

# 3

## Lectio 1

1 ἦν δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τῶν φαρισαίων, Νικόδημος ὄνομα αὐτῶ, ἀρχῶν τῶν Ἰουδαίων: 2 οὗτος ἦλθεν πρὸς αὐτὸν νυκτὸς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῶ, ῥαββί, οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας διδάσκαλος: οὐδεὶς γὰρ δύναται ταῦτα τὰ σημεῖα ποιεῖν ἃ σὺ ποιεῖς, ἐὰν μὴ ἦ ὁ θεὸς μετ' αὐτοῦ. 3 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῶ, ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. 4 λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν [ὁ] Νικόδημος, πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος γεννηθῆναι γέροντων; μὴ δύναται εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ δευτέρου εἰσελθεῖν καὶ γεννηθῆναι; 5 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς, ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. 6 τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς σὰρξ ἐστίν, καὶ τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος πνεῦμά ἐστιν.

## LECTURE 1

1 There was a certain Pharisee named Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin. 2 He came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one could perform the signs you perform, unless he had God with him." 3 Jesus responded and said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born again when he is already an old man? Is it possible for him to return to his mother's womb and be born all over again?" 5 Jesus replied, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless one is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 What is born of flesh is itself flesh; and what is born of Spirit is itself spirit."

Supra ostendit Evangelista virtutem Christi quantum ad mutationem naturae; hic vero ostendit eam quantum ad reformationem gratiae, de qua principaliter intendit. Reformatio autem gratiae fit per spiritualem generationem, et per beneficiorum regeneratis collationem. Primo ergo tractat de spirituali generatione; secundo de beneficiorum spiritualium regeneratis divinitus collatione; et hoc in V cap. ibi *post haec erat dies festus Iudaeorum et cetera*.

Circa primum duo facit. Primo agit de spirituali regeneratione quantum ad Iudaeos; secundo de propagatione fructuum huius regenerationis etiam quantum ad externas nationes. Et hoc in IV cap. ibi *ut ergo cognovit Iesus, quia audierunt Pharisei et cetera*. Circa primum duo facit. Primo manifestat spiritualem regenerationem verbis; secundo implet eam factis, ibi *post haec venit Iesus, et discipuli eius in terram Iudaeam et cetera*.

Circa primum tria facit. Primo ostendit spiritualis regenerationis necessitatem; secundo eius qualitatem, ibi *dicit ad eum Nicodemus: quomodo potest homo nasci, cum sit senex?* Tertio eius modum et rationem, ibi *respondit ad eum Nicodemus, et dixit ei: quomodo possunt haec fieri?* Circa primum duo facit. Primo ostendit demonstrandae necessitatis occasionem; secundo necessitatem huius regenerationis, ibi *respondit Iesus, et dixit ei: amen, amen dico tibi et cetera*.

Occasio autem huius necessitatis inducitur ex Nicodemo; et ideo dicit *erat autem homo ex Phariseis, Nicodemus nomine et cetera*. Quem describit ex persona, ex tempore, et ex confessione ipsius.

Ex persona quidem describitur quantum ad tria. Scilicet quantum ad religionem, quia Phariseus; unde dicit *erat homo ex Phariseis*. Duplex namque secta erat apud Iudaeos, scilicet Phariseorum et Sadducaeorum. Sed Pharisei magis conveniebant nobiscum in opinionibus, quia credebant resurrectionem et dicebant esse creaturas aliquas spirituales. Sadducaeii vero magis discordabant,

423 Above, the Evangelist showed Christ's power in relation to changes affecting nature; here he shows it in relation to our reformation by grace, which is his principal subject. Reformation by grace comes about through spiritual generation and by the conferring of benefits on those regenerated. First, then, he treats of spiritual generation. Secondly, of the spiritual benefits divinely conferred on the regenerated, and this in chapter five.

As to the first he does two things. First, he treats of spiritual regeneration in relation to the Jews. Secondly, of the spreading of the fruits of this regeneration even to foreign peoples, and this in chapter four. Concerning the first he does two things. First, he explains spiritual regeneration with words. Secondly, he completes it with deeds (3:22).

As to the first he does three things. First, he shows the need for a spiritual regeneration. Secondly, its quality (3:4). Thirdly, its mode and nature (3:9). As to the first he does two things. First, he mentions the occasion for showing this need. Secondly, the need itself for this regeneration (3:3).

The occasion was presented by Nicodemus; hence he says, **There was a certain Pharisee named Nicodemus**. And he describes him as to his person, from the time, and from his statements.

424 he describes his person in three ways. First, as to his religion, because he was a Pharisee, hence he says, **There was a certain Pharisee**. For there were two sects among the Jews: the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees were closer to us in their beliefs, for they believed in the resurrection, and admitted the existence of spiritual creatures. The Sadducees, on the other hand, disagree more

quia nec resurrectionem futuram, nec spiritum esse credebant. Et dicebantur isti Pharisei, quasi ab aliis divisi. Et quia opinio eorum probabilior erat, et magis propinqua veritati, ideo Nicodemus facilius conversus est ad Christum. Act. XXVI, 5: *secundum certissimam sectam religionis nostrae* et cetera.

Item quantum ad nomen, cum dicit *Nicodemus nomine*: quod interpretatur victor, seu victoria populi, per quem significantur illi qui ex Iudaeis ad Christum conversi, fide vicerunt mundum. I Io. ult., 4: *haec est victoria, quae vincit mundum, fides nostra*.

Item tertio, quantum ad dignitatem; unde dicit *princeps Iudaeorum*. A principio namque licet dominus non elegerit sapientes, potentes, aut nobiles, ne virtus fidei sapientiae et potentiae humanae attribueretur ut dicitur I Cor. I, 26: *non multi sapientes, secundum carnem, non multi potentes, non multi nobiles, sed quae stulta sunt mundi eligit Deus*, voluit tamen aliquos sapientes et potentes a principio ad se convertere, ne si doctrina sua solum ab ignobilibus et insipientibus reciperetur, haberetur contemptui, et ne credentium multitudo potius attribueretur rusticitati, et insipientiae conversorum, quam virtuti fidei. Nihilominus tamen voluit istos nobiles et potentes non multos esse ad eum conversos, ne ut dictum est humanae potentiae, aut sapientiae ascriberetur. Et ideo dicitur Io. XII, 42, quod *aliqui ex principibus crediderunt in eum*: inter quos fuit iste Nicodemus; Ps. XLVI, 10: *principes populorum congregati sunt*.

Ex tempore vero describit eum, cum dicit *hic venit ad Iesum nocte* et cetera. Circa quod sciendum est, quod qualitas temporis consuevit in Scriptura describi circa aliquos, ad insinuandam cognitionem mentis, seu conditionem actionis eorum. Describitur autem hic tempus istud obscurum, unde dicit *venit nocte*. Nox enim obscura est, et competebat qualitati affectus Nicodemi, qui non cum securitate et

with us, for they believed neither in the resurrection to come nor in the existence of spirits. The former were called Pharisees, as being separated from the others. And because their opinion was the more credible and nearer to the truth, it was easier for Nicodemus to be converted to Christ. “I lived as a Pharisee, according to the strictest sect of our religion” (Acts 26:5).

425 As to his name he says, **named Nicodemus**, which means “victor,” or “the victory of the people.” This signifies those who overcame the world through faith by being converted to Christ from Judaism. “This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith” (1 Jn 5:4).

426 Thirdly, as to his rank he says, a **member of the Sanhedrin**. For although our Lord did not choose the wise or powerful or those of high birth at the beginning, lest the power of the faith be attributed to human wisdom and power—“Not many of you are learned in the worldly sense, not many powerful, not many of high birth. But God chose the simple ones of the world” (1 Cor 1:26)—still he willed to convert some of the wise and powerful to himself at the very beginning. And he did this so that his doctrine would not be held in contempt, as being accepted exclusively by the lowly and uneducated, and so that the number of believers would not be attributed to the rusticity and ignorance of the converts rather than to the power of the faith. However, he did not will that a large number of those converted to him be powerful and of high birth, lest, as has been said, it should be ascribed to human power and wisdom. And so it says, “many of those in authority believed in him” (below 12:42), among whom was this Nicodemus. “The rulers of the people have come together” (Ps 46:10).

427 Then he describes him as to the time, saying, **he came to Jesus at night**. In regard to this, it might be noted that in Scripture the quality of the time is mentioned as to certain persons in order to indicate their knowledge or the condition of their actions. Here an obscure time is mentioned, **at night**. For the night is obscure and suited to the state of mind of Nicodemus, who did not come to Jesus free of care and

libera propalatione, sed cum timore ad Iesum veniebat; nam erat de illis principibus, de quibus dicitur Io. XII, 42 quod *crediderunt in eum; sed propter Phariseos non confitebantur, ut de synagoga non eicerentur*. Non enim perfecte diligebant; unde subditur: *dilexerunt enim magis gloriam hominum quam gloriam Dei*.

Competit etiam nox eius ignorantiae, et imperfectae cognitioni, quam iste habebat de Christo; Rom. XIII, 12: *nox praecessit* etc.; Ps. LXXXI, 5: *nescierunt, neque intellexerunt, in tenebris ambulant*.

Ex confessione vero describitur, cum subdit *et dixit ei: Rabbi, scimus quia a Deo venisti magister*. Ubi confitetur Christi officium in docendo, cum dicit *Rabbi*, etc. et eius potestatem in agendo, ibi *nemo enim potest haec signa facere quae tu facis, nisi fuerit Deus cum eo*. Et quidem in utroque verum dicit, licet parum confessus est.

Verum enim est quod vocat eum *Rabbi*, idest magister, quia, ut dicitur infra XIII, 13: *vos vocatis me magister, et domine, et bene dicitis, sum etenim*. Legerat enim Nicodemus quod scriptum est Ioel II, 23: *filiis Sion, exultate, et laetamini in domino Deo vestro, quia dedit vobis doctorem iustitiae*. Sed parum dicit, quia dicit eum a Deo venisse magistrum sed tacet eum Deum esse. Nam venire a Deo magister, commune est omnibus bonis praelatis, Ier. III, 15, *et dabo vobis pastores iuxta cor meum; et pascent vos scientia, et doctrina*; unde hoc non est singulare Christo: quamquam aliter doceant homines, aliter Christus. Alii enim magistri docent tantum exterius, sed Christus etiam interius, quia, ut dicitur supra I, 9, *erat lux vera, quae illuminat omnem hominem*: et ideo ipse solus dat sapientiam; Lc. XXI, 15: *ego dabo vobis os et sapientiam*. Et hoc nullus purus homo dicere potest.

anxiety, but in fear; for he was one of those of whom it is said that they "believed in him; but they did not admit it because of the Pharisees, so that they would not be expelled from the synagogue" (below 12:42). For their love was not perfect, so it continues, "For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God."

Further, night was appropriate to his ignorance and the imperfect understanding he had of Christ: "The night has passed, and day is at hand. So let us cast-off the works of darkness" (Rom 13:12); "They have not known or understood; they are walking in darkness" (Ps 81:5).

428 Then he is described from his statements, when he says that Nicodemus said to Jesus: **Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God**. Here he affirms Christ's office as teacher when he says, **Rabbi**, and his power of acting, saying, **for no one could perform the signs you perform, unless he had God with him**. And in both remarks he says what is true, but he does not affirm enough.

He is right in calling Jesus **Rabbi**, i.e., Teacher, because, "You call me Teacher and Lord; and you do well, for so I am," as we read below (13:13). For Nicodemus had read what was written in Joel (2:23): "Children of Sion, rejoice, and be joyful in the Lord your God, because he has given you a teacher of justice." But he says too little, because he says that Jesus came as a teacher from God, but is silent on whether he is God. For to come as a teacher from God is common to all good prelates: "I will give you shepherds after my own heart, and they will feed you with knowledge and doctrine," as it says in Jeremiah (3:15). Therefore, this is not unique to Christ even though Christ taught in a manner unlike other men. For some teachers teach only from without, but Christ also instructs within, because "He was the true light, which enlightens every man" (above 1:9); thus he alone gives wisdom: "I will give you an eloquence and a wisdom" (Lk 21:15), and this is something that no mere man can say.

Potestatem vero confitetur ex signis visis, quasi dicat: credo quod a *Deo venisti magister*, quia *nemo potest haec signa facere*. Et verum dicit, quia signa quae Christus fecit, non possunt fieri nisi divinitus, et quia Deus cum eo erat; infra VIII, v. 29: *qui me misit, mecum est*. Sed parum dicit, quia credebat quod Christus non propria potestate signa faceret, quasi indigens extranea virtute, ac si Deus non esset cum eo per unitatem essentiae, sed per infusionem gratiae solum. Quod quidem falsum est, quia non extranea virtute, sed propria, signa faciebat: nam eadem est potestas Dei et Christi. Simile est quod dicit mulier Eliae, III Reg. XVII, 24: *in hoc facto cognovi quoniam vir Dei es tu*.

Consequenter cum dicit *respondit Iesus, et dixit ei* etc. ponit necessitatem spiritualis regenerationis provenientem ex ignorantia Nicodemi. Et ideo dicit *amen, amen*. Ubi notandum est, quod haec dictio *amen* est Hebraea, qua frequenter Christus usus est: unde ob eius reverentiam nullus translator, tam Graecorum quam Latinorum, transferre voluit. Et quandoque quidem significat idem quod verum, aut idem quod vere; quandoque vero idem quod fiat. Unde in Ps. LXXI, LXXXVIII et CVI, ubi nos habemus, *fiat*, in Hebraeo est *amen, amen*. Sed hanc dictionem solus Ioannes Evangelista ingeminat inter Evangelistas. Cuius ratio est, quia alii Evangelistae ea principaliter tradunt quae ad humanitatem Christi pertinent: ad quae, cum facilius credibilia sint, minor assertio necessaria erat; Ioannes vero ea quae ad divinitatem Christi pertinent, principaliter tractat, quae, cum occulta sint, et a cognitione hominum remota, maiori assertione indigebant.

Deinde attendendum est, quod haec responsio Christi videtur omnino inconsona propositis a Nicodemo, nisi diligenter consideretur. Quomodo namque convenire videtur quod dixit Nicodemus *Rabbi, scimus quia a Deo venisti*, cum hoc quod respondit dominus *nisi quis renatus fuerit denuo, non potest videre regnum Dei?*

429 He affirms his power because of the signs he saw. As if to say: I believe that you have come as a teacher from God, **for no one could perform the signs you perform**. And he is speaking the truth, because the signs which Christ did cannot be worked except by God, and because God was with him: "He who sent me is with me" (below 8:29). But he says too little, because he believed that Christ did not perform these signs through his own power, but as relying on the power of another; as though God were not with him by a unity of essence but merely by an infusion of grace. But this is false, because Christ performed these signs not by an exterior power but by his own; for the power of God and of Christ is one and the same. It is similar to what the woman says to Elijah: "Because of this I know that you are a man of God" (1 Kgs 17:24).

430 Then when he says that Jesus answered, **Amen, amen, I say to you**, he sets down the necessity for spiritual regeneration, because of the ignorance of Nicodemus. And so he says, **Amen, amen**. Here we should note that this word, **amen**, is a Hebrew word frequently employed by Christ; hence out of reverence for him no Greek or Latin translator wanted to translate it. Sometimes it means the same as "true" or "truly"; and sometimes the same as "so be it." Thus is the Psalms 71 (v 19), 88 (v 53), and 106, where we have, "So be it, so be it," the Hebrew has "Amen, amen." But John is the only Evangelist who duplicates or makes a twin use of this word. The reason for this is that the other Evangelists are concerned mainly with matters pertaining to the humanity of Christ, which, since they are easier to believe, need less reinforcement; but John deals chiefly with things pertaining to the divinity of Christ, and these, since they are hidden and remote from men's knowledge and experience, require greater formal declaration.

431 Next we should point out that at first glance this answer of Christ seems to be entirely foreign to Nicodemus' statement. For what connection is there between Nicodemus' statement, **Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God**, and the Lord's reply, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God**.

Sed notandum, sicut iam dictum est, quod Nicodemus imperfectam opinionem habens de Christo, confitebatur eum magistrum et haec signa facere tamquam hominem purum. Vult ergo ei dominus ostendere, quomodo ad altiorem cognitionem de ipso posset pervenire. Et quidem poterat de hoc dominus disputare; sed quia hoc fuisset verum in contentionem, cuius contrarium de eo scriptum est Is. XLII, 2: *non contendet*, ideo cum mansuetudine voluit eum ad veram cognitionem perducere, quasi diceret: non mirum si me purum hominem credis, quia illa secreta divinitatis non potest aliquis scire, nisi adeptus fuerit spiritualem regenerationem. Et hoc est quod dicit *nisi quis natus fuerit denuo, non potest videre regnum Dei*.

Ubi sciendum, quod cum visio sit actus vitae, secundum diversas vitas, diversae sunt visiones. Nam est quaedam vita carnalis, qua communiter omnia alia vivunt, et haec habet carnalem visionem, seu cognitionem. Est et vita spiritualis, qua homo conformatur Deo et spiritibus sanctis, et haec habet spiritualem visionem. Secundum carnalem quidem spiritualia videri non possunt; I Cor. c. II, 14: *animalis homo non percipit ea quae sunt spiritus Dei*, sed percipiuntur visione spirituali; unde ibidem subditur *quae Dei sunt, nemo novit nisi spiritus Dei*. Spiritus autem est qui regenerat; unde apostolus Rom. VIII, v. 15: *non accepistis spiritum servitutis iterum in timore; sed accepistis spiritum adoptionis*. Et hunc quidem spiritum per regenerationem spiritualem accipimus. Ad Tit. III, 5: *salvos nos fecit per lavacrum regenerationis spiritus sancti*. Si ergo visio spiritualis non est nisi per spiritum sanctum, et spiritus sanctus infunditur nobis per lavacrum regenerationis spiritualis: ergo non possumus videre regnum Dei, nisi per lavacrum regenerationis, et ideo dicit *nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu sancto, non potest introire in regnum Dei*. Quasi dicat: non est mirum si non vides regnum Dei, quia nullus illud videre potest nisi accipiat spiritum sanctum, per quem renascitur in filium Dei.

