul, Saul, why persecute you Me?" who keeps account, to the judgment, of all that He sees His members suffer?

10. And what have we done, say they? We are the persecuted, not the

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persecutors. You are the persecutors, O wretched men. In the first place, in that you have divided the Church. Mightier the sword of the tongue than the sword of steel. Agar, Sarah's maid, was proud, and she

was afflicted by her mistress for her pride. That was discipline, not punishment. Accordingly, when she had gone away from her mistress, what said the angel to her? "Return to your mistress." Then, O carnal soul, like a proud bond-woman, suppose you have suffered any trouble for discipline' sake, why do you rave? "Return to your mistress," hold fast the peace of the Church. Lo, the gospels are produced, we read where the Church is spread abroad: men dispute against us, and say to us, "Traitors!" Traitors of what? Christ commends to us His Church, and you believe not: shall I believe you, when you revile my parents? Would you that I should believe you about the "traitors"? Do you first believe Christ. What is worth believing? Christ is God, you are man: which ought to be believed first? Christ has spread His Church abroad over all the earth: I say it - despise me: the gospel speaks - beware. What says the gospel? "It was necessary for Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name." Where remission of sins, there the Church is. How the Church? Why, to her it was said, "To you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound

in heaven." Where is this remission of sins spread abroad? "Through all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Lo, believe Christ! But, because you are well aware that if you shall believe Christ, you will not have anything to say about "betrayers," you will needs have me to believe you when you speak evil against my parents, rather than yourself believe what Christ foretold!

[The remainder of the Homily is wanting in all the manuscripts. It seems also that St. Augustin was hindered from completing the exposition of the entire epistle, as he had undertaken to do: at least Possidius specifies this work under the title, "In Epist. Joannis ad Parthos Tractatus decem," and it is scarcely likely that the whole of the fifth chapter was expounded in this tenth Homily. - Of the "Sermons," there are none upon the remaining part of this epistle: the following extracts from other works of St. Augustin will supply what will be

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most desiderated: namely, his exposition of the text on "the Three Witnesses," of "the sin to death," and of the twentieth verse].

Contra Maximinum, lib. ii. c. 22 §. 3.

1 Joann. v. 7, 8. There are three witnesses, spirit, water and blood; and the three are one.

I would not have you mistake that place in the epistle of John the apostle where he says, "There are three witnesses: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three are one." Lest haply you say that the Spirit and the water and the blood are diverse substances, and yet it is said, "the three are one:" for this cause I have admonished you, that you mistake not the matter. For these are mystical expressions, in which the point always to be considered is, not what the actual things are, but what they denote as signs: since they are signs of things, and what they are in their essence is one thing, what they are in their signification another. If then we understand the things signified, we do find these things to be of one substance. Thus, if we should say, the rock and the water are one, meaning by the Rock, Christ; by the water, the Holy Ghost: who doubts that rock and water are two different substances? yet because Christ and the Holy Spirit are of one and the same nature, therefore when one says, the rock and the water are one, this can be rightly taken in this behalf, that these two things of which the nature is diverse, are signs of other things of which the nature is one. Three things then we know to have issued from the Body of the Lord when He hung upon the tree: first, the spirit: of which it is written, "And He bowed the head and gave up the spirit:" then, as His

side was pierced by the spear, "blood and water." Which three things if we look at as they are in themselves, they are in substance several and distinct, and therefore they are not one. But if we will inquire into the things signified by these, there not unreasonably comes into our thoughts the Trinity itself, which is the One, Only, True, Supreme God, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, of whom it could most truly be said, "There are Three Witnesses, and the Three are One:" so that by the term Spirit we should understand God the Father to be signified; as indeed it was concerning the worshipping of Him that the Lord was speaking, when He said, "God is a Spirit:" by the term, blood, the Son;

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because "the Word was made flesh:" and by the term water, the Holy Ghost; as, when Jesus spake of the water which He would give to those who thirst, the evangelist says, "But this said He of the Spirit which those who believed on Him were to receive." Moreover, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are "Witnesses," who that believes the Gospel can doubt, when the Son says, "I am one who bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me, He bears witness of me." Where, though the Holy Ghost is not mentioned, yet He is not to be thought separated from them. Howbeit neither concerning the Spirit has He kept silence

elsewhere, and that He too is a witness has been sufficiently and openly shown. For in promising Him He said, "He shall bear witness of me." These are the "Three Witnesses," and the Three are One, because of one substance. But whereas, the signs by which they were signified came forth from the Body of the Lord, herein they figured the Church preaching the Trinity, that it has one and the same nature: since these Three in threefold manner signified are One, and the Church that preaches them is the Body of Christ. In this manner then the three things by which they are signified came out from the Body of the Lord: like as from the Body of the Lord sounded forth the command to "baptise the nations in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." "In the name:" not, In the names: for "these Three are One," and One God is these Three. And if in any other way this depth of mystery which we read in John's epistle can be expounded and understood agreeably with the Catholic faith, which neither confounds nor divides the Trinity, neither believes the substances diverse nor denies that the persons are three, it is on no account to be rejected. For whenever in Holy Scriptures in order to exercise the minds of the faithful any thing is put darkly, it is to be joyfully welcomed if it can be in many ways but not unwisely expounded.

De Sermone Domini in Monte, lib. i. 22, § 73.

1 Joann. v. 16. If he knows a brother who sins a sin that is not to deat, pray, and God will give life to him who sins not to death; there is a sin to death; I do not say to pray for that.