Ad regnum autem non solum pertinet regale solium, sed etiam quae sunt ad regni gubernationem, scilicet regia dignitas, beneficia

But we should note, as has already been stated, that Nicodemus, having an imperfect opinion about Christ, affirmed that he was a teacher and performed these signs as a mere man. And so the Lord wishes to show Nicodemus how he might arrive at a deeper understanding of him. And as a matter of fact, the Lord might have done so with an argument, but because this might have resulted in a quarrel—the opposite of which was prophesied about him: “He will not quarrel” (Is 42:2)—he wished to lead him to a true understanding with gentleness. As if to say: It is not strange that you regard me as a mere man, because one cannot know these secrets of the divinity unless he has achieved a spiritual regeneration. And this is what he says: **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**

432 Here we should point out that since vision is an act of life, then according to the diverse kinds of life there will be diversity of vision. For there is a sentient life which some living things share in common, and this life has a sentient vision or knowledge. And there is also a spiritual life, by which man is made like God and other holy spirits; and this life enjoys a spiritual vision. Now spiritual things cannot be seen by the sentient: “The sensual man does not perceive those things that pertain to the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 2:14), but they are perceived by the spiritual vision: “No one knows the things of God but the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 2:11). So the apostle says: “You did not receive the spirit of slavery, putting you in fear again, but the spirit of adoption” (Rom 8:15). And we receive this spirit through a spiritual regeneration: “He saved us by the cleansing of regeneration in the Holy Spirit” (Ti 3:3). Therefore, if spiritual vision comes only through the Holy Spirit, and if the Holy Spirit is given through a cleansing of spiritual regeneration, then it is only by a cleansing of regeneration that we can see the kingdom of God. Thus he says, **unless one is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.** As if to say: It is not surprising if you do not see the kingdom of God, because no one can see it unless he receives the Holy Spirit, through whom one is reborn a son of God.

433 It is not only the royal throne that pertains to a kingdom, but also the things needed for governing the kingdom, such as the royal dignity,

gratiarum et via iustitiae, qua solidatur regnum, et ideo dicit *non potest videre regnum Dei*, idest gloriam et dignitatem Dei, idest mysteria salutis aeternae, quae per fidei iustitiam inspiciuntur; Rom. XIV, 17: *regnum Dei non est esca et potus*.

In veteri autem lege fuit quaedam regeneratio spiritualis, sed imperfecta et figuralis; I Cor. X, 2: *omnes in Moyse baptizati sunt, in nube et in mari*; idest, in figura Baptismum acceperunt. Et ideo mysteria regni Dei videbant quidem, sed figuraliter tantum; Hebr. c. XI, 13: *a longe aspicientes*. In nova vero lege est manifesta regeneratio spiritualis, sed tamen est imperfecta, quia renovamur interius tantum per gratiam, sed non exterius per incorruptionem; II Cor. IV, 16: *licet is qui foris est noster homo corrumpatur, tamen is qui intus est renovatur de die in diem*. Et ideo videmus regnum Dei et mysteria salutis aeternae, sed imperfecte, quia, ut dicitur I Cor. XIII, 12, *videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate* et cetera. In patria vero est perfecta regeneratio, quia renovabimur interius et exterius. Et ideo regnum Dei perfectissime videbimus; unde I Cor. XIII, 12: *tunc autem videbimus facie ad faciem*; et I Io. III, 2: *cum apparuerit, similes ei erimus, quia videbimus eum sicuti est*.

Patet ergo quod sicut visionem corporalem non habet quis nisi natus, ita nec spiritualem habere potest nisi renatus. Et secundum triplicem regenerationem est triplex modus visionis.

Nota autem, quod in Graeco non habetur denuo, sed *another*, idest desuper, quod Hieronymus transtulit *denuo*, ut scilicet importet additionem. Et sic Hieronymus intellexit dicens *nisi renatus fuerit denuo*; quasi dicat: nisi renatus iterato per supernaturalem generationem.

royal favors, and the way of justice by which the kingdom is consolidated. Hence he says, **he cannot see the kingdom of God**, i.e., the glory and dignity of God, i.e., the mysteries of eternal salvation which are seen through the justice of faith: "The kingdom of God is not food and drink" (Rom 14:17).

Now in the Old Law there was a spiritual regeneration; but it was imperfect and symbolic: "All were baptized into Moses, in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor 10:2), i.e., they received baptism in symbol. Accordingly, they did see the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but only symbolically: "seeing from afar" (Heb 11:13). But in the New Law there is an evident spiritual regeneration, although imperfect, because we are renewed only inwardly by grace, but not outwardly by incorruption: "Although our outward nature is wasting away, yet our inward nature is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor 4:16). And so we do see the kingdom of God and the mysteries of eternal salvation, but imperfectly, for as it says, "Now we see in a mirror, in an obscure manner" (1 Cor 13:12). But there is perfect regeneration in heaven, because we will be renewed both inwardly and outwardly. And therefore we shall see the kingdom of God in a most perfect way: "But then we will see face to face," as is said in 1 Corinthians (13:12); and "When he appears we will be like him, because we will see him as he is" (1 Jn 3:2).

434 It is clear, therefore, that just as one does not have bodily vision unless he is born, so one cannot have spiritual vision unless he is reborn. And according to the threefold regeneration, there is a threefold kind of vision.

435 Note that the Greek reading is not "again," but *another*, i.e., "from above," which Jerome translated as "again," in order to suggest addition. And this is the way Jerome understood the saying, **unless one is born again**. It is as if he were saying: Unless one is reborn once more through a fraternal generation.

Chrysostomus autem dicit, nasci desuper, esse proprium filii Dei, quia ipse solus natus est desuper; infra (hoc cap.) *qui desursum venit, super omnes est*. Et dicitur Christus nasci desuper quantum ad tempus (ut ita liceat loqui) quia ab aeterno genitus; Ps. CIX, v. 3: *ante Luciferum genui te*. Et quantum ad generationis principium, quia a patre caelesti; infra VI, 38: *descendi, non ut faciam voluntatem meam, sed eius qui misit me*. Quia ergo nostra regeneratio est ad similitudinem filii Dei, secundum illud Rom. VIII, v. 29: *quos praescivit conformes fieri imaginis filii sui*, ideo, quia illa generatio superna est, et nostra generatio desuper est, quantum ad tempus, per aeternam praedestinationem, Eph. I, 4: *elegit nos in ipso ante mundi constitutionem*, et quantum ad donum Dei, infra VI, 44: *nemo potest venire ad me, nisi pater qui misit me, traxerit eum*. Eph. II, 5: *gratia Dei salvati estis et cetera*.

Consequenter cum dicit *dicit ad eum Nicodemus etc.*, ponit modum, et rationem huius spiritualis regenerationis: et circa hoc primo ponitur dubitatio Nicodemi; secundo responsio Christi *respondit Iesus: amen, amen dico tibi et cetera*.

Circa primum sciendum est, quod, sicut dicitur I Cor. II, 14, *animalis homo non percipit ea quae sunt spiritus Dei*, et ideo, quia Nicodemus carnalis adhuc et animalis erat, non potuit quae dicebantur, nisi carnaliter intelligere. Et ideo ea quae dominus dixerat de regeneratione spirituali, ipse de regeneratione carnali intelligebat. Et hoc est quod dicit *quomodo potest homo nasci, cum sit senex?*

Ubi, secundum Chrysostomum, sciendum est, quod Nicodemus voluit obiicere contra verba salvatoris. Sed tamen obiectio eius derisibilis est, quia Christus loquitur de regeneratione spirituali, hic autem obiicit de carnali. Similiter omnes rationes inductae ad impugnandum ea

Chrysostom, however, says that to be “born from above” is peculiar to the Son of God, because he alone is born from above: “The one who came from above is above all things” (below 3:31). And Christ is said to be born from above both as to time (if we may speak thus), because he was begotten from eternity: “Before the daystar I begot you” (Ps 109:3), and as to the principle of his generation, because he proceeds from the heavenly Father: “I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me” (below 6:38). Therefore, because our regeneration is in the likeness of the Son of God, inasmuch as “Those whom he foreknew he predestined to become conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom 8:29), and because that generation is from above, our generation also is from above: both as to the time, because of our eternal predestination, “He chose us in him before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4), and as to its being a gift of God, as we read below (6:44), “No one can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him”; and “You have been saved by the grace of God” (Eph 2:5).

436 Then when he says, **Nicodemus said to him**, he gives the manner of and the reason for this spiritual regeneration. First, the doubt of Nicodemus is set forth. Secondly, Christ’s response (v 5).

437 As to the first we should note that as stated in 1 Corinthians (2:14): “The sensual man does not perceive those things that pertain to the Spirit of God.” And so because Nicodemus was yet carnal and sensual, he was unable to grasp, except in a carnal manner, the things that were said to him. Consequently, what the Lord said to him about spiritual regeneration, he understood of carnal generation. And this is what he says: **How can a man be born again when he is already an old man?**

We should note here, according to Chrysostom, that Nicodemus wanted to object to what was said by the Savior. But his objection is foolish, because Christ was speaking of spiritual regeneration, and he is objecting in terms of carnal regeneration. In like manner, all the



quae sunt fidei, derisibiles sunt, quia non sunt secundum intentionem sacrae Scripturae.

Obiicit autem Nicodemus contra verba domini dupliciter, secundum quod dupliciter videbatur dictum domini impossibile, scilicet quod homo denuo renascatur. Uno modo scilicet propter irreversibilitatem humanae vitae: nam a senectute non potest homo redire ad pueritiam. Unde dicitur Iob XVI, v. 23: *semitam*, scilicet vitam praesentem, *per quam non revertar, ambulo*. Et secundum hoc dicit *quomodo potest homo nasci, cum sit senex?* Quasi dicat: numquid iterum efficietur puer ut renascatur? Iob VII, 10: *non revertetur ultra in domum suam, neque cognoscat eum amplius locus eius*. Secundo ex modo carnalis generationis: nam homo in principio cum generatur est in parva quantitate, ita ut possit eum uterus maternus capere; postmodum vero, cum iam natus est, ad continua crementa paulatim perducitur, ita ut non possit in materno utero contineri. Et ideo dicit *numquid potest in ventrem matris suae iterato introire, et renasci?* Quasi dicat, non, quia non capit eum venter.

Sed haec locum non habent in generatione spirituali, quia homo, quantumcumque per peccatum spiritualiter inveteratus, secundum illud Ps. XXXI, 3: *quoniam tacui, inveteraverunt omnia ossa mea*, potest per auxilium gratiae divinae ad novitatem venire, secundum illud Ps. CII, 5: *renovabitur ut aquilae iuventus tua*. Potest, et quantumcumque magnus, in uterum spiritualem, scilicet Ecclesiae, per sacramentum Baptismi introire. Quis autem sit uterus spiritualis, manifestum est; alias numquam diceretur: *ex utero ante Luciferum genui te*. Nihilominus tamen aliqualem similitudinem habet quod dicitur; nam, sicut homo semel carnaliter natus, non potest iterum nasci, ita et semel per Baptismum spiritualiter natus, non potest iterum nasci, quia non debet iterum baptizari; Eph. IV, 5: *unus dominus, una fides, unum Baptisma*.

reasons brought forth to attack the things of faith are foolish, since they are not according to the meaning of Sacred Scripture.

438 Nicodemus objected to the Lord's statement that a man must be born again according to the two ways in which this seemed impossible. In one way, on account of the irreversibility of human life; for a man cannot return to infancy from old age. Hence we read, "I am walking on a path," namely, this present life, "by which I will not return" (Jb 16:23). And it is from this point of view that he says, **How can a man be born again when he is already an old man?** As if to say: Shall he become a child once more so that he can be reborn? "He will not return again to his home, and his place will not know him any more" (Jb 7:10). In the second way, regeneration seemed impossible because of the mode of carnal generation. For in the beginning, when a man is generated, he is small in size, so that his mother's womb can contain him; but later, after he is born, he continues to grow and reaches such a size that he cannot be contained within his mother's womb. And so Nicodemus says, **Is it possible for him to return to his mother's womb and be born all over again?** As if to say: He cannot, because the womb cannot contain him.

439 But this does not apply to spiritual generation. For no matter how spiritually old a man might become through sin, according to the Psalm (31:3): "Because I kept silent, all my bones grew old," he can, with the help of divine grace, become new, according to the Psalm (102:5): "Your youth will be renewed like the eagle's." And no matter how enormous he is, he can enter the spiritual womb of the Church by the sacrament of baptism. And it is clear what that spiritual womb is; otherwise it would never have been said: "From the womb, before the daystar, I begot you" (Ps 109:3). Yet there is a sense in which his objection applies. For just as a man, once he is born according to nature, cannot be reborn, so once he is born in a spiritual way through baptism, he cannot be reborn, because he cannot be baptized again: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," as we read in Ephesians (4:5).

Consequenter cum dicit *respondit Iesus* etc., ponitur responsio Christi. Et circa hoc tria facit. Primo solvit rationes Nicodemi, ostendendo qualitatem regenerationis; secundo manifestat solutionem per rationem, ibi *quod natum est ex carne, caro est* etc.; tertio per exemplum, ibi *non mireris* et cetera.

Solvit ergo obiectiones, ostendens quod regeneratio de qua loquitur, est spiritualis, et non carnalis. Et hoc est quod dicit *amen, amen dico tibi, nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu sancto, non potest introire in regnum Dei*, quasi dicat: tu intelligis de generatione carnali, sed ego loquor de spirituali.

Sed attende quod supra dixerat *non potest videre regnum Dei*, hic vero dicit *non potest introire in regnum Dei*, quod idem est. Nam quae regni Dei sunt, nullus videt, nisi regnum Dei intret; et tantum videt quantum intrat. Apoc. II, 17: *in calculo nomen novum scriptum, quod nemo scit nisi qui accipit*.

Quod autem spiritualis regeneratio ex spiritu fiat, rationem habet. Nam oportet generatum generari ad similitudinem generantis; nos autem regeneramur in filios Dei, ad similitudinem veri filii: oportet ergo quod regeneratio spiritualis fiat per id per quod assimilamur vero filio; quod quidem est per hoc quod spiritum eius habemus. Rom. VIII, 9: *si quis spiritum Christi non habet, hic non est eius*; I Io. IV, 13: *in hoc cognoscimus, quoniam in eo manemus, et ipse in nobis, quia de spiritu suo dedit nobis* et cetera. Oportet ergo quod spiritualis regeneratio per spiritum sanctum fiat. Rom. VIII, 15: *non accepistis spiritum servitutis iterum in timore, sed spiritum adoptionis filiorum*; infra VI, 63: *spiritus est qui vivificat* et cetera.

Et etiam huic regenerationi necessaria aqua propter tria. Primo quidem propter humanae naturae conditionem. Homo enim ex anima et corpore constat, et si in eius regeneratione esset spiritus tantum,

440 Then we have the answer of Christ. Concerning this he does three things. First, he answers the arguments of Nicodemus by showing the nature of regeneration. Secondly, he explains this answer with a reason (v 6). Thirdly, he explains it with an example.

441 He answers the objections by showing that he is speaking of a spiritual regeneration, not a carnal one. And this is what he says: **unless one is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God**. As if to say: You are thinking of a carnal generation, but I am speaking of a spiritual generation.

Note that above he had said, **he cannot see the kingdom of God**, while here he says, **he cannot enter the kingdom of God**, which is the same thing. For no one can see the things of the kingdom of God unless he enters it; and to the extent that he enters, he sees. "I will give him a white stone upon which is written a new name, which no one knows but he who receives it" (Rv 5:5).

442 Now there is a reason why spiritual generation comes from the Spirit. It is necessary that the one generated be generated in the likeness of the one generating; but we are regenerated as sons of God, in the likeness of his true Son. Therefore, it is necessary that our spiritual regeneration come about through that by which we are made like the true Son. and this conies about by Our having his Spirit: "If any one does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not his" (Rom 8:9); "By this we know that we abide in him, and he in us: because he has given us of his Spirit" (1 Jn 4:13). Thus spiritual regeneration must come from the Holy Spirit. "You did not receive the spirit of slavery, putting you in fear again, but the spirit of adoption" (Rom 8:15); "It is the Spirit that gives life" (below 6:63).

443 Water, too, is necessary for this regeneration, and for three reasons. First, because of the condition of human nature. For man consists of soul and body, and if the Spirit alone were involved in his

solum quod spirituale est hominis, ostenderetur regenerari. Ut ergo regeneretur etiam caro, oportet quod sicut est ibi spiritus, per quem regeneratur anima, ita sit ibi aliquid corporale, per quod regeneretur corpus; et hoc est aqua.

Secundo propter humanam cognitionem: nam, sicut Dionysius dicit, divina sapientia ita omnia ordinat ut unicuique provideat secundum modum suae conditionis. Homo autem est naturaliter cognoscitivus; oportet ergo eo modo dona spiritualia hominibus conferri, ut ea cognoscant; I Cor. II, 12: *ut sciamus quae a Deo donata sunt nobis*. Naturalis autem modus huius cognitionis est ut spiritualia per sensibilia cognoscat, cum omnis nostra cognitio a sensu incipiat. Oportuit ergo ad hoc quod intelligamus id quod spirituale est in hac regeneratione, quod esset in ea aliquid sensibile et materiale, scilicet aqua: per quod intelligamus quod sicut aqua lavat et purgat corporaliter exterius, ita et per Baptismum homo lavatur et purgatur interius spiritualiter.

Tertio propter causae congruitatem: nam causa nostrae regenerationis est verbum incarnatum. Supra I, 12: *dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri*. Congruit ergo quod in sacramentis, quae efficaciam habent ex virtute verbi incarnati, sit aliquid correspondens verbo, et aliquid correspondens carni, seu corpori. Et hoc est spiritualiter aqua in sacramento Baptismi, ut scilicet per eam configuremur morti Christi, dum submergimur in ea, quando baptizamur, sicut Christus tribus diebus fuit in ventre terrae; Rom. VI, 4: *consepulti enim sumus cum illo per Baptismum*.

Hoc etiam mysterium in prima rerum productione signatum est, Gen. I, quando spiritus domini ferebatur super aquas. Sed per tactum mundissimae carnis Christi maior virtus collata est aquis: quia in

regeneration, this would indicate that only the spiritual part of man is regenerated. Hence in order that the flesh also be regenerated, it is necessary that, in addition to the Spirit through whom the soul is regenerated, something bodily be involved, through which the body is regenerated; and this, is water.

Secondly, water is necessary for the sake of human knowledge. For, as Dionysius says, divine wisdom so disposes all things that it provides for each thing according to its nature. Now it is natural for man to know; and so it is fitting that spiritual things be conferred on men in such a way that he may know them: "so that we may know what God has given us" (1 Cor 2:12). But the natural manner of this knowledge is that man know spiritual things by means of sensible things, since all our knowledge begins in sense knowledge. Therefore, in order that we might understand what is spiritual in our regeneration, it was fitting that there be in it something sensible and material, that is, water, through which we understand that just as water washes and cleanses the exterior in a bodily way, so through baptism a man is washed and cleansed inwardly in a spiritual way.

Thirdly, water was necessary so that there might be a correspondence of causes. For the cause of our regeneration is the incarnate Word: "He gave them power to become the sons of God," as we saw above (1:12). Therefore it was fitting that in the sacraments, which have their efficacy from the power of the incarnate Word, there be something corresponding to the Word, and something corresponding to the flesh, or body. And spiritually speaking, this is water when the sacrament is baptism, so that through it we may be conformed to the death of Christ, since we are submerged in it during baptism as Christ was in the womb of the earth for three days: "We are buried with him by baptism" (Rom 6:4).

Further, this mystery was suggested in the first production of things, when the Spirit of God hovered over the waters (Gn 1:2). But a greater power was conferred on water by contact with the most pure flesh of Christ; because in the beginning water brought forth crawling creatures

principio producebant aquae reptile animae viventis; sed ex quo Christus baptizatus est in Iordane, animas spirituales aqua reddit.

Per hoc autem quod hic dicit *nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu sancto*, manifeste apparet spiritum sanctum esse Deum. Supra enim I, 13, dicit: *non ex sanguinibus, neque ex voluntate carnis, neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo nati sunt*. Ex quo sic formatur ratio. Ille ex quo spiritualiter renascuntur homines, est Deus; sed homines renascuntur spiritualiter per spiritum sanctum, ut hic dicitur: ergo spiritus sanctus est Deus.

Sed hic est duplex quaestio. Prima est. Si nullus intrat regnum Dei, nisi renascatur aqua, antiqui autem patres non sunt renati aqua, quia non baptizabantur: ergo non intraverunt regnum Dei. Alia est, quia cum sit triplex Baptismus, scilicet fluminis, fluminis et sanguinis, et multi fuerint baptizati ultimis duobus, quos dicimus intrasse regnum Dei statim (cum tamen non fuerint renati aqua) non videtur esse verum quod hic dicitur *nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu sancto*.

Responsio. Dicendum est quantum ad primum, quia regeneratio ex aqua et spiritu sancto fit dupliciter, scilicet in veritate et figura. Antiqui autem patres, licet non fuerint regenerati regeneratione vera, fuerunt tamen regenerati regeneratione figurali, quia semper habuerunt aliquod signum sensibile, in quo vera regeneratio praefigurabatur; et secundum hoc renati intraverunt regnum Dei, soluto pretio.

Quantum ad secundum dicendum, quod illi qui renascuntur Baptismo sanguinis et fluminis, licet non habeant regenerationem in actu, habent tamen in voto: alias enim neque Baptismus sanguinis aliquid valeret; nec esse posset Baptismus spiritus. Sic ergo ad hoc quod homo intret regnum Dei, oportet quod adsit Baptismus aquae in re, sicut est in omnibus baptizatis; vel in voto, sicut est in martyribus et

with living souls, but since Christ was baptized in the Jordan, water has yielded spiritual souls.

444 It is clear that the Holy Spirit is God, since he says, **unless one is born again of water and the Holy Spirit** (*ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto*). For above (1:13) he says: “who are born not from blood, nor from the desires of the flesh, nor from man’s willing it, but from God (*ex Deo*).” From this we can form the following argument: He from whom men are spiritually reborn is God; but men are spiritually reborn through the Holy Spirit, as it is stated here; therefore, the Holy Spirit is God.

445 Two questions arise here. First, if no one enters the kingdom of God unless he is born again of water, and if the fathers of old were not born again of water (for they were not baptized), then they have not entered the kingdom of God. Secondly, since baptism is of three kinds, that is, of water, of desire, and of blood, and many have been baptized in the latter two ways (who we say have entered the kingdom of God immediately, even though they were not born again of water), it does not seem to be true to say that **unless one is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God**.

The answer to the first is that rebirth or regeneration from water and the Holy Spirit takes place in two ways: in truth and in symbol. Now the fathers of old, although they were not reborn with a true rebirth, were nevertheless reborn with a symbolic rebirth, because they always had a sense perceptible sign in which true rebirth was prefigured. So according to this, thus reborn, they did enter the kingdom of God, after the ransom was paid.

The answer to the second is that those who are reborn by a baptism of blood and fire, although they do not have regeneration in deed, they do have it in desire. Otherwise neither would the baptism of blood mean anything nor could there be a baptism of the Spirit. Consequently, in order that man may enter the kingdom of heaven, it is necessary that there be a baptism of water in deed, as in the case of all baptized

catechumenis, qui morte praeveniuntur antequam votum impleant; vel in figura, sicut in antiquis patribus.

Ex hoc quod dicitur *nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu sancto*, Pelagiani errantes dixerunt, quod pueri baptizantur, non quidem ut mudentur a peccatis quae nondum habent, sed ut possint intrare regnum Dei. Sed hoc est falsum: quia, secundum quod Augustinus dicit in Lib. de Baptismo parvulorum, inconveniens est quod imago Dei, scilicet homo, subtrahatur a regno Dei, nisi propter aliquod impedimentum; quod esse non potest, nisi peccatum. Oportet ergo quod in pueris qui subtrahuntur a regno, sit aliquod peccatum scilicet originale.

Consequenter cum dicit *quod natum est ex carne, caro est* etc. probat per rationem, quod oportet nasci ex aqua et spiritu sancto: et est ratio sua talis. Nullus potest pervenire ad regnum, nisi spiritualis efficiatur; sed aliquis non efficitur spiritualis nisi per spiritum sanctum: ergo nullus potest intrare regnum Dei nisi renatus ex spiritu sancto.

Dicit ergo *quod natum est ex carne, caro est*, idest, nativitas secundum carnem, facit nasci in vitam carnalem, I Cor. XV, 47: *primus homo de terra terrenus, et quod natum est ex spiritu*, idest ex virtute spiritus sancti, *spiritus est*, idest spiritualis.

Nota autem, quod haec praepositio ex quandoque designat causam materiale; sicut cum dico, cultellus est ex ferro; quandoque causam efficientem; sicut domus est ex aedificatore. Et secundum hoc, quod dicitur *quod natum est ex carne*, potest intelligi dupliciter, effective et materialiter. Effective quidem, quia virtus quae est in carne, est effectiva generationis; materialiter vero, quia aliquod carnale in animalibus est materia generati. Sed ex spiritu non dicitur aliquid

persons, or in desire, as in the case of the martyrs and catechumens, who are prevented by death from fulfilling their desire, or in symbol, as in the case of the fathers of old.

446 It might be remarked that it was from this statement, **unless one is born again of water and the Holy Spirit**, that the Pelagians derived their error that children are baptized not in order to be cleansed from sin, since they have none, but in order to be able to enter the kingdom of God. But this is false, because as Augustine says in his book, *The Baptism of Children*, it is not fitting for an image of God, namely, man, to be excluded from the kingdom of God except for some obstacle, which can be nothing but sin. Therefore, there must be some sin, namely, original sin, in children who are excluded from the kingdom.

447 Then when he says, **What is born of flesh is itself flesh**, he proves by reason that it is necessary to be born of water and the Holy Spirit. And the reasoning is this: No one can reach the kingdom unless he is made spiritual; but no one is made spiritual except by the Holy Spirit; therefore, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again of the Holy Spirit.

So he says, what is born of flesh (*ex carne*) is itself flesh, i.e., birth according to the flesh makes one be born into the life of the flesh: "The first man was from the earth, earthly" (1 Cor 15:47); **and what is born of Spirit** (*ex Spiritu*) , i.e., from the power of the Holy Spirit, **is itself spirit**, i.e., spiritual.

448 Note, however, that this preposition *ex* (from, of, by) sometimes designates a material cause, as when I say: "A knife is made of (*ex*) iron"; sometimes it designates an efficient cause, as when I say: "The house was built by (*ex*) a carpenter." Accordingly, the phrase, **what is born of** (*ex*) flesh is itself flesh, can be understood according to either efficient or material causality. As efficient cause, indeed, because a power existing in flesh is productive of generation; and as material cause, because some carnal element in animals makes up the animal

nasci materialiter, cum spiritus immutabilis sit, materia vero sit subiectum transmutationis, sed dicitur effective.

Secundum hoc ergo, possumus accipere triplicem generationem. Unam quae est ex carne materialiter et effective, quae est communis omnibus qui carnalem statum habent. Alia est secundum spiritum effective, secundum quam regeneramur in filios Dei per gratiam spiritus sancti, et efficitur spirituales. Tertia est media, scilicet quae est ex carne materialiter solum, et ex spiritu sancto effective. Et haec est singularis et propria Christi: quia materialiter est habens carnem ex carne matris natus, et effective est ex spiritu sancto; Matth. I, 20: *quod enim in ea natum est, de spiritu sancto est*. Et ideo natus est sanctus; Lc. I, 35: *spiritus sanctus superveniet in te, et virtus altissimi obumbrabit tibi: ideoque quod nascetur ex te sanctum, vocabitur filius Dei*.

generated. But nothing is said to be made out of spirit (*ex spiritu*) in a material sense, since spirit is unchangeable, whereas matter is the subject of change; but it is said in the sense of efficient causality.

According to this, we can discern a threefold generation. One is materially and effectively from (*ex*) the flesh, and is common to all who exist according to the flesh. Another is according to the Spirit effectively, and according to it we are reborn as sons of God through the grace of the Holy Spirit, and are made spiritual. The third is midway, that is, only materially from the flesh but effectively from the Holy Spirit. And this is true in the singular case of Christ: because he was born deriving his flesh materially from the flesh of his mother, but effectively from the Holy Spirit: “What she has conceived is of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 1:20). Therefore, he was born holy: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. And so the Holy One who will be born from you, will be called the Son of God” (Lk 1:35).

Lectio 2

7 μὴ θαυμάσης ὅτι εἶπόν σοι, δεῖ ὑμᾶς γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν. 8 τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ, καὶ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκούεις, ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδας πόθεν ἔρχεται καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγει: οὕτως ἐστὶν πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος. 9 ἀπεκρίθη Νικόδημος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, πῶς δύναται ταῦτα γενέσθαι; 10 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, σὺ εἶ ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ταῦτα οὐ γινώσκεις; 11 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι ὅτι ὁ οἶδαμεν λαλοῦμεν καὶ ὁ ἑωράκαμεν μαρτυροῦμεν, καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἡμῶν οὐ λαμβάνετε. 12 εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε, πῶς ἂν εἴπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια πιστεύσετε; 13 καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. 14 καὶ καθὼς Μωϋσῆς ὑψώσεν τὸν ὄφιν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, 15 ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

Supra posuit dominus rationem ad instruendam spiritualem generationem; hic ponit exemplum. Datur autem intelligi, quod Nicodemus, audito *quod natum est ex spiritu, spiritus est*, turbationem quamdam dubietatis incurrit; et ideo dominus dicit ei *non mireris, quia dixi tibi: oportet vos nasci denuo*.

Ubi sciendum est, quod duplex est admiratio. Una devotionis, secundum quod aliquis magnalia Dei considerans, cognoscit ea sibi

LECTURE 2

7 “Do not be surprised that I said to you, you must be born again. 8 The wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 9 “How can all this happen?” asked Nicodemus. 10 Jesus replied: “You are a teacher in Israel and you do not know these things? 11 “Amen, amen I say to you, that we know of what we speak, and we bear witness of what we see; but you do not accept our testimony. 12 If I spoke of earthly things, and you did not believe me, how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? 13 No one has gone up to heaven except the One who came down from heaven, the Son of Man, who lives in heaven. 14 Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life.”

449 Above, in his instruction on spiritual generation, the Lord presented a reason; here he gives an example. For we are led to see that Nicodemus was troubled when he heard that **what is born of Spirit is itself spirit**. And so the Lord says to him, **Do not be surprised that I said to you, you must be born again**.

Here we should note that there are two kinds of surprise or astonishment. One is the astonishment of devotion in the sense that

incomprehensibilia esse: unde relinquitur admirationi locus, secundum illud Ps. XCII, 4: *mirabilis in altis dominus*; et alibi CXVIII, v. 129: *mirabilia testimonia tua*. Et ad hanc homines sunt inducendi, non prohibendi. Alia est infidelitatis, dum quis ea quae dicuntur non credens, miratur. Unde dicitur Matth. c. XIII, 57 quod *mirabantur in doctrina Christi*: et sequitur, quod *scandalizabantur in eo*. Et ab hac admiratione dominus Nicodemum removet, inducens exemplum, cum dicit *spiritus ubi vult spirat*. Quod quidem, eadem servata sententia, dupliciter quantum ad litteram exponi potest.

Uno enim modo, secundum Chrysostomum, accipitur pro vento, sicut in Ps. c. CXLVIII, 8: *spiritus procellarum, quae faciunt verbum eius*. Et secundum hoc quatuor dicit de vento. Primo venti potestatem, cum dicit *spiritus ubi vult spirat*; idest, ventus quo vult flat. Et si dicas, quod ventus non habet voluntatem; dicendum, quod voluntas sumitur pro appetitu naturali, qui nihil est aliud quam naturalis inclinatio, de qua dicitur Job XXVIII, 25: *qui creavit ventis pondus*. Secundo ponitur venti indicium, cum dicit *et vocem eius audis*; et sumitur vox pro sono quem facit ventus ex percussione ad aliquod corpus; de quo dicitur in Ps. LXXVI, 19: *vox tonitruum tui in rota*.

Tertio ponit venti originem, quae occulta est; unde dicit *et nescis unde veniat*, idest ubi oriatur; Ps. CXXXIV, 7: *qui producit ventos de thesauris suis*.

Quarto ponit venti finem, qui similiter occultus est; unde dicit *aut quo vadat*, supple, nescis, idest ubi persistat.

someone, considering the great things of God, sees that they are incomprehensible to him; and so he is full of astonishment: “The Lord on high is wonderful” (Ps 92:4), “Your testimonies are wonderful” (Ps 118:129). Men are to be encouraged, not discouraged, to this kind of astonishment. The other is the astonishment of disbelief, when someone does not believe what is said. So Matthew (13:54) says: “They were astonished,” and further on adds that “They did not accept him.” It is from this kind of astonishment that the Lord diverts Nicodemus where he proposes an example and says: **The wind (spiritus, wind, spirit) blows where it wills**. In the literal sense, the same words can be explained in two ways.

450 In the first way, according to Chrysostom, spiritus is taken for the wind, as in Psalm 148 (v 8): “The winds of the storm that fulfill his word.” According to this interpretation, he says four things about the wind. First, the power of the wind, when he says, **the wind blows where it wills**. And if you say that the wind has no will, one may answer that “will” is taken for a natural appetite, which is nothing more than a natural inclination, about which it is said: “He created the weight of the wind” (Job 28:25). Secondly, he tells the evidence for the wind, when he says, **and you hear its sound**, where “sound” (vox, voice, sound) refers to the sound the wind makes when it strikes a body. Of this we read: “The sound (vox) of your thunder was in the whirlwind” (Ps 76:19).

Thirdly, he mentions the origin of the wind, which is unknown; so he says, **but you do not know where it comes from**, i.e., from where it starts: “He brings forth the winds out of his storehouse” (Ps 134:7).

Fourthly, he mentions the wind’s destination, which is also unknown; so he says, **or where it goes** you do not know, i.e., where it remains.



Et hanc quidem similitudinem inducit ad propositum, cum dicit *sic est omnis qui natus est ex spiritu*; quasi dicat: si ventus, qui est corporeus, habet occultam originem, nec potest sciri eius processus; quomodo miraris, si tu non potes scire processum regenerationis spiritualis?

Sed contra hanc expositionem obiicit Augustinus dicens, quod dominus non intellexit de vento, cum dixit *spiritus ubi vult spirat* etc. nam de quolibet vento scimus, unde veniat, aut quo vadat: nam Auster venit a meridie, et vadit ad Aquilonem; Boreas vero e converso ab Aquilone ad meridiem vadit. Quomodo ergo de spiritu corporeo dicit dominus *nescis unde veniat, aut quo vadat?*

Sed ad hoc responderi potest, quod principium venti potest sciri dupliciter. Uno modo in generali; et hoc modo scitur unde veniat, idest a qua parte mundi, sicut scitur, quod Auster venit a meridie; et quo vadat, quia ad Aquilonem. Alio modo in speciali; et hoc modo nescitur unde veniat, idest in qua plaga determinate incipiat: aut quo vadat, idest ubi determinate cesset. Et cum Chrysostomo ad hanc expositionem conveniunt omnes fere Graeci doctores.

Alio modo exponitur de spiritu sancto; et secundum hoc quatuor ponit de spiritu sancto. Primo quidem eius potestatem, cum dicit *spiritus ubi vult spirat*: quia pro libero potestatis arbitrio inspirat ubi vult, et quando vult, corda illustrando; I Cor. XII, 11: *haec omnia operatur unus atque idem spiritus, dividens singulis prout vult*. Ex quo confutatur error Macedonii ponentis spiritum sanctum esse ministrum patris et filii. Non enim spiraret ubi ipse vellet, sed ubi ei mandaretur.

And he applies this similarity to the subject under discussion, saying, **So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit**. As if to say: If the wind, which is corporeal, has an origin which is hidden and a course that is unknown, why are you surprised if you cannot understand the course of spiritual regeneration.

451 Augustine objects to this explanation and says that the Lord was not speaking here about the wind, for we know where each of the winds comes from and where it goes. For “Auster” comes from the south and goes to the north; “Boreas” comes from the north and goes to the south. Why, then, does the Lord say of this wind, you do not know where it comes from or where it goes?

One may answer that there are two ways in which the source of the wind might be unknown. In one way, in general: and in this way it is possible to know where it comes from, i.e., from which direction of the world, for example, that Auster comes from the south, and where it goes, that is, to the north. In another way, in particular: and in this sense it is not known where the wind comes from, i.e., at which precise place it originated, or where it goes, i.e., exactly where it stops. And almost all the Greek doctors agree with this exposition of Chrysostom.

452 In another way, *spiritus* is taken for the Holy Spirit. And according to this, he mentions four things about the Holy Spirit. First, his power, saying, **The Spirit blows where it wills**, because it is by the free use of his power that he breathes where he wills and when he wills, by instructing hearts: “One and the same Spirit does all these things, distributing to each as he wills” (1 Cor 12:11). This refutes the error of Macedonius who thought that the Holy Spirit was the minister of the Father and the Son. But then he would not be breathing where he willed, but where he was commanded.

Secundo vero ponit spiritus sancti indicium, cum dicit *et vocem eius audis*; Ps. XCIV, 8: *hodie si vocem eius audieritis, nolite obdurare corda vestra*.

Sed contra hoc obiicit Chrysostomus dicens, quod non potest intelligi de spiritu sancto. Dominus enim loquebatur Nicodemo, qui adhuc infidelis erat, cui non competebat audire vocem spiritus sancti. Sed dicendum, secundum Augustinum, quod spiritus sancti est duplex vox. Una, qua loquitur intus in corde hominis; et hanc audiunt solum fideles et sancti: de qua dicitur in Ps. c. LXXXIV, 9: *audiam quid loquatur in me dominus Deus*. Alia est, qua spiritus sanctus loquitur in Scripturis, vel per praedicatores, secundum quod dicitur Matth. X, 20: *non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed spiritus sanctus qui loquitur in vobis*. Et hanc audiunt etiam infideles et peccatores.