But what presses harder upon the present question [in the Lord's command of praying for enemies and persecutors] is that saying of the
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apostle John, "If any man know that his brother sins a sin not to death, he shall ask, and the Lord will give life to that man who sins not to

death: but there is a sin to death: not for that do I say that he should ask." For it manifestly shows that there are some "brethren" whom we are not commanded to pray for, whereas the Lord bids us pray even for our persecutors. Nor can this question be solved except we acknowledge, that there are some sins in brethren that are worse than the sin of enemies in persecuting. That "brethren" mean Christians, may be proved by many texts of Holy Writ; the plainest, however, is that of the apostle which he puts thus: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother." For he has not added our; but thought it plain enough, when by the term brother he spake of the Christian that should have an unbelieving wife. And accordingly he says just afterwards, "But if the

unbelieving depart, let her depart: but a brother or sister is not put under servitude in a matter of this sort." The "sin," therefore, of a brother, "to death," I suppose to be when, after the acknowledging of God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, one fights against the brotherhood, and is set on by the fire-brands of hatred against the very grace through which he was reconciled to God. But "a sin not to death" is when a person, not having alienated his love from his brother, yet through some infirmity of mind may have failed to exhibit the due offices of brotherhood. So, on the one hand, the Lord on the cross said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," since they had not yet, by being made partakers of the grace of the Holy Spirit, entered into the fellowship of holy brotherhood; and blessed Stephen in the Acts of the Apostles prays for them who are stoning him; because they had not yet believed Christ, and were not fighting against that grace of communion. On the other hand, the apostle Paul does not pray for Alexander, and the reason I suppose, is, that this man was a brother, and had sinned "to death," i.e. by opposing the brotherhood in a spirit of hatred. Whereas for such as had not broken off the bonds of love, but had given way through fear, he prays that they may be forgiven. For so he says: "Alexander the

coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: of whom beware also; for he has greatly withstood our words." Then he subjoins for whom he prays, saying, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not
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be laid to their charge." This difference of sins it is that distinguishes Judas with his treason from Peter with his denial. Not that to him who repents there is to be no forgiveness: lest we go against that sentence of the Lord, in which He commands always to forgive the brother who asks his brother's forgiveness: but that the mischief of that sin is, that the man cannot submit to the humiliation of begging for pardon, even when he is forced by his evil conscience both to acknowledge and to publish his sin. For when Judas had said, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood," he went and hanged himself in desperation, rather than pray for forgiveness in humiliation. So it makes a great difference, what sort of repentance God forgives. For many are much quicker than others to confess that they have sinned, and are angry with themselves in such sort that they vehemently wish they had not sinned, while yet they cannot lay down their pride, and submit to have the heart humbled and broken so as to implore pardon: a state of mind which one may well believe to be, for the

greatness of their sin, a part of their already begun damnation.

And this, perhaps, it is "to sin against the Holy Ghost:" i.e. through malice and envy to fight against brotherly charity after receiving the grace of the Holy Spirit: that sin which the Lord says has no forgiveness, either here or in the world to come. . . . For the Lord in saying to the Pharisees, "Whoever shall speak an evil word against the Son of Man," &c., may have meant to warn them to come to the grace of God, and having received it, not to sin as they have now sinned. For now they have spoken an evil word against the Son of Man, and it may be forgiven them, if they be converted and believe and receive the Holy Spirit: which when they have received, if they will then have ill-will against the brotherhood and oppose the grace they have received, there is no forgiveness for them, either in this world or in the world to come.

Contra Maximinum. lib. ii. c. 14, § 2, 3.

1 Joann. v. 20. "That we may be in His true Son Jesus Christ; he is the true God, and eternal life."

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When you read, "That we may be in His true Son Jesus Christ," think of the "true Son" of God. But this Son you in no wise think to be the true

Son of God, if you deny Him to be begotten of the substance of the

Father. For was He already Son of Man and by gift of God became Son of

God, begotten indeed of God, but by grace, not by nature? Or, though not Son of Man, yet was He some sort of creature which, by God's changing it, was converted into Son of God? If you mean nothing of this sort, then was He either begotten of nothing, or of some substance. But you have relieved us from all fear of having to suppose that you affirm the Son of God to be of nothing, for you have declared that this is not your meaning. Therefore, He is of some substance. If not of the substance of the Father, then of what? Tell me. But you cannot find any other . . . Consequently, the Father and the Son are of one and the same substance. This is the Homouousion In the Scriptures both you and we read, "That we may be in His true Son Jesus Christ; He is the true God and Eternal Life." Let both parties yield to such weighty evidence. Tell us then, whether this "true Son" of God, discriminated as He is by the property of this name from those who are sons by grace, be of no substance or of some substance. You say, "I do not say that He is of no substance, lest I should say that He is of nothing." He is therefore of some substance: I ask, of what? If not of the substance of the Father, seek another. If you find not another, as

indeed you can find none at all, then acknowledge it to be the Father's, and confess the Son Homouousios, "of one substance with the Father." Flesh is begotten of flesh, the Son of flesh is begotten of the substance of the flesh. Set aside corruption, reject from the eye of the mind all carnal passions, and behold "the invisible things of God understood by the means of the things that are made." Believe that the Creator who has given flesh power to beget flesh, who has given parents power of the substance of the flesh to generate "true sons" of flesh, much more had power to beget a "true Son" of His own substance, and to have one substance with the true Son, the spiritual incorruption remaining and carnal corruption being altogether alien therefrom.