Tertio ponit spiritus sancti originem, quae occulta est, unde dicit *et nescis unde veniat*, licet vocem eius audias: et hoc ideo quia venit a patre et filio; infra XV, 26: *cum autem venerit Paraclitus, quem ergo mittam vobis a patre spiritum veritatis, qui a patre procedit*. Pater autem, et filius lucem habitant inaccessibilem, *quam nemo hominum vidit, sed nec videre potest*: ut dicitur I Tim. ult. 16.

Quarto ponit spiritus sancti finem, qui quidem occultus est, et ideo dicit *aut quo vadat*, supple: nescis, quia perducit ad occultum finem, scilicet ad beatitudinem aeternam. Unde dicitur *pignus hereditatis*, Eph. I, v. 14 et I Cor. II, 9: *oculus non vidit nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quae praeparavit Deus iis qui diligunt illum*.

453 Secondly, he mentions the evidence for the Holy Spirit, when he says, **and you hear its voice**: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Ps 94:8).

Chrysostom objects to this and says that this cannot pertain to the Holy Spirit. For the Lord was speaking to Nicodemus, who was still an unbeliever, and thus not fit to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. We may answer to this, with Augustine, that there is a twofold voice of the Holy Spirit. One is that by which he speaks inwardly in man’s heart; and only believers and the saints hear this voice, about which the Psalm (84:9) says: “I will hear what the Lord God says within me.” The other voice is that by which the Holy Spirit speaks in the Scriptures or through those who preach, according to Matthew (10:20): “For it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit who is speaking through you.” And this voice is heard by unbelievers and sinners.

454 Thirdly, he refers to the origin of the Holy Spirit, which is hidden; thus he says, **but you do not know where it comes from**, although you may hear its voice. And this is because the Holy Spirit comes from the Father and the Son: “When the Paraclete comes, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father” (below 15:26). But the Father and the Son “dwell in inaccessible light, whom no man has seen or is able to see” (1 Tim 6:16).

455 Fourthly, he gives the destination of the Holy Spirit, which is also hidden; and so he says, you do not know where it goes, because the Spirit leads one to a hidden end, that is, eternal happiness. Thus it says in Ephesians (1:14) that the Holy Spirit is “the pledge of our inheritance.” And again, “The eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, nor has the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor 2:9).

Vel *nescis unde veniat*, idest quomodo hominem introeat, *aut quo vadat*, idest ad quam perfectionem illum adducat; Job IX, 11: *si venerit ad me, non videbo eum*.

Sic est omnis qui natus est ex spiritu; idest, sicut spiritus sanctus. Nec mirum: nam sicut supra dixerat, *quod natum est ex spiritu, spiritus est*: quia in viro spirituali sunt proprietates spiritus sancti, sicut in carbone succenso sunt proprietates ignis.

Sunt autem in eo qui natus est ex spiritu sancto praedictae quatuor proprietates spiritus. Primo namque habet libertatem; II Cor. c. III, 17: *ubi spiritus domini, ibi libertas*, quia spiritus domini ducit ad id quod rectum est, Ps. CXLII, 10: *spiritus tuus bonus deducet me in terram rectam*, et liberat a servitute peccati et legis, Rom. VIII, 2: *lex spiritus vitae in Christo liberavit me* et cetera.

Secundo vero eius indicium sumis per vocem verborum suorum, quam dum audis, cognoscis eius spiritualitatem; Matth. XII, 34: *ex abundantia cordis os loquitur*.

Tertio vero habet originem occultam, et finem, quia nullus potest spiritualem iudicare I Cor. II, 15: *spiritualis omnia iudicat, et ipse a nemine iudicatur*. Vel *nescis unde veniat*, principium spiritualis nativitatis eius, quod est gratia baptismalis *aut quo vadat*, idest quo dignus efficitur, idest vita aeterna, quae tibi adhuc occulta est.

Hic ponitur causa et ratio spiritualis regenerationis: et primo ponitur interrogatio Nicodemi; secundo responsio domini *respondit Iesus, et dixit ei* et cetera.

Or, **you do not know where it comes from**, i.e., how the Spirit enters into a person, **or where it goes**, i.e., to what perfection he may lead him: "If he comes toward me, I will not see him" (Jb 9:11).

456 **So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit**, i.e., they are like the Holy Spirit. And no wonder: for as he had said before, "What is born of Spirit is itself spirit," because the qualities of the Holy Spirit are present in the spiritual man, just as the qualities of fire are present in burning coal.

Therefore, the above four qualities of the Holy Spirit are found in one who has been born of the Holy Spirit. First of all, he has freedom: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3:17), for the Holy Spirit leads us to what is right: "Your good Spirit will lead me to the right path" (Ps 142:10); and he frees us from the slavery of sin and of the law: "The law of the Spirit, of life in Christ, has set me free" (Rom 8:2).

Secondly, we get an indication of him through the sound of his words; and when we hear them we know his spirituality, for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks.

Thirdly, he has an origin and an end that are hidden, because no one can judge one who is spiritual: "The spiritual man judges all things, and he himself is judged by no one" (1 Cor 2:15). Or, we do not know where such a person comes from, i.e., the source of his spiritual birth, which is baptismal grace; or where he goes, i.e., of what he is made worthy, that is, of eternal life, which remains concealed from us.

457 Then the cause and reason for spiritual regeneration are set forth. First, a question is asked by Nicodemus; secondly, the Lord's answer is given (v 10).

Apparet autem ex primo, quod Nicodemus adhuc rudis, et adhuc Iudaeus sensibilis existens, mysteria Christi, et per ea exempla, et per rationes proposita intelligere non poterat; et ideo dicit *quomodo possunt haec fieri?*

Dupliciter namque aliqui inquirunt. Quidam namque ex diffidentia; sicut Zacharias, Lc. I, v. 18: *unde hoc sciam? Ego enim sum senex, et uxor mea processit in diebus suis: et ideo punitus fuit; Is. XL, 23: qui dat scrutatores eius quasi non sint.* Aliqui vero ex studio addiscendi, sicut virgo beata, cum dixit Angelo, Lc. I, 34: *quomodo fiet istud, quoniam virum non cognosco?* Et tales instruuntur. Quia ergo iste quaesivit ex studio addiscendi, ideo meruit instrui.

Et hoc est quod sequitur *respondit Iesus* etc. ubi primo dominus arguit eius tarditatem; secundo respondet ad quaestionem ipsius, ibi *et nemo ascendit in caelum.*

Tarditatem eius arguit ex tribus: primo ex conditione personae eius cui loquitur, cum dicit *tu es magister.* ubi non reprehendit eum dominus ut insultaret ei, sed quia confidebat adhuc de magisterio suo, praesumens de sua scientia, voluit eum humiliando efficere habitaculum spiritus sancti; Is. ult., 2: *ad quem respiciam, nisi ad pauperculum, et contritum spiritu?* Et dicit *tu es magister.* quia si aliquis simplex non potest profunda capere, tolerabile est; sed hoc in magistro valde est reprehensibile, et ideo dicit ei *tu es magister,* idest litterae quae occidit, I Cor. III; *in Israel, et haec, scilicet spiritualia ignoras?* Hebr. V, 12: *etenim cum deberetis esse magistri propter tempus, rursus indigetis ut vos doceamini.*

Si dicas, quod dominus iuste argueret Nicodemum, si dixisset ei aliquid de veteri lege, et ipse non intellexisset; sed dixit ei de nova lege.

458 It is apparent from the first that Nicodemus, as yet dull, and remaining a Jew on the level of sense, was unable to understand the mysteries of Christ in spite of the examples and explanations that were given. And so he says, **How can all this happen?**

There are two reasons why one may question about something. Some question because of disbelief, as did Zechariah, saying: "How will I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in age" (Lk 1:18); "He confounds those who search into mysteries" (Is 40:23). Others, on the other hand, question because of a desire to know, as the Blessed Virgin did when she said to the angel: "How shall this be, since I do not know man?" (Lk 1:34). It is the latter who are instructed. And so, because Nicodemus asked from a desire to learn, he deserved to be instructed.

459 And this is what follows: **Jesus replied.** First the Lord chides him for his slowness. Secondly, he answers his question (v 13).

460 He chides him for his slowness, basing himself on three things. First, the condition of the person to whom he is speaking, when he says, **You are a teacher in Israel.** And here the Lord did not chide him to insult him. Rather, because Nicodemus, presuming on his own knowledge, was still relying on his status as a teacher, the Lord wished to make him a temple of the Holy Spirit by humbling him: "For whom will I have regard? For he who is humble and of contrite spirit" (Is 66:2). And he says, **You are a teacher,** because it is tolerable if a simple person cannot grasp profound truths, but in a teacher, it deserves rebuke. And so he says, You are a teacher, i.e., of the letter that kills (2 Cor 3:6), **and you do not know these things?** i.e., spiritual things. "For although you ought to be teachers by now, you yourselves need to be taught again" (Heb 5:12).

461 You might say that the Lord would have rebuked Nicodemus justly if he had spoken to him about matters of the Old Law and he

Dicendum, quod ea quae dominus dicit de spirituali generatione, continentur in lege veteri, sed sub figura, secundum quod habetur I Cor. X, 2: *omnes in Moyse baptizati sunt in nube et in mari*. Et prophetae etiam hoc dixerunt; Ez. XXXVI, 25: *effundam super vos aquam mundam, et mundabimini ab omnibus inquinamentis vestris*.

Secundo vero arguit eius tarditatem ex conditione dicentis. Quod enim non acquiescatur dictis alicuius hominis rudis, tolerari potest; sed repugnare dictis hominis sapientis, et magnae auctoritatis, reprehensibile est; et ideo dicit *amen, amen dico tibi, quia quod scimus loquimur, et quod vidimus testamur*. Requiritur enim ad idoneitatem testis ut perhibeat testimonium de auditu, vel visu; I Io. I, 3: *quod vidimus, et audivimus*. Et ideo dominus utrumque dicit *quod scimus loquimur, et quod vidimus testamur*. Scit autem dominus, secundum quod homo, omnia; infra ult., 17: *domine, tu omnia nosti*; II Mac. VI, 30: *domine, qui habes sanctam scientiam, manifeste tu scis*. Sed et videt omnia cognitione divinitatis; infra VIII, v. 38: *ego quae vidi apud patrem meum, haec facio*.

Dicit autem pluraliter *scimus et vidimus*, ut insinuet mysterium Trinitatis. Ideo *pater in me manens, ipse facit opera*: infra XIV, 10. Vel *quod scimus*, ego et alii spirituales effecti: quia, dicitur Matth. XI, 26: *nemo novit patrem nisi filius, et cui voluerit filius revelare*.

Et tamen *testimonium*, ita probatum, ita firmum, *non accipitis*. Infra eodem *et testimonium eius nemo accipit*.

Tertio arguit eius tarditatem ex conditione eorum quae dicuntur. Quod enim aliqua difficilia non capiantur ab aliquo, non est mirum; sed quod facilia quis non capiat, reprehensibilis est. Et ideo dicit *si terrena dixi*

did not understand them; but he spoke to him about the New Law. I answer that the things which the Lord says of spiritual generation are contained in the Old Law, although under a figure, as is said in 1 Corinthians (10:2): “All were baptized into Moses, in the cloud and in the sea.” And the prophets also said this: “I will pour clean water upon you, and you will be cleansed from all your uncleanness” (Ez 36:25).

462 Secondly, he rebukes him for his slowness on account of the character of the person who is speaking. For it is tolerable if one does not acquiesce to the statements of an ignorant person; but it is reprehensible to reject the statements of a man who is wise and who possesses great authority. And so he says, Amen, amen I say to you, that we **know of what we speak, and we bear witness of what we see**. For a qualified witness must base his testimony on hearing or sight: “What we have seen and heard” (1 Jn 1:3). And so the Lord mentions both: **we know of what we speak, and we bear witness of what we see**. Indeed, the Lord as man knows all things: “Lord, you know all things” (below 21:17); “The Lord, whose knowledge is holy, knows clearly” (2 Mc 6:30). Further, he sees all things by his divine knowledge: “I speak of what I have seen with my Father,” as we read below (8:38).

He speaks in the plural, we know, we see, in order to suggest the mystery of the Trinity: “The Father, who dwells in me, he does the works” (below 14:10). Or, we know, i.e., I, and others who have been made spiritual, because “No one knows the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son wishes to reveal him” (Mt 11:27).

**But you do not accept our testimony**, so approved, so solid. “And his testimony no one accepts (below 3:32).

463 Thirdly, he rebukes him for his slowness because of the quality of the things under discussion. For it is not unusual when someone does not grasp difficult matters, but it is inexcusable not to grasp

*vobis, et non creditis; quomodo si dixero vobis caelestia, credetis? Quasi dicat: si haec quae sunt levia, non capis; quomodo capere poteris processum spiritus sancti? Sap. c. IX, 16: quae in terris sunt, difficile invenimus, et quae in caelis sunt quis investigabit?*

Sed contra. Non invenitur ex praemissis quod dominus dixerit Nicodemo aliqua terrena. Et dicendum, secundum Chrysostomum hic, quod dicit dominus *si terrena dixi vobis* et cetera. Intelligitur de exemplo venti. Ventus enim cum sit generabilis et corruptibilis, numeratur inter res terrenas. Vel potest dici, secundum eundem, quod spiritualis generatio, quae est in Baptismo, caelestis quidem est quantum ad principium, quod sanctificat et regenerat, sed terrena quantum ad subiectum: quod enim regeneratur, scilicet homo, terrenus est.

Vel dicendum, secundum Augustinum, quod intelligendum est de eo quod supra dixerat: *solvite templum hoc* etc. quod ideo terrenum est, quia hoc dixit de templo corporis sui, quod de terra acceperat.

*Si terrena dixi vobis, et non creditis; quomodo si caelestia, credetis?* Quasi dicat: si non creditis generationem spiritualem temporalem, quomodo credetis aeternam filii generationem? Vel si non creditis quae dico de potestate corporis mei, quomodo credetis de potestate divinitatis meae, et de potestate spiritus sancti?

*Respondit Iesus, et cetera.* Hic respondet quaestioni: et primo ponit causas spiritualis regenerationis; secundo manifestat quod dicit, *ibi sic enim Deus dilexit mundum ut filium suum unigenitum daret.* Causa autem spiritualis regenerationis est duplex, scilicet mysterium incarnationis

easy things. So he says, **If I spoke of earthly things, and you did not believe, how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?** As if to say: If you do not grasp these easy things, how will you be able to understand the progress of the Holy Spirit? “What is on earth we find difficult, and who will search Out the things in heaven,” as is said in Wisdom (9:10).

464 But one might object that the above does not show that the Lord spoke of earthly things to Nicodemus. I answer, according to Chrysostom, that the Lord’s statement, **If I spoke of earthly things**, refers to the example of the wind. For the wind, being something which is generable and corruptible, is regarded as an earthly thing. Or one might say, again according to Chrysostom, that the spiritual generation which is given in baptism is heavenly as to its source, which sanctifies and regenerates; but it is earthly as to its subject, for the one regenerated, man, is of the earth.

Or one might answer, according to Augustine, that we must understand this in reference to what Christ said earlier: “Destroy this temple,” which is earthly, because he said this about the temple of his body, which he had taken from the earth.

**If I spoke of earthly things, and you did not believe, how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?** As if to say: If you do not believe in a spiritual generation occurring in time, how will you believe in the eternal generation of the Son? Or, if you do not believe what I tell you about the power of my body, how will you believe what I tell you about the power of my divinity and about the power of the Holy Spirit?

465 **Jesus replied.** Here he answers the question. First, he lays down the causes of spiritual regeneration. Secondly, he explains what he says (3:16). Now there are two causes of spiritual regeneration, namely, the mystery of the incarnation of Christ, and

Christi et passionis eius: et ideo primo agit de incarnatione; secundo de passione, ibi *et sicut Moyses exaltavit serpentem* et cetera.

Est autem considerandum primo, quomodo ista responsio Christi quaestioni Nicodemi satisficiat. Dixerat enim supra dominus, de spiritu loquens, quod *nescis unde veniat, aut quo vadat*: per quod dabatur intelligi, quod spiritualis regeneratio haberet occultum principium et occultum finem. Occulta autem nobis sunt quae in caelis sunt, secundum illud Sap. IX, 16: *quae in caelis sunt, quis investigabit?* Quaestio ergo Nicodemi *quomodo possunt haec fieri?* Sic debet intelligi: quomodo possit aliquid de occulto caelorum venire aut ad occultum caelorum ire? Unde antequam quaestioni satisfaceret, hunc intellectum quaestionis explicavit, dicens *quomodo si dixero vobis caelestia, credetis?*

Et statim incipit ostendere, cuius sit in caelum ascendere proprium: quia omnis qui de caelo descendit, secundum illud Eph. IV, 10: *qui descendit ipse est et qui ascendit*. Hoc enim et in rebus naturalibus invenitur quod unumquodque corpus tendit in locum, secundum suam originem vel naturam. Unde hoc modo potest fieri ut aliquis per spiritum vadat ad locum quem carnales nesciunt, ascendendo in caelum, si hoc fiat per virtutem eius qui descendit de caelo: quia ad hoc descendit, ut ascendens, nobis viam aperiret; Mich. II, v. 13: *ascendit pandens iter ante eos*.

Sed quia dicit *qui descendit de caelo filius hominis*: quidam errandi sumpserunt occasionem. Cum enim filius hominis designet humanam naturam, quae componitur ex anima et corpore, per hoc quod dicit quod filius descendit de caelo, Valentinus accipere voluit, quod etiam corpus de caelo detulisset, et transisset per virginem, nihil ex ea accipiens, sicut aqua per fistulam: ergo non de terrena substantia, nec sumptum de virgine: quod est contra apostolum, Rom. I, 3: *qui factus est ei ex semine David secundum carnem*.

his passion. So first, he treats of the incarnation; secondly, of the passion (3:14).

466 Here we should consider, first of all, how this answer of Christ is an adequate reply to the question of Nicodemus. For above, when the Lord was speaking of the Spirit, he said: **you do not know where it comes from or where it goes**. We understand by this that spiritual regeneration has a hidden source and a hidden end. Now the things in heaven are hidden from us: "Who will search out the things in heaven?" (Wis 9:16). Therefore, the sense of Nicodemus' question, **How can all this happen?** is this: How can something come from the secret things of heaven or go to the secret things of heaven? So before answering, the Lord expressed this interpretation of the question, saying, **how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?**

And immediately he begins to show whose prerogative it is to ascend into heaven, namely, anyone who came down from heaven, according to the statement of Ephesians (4:10): "He who descended is he who ascended." This is verified even in natural things, namely, that each body tends to a place according to its origin or nature. And so in this way it can come about that someone, through the Spirit, may go to a place which carnal persons do not know, i.e., by ascending into heaven, if this is done through the power of one who descended from heaven: because he descended in order that, in ascending, he might open a way for us: "He ascends, opening the way before them" (Mi 2:13).

467 Some have fallen into error because of his saying, **the One who came down from heaven, the Son of Man**. For since Son of Man designates human nature, which is composed of soul and body, then because he says that the Son descended from heaven, Valentinus wanted to maintain that he even took his body from heaven and thus passed through the Virgin without receiving anything from her, as water passes through a pipe; so that his body was neither of an earthly substance nor taken from the Virgin. But

this is contrary to the statement of the Apostle, writing to the Romans (1:3): “who was made from the seed of David according to the flesh.”

Origenes vero dixit, quod descendit de caelo secundum animam, quam dicit ab initio fuisse creatam cum Angelis, et verbo unitam, et postmodum de caelo descendisse assumendo carnem de virgine. Sed et hoc repugnat Catholicae fidei, quae animas dicit ante corpora non extitisse.

On the other hand, Origen said that he descended from heaven as to his soul, which, he says, had been created along with the angels from the very beginning, and that later this soul descended from heaven and took flesh from the Virgin. But this also conflicts with the Catholic faith, which teaches that souls do not exist before their bodies.

Non ergo intelligendum est quod filius hominis secundum humanam naturam de caelo descenderit, sed secundum divinam. Cum enim in Christo sit unum suppositum, vel hypostasis, vel persona duarum naturarum, divinae scilicet, et humanae; ex quacumque earum hoc suppositum nominetur, possunt ei attribui et divina et humana. Possumus enim dicere, quod filius hominis creavit stellas, et quod filius Dei crucifixus est. Sed filius Dei crucifixus est, non secundum divinam naturam, sed secundum humanam; filius autem hominis creavit stellas secundum divinam naturam. Ita in his quae de Christo dicuntur, non est attendenda distinctio quantum ad id de quo dicuntur, quia indifferenter et divina et humana dicuntur de Deo et homine; sed est attendenda distinctio quantum ad id secundum quod dicuntur, quia divina dicuntur de Christo secundum divinam naturam, humana vero secundum humanam.

468 Therefore, we should not understand that the Son of Man descended from heaven according to his human nature, but only according to his divine nature. For since in Christ there is one *suppositum*, or hypostasis, or person of the two natures, the divine and human natures, then no matter from which of these two natures this *suppositum* is named, divine and human things can be attributed to him. For we can say that the Son of Man created the stars and that the Son of God was crucified. But the Son of God was crucified, not according to his divine nature, but according to his human nature; and the Son of Man created the stars according to his divine nature. And so in things that are said of Christ, the distinction is not to be taken with respect to that about which they are said, because divine and human things are said of God and man indifferently; but a distinction must be made with respect to that according to which they are said, because divine things are said of Christ according to his divine nature, but human things according to his human nature. Thus, to descend from heaven is said of the Son of Man, not according to his human nature, but according to his divine nature, according to which it was appropriate to him to have been from heaven before the incarnation, as is said, “Heaven belongs to the Lord” (Ps 113:16).

Descendere ergo de caelis dicitur de filio hominis, non secundum humanam naturam, sed secundum divinam, secundum quam convenit ei ante incarnationem de caelo fuisse, secundum illud Ps. CXIII, 16: *caelum*

469 he is said to have come down, but not by local motion, because then he would not have remained in heaven; for nothing which moves locally remains in the place from which it comes down. And



*caeli domino*. Dicitur autem descendisse, non motu locali, quia sic non remaneret in caelo: nihil enim localiter motum manet unde descendit. Et ideo ad excludendum motum localem, subdit *qui est in caelo*; quasi dicat: sic descendit de caelo, quod tamen est in caelo. Descendit enim de caelo, non quidem desinens esse sursum, sed assumens naturam quae est deorsum: quae, quia non includitur, vel comprehenditur, corpore eius existente in terra, ipse secundum divinitatem erat in caelis, et ubique. Et ideo ad designandum, quod hoc modo dicitur descendisse, quia assumpsit naturam, dixit quod *descendit filius hominis*; idest, in quantum factus est filius hominis.

Vel potest dici etiam, quod quantum ad corpus descendit de caelo, ut Hilarius dicit: non quod materia corporis Christi descenderit de caelo, sed quod virtus formativa eius de caelo fuit.

Sed quid est quod dicit *nemo ascendit in caelum, nisi filius hominis, qui est in caelo*? Nonne Paulus, et Petrus, et alii sancti ascenderunt, secundum illud II Cor. c. V, 1: *domum habemus, non manufactam in caelis* et cetera. Respondeo dicendum, quod nemo ascendit in caelum nisi Christus et membra sua, idest iusti fideles: propterea filius Dei de caelis descendit, ut nos faciendo membra sua ad ascensum caelorum praepararet; nunc quidem in spe, tandem vero in re; Eph. II, 6: *qui resuscitavit nos, et consedere nos fecit in caelestibus in Christo Iesu*.

Hic ponit mysterium passionis, cuius virtute Baptismus efficaciam habet; Rom. c. VI, 3: *quicumque baptizati sumus in Christo Iesu, in morte ipsius baptizati sumus*. Et circa hoc tria facit: primo namque proponit passionis figuram; secundo passionis modum; tertio passionis fructum.

so to exclude local motion, he adds, **who lives in heaven**. As if to say: He descended from heaven in such a way as yet to be in heaven. For he came down from heaven without ceasing to be above, yet assuming a nature which is from below. And because he is not enclosed or held fast by his body which exists on earth, he was, according to his divinity, in heaven and everywhere. And therefore to indicate that he is said to have come down in this way, because he assumed a [human] nature, he said, **the Son of Man** came down, i.e., insofar as he became Son of Man.

470 Or it can be said, as Hilary does, that he came down from heaven as to his body: not that the material of Christ's body came down from heaven, but that the power which formed it was from heaven.

471 But why does he say, **No one has gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who lives in heaven**? For have not Paul and Peter and the other saints gone up, according to 2 Corinthians (5:1): "We have a house in the heavens." I answer that no one goes up into heaven except Christ and his members, i.e., those believers who are just. Accordingly, the Son of God came down from heaven in order that, by making us his members, he might prepare us to ascend into heaven: now, indeed, in hope, but later in reality. "He has raised us up, and has given us a place in heaven in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:6).

472 Here he mentions the mystery of the passion, in virtue of which baptism has its efficacy: "We who have been baptized into Christ Jesus, have been baptized into his death" (Rom 6:3). And with regard to this he does three things. First, he gives a symbol for the passion. Secondly, the manner of the passion. Thirdly, the fruit of the passion.

Figuram quidem assumit de veteri lege, ut reducat ad intellectum Nicodemum; unde dicit *sicut Moyses exaltavit serpentem in deserto* etc. quod quidem habetur Num. XXI, 5 quoniam dominus, populo Iudaeorum dicenti: *nauseat anima nostra super hoc cibo levissimo*, in ultionem misit serpentes, et postea concurrente populo ad Moysen, et ipso clamante ad dominum, mandavit dominus in remedium fieri serpentem aeneum, qui quidem fuit et in remedium contra illos serpentes, et in figuram passionis dominicae. Unde et dicitur: *in signum posuit eum*.

Proprium autem serpentis est habere venenum; sed serpens aeneus venenum non habuit, sed figura fuit serpentis venenosi. Sic et Christus non habuit peccatum, quod est venenum: quia *cum consummatum fuerit, generat mortem*, ut dicitur Iac. c. I, 15, sed habuit similitudinem peccati, Rom. c. VIII, 3: *misit Deus filium suum in similitudinem carnis peccati*. Ideo Christus habuit effectum serpentis contra motum concupiscentiarum ignitarum.

Modum autem passionis ostendit, cum dicit *sic exaltari oportet filium hominis*: quod intelligitur de exaltatione crucis. Unde infra XII, 34 cum diceret: *oportet exaltari filium hominis* etc. sequitur: *hoc dicebat significans qua morte clarificaturus esset Deum*.

Voluit autem mori exaltatus, primo ut purgaret caelestia: iam enim per sanctitatem suae conversationis purgaverat terram, restabat per mortem purgare aerea. Col. I, 20: *pacificans per sanguinem suum quae in caelis et quae in terris*. Secundo ut triumpharet de Daemonibus, qui in aere bellum praeparant; Eph. c. II, 2: *secundum principem potestatis aeris* et cetera. Tertio ut corda nostra ad se traheret; infra XII, 32: *ego si exaltatus fuero a terra, omnia traham ad me ipsum*. Quarto quia in morte crucis fuit exaltatus, in quantum ibi de inimicis triumphavit: unde mors non vocatur, sed exaltatio; Ps. 109: *de torrente in via bibit, propterea exaltabit caput* et cetera. Quinto quia crux fuit causa exaltationis eius; Phil. II,

473 He takes the symbol from the old law, in order to adapt to the understanding of Nicodemus; so he says, **Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert**. This refers to Numbers (21:5) when the Lord, faced with the Jewish people saying, “We are sick of this useless food,” sent serpents to punish them; and when the people came to Moses and he interceded with the Lord, the Lord commanded that for a remedy they make a serpent of bronze; and this was to serve both as a remedy against those serpents and as a symbol of the Lord’s passion. Hence it says that this bronze serpent was lifted up as a sign (Nm 21:9).

Now it is characteristic of serpents that they are poisonous, but not so the serpent of bronze, although it was a symbol of a poisonous serpent. So, too, Christ did not have sin, which is also a poison: “Sin, when it is fully developed, brings forth death” (Jas 1:15); but he had the likeness of sin: “God sent his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3). And thus Christ had the effect of the serpent against the insurgence of inflamed concupiscences.

474 He shows the manner of the passion when he says, **so must the Son of Man be lifted up**: and this refers to the lifting up of the cross. So below (12:34) when it says, “The Son of Man must be lifted up,” it also has, “He said this to indicate the manner of his death.”

He willed to die lifted up, first of all, to cleanse the heavens: for since he had cleansed the things on earth by the sanctity of his life, the things of the air were left to be cleansed by his death: “through him he should reconcile all things to himself, whether on earth or in the heavens, making peace through his blood” (Col 1:20). Secondly, to triumph over the demons who prepare for war in the air: “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph 2:2). Thirdly, he wished to die lifted up to draw our hearts to himself: “I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all to myself” (below 12:32). And fourthly, because in the death of the cross he was lifted up in the sense that there he triumphed over his enemies; so it is not called a death, but a lifting up: “He will

8: *factus est obediens patri usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis: propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum.*

Fructus autem passionis Christi est vita aeterna; unde dicit *ut omnis qui credit in ipsum, bene operando, non pereat, sed habeat vitam aeternam.* Et respondet hic fructus fructui figuralis serpentis. Quicumque enim respiciebant serpentem aeneum, liberabantur a veneno, et praeservabantur vitae. Ille autem respicit filium hominis exaltatum qui credit Christo crucifixo; et sic liberatur a veneno et a peccato, infra XI, 26: *qui credit in me, non morietur in aeternum:* et praeservatur ad vitam aeternam; infra XX, 31: *haec scripta sunt ut credatis, et ut credentes vitam habeatis in nomine eius.*

drink from the stream on the way, therefore he will lift up his head” (Ps 109:7). Fifthly, he willed to die lifted up because the cross was the reason for his being lifted up, i.e., exalted: “He became obedient to the Father even to death, the death of the cross; on account of which God has exalted him” (Phil 2:8).

475 Now the fruit of Christ’s passion is eternal life; hence he says, so **that everyone who believes in him**, performing good works, **may not be lost, but have eternal life.** And this fruit corresponds to the fruit of the symbolic serpent. For whoever looked upon the serpent of bronze was freed from poison and his life was preserved. But he who looks upon the lifted up Son of Man, and believes in the crucified Christ, he is freed from poison and sin: “Whoever believes in me will never die” (below 11:26), and is preserved for eternal life. “These things are written that you may believe ... and that believing you may have life in his name” (below 20:3 1).

**Lectio 3**

16 οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον. 17 οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα κρίνη τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῆ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ. 18 ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν οὐ κρίνεται: ὁ δὲ μὴ πιστεύων ἤδη κέκριται, ὅτι μὴ πεπίστευκεν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ. 19 αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ κρίσις, ὅτι τὸ φῶς ἐλήλυθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον καὶ ἠγάπησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι μᾶλλον τὸ σκότος ἢ τὸ φῶς, ἦν γὰρ αὐτῶν πονηρὰ τὰ ἔργα. 20 πᾶς γὰρ ὁ φαῦλα πράσσων μισεῖ τὸ φῶς καὶ οὐκ ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα μὴ ἐλεγχθῆ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ: 21 ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα φανερωθῆ αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα ὅτι ἐν θεῷ ἐστιν εἰργασμένα.

Supra dominus assignavit causam spiritualis regenerationis quantum ad descensum filii, et exaltationem filii hominis, et posuit fructum, scilicet vitam aeternam, qui quidem fructus incredibilis videbatur hominibus habentibus necessitatem moriendi: et ideo dominus hoc manifestat, et primo probat magnitudinem fructus ex magnitudine divini amoris; secundo excludit quamdam responsionem, ibi *non enim misit Deus filium suum in mundum, ut iudicet mundum.*

**LECTURE 3**

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 17 God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not judged; but whoever does not believe is already judged, since he does not believe in the name of the Only Begotten Son of God. 19 The judgment of condemnation is this: the light came into the world, and men loved darkness more than the light, because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who practices evil hates the light, and does not approach the light for fear that his deeds might be exposed. 21 But everyone who practices the truth comes to the light, to make clear that his deeds are done in God."

476 Above, the Lord assigned as the cause of spiritual regeneration the coming down of the Son and the lifting up of the Son of Man; and he set forth its fruit, which is eternal life. But this fruit seemed unbelievable to men laboring under the necessity of dying. And so now the Lord explains this. First, he proves the greatness of the fruit from the greatness of God's love. Secondly, he rejects a certain reply (v 17).

Notandum est autem, quod omnium bonorum nostrorum causa est dominus et divinus amor. Amare enim proprie est velle alicui bonum. Cum ergo voluntas Dei sit causa rerum, ex hoc provenit nobis bonum, quia Deus amat nos. Et quidem amor Dei est causa boni naturae; Sap. XI, 25: *diligis omnia quae sunt* et cetera. Item est causa boni gratiae; Jer. XXXI, 3: *in caritate perpetua dilexi te, ideo attraxi te*, scilicet per gratiam. Sed quod sit etiam dator boni gloriae, procedit ex magna caritate. Et ideo ostendit hic, hanc Dei caritatem esse maximam ex quatuor.

Primo namque ex persona amantis, quia Deus est qui diligit, et immense; et ideo dicit *sic Deus dilexit*; Deut. XXXIII, 3: *dilexit populos: omnes sancti in manu illius sunt*. Secundo ex conditione amati, quia homo est qui diligitur, mundanus scilicet, corporeus, idest in peccatis existens; Rom. V, 10: *commendat Deus suam caritatem in nobis: quoniam cum adhuc inimici essemus, reconciliati sumus Deo per mortem filii eius*. Et ideo dicit *mundum*. Tertio ex magnitudine munerum: nam dilectio ostenditur per donum, quia, ut dicit Gregorius probatio dilectionis, exhibitio operis est. Deus autem maximum donum nobis dedit, quia filium suum unigenitum; et ideo dicit *ut filium suum unigenitum daret*; Rom. VIII, 32: *proprio filio suo non pepercit, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidit illum*.

Et dicit *suum*, idest filium naturalem, sibi consubstantialem, non adoptivum: de quibus in Ps. LXXXI, 6: *ego dixi, dii estis*. Et per hoc patet falsitas Arii: quia si filius Dei esset creatura, ut ipse dicebat, non posset in eo ostendi immensitas divini amoris, per susceptionem infinitae bonitatis, quam nulla creatura recipere potest. Dicit etiam *unigenitum*, ut ostendat Deum non divisum amorem habere ad plures filios, sed totum in filio, quem dedit ad comprobandum immensitatem sui amoris; infra V, 20: *pater diligit filium, et omnia demonstrat ei*.

477 Here we should note that the cause of all our good is the Lord and divine love. For to love is, properly speaking, to will good to someone. Therefore, since the will of God is the cause of things, good comes to us because God loves us. And God's love is the cause of the good of nature: "You love everything which exists" (Wis 11:2 5). It is also the cause of the good which is grace: "I have loved you with an everlasting love, and so I have drawn you" i.e., through grace (Jer 3 1:3). But it is because of his great love that he gives us the good of glory. So he shows us here, from four standpoints, that this love of God is the greatest.

First, from the person of the one loving, because it is God who loves, and immeasurably. So he says, **For God so loved**: "He has loved the people; all the holy ones are in his hand" (Dt 33:3). Secondly, from the condition of the one who is loved, because it is man, a bodily creature of the world, i.e., existing in sin: "God shows his love for us, because while we were still his enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom 5:8). Thus he says, **the world**. Thirdly, from the greatness of his gifts, for love is shown by a gift; as Gregory says: "The proof of love is given by action." But God has given us the greatest of gifts, his Only Begotten Son, and so he says, **that he gave his Only Begotten Son**. "God did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for all of us" (Rom 8:32).

He says his Son, i.e., his natural Son, consubstantial, not an adopted son, i.e., not those sons of which the Psalmist says: "I said: You are gods" (Ps 81:6). This shows that the opinion of Arius is false: for if the Son of God were a creature, as he said, the immensity of God's love through the taking on of infinite goodness, which no creature can receive, could not have been revealed in him. He further says **Only Begotten**, to show that God does not have a love divided among many sons, but all of it is for that Son whom he gave to prove the immensity of his love: "For the Father loves the Son, and shows him everything that he does" (below 5:20).

Quarto ex fructus magnitudine, quia per eum habemus vitam aeternam, unde dicit *ut omnis qui credit in eum, non pereat, sed habeat vitam aeternam*: quam acquisivit nobis per mortem crucis.

Sed numquid ad hoc dedit eum ut moreretur in cruce? Dedit quidem eum ad mortem crucis, in quantum dedit voluntatem patiendi in ea: et hoc dupliciter. Primo quia in quantum filius Dei, ab aeterno habuit voluntatem assumendi carnem, et patiendi pro nobis, et hanc voluntatem habuit a patre. Secundo vero quia animae Christi inspirata est a Deo voluntas patiendi.

Nota autem, quod dominus supra loquens de descensu qui competit Christo secundum divinitatem, nominavit eum filium Dei; et hoc est ratione unius suppositi in duabus naturis, sicut supra dictum est. Et ideo divina possunt praedicari de supposito humanae naturae, et humana de supposito divinae, non tamen secundum eandem naturam; sed divina secundum divinam naturam, et humana secundum humanam. Specialis autem causa quare hic nominavit eum filium Dei est quia ipse proposuit donum istud in signum divini amoris, per quem provenit nobis fructus vitae aeternae. Tali ergo nomine nominandus erat, cui competeret indicare virtutem factivam vitae aeternae, quae non est in Christo in quantum filius hominis, sed in quantum filius Dei; I Io. ult., 20: *hic est verus Deus, et vita aeterna*; supra I, 4: *in ipso vita erat*.

Sed nota, quod dicit *non pereat*. Perire namque dicitur aliquid quod impeditur ne perveniat ad finem ad quem ordinatur. Homo autem ordinatur ad finem, qui est vita aeterna; et quamdiu peccat, avertit se ab ipso fine. Et licet dum vivit omnino non pereat, ita quod non possit restaurari, tamen quando moritur in peccato, tunc perit omnino; Ps. I, 6: *iter impiorum peribit*.

Fourthly, from the greatness of its fruit, because through him we have eternal life. Hence he says, **so that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life**, which he obtained for us through the death of the cross.

478 But did God give his Son with the intention that he should die on the cross? He did indeed give him for the death of the cross inasmuch as he gave him the will to suffer on it. And he did this in two ways. First, because as the Son of God he willed from eternity to assume flesh and to suffer for us; and this will he had from the Father. Secondly, because the will to suffer was infused into the soul of Christ by God.

479 Note that above, when the Lord was speaking about the coming down which belongs to Christ according to his divinity, he called him the Son of God; and this because of the one *suppositum* of the two natures, as was explained above. And so divine things can be said about the *suppositum* of the human nature, and human things can be said about the *suppositum* of the divine nature, but not with reference to the same nature. Rather, divine things are said with reference to the divine nature, and human things with reference to the human nature. Now the specific reason why he here calls him the Son of God is that he set forth that gift as a sign of the divine love, through which the fruit of eternal life comes to us. And so, he should have been called by that name which indicates the power that produces eternal life; and this power is not in Christ as Son of Man but as Son of God: "This is the true God and eternal life," as we read in 1 John (5:20); "In him was life" (above 1:4).

480 Note also that he says, **should not perish**. Someone is said to be perishing when he is hindered from arriving at the end to which he is ordained. But the end to which man is ordained is eternal life, and as long as he sins, he turns himself from that end. And although while he is living he cannot entirely perish in the sense that he cannot be restored, yet when he dies in sin, then he entirely perishes: "The way of the wicked will perish" (Ps 1:7).

In hoc autem quod dicit *habeat vitam aeternam*, indicatur divini amoris immensitas: nam dando vitam aeternam, dat seipsum. Nam vita aeterna nihil aliud est quam frui Deo. Dare autem seipsum, magni amoris est indicium; Eph. II, 5: *Deus autem, qui dives est in misericordia, convivificavit nos in Christo*, idest fecit nos habere vitam aeternam.

Hic excludit dominus obiectionem quae posset fieri. In veteri enim lege promittebatur quod dominus esset venturus ad iudicandum; Is. III, 14: *dominus ad iudicium veniet* et cetera. Unde posset aliquis dicere, quod non venerat filius Dei, ut det vitam aeternam, sed ut iudicet mundum: et ideo hoc excludens dominus, primo ostendit se non venisse ad iudicandum; secundo probat, ibi *qui credit in eum, non iudicatur*.

Dicit ergo: non enim venit filius Dei ad iudicandum, quia *non misit Deus filium suum*, scilicet quantum ad primum adventum, *ut iudicet mundum, sed ut salvetur mundus*. Simile habetur infra XII, 47: *non enim veni ut iudicem mundum, sed ut salvificem mundum*.

Salus autem hominis est ut perveniat ad Deum; Ps. LXI, 8: *in Deo salutare meum*. Pervenire autem ad Deum est consequi vitam aeternam: unde idem est salvari quod habere vitam aeternam. Nec debent homines esse pigri, et abutentes Dei misericordia, propter hoc quod dicit *non veni ut iudicem mundum* licentiam sibi indulgere peccandi, quia etsi in primo adventu non venerit ad iudicandum, sed ad dimittendum; in secundo tamen veniet ad iudicandum, sed non ad dimittendum, ut Chrysostomus dicit. Ps. LXXIV, 3: *cum accepero tempus, ego iustitias iudicabo*.

Contra est, quod dicitur infra IX v. 39: *in iudicium ego veni*. Sed dicendum est, quod duplex est iudicium. Unum est discretionis; et ad hoc venit filius Dei in primo adventu: quia eo veniente homines discreti

He indicates the immensity of God's love in saying, **have eternal life**: for by giving eternal life, he gives himself. For eternal life is nothing else than enjoying God. But to give oneself is a sign of great love: "But God, who is rich in mercy, has brought us to life in Christ" (Eph 2:5), i.e., he gave us eternal life.

481 Here the Lord excludes an objection that might be made. For in the old law it was promised that the Lord would come to judge: "The Lord will come to judge" (Is 3:14). So someone might say that the Son of God had not come to give eternal life but in order to judge the world. The Lord rejects this. First, he shows that he has not come to judge. Secondly, he proves it (v 18).

482 So he says: The Son of God has not come to judge, because **God did not send his Son**, referring to his first coming, **into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him**. The same thing is found below (12:47): "I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world."

Now man's salvation is to attain to God: "My salvation is in God" (Ps 61:8). And to attain to God is to obtain eternal life; hence to be saved is the same as to have eternal life. However, because the Lord says, "I did not come to judge the world," men should not be lazy or abuse God's mercy, or give themselves over to sin: because although in his first coming he did not come to judge but to forgive, yet in his second coming, as Chrysostom says, he will come to judge but not to forgive. "At the appointed time I will judge with rigor" (Ps 74:3).

483 However, this seems to conflict with what is said below (9:39): "I came into this world to judge." I answer that there are two kinds of judgment. One is the judgment of distinction, and the Son has come for this in his first coming; because with his coming men are

sunt, quidam per caecitatem, quidam per lumen gratiae. Aliud est condemnationis; et in hoc quantum de se non venit.

Hic probat quae dixerat, quasi per locum a divisione, hoc modo. Quicumque iudicabitur, aut erit fidelis, aut infidelis; sed non veni ad iudicandum infideles, quia iam iudicati sunt: ergo a principio *non misit Deus filium suum, ut iudicet mundum*. Primo ergo ostendit, quod fideles non iudicantur; secundo quod nec infideles, ibi *qui autem non credit, iam iudicatus est*.

Dicit ergo: *non veni ut iudicem mundum*: quia non venit ad iudicandum fideles, quia *qui credit in eum, non iudicatur*, scilicet iudicio condemnationis, quo nullus credens in eum fide formata iudicatur; infra c. V, 24: *in iudicium non venit, sed transit a morte in vitam*: sed iudicabitur iudicio praemiationis et approbationis, de quo dicit apostolus I Cor. IV, 4: *qui autem iudicat me, dominus est*.

Sed numquid multi fideles peccatores non damnabuntur? Respondeo dicendum, quod quidam haeretici dixerunt, quod nullus fidelis, quantumcumque peccator, damnabitur; sed salvabitur merito fundamenti, scilicet fidei, licet aliquam poenam patiat. Et erroris sui fundamentum sumunt ex hoc quod dicit apostolus I Cor. c. III, 11: *fundamentum aliud nemo potest ponere*; et infra: *si cuiusquam opus arserit, ipse tamen salvus erit, quasi per ignem*.

Sed hoc manifeste est contra apostolum ad Gal. V, 19: *manifesta sunt opera carnis, quae sunt fornicatio, immunditia, impudicitia et cetera. Qui talia agunt, regnum Dei non possidebunt*. Dicendum est ergo, quod fundamentum non est fides informis, sed formata, quae per caritatem operatur. Et ideo signanter non dicit dominus qui credit ei,

distinguished, some by blindness and some by the light of grace. The other is the judgment of condemnation; and he did not come for this as such.

484 Now he proves what he had said, as though by a process of elimination, in the following way: Whoever will be judged will be either a believer or an unbeliever. But I have not come to judge unbelievers, because they are already judged. Therefore, from the outset, God did not send his Son to judge the world. So first he shows that believers are not judged. Secondly, that unbelievers are not judged (v 18).

485 He says therefore: I have not come to judge the world: because he did not come to judge believers, for **Whoever believes in him is not judged**, with the judgment of condemnation, with which no one who believes in him with faith informed by love is judged: "Whoever believes ... will not encounter judgment, but will pass from death to life" (below 5:24). But he is judged with the judgment of reward and approval, of which the Apostle says: "It is the Lord who judges me" (1 Cor 4:4).

486 But will there be many believing sinners who will not be damned? I reply that some heretics [e.g., Origen] have said that no believer, however great a sinner he may be, will be damned, but he will be saved by reason of his foundation of salvation, namely, his faith, although he may suffer some [temporary] punishment. They take as the basis of their error the statement of the Apostle: "No one can lay a foundation other than the one that has been laid, that is, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 3:11); and further on: "If a man's building burns ... he himself will be saved as one fleeing through fire" (3:15).

But this view is clearly contrary to what the Apostle says in Galatians (5:1): "It is obvious what proceeds from the flesh: lewd conduct, impurity, licentiousness ... Those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." Therefore we must say that the foundation of salvation is not faith without charity (unformed faith), but faith



sed *qui credit in eum*; idest, qui credendo in eum, per caritatem tendit, *non iudicatur*; et hoc, quia non peccat mortaliter, per quod tollitur fundamentum.

Vel, secundum Chrysostomum, omnis qui male agit, non credit; ad Tit. I, 16: *confitentur se nosse Deum, factis autem negant*; sed qui bene agit, Iac. II, 18: *ostende mihi ex operibus fidem tuam*: et talis non iudicatur et non condemnatur propter infidelitatem.

Hic ostendit quod infideles non iudicantur. Et primo ponit suam sententiam; secundo manifestat eam, ibi *hoc autem est iudicium et cetera*.

Sciendum est autem circa primum, secundum Augustinum, quod non dicit Christus: qui non credit, iudicatur; sed dicit *non iudicatur*: quod potest tripliciter exponi. Secundum Augustinum enim qui non credit non iudicatur, quia iam iudicatus est, non in re, sed in Dei praescientia; idest, iam praecognitus est apud Deum condemnandus; II Tim. c. II, 19: *novit dominus qui sunt eius*. Alio modo, secundum Chrysostomum, *qui non credit iam iudicatus est*; idest, hoc ipsum quod non credit, est sibi ad condemnationem: non credere enim, est non adhaerere lumini, quod est esse in tenebris; et haec est magna condemnatio; Sap. XVII, 17: *una catena tenebrarum omnes erant colligati*; Tob. V, 12: *quale gaudium mihi erit qui in tenebris sedeo, et lumen caeli non video?* Tertio modo secundum eundem, *qui non credit*, non iudicatur, idest, iam condemnatus est; idest, iam manifestam causam condemnationis habet. Et simile est ac si diceretur de aliquo qui manifestam causam mortis habet, ante etiam quam feratur sententia mortis contra eum, quia iam mortuus est.

informed by charity. Significantly therefore the Lord did not say, “whoever believes him,” but **whoever believes in him**, that is, whoever by believing tends toward him through love **is not judged**, because he does not sin mortally, thereby removing the foundation.

Or one could say, following Chrysostom, that everyone who acts sinfully is not a believer: “They profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions” (Ti 1:16); but only one who acts worthily: “Show me your faith by your works” (Jas 2:18). It is only such a one who is not judged and not condemned for unbelief.

487 Here [the Lord] shows that unbelievers are not judged. First he makes the statement; secondly, he explains it (v 19).

488 Concerning the first we should note, according to Augustine, that Christ does not say, “whoever does not believe is judged,” but rather **is not judged**. This can be explained in three ways. For, according to Augustine, whoever does not believe is not judged, because he is already judged, not in fact, but in God’s foreknowledge, that is, it is already known to God that he will be condemned: “The Lord knows who are his” (2 Tim 2:19). In another way: according to Chrysostom, **whoever does not believe is already judged**, that is, the very fact that he does not believe is for him a condemnation: for not to believe is not to adhere to the light—which is to live in darkness, and this is a momentous condemnation: “All were bound with one chain of darkness” (Wis 17:17). “What kind of joy can I have, I who sit in darkness and do not see the light of heaven?” (Tb 5:12). In a third way: also according to Chrysostom, **whoever does not believe is not judged**, that is, being already condemned, he displays the obvious reason for his condemnation. This is like saying that a person who is proven guilty of death is already dead, even before the sentence of death has been passed on him, because he is as good as dead.

Unde Gregorius dicit quod in iudicio duplex est ordo. Quidam etenim iudicabuntur iudicio discussionis, illi videlicet qui habent aliquid condemnationi repugnans, scilicet bonum fidei, scilicet fideles peccatores. Sed infideles, quorum damnatio est manifesta, absque discussione damnantur; et de istis dicitur *qui non credit, iam iudicatus est*, Ps. I, 5: *non resurgent impii in iudicio*, scilicet discussionis.

Sciendum est autem, quod iudicari idem est quod condemnari; condemnari autem est a salute excidere, ad quam una sola via pervenitur, scilicet per nomen filii Dei; Act. IV, 12: *non est aliud nomen datum sub caelo, in quo oporteat nos salvos fieri*. Et in Ps. LIII, 3: *Deus in nomine tuo salvum me fac*. Qui ergo non credunt in filium Dei, excidunt a salute, et manifesta est in eis causa damnationis.

Hic manifestat dominus suam sententiam, scilicet quod causa condemnationis manifesta est in infidelibus: et primo ponit manifestans signum; secundo ostendit signi convenientiam, ibi *omnis enim qui male agit, odit lucem*.

In signo autem proposito tria facit: primo enim proponit Dei beneficium; secundo perversitatem mentis infidelium; tertio perversitatis causam.

Dicit ergo: manifeste apparet quod *qui non credit, iam iudicatus est*, quod apparet ex Dei beneficio: quia *lux venit in mundum*. Homines enim erant in tenebris ignorantiae, quas quidem tenebras Deus destruxit, mittens lucem in mundum, ut homines cognoscerent veritatem; infra VIII, 12: *ego sum lux mundi: qui sequitur me non ambulat in tenebris, sed habebit lumen vitae*; Lc. I, 78: *visitavit nos oriens ex alto. Illuminare his qui in tenebris et in umbra mortis sedent*. Sed ista venit in mundum, scilicet lux, quia homo ad eam accedere non poterat: nam *lucem habitat inaccessibilem, quam nemo hominum vidit, sed nec videre potest*. I Tim. VI, 16.

Hence Gregory says that in passing judgments there is a twofold order. Some will be sentenced by a trial; such are the ones who have something not deserving of condemnation, namely, the good of faith, that is, sinners who believe. But unbelievers, Whose reason for condemnation is manifest, are sentenced without trial; and of these it is said, **whoever does not believe is already judged**. “In judgment the wicked will not stand” (Ps 1:6), that is, stand in trial.

489 It should be noted that to be judged is the same as to be condemned; and to be condemned is to be shut out from salvation, to which only one road leads, that is, the name of the Son of God: “There is no other name under heaven given to men, by which we are saved” (Acts 4:12); “O God, save me by your name” (Ps 53:3). Therefore, those who do not believe in the Son of God are cut off from salvation, and the cause of their damnation is evident.

490 Here the Lord explains his statement that unbelievers have an evident cause for their condemnation. First, he sets forth the sign which shows this. Secondly, the fittingness of this sign (v 20).

491 In the sign he sets forth he does three things. First, he mentions the gift of God. Secondly, the perversity of mind in unbelievers. Thirdly, the cause of this perversity.

So he says: It is abundantly clear that **whoever does not believe is already judged**, because **the light came into the world**. For men were in the darkness of ignorance, and God destroyed this darkness by sending a light into the world so that men might know the truth: “I am the light of the world. He who follows me does not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (below 8:12); “To enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death” (Lk 1:78). Now the light came into the world because men could not come to it: for “He dwells in inaccessible light, whom no man has seen or is able to see” (1 Tim 6:16).

Apparet etiam ex perversitate mentis infidelium, qui *dilexerunt magis tenebras quam lucem*, idest, magis voluerunt esse in tenebris ignorantiae quam instrui per Christum; Iob c. XXIV, 13: *ipsi fuerunt rebelles lumini*: Is. c. V, 20: *vae qui ponunt lucem tenebras et cetera*.

Cuius quidem perversitatis causa est quia *erant eorum mala opera*: quae a luce dissonant et tenebras quaerunt; Rom. XIII, 12: *abiiciamus opera tenebrarum*, idest peccata, quae tenebras quaerunt; I Thess. ult., 7: *qui dormiunt, nocte dormiunt*; Iob XXIV, 15: *oculus adulteri observat caliginem*. Ex hoc autem aliquis non credit luci, quod ei repugnat, discedendo.

Sed numquid omnes infideles habent mala opera? Videtur quod non: nam multi gentiles secundum virtutem operati sunt; puta Cato, et alii plures. Sed dicendum, secundum Chrysostomum, quod aliud est bene operari ex virtute, aliud ex aptitudine et dispositione naturali. Nam aliqui ex dispositione naturali bene operantur, quia ex eorum dispositione non inclinantur ad contrarium. Et hoc modo etiam infideles potuerunt bene operari: sicut quod aliquis caste vixit, quia non impugnabatur a concupiscentia, et sic de aliis. Illi autem ex virtute bene operantur, qui, etsi inclinantur ad vitium contrarium, tamen ex rectitudine rationis, et bonitate voluntatis a virtute non declinant et hoc est proprium fidelium.

Vel dicendum, quod licet infideles bona facerent, non tamen faciebant propter amorem virtutis, sed propter inanem gloriam. Nec etiam omnia bene operabantur, quia Deo cultum debitum non reddebant.

Consequenter dicit *omnis enim qui male agit, odit lucem*, ostendit propositi signi convenientiam: et primo quidem quantum ad malos;

It is also clear from the perversity of mind in unbelievers who **loved darkness more than the light**, i.e., they preferred to remain in the darkness of ignorance rather than be instructed by Christ: "They have rebelled against the light" (Jb 24:13); "Woe to you who substitute darkness for light, and light for darkness" (Is 5:20).

And the cause of this perversity is that **their deeds were evil**: and such deeds do not conform to the light but seek the darkness: "Let us cast off the works of darkness" (Rom 13:12), i.e., sins, which seek the darkness; "Those who sleep, sleep at night" (1 Thes 5:7); "The eye of the adulterer watches for the darkness," as we read in Job (24:15). Now it is by withdrawing from the light, which is unpleasant to him, that one does not believe the light.

492 But do all unbelievers produce evil works? It seems not: for many Gentiles have acted with virtue; for example, Cato, and many others. I answer, with Chrysostom, that it is one thing to work by reason of virtue, and another by reason of a natural aptitude or disposition. For some act well because of their natural disposition, because their temperament is not inclined in a contrary way. And even unbelievers can act well in this way. For example, one may live chastely because he is not assailed by concupiscentia; and the same for the other virtues. But those who act well by reason of virtue do not depart from virtue, in spite of inclinations to the contrary vice, because of the rightness of their reason and the goodness of their will; and this is proper to believers.

Or, one might answer that although unbelievers may have done good things, they do not do them for love of virtue but out of vainglory. Further, they did not do all things well; for they failed to render to God the worship due him.

493 Then when he says, **Everyone who practices evil hates the light**, he shows the appropriateness of the sign he used. First, with respect to those who are evil. Secondly, with respect to the good.

secundo quantum ad bonos, ibi *qui autem facit veritatem venit ad lucem*.

Dicit ergo: ideo non dilexerunt lucem, quia *erant eorum mala opera*. Et hoc patet, quia *omnis qui male agit, odit lucem*. Non autem dicit egit sed *agit*: quia si quis male egit, tamen poenitens, et videns se male fecisse, dolet, non odit lucem, sed ad lucem venit. Sed *omnis qui male agit*, idest in malo perseverat, non dolet, nec ad lucem venit, sed eam odit: non in quantum veritatis quidem est manifestativa, sed in quantum per eam peccatum hominis manifestatur. Diligit enim malus homo cognoscere lucem et veritatem; sed odit per eam manifestari; Iob XXIV, 17: *si subito apparuerit aurora, arbitrantur umbram mortis*. Et ideo *non venit ad lucem*. Et hoc *ut non arguantur opera eius*: nullus enim homo, qui non vult malum deserere, vult reprehendi; sed fugit, et odit; Amos V, 10: *odio habuerunt corripientem in porta*; Prov. XV, 12: *non amat pestilens eum qui se corripit*.

Hic ostendit idem quantum ad bonos facientes veritatem, idest bona opera. Veritas enim non solum in cogitatione et dictis consistit, sed et in factis. *Venit ad lucem*.

Sed numquid aliquis ante Christum fecit ita? Videtur quod non. Ille enim facit veritatem, qui non peccat; sed *ante Christum omnes peccaverunt*: ut dicitur Rom. III, 23. Respondeo dicendum, secundum Augustinum, quod ille facit veritatem in seipso, cui displicet malum quod fecit; et relictis tenebris, observat se a peccatis, et de praeteritis poenitens *venit ad lucem*, ad hoc ut specialiter *manifestentur opera eius*.

Sed contra est, quod nullus debet publicare bona quae facit: unde Pharisaei de hoc a domino reprehenduntur. Dicendum est, quod licitum

494 So he says: The reason why they did not love the light is that their works were evil. And this is plain because **Everyone who practices evil hates the light**. He does not say, “practiced,” but rather practices: because if someone has acted in an evil way, but has repented and is sorry, seeing that he has done wrong, such a person does not hate the light but comes to the light. But Everyone who practices evil, i.e., persists in evil, is not sorry, nor does he come to the light, but he hates it; not because it reveals truth, but because it reveals a person’s sins. For an evil person still wants to know the light and the truth; but he hates to be unmasked by it. “If the dawn suddenly appears, they regard it as the shadow of death” (Qb 24:17). And so he **does not approach the light**; and this **for fear that his deeds might be exposed**. For no one who is unwilling to desert evil wants to be rebuked; this is fled from and hated. “They hate the one who rebukes at the city gate” (Am 5:10); “A corrupt man does not love the one who rebukes him” (Prv 15:12).

495 Now he shows the same things with respect to the good, who practice the truth, i.e., perform good works. For truth is found not only in thought and words. but also in deeds. Everyone of these **comes to the light**.

But did anyone practice the truth before Christ? It seems not, for to practice the truth is not to sin; and “before Christ all have sinned” (Rom 3:23). I answer, according to Augustine, that he practices the truth in himself who is displeased at the evil he has done; and after leaving the darkness, keeps himself from sin, and repenting of the past, **comes to the light**, with the special intention of making his actions known.

496 But this conflicts with the teaching that no one should make public the good he has done; and this was a reason why the Lord rebuked

est velle manifestare opera sua coram Deo, ut approbentur, secundum quod dicitur II Cor. X, 18: *non enim qui seipsum commendat, ille probatus est, sed quem Deus commendat.* Et Job XVI, 20: *ecce in caelo est testis meus.* Velle etiam manifestari in sua conscientia ut gaudeat; secundum quod dicitur II Cor. I, 12: *gloria nostra haec est, testimonium conscientiae nostrae.* Velle autem manifestari hominibus ad laudem, vel gloriam propriam, reprehensibile est. Nihilominus tamen sancti viri bona quae faciunt, manifestari desiderant hominibus propter honorem Dei et propter utilitatem fidei; Matth. V, 16: *sic luceat lux vestra coram hominibus ut videant opera vestra bona, et glorificent patrem vestrum qui in caelis est.* Sed veniunt *ad lucem, ut manifestentur opera eorum, quoniam in Deo sunt facta,* idest secundum mandatum Dei, vel per gratiam Dei. Quicquid enim boni facimus, sive vitando peccatum, seu poenitendo de commissis, sive bona operando, totum est a Deo, iuxta illud Is. XXVI, 12: *omnia opera nostra operatus es in nobis.*

the Pharisees. I answer that it is lawful to want one's works to be seen by God so that they may be approved: "It is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom God commends" (2 Cor 10:18); "My witness is in heaven," as is said in Job (16:20). It is also lawful to want them to be seen by one's own conscience, so that one may rejoice: "Our glory is this: the testimony of our conscience" (2 Cor 1:12). But it is reprehensible to want them to be seen by men in order to be praised or for one's own glory. Yet, holy persons desire that their good works be known to men for the sake of God's glory and for the good of the faith: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven" (Mt 5:16). Such a person **comes to the light to make clear that his deeds are done in God**, that is, according to God's commandment or through the grace of God. For whatever good we do, whether it be avoiding sin, repenting of what has been done, or doing good works, it is all from God: "You have accomplished all our works" (Is 26:12).

COMMENTARY ON  
THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

St. Thomas Aquinas

Lectio 4

22 μετὰ ταῦτα ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν γῆν, καὶ ἐκεῖ διέτριβεν μετ' αὐτῶν καὶ ἐβάπτιζεν. 23 ἦν δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων ἐν αἰνῶν ἐγγύς τοῦ Σαλείμ, ὅτι ὕδατα πολλὰ ἦν ἐκεῖ, καὶ παρεγίνοντο καὶ ἐβαπτίζοντο: 24 οὐπω γὰρ ἦν βεβλημένος εἰς τὴν φυλακὴν ὁ Ἰωάννης. 25 ἐγένετο οὖν ζήτησις ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν Ἰωάννου μετὰ Ἰουδαίου περὶ καθαρισμοῦ. 26 καὶ ἦλθον πρὸς τὸν Ἰωάννην καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, ῥαββί, ὃς ἦν μετὰ σοῦ πέραν τοῦ ἰορδάνου, ᾧ σὺ μεμαρτύρηκας, ἴδε οὗτος βαπτίζει καὶ πάντες ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτόν.

Supra dominus tradidit doctrinam de spirituali regeneratione per verba; hic vero doctrinam illam implet per opera, baptizando. Et primo inducitur duplex Baptismus; secundo movetur quaestio de comparatione eorum, ibi *facta est ergo quaestio* et cetera. Circa primum duo facit. Primo inducitur Baptismus Christi; secundo Baptismus Ioannis, ibi *erat autem Ioannes baptizans* et cetera.

Dicit ergo primo: *post haec*, scilicet quae de doctrina spiritualis regenerationis praemissa sunt, *venit Iesus, et discipuli eius in terram Iudaeam*. Sed hic est quaestio litteralis: nam supra dixerat

LECTURE 4

22 After this Jesus and his disciples came to Judean territory; he stayed there with his disciples and was baptizing. 23 But John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, where the water was plentiful, and people kept coming and were baptized. 24 John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison. 25 A controversy arose between the disciples of John and the Jews concerning purification. 26 They went to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the man who was with you across the Jordan, the one of whom you have given testimony, he is here baptizing, and all the people are flocking to him."

497 Above, the Lord gave us his teaching on spiritual regeneration in words, here he completes his teaching through action, by baptizing. First, two kinds of baptism are mentioned. Secondly, a question about their relationship is raised (v 25). As to the first, two things are done. Mention is first made of the baptism of Christ. Secondly, of the baptism of John.

498 He says first, **After this**, i.e., the teaching on spiritual regeneration, **Jesus and his disciples came to Judean territory**. There is a question here about the literal meaning. For

Evangelista, quod dominus de Galilaea venerat in Ierusalem, quae est Iudaea terra, ubi instruxerat Nicodemum. Quomodo ergo post instructionem Nicodemi, venit in Iudaeam, cum iam esset ibi?

Ad quod est duplex responsio: nam secundum Bedam, Christus post verba Nicodemi, ivit in Galilaeam, et ibi aliquandiu moratus rediit in Iudaeam: et ideo cum dicitur *post haec venit Iesus*, non est intelligendum quod immediate venerit in Iudaeam post verba Nicodemi. Alio modo, secundum Chrysostomum, intelligendum est quod post haec immediate venerit in terram Iudaeam. Christus enim volebat praedicare ubi multitudo conveniebat, ut multi converterentur; Ps. XXXIX, 10: *annuntiavi iustitiam tuam in Ecclesia magna*. Et infra c. XVIII, 20: *ego palam locutus sum* et cetera. Duo autem loca erant in Iudaea, ad quae confluebat multitudo Iudaeorum, scilicet Ierusalem, ad quam ibant ad festa, et Iordanis, ad quem concurrebant propter praedicationem et Baptismum Iohannis. Et ideo dominus ista duo loca frequentans, statim completis diebus festis in Ierusalem, quae est in una parte Iudaeae, venit in aliam partem Iudaeae, ubi Iohannes baptizabat, scilicet in Iordanem.

Moraliter autem Iudaea interpretatur confessio, ad quam venit Iesus, quia Christus confitentes sua peccata, vel divinam laudem, visitat; Ps. CXIII, 2: *facta est Iudaea sanctificatio eius*. Et illic moratur, quia tales non transitorie visitat; infra XIV, 23: *ad eum veniemus et mansionem apud eum faciemus*. Et illic baptizat, idest purgat a peccatis: quia nisi quis peccata sua confiteatur, remissionem non consequitur; Prov. XXVIII, 13: *qui abscondit scelera sua, non dirigitur*.

Deinde cum dicit *erat autem et Iohannes baptizans in Aenon*, introducit Evangelista Baptisma Iohannis: et circa hoc quatuor facit. Primo enim ponit personam baptizantis; secundo locum Baptismi; tertio fructum; quarto tempus.

above, the Evangelist had said that the Lord had come from Galilee to Jerusalem, which is in Judean territory, where he taught Nicodemus. So how, after teaching Nicodemus, can he come into Judea, since he was already there?

Two answers are given to this. According to Bede, after his discussion with Nicodemus, Christ went to Galilee, and after remaining there for a time, returned to Judea. And so **After this Jesus and his disciples came to Judean territory**, should not be understood to mean that he came into Judea immediately after his talk with Nicodemus. Another explanation, given by Chrysostom, is that he did come into the territory of Judea immediately after this discussion: for Christ wanted to preach where the people gathered, so that many might be converted: "I have declared your justice in the great assembly" (Ps 39:10); "I have spoken openly to the world" (below 18:20). Now there were two places in Judea where the Jewish people gathered: Jerusalem, where they went for their feasts, and the Jordan, where they gathered on account of John's preaching and his baptism. And so the Lord used to visit both places; and after the feast days were over in Jerusalem, which is in one part of Judea, he went to another part, to the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

499 As for the moral sense, Judea means "confession," to which Jesus came, for Christ visits those who confess their sins or speak in praise of God: "Judea became his sanctuary" (Ps 113:2). He stayed there, because he did not make a merely temporary visit: "We will come to him, and make our abode with him," as it says below (14:23). **And was baptizing**, i.e., cleansing from sin; because unless one confesses his sins he does not obtain forgiveness: "He who hides his sins will not prosper" (Prov 28:13).

500 Then when he says, **But John also was baptizing**, the Evangelist presents the baptism of John. And in regard to this he does four things. First, he presents the person who is baptizing. Secondly, the place of the baptism. Thirdly, its fruit. Fourthly, the time.

Persona baptizans est loannes; et ideo dicit *erat autem loannes baptizans*. Sed hic est quaestio: quia cum Baptisma loannis ordinaretur ad Baptismum Christi, videtur quod, veniente Baptismate Christi, loannes cessare debuerit a baptizando, sicut veniente veritate, cessat figura. Ad hoc est triplex responsio. Una, quantum ad personam Christi: nam loannes baptizavit ut Christus baptizaretur ab eo. Nec oportebat quod solus Christus ab eo baptizaretur, ne Baptismus loannis ex huius singularitate, melior Christi Baptismate videretur: et ideo expediens fuit ut alii ante Christum baptizarentur a loanne, quia antequam Christi doctrina publicata est, necessarium erat homines praeparari ad Christum Baptismo loannis. Unde secundum hoc, ita se habet Baptismus loannis ad Baptismum Christi sicut catechismus, in quo baptizandi instruuntur de fide et praeparantur ad Baptismum, se habet ad verum Baptisma. Necessarium etiam fuit ut postquam Christus baptizatus fuerat a loanne, alii baptizarentur ab eo, ne loannis Baptisma reprobandum videretur; sicut etiam non statim veniente veritate cessavit usus legalium, sed, secundum Augustinum, licuit Iudaeis determinato tempore legalia servare.

Alio modo quantum ad personam loannis: nam si loannes statim cum Christus baptizare coepit, destitisset a Baptismo, potuisset credi, quod hoc fecisset ex invidia, vel ira. Et quia, ut dicitur Rom. XII, 17: *providere debemus bona non solum coram Deo, sed etiam coram omnibus hominibus*: ideo loannes non statim cessavit.

Alio modo quantum ad discipulos loannis, qui iam incipiebant se zelotypos habere ad Christum, et ad discipulos eius, quia baptizabant. Unde si statim loannes totaliter baptizare cessasset, dimisisset discipulos suos in maiori zelo et controversia contra Christum et discipulos eius. Iam enim etiam loanne baptizante, ipsi aegre ferebant Baptismum Christi: quod patet ex sequentibus. Et ideo non statim cessavit; I Cor. VIII, 9: *videte ne forte haec licentia vestra offendiculum fiat infirmis*.

501 John is the person who is baptizing, so he says, **John also was baptizing**. There is a question about this: Since John's baptism was ordained to the baptism of Christ, it seems that John should have stopped baptizing when Christ started to baptize, just as the symbol does not continue when the truth comes. Three reasons are given for this. The first is in relation to Christ, for John baptized in order that Christ might be baptized by him. But it was not fitting that John baptize just Christ; otherwise, on this point alone, it might seem that John's baptism was superior to Christ's. Accordingly, it was expedient that John baptize others before Christ, because before Christ's teaching was to be made public it was necessary that men be prepared for Christ by John's baptism. In this way, the baptism of John is related to the baptism of Christ as the catechesis or religious instruction given to prospects to teach and prepare them for baptism is related to the true baptism. It was likewise important that John baptize others after he had baptized Christ, so that John's baptism would not seem to be worthless. For the same reason, the practice of the ceremonies of the old law was not abolished as soon as the truth came, but as Augustine says, the Jews could lawfully observe them for a time.

The second reason relates to John. For if John had stopped baptizing at once after Christ began baptizing, it might have been thought that he stopped out of envy or anger. And because, as the Apostle says, "We ought to look after what is good, not only before God, but also before all men" (Rom 12:17), this is the reason why John did not stop at once.

The third reason relates to John's disciples, who were already beginning to act like zealots toward Christ and his disciples, because they were baptizing. So if John had entirely stopped from baptizing, it would have provoked his disciples to an even greater zeal and opposition to Christ and his disciples. For even while John continued baptizing, they were hostile to Christ's baptism, as later events showed. And so John did not stop at once: "Take care that your freedom does not become a hindrance to those who are weak," as is said in 1 Corinthians (8:9).



Locus autem Baptismi erat *in Aennon iuxta Salim: quia aquae multae erant ibi*. Salim alio nomine dicitur Salem quae est villa, unde Melchisedech rex fuit. Et dicitur hic Salim, quia apud Iudaeos, lector pro voluntate uti potest vocalibus litteris in medio dictionum: unde, sive dicatur Salim, sive Salem, non refert apud Iudaeos. Hoc autem quod addit *quia aquae multae erant ibi* ponit ad exponendum hoc nomen loci, scilicet Aennon, quod idem est quod aqua.

Fructus autem Baptismi est remissio peccatorum; et ideo dicit *et veniebant et baptizabantur*, idest mundabantur: quia, ut dicitur Matth. III, 5, Lc. III, 7 multitudo magna ibat ad Ioannem.

Tempus ponitur ibi *nondum enim missus fuerat Ioannes in carcerem*: quod ideo dicit, ut det intelligere quod ipse incepit narrationem de factis Christi ante alios Evangelistas. Alii namque inceperunt narrare opera Christi solum a tempore incarcerationis Ioannis. Unde dicitur Matth. IV, 12: *cum audisset Iesus, quia Ioannes traditus esset, secessit in Galilaeam*. Et ideo, quia omnia facta Christi ante Ioannis incarcerationem praeterierant, Ioannes, qui ultimo Evangelium scripsit, defectum hunc supplevit; et hoc insinuat, cum dicit *nondum enim missus fuerat Ioannes in carcerem*.

Sed nota, quod dispensatione divina factum est ut Ioannes, Christo baptizante, non diu baptizaret et praedicaret, ne ex hoc fieret schisma in populo; quamquam hoc ei aliquo tempore permissum fuerit, ne reprobandus videretur, ut supra dictum est. Sic etiam dispensatione factum est ut post praedicationem fidei, et conversionem fidelium, templum totaliter destrueretur, ut videlicet tota devotio, et spes fidelium traheretur ad Christum.

502 The place of his baptism was **at Aenon near Salim, where the water was plentiful**. Another name for Salim is Salem, which is the village from which the king Melchizedek came. It is called Salim here because among the Jews a reader may use any vowel he chooses in the middle of his words; hence it made no difference to the Jews whether it was pronounced Salim or Salem. He added, **where the water was plentiful**, to explain the name of this place, i.e., **Aenon**, which is the same as “water.”

503 The fruit of his baptism is the remission of sins; thus he says, **people kept coming and were baptized**, i.e., cleansed: for as is stated in Matthew (3:5) and in Luke (3:7), great crowds came to John.

504 The time is indicated when he says, **John had not yet been thrown into prison**. He says this so that we may know that he began his narrative of Christ’s life before the other Evangelists. For the others began their account only from the time of John’s imprisonment. So Matthew (4:12) says: “When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee.” And so, because they had passed over the things that Christ did before John’s imprisonment, John, who was the last to write a Gospel, supplied these omissions. He suggests this when he says: **John had not yet been thrown into prison**.

505 Note that by divine arrangement it came about that when Christ began to baptize, John did not continue his own baptizing and preaching for very long, in order not to create disunion among the people. But he was granted a little time so that it would not seem that he deserved to be repudiated, as was mentioned before. Again, by God’s arrangement, it came about that after the faith had been preached and the faithful converted, the temple was utterly destroyed, in order that all the devotion and hope of the faithful could be directed to Christ.

Deinde cum dicit *facta est autem quaestio* etc., inducitur quaestio Baptismatum: et primo proponitur ipsa quaestio; secundo relatio quaestionis ad Ioannem, ibi *et venerunt ad Ioannem*; tertio ponitur quaestionis determinatio, ibi *respondit Ioannes, et dixit eis*.

Quia ergo duo baptizabant, ut dictum est, scilicet Christus et Ioannes, discipuli ipsius Ioannis pro magistro suo zelantes, occasionem dissidii sumpserunt. Et hoc est quod dicit *facta est quaestio*, id est controversia, *ex discipulis Ioannis*, ipsis scilicet primo moventibus hanc quaestionem, *cum Iudaeis*: quos reprehendebant discipuli Ioannis, eo quod ad Christum magis currebant propter miracula quae faciebat, quam ad Ioannem, qui miraculum nullum faciebat. Et quaestio ista facta est *de purificatione*, id est de Baptismo. Causam autem unde invidiebant discipuli Ioannis, et controversiam movebant, sumpserunt ex eo quod Ioannes illos quos baptizabat, mittebat ad Christum; Christus vero quos baptizabat non mittebat ad Ioannem. Ex quo videbatur, et forte Iudaei dicebant, Christum maiorem esse Ioanne: et ideo isti nondum spirituales, de Baptismo contendunt cum Iudaeis; I Cor. III, 3: *cum enim sit inter vos zelus et contentio, nonne carnales estis?*

Sed motam quaestionem referunt ad Ioannem; et ideo dicit *et venerunt ad Ioannem*. Et si attenditur diligenter, conati sunt commovere Ioannem contra Christum. Similes isti sunt bilinguibus et susurronibus; Eccli. c. XXVIII, 15: *susurro et bilinguis maledictus multos enim turbabit pacem habentes*.

Proponunt autem quatuor, quae commotionem in animo Ioannis contra Christum causarent. Primo enim commemorant humilitatem status Christi praeteriti; secundo beneficium a Ioanne impensum; tertio officium assumptum a Christo; quarto detrimentum quod provenit Ioanni ex Christi officio.

Humilitatem autem status commemorant, cum dicunt *qui erat tecum*, quasi unus de discipulis; non autem tu cum illo, sicut cum magistro:

506 Then when he says, **A controversy arose**, he brings in the issue of the two baptisms. First, the issue is mentioned. Secondly, it is brought to John's attention (v 26). Thirdly, the issue is resolved.

507 Because both John and Christ were baptizing, the disciples of John, out of zeal for their teacher, started a controversy over this. And this is what he says, A controversy arose, i.e., a dispute, **between the disciples of John**, who were the first to raise the issue, **and the Jews**, whom the disciples of John had rebuked for preferring Christ, because of the miracles he did, to John, who did not do any miracles. The issue was **concerning purification**, i.e., baptizing. The cause of their envy and the reason why they started the controversy was the fact that John sent those he baptized to Christ, but Christ did not send those he baptized to John. It seemed from this, and perhaps the Jews even said so, that Christ was greater than John. Thus, the disciples of John, having not yet become spiritual, quarreled with the Jews over the baptisms. "While there is envy and fighting among you, are you not carnal?" (1 Cor 3:3).

508 They referred this issue to John; hence he says, **They went to John**. If we examine this closely, we see that they were trying to incite John against Christ. Indeed, they are like the gossip and the double-tongued: "Those who gossip and are double-tongued are accursed, for they disturb many who are at peace" (Sir 28:15).

So they bring up four things calculated to set John against Christ. First, they recall the previous unimportant status of Christ. Secondly, the good John did for him. Thirdly, the role which Christ took on. Fourthly, the loss to John because of Christ's new role.

509 They recall Christ's unimportance when they say, **the man who was with you**, as one of your disciples; and not the one you were with

nam si alicui maiori honor exhibeatur, non est tanta causa invidiae; sed tunc quis invidet, quando minori se magis honor exhibetur; Eccle. X, 7: *vidi servos in equis sedentes, et principes ambulantes super terram quasi servos*; Job XIX, 16: *servum meum vocavi, et non respondit*. Quia plus turbatur dominus aliquis de rebellionem servi et subditi, quam alicuius alterius.

Secundo commemorantes beneficium impensum a Ioanne, non dicunt quem tu baptizasti, quia in hoc confessi fuissent magnificentiam Christi, quae in Baptismo demonstrata est, et descensum spiritus sancti super eum in specie columbae, et vocem patris sibi factam; sed dicunt *cui tu testimonium perhibuisti*; id est, quem tu clarum et circumspicuum fecisti, talia tibi rependere audeat, quod multum concitat exacerbationem; Ps. XL, 10: *qui edebat panes meos, magnificavit super me supplantationem*. Sed quia quaerentes propriam gloriam, et intendentes lucrum proprium in suo officio, dolent si alius officium illud assumat.

Ideo, tertio, isti addunt etiam, quod Christus Ioannis officium sibi assumpsit, cum dicunt: *ecce hic baptizat*; id est, officium tuum exercet: quod multum concitat ad turbationem. Nam communiter videmus hic, homines eiusdem artis insidiosae et invidiae se habere ad invicem. Figulus figulo invidet, non autem fabro. Sic etiam doctores proprium honorem quaerentes, dolent si alius veritatem docet; contra quos dicit Gregorius: mens pii pastoris optat ut veritatem, quam solus docere non sufficit, alii doceant. Sic et Moyses, Num. XI, 29: *quis det ut omnis hic populus prophetet?*

Sed non solum sufficiebat istis concitare Ioannem; sed quod magis movet, referunt, scilicet detrimentum quod Ioanni ex assumpto officio a Christo provenire videbatur; quod quarto exponunt, cum dicunt *et omnes veniunt ad eum*, qui scilicet ad te venire solebant: quia te dimisso et contempto, omnes ad Baptismum eius currunt. Quod

as your teacher. For there is no good reason for envy if honor is shown to one who is greater; rather, envy is aroused when honor is given to an inferior: "I have seen slaves on horses, and princes walking like slaves" (Ecc 10:7); "I called my servant, and he did not answer me" (Job 19:16). For a master is more disturbed at the rebellion of a servant and a subject than of anyone else.

510 Secondly, they remind John of the good he did Christ. Thus they do not say, "the one whom you baptized," because they would then be admitting the greatness of Christ which was shown during his baptism when the Holy Spirit came upon him in the form of a dove and in the voice of the Father speaking to him. So they say, **the one of whom you have given testimony**, i.e., we are very angry that the one you made famous and admired dares to repay you in this way: "The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me" (Ps 40:10). They said this because those who seek their own glory and personal profit from their office become dejected if their office is taken over by someone else

511 And so thirdly, they even add that Christ took over John's office for himself, when they say, **he is here baptizing**, i.e., he is exercising your office; and this also disturbed them very much. For we generally see that men of the same craft are envious and underhanded with respect to one another; a potter envies another potter, but does not envy a carpenter. So, even teachers, who are seeking their own honor, become sad if another teaches the truth. In opposition to them, Gregory says: "The mind of a holy pastor wishes that others teach the truth which he cannot teach all by himself." So also Moses: "Would that all the people might prophesy," as we read in Numbers (11:29).

512 Yet they were not satisfied with merely disturbing John, rather they report something that should really excite him, that is, the loss that John seemed to be having because of the office Christ took over. They give this when they say: **and all the people are flocking to him**, i.e., the ones who used to come to you. In other words, they have rejected and

autem ante consueverant ire ad Ioannem, patet ex testimonio Matth. XI, 7: *quid existis in desertum videre?* et cetera. Tali invidia movebantur Pharisei contra Christum; unde dicebant, infra XII, 19: *ecce totus mundus post eum vadit*. Sed ex his Ioannes non fuit motus contra Christum: non enim erat arundo vento agitata, ut dicitur Matt. XI, 7. Et hoc patet ex responsione Ioannis, quae sequitur in determinatione quaestionis sibi delatae.

disowned you, and now are all going to his baptism. It is clear from Matthew (11:7) that they used to go to John: "What did you go into the desert to see?" The same envy affected the Pharisees against Christ; so they said: "Look, the whole world has gone after him" (below 12:19). However, all this did not set John against Christ, for he was not a reed swaying in the wind, and this is clear from John's answer to their question.

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COMMENTARY ON  
THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

St. Thomas Aquinas

Lectio 5

27 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰωάννης καὶ εἶπεν, οὐ δύναται ἄνθρωπος λαμβάνειν οὐδὲ ἓν ἐὰν μὴ ἦ δεδομένον αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. 28 αὐτοὶ ὑμεῖς μοι μαρτυρεῖτε ὅτι εἶπον [ὅτι] οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐγὼ ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἀπεσταλμένος εἰμὶ ἔμπροσθεν ἐκείνου. 29 ὁ ἔχων τὴν νύμφην νυμφίος ἐστίν· ὁ δὲ φίλος τοῦ νυμφίου, ὁ ἐστηκὼς καὶ ἀκούων αὐτοῦ, χαρᾶ χαίρει διὰ τὴν φωνὴν τοῦ νυμφίου. αὕτη οὖν ἡ χαρὰ ἢ ἐμὴ πεπλήρωται. 30 ἐκεῖνον δεῖ αὐξάνειν, ἐμὲ δὲ ἐλαττοῦσθαι. 31 ὁ ἄνωθεν ἐρχόμενος ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν· ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐστίν καὶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς λαλεῖ. ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐρχόμενος [ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστίν·] 32 ὁ ἐώρακεν καὶ ἤκουσεν τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ,

Hic ponitur responsio Ioannis super quaestione sibi delata a discipulis quae quidem quaestio duo continebat, scilicet querimoniam de officio assumpto: unde dicebant *ecce hic baptizat*, et de Christi profectu in fama et opinione hominum: unde dicebant *et omnes veniunt ad eum*. Et ideo Ioannes dirigit responsionem suam ad haec duo: et primo respondet ad querimoniam de officio assumpto; secundo vero ad querimoniam de profectu Christi, ibi *illum oportet crescere, me autem minui*. Circa primum tria facit. Primo ostendit officiorum Christi et sui originem; secundo ipsorum

LECTURE 5

27 John replied and said: “No one can lay hold of anything unless it is given to him from heaven. 28 “You yourselves are witnesses to the fact that I said: I am not the Christ, but the one sent before him. 29 “It is the groom who has the bride. The groom’s friend waits there and listens to him, rejoicing at hearing his voice. Therefore in this case my joy is complete. 30 He must increase, and I must decrease. 31 The One who came from above is above all things. He who is of earth is earthly, and speaks of earthly things. 32a The One who comes from heaven is above all things, and he testifies to what he sees, and to what he hears.

513 Here we have John’s answer to the question presented to him by his disciples. Their question contained two points: a complaint about the office Christ took on, and so they said, **he is here baptizing**; and about Christ’s increasing fame and reputation among the people, and so they said, **all the people are flocking to him**. Accordingly, John directs his answer to these two complaints. First he answers the complaint about the office Christ took on. Secondly, the complaint about Christ’s increasing reputation (v 30). As to the first he does two things. First, he

distinctionem, ibi *ipsi vos mihi testimonium perhibetis*; tertio ostendit habitudinem Christi et suam ad dicta officia, ibi *qui habet sponsam, sponsus est*.

Circa primum autem nota quod discipuli Ioannis licet malitiose Ioanni quaestionem proponant, et ex hoc sint reprehensione digni, Ioannes tamen non eos vehementer increpat; et hoc propter imperfectionem: timebat enim ne commoti ex reprehensione, recederent ab eo, et iungentes se Pharisaeis, Christo publice insidiarentur; implens in hoc quod de domino dicitur, Is. XLII, 3: *calamum quassatum non confringet* et cetera. Similiter advertendum, quod a principio suae responsionis non ardua et praeclara de Christo asserit, sed humilia et plana propter ipsorum invidiam. Cum enim excellentia sit alterius invidiae provocativa, si Ioannes statim Christi excellentiam eis proposuisset, illorum invidiae fomentum praestitisset.

Et ideo humilia proponens, dicit *non potest homo a se accipere quicquam*: intendens in hoc eis terrorem incutere; quasi dicat: hoc quod omnes ad eum currunt, non est nisi a Deo, quia *non potest homo accipere quicquam*, scilicet perfectionis et boni, *nisi fuerit ei datum de caelo*, et ideo si vos contradicitis, contradicitis Deo; Actor. V, 38: *si ex hominibus est consilium hoc, aut opus istud, dissolvetur*. Et sic exponit Chrysostomus, referens hoc ad Christum.

Augustinus autem refert ad ipsum Ioannem, et melius. *Non potest homo accipere quicquam, nisi fuerit ei datum de caelo*; quasi dicat: vos zelatis pro me, et vultis quod ego maior sim quam Christus; sed hoc non est mihi datum, nec ego volo mihi usurpare; secundum illud Hebr. V, 4: *nemo assumit sibi honorem* et cetera. Sic ergo patet officiorum origo.

Sequitur officiorum distinctio, cum dicit *ipsi vos mihi testimonium perhibetis*; quasi dicat: ex testimonio meo, quod sibi perhibui,

shows the source of Christ's office and of his own. Secondly, their difference (v 28). Thirdly, how Christ and he are related to these offices.

514 As to the first, note that although John's disciples broach their question maliciously, and so deserve to be rebuked, John nevertheless does not sharply reprove them; and this because of their imperfection. For he feared that they might be provoked by a rebuke, leave him, and, joining forces with the Pharisees, publicly harass Christ. In acting this way he was putting into practice what is said of the Lord: "The burised reed he will not break" (Is 42:3). Again, we should also note that he begins his answer not by telling them what is great and wonderful about Christ, but what is common and obvious; and he did this on account of their envy. For since the excellence of a person provokes others to envy, if John had stressed Christ's excellence at once, he would have fed the fire of their envy.

515 Thus he states something unpretentious, and says, **No one can lay hold of anything unless it is given to him from heaven**; and he said this to them in order to inspire them with reverence. As if to say: If all men are going to him, it is God's doing, because **no one can lay hold of anything**, in the order of perfection and goodness, unless it is given to him from heaven. Therefore, if you oppose him, you oppose God. "If this plan or work is from men, it will fail," as is said in Acts (5:38). This is the way Chrysostom explains it, applying these words to Christ.

Augustine, on the other hand, does much better when he refers them to John. **No one can lay hold of anything unless it is given to him from heaven**: as if to say: You are zealous on my behalf and you want me to be greater than Christ; but that has not been given to me, and I do not wish to usurp it: "No one takes this honor on himself" (Heb 5:4). This is the origin of their offices.

516 Then follows the difference of their offices, when he says, You yourselves are witnesses. As if to say: From the testimony which I bore

potestis scire officium mihi commissum a Christo: nam *ipsi vos mihi testimonium perhibetis*, idest perhibere potestis, *quod dixerim: non sum ego Christus*; supra I, 20: *confessus est et non negavit*. Sed hoc dixi, *quia missus sum ante illum*, sicut praeco ante iudicem. Sic ergo ex testimonio meo scire potestis officium meum, quod est praecedere Christum, et praeparare sibi viam; supra I, 6: *fuit homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Ioannes*. Sed officium Christi est iudicare et praeesse. Et si bene attenditur, Ioannes more providi respondentis, proponentes ex verbis eorum arguit, secundum illud Lc. XIX, 22: *ex ore tuo te iudico*.

Qualiter autem Ioannes se habet ad officium suum, ostendit cum subdit *qui habet sponsam, sponsus est*. et primo ponit quamdam similitudinem; secundo adaptat eam ad propositum, ibi *in hoc autem gaudium meum impletum est*.

Circa primum duo facit. Primo ponit similitudinem quantum ad id quod pertinet ad Christum; secundo quantum ad id quod pertinet ad seipsum, ibi *amicus autem sponsi* et cetera. Circa primum notandum est, quod in rebus humanis disponere, et dominari, et habere sibi sponsam, pertinet ad sponsum tantum; et ideo dicit *qui habet sponsam*, idest ad quem pertinet habere sponsam, *sponsus est*. Iste autem sponsus est Christus; Ps. XVIII, 6: *tamquam sponsus procedens de thalamo suo*. Sponsa sua est Ecclesia, quae coniungitur ei per fidem; Oseae II, 20: *sponsabo te mihi in fide*. Et in huius figuram dixit Sephora ad Moysen, Ex. IV, 25: *sponsus sanguinum tu mihi es*. Et de istis nuptiis dicitur Apoc. XIX, 7: *venerunt nuptiae agni*. Sic ergo, quia Christus sponsus est, etiam ad eum pertinet habere sponsam, scilicet Ecclesiam; sed ad me non pertinet nisi gaudere quod sponsam habet.

Unde dicit *amicus autem sponsi (...) gaudio gaudet*. Et licet supra dixerit quod non erat dignus solvere corrigiam calceamentorum Iesu, hic tamen vocat se eius amicum, ut insinuet caritatis suae fidelitatem ad Christum. Nam servus ad ea quae domini sui sunt, non movetur

to him, you can know the office committed to me by Christ: for You yourselves are witnesses, i.e., you can testify, **to the fact that I said: I am not the Christ**—“He declared openly and did not deny” (above 1:20)—**but the one sent before him**, as a herald before a judge. And so from my own testimony you can know my office, which is to go before Christ and prepare the way for him: “There was a man sent by God, whose name was John” (above 1:6). But the office of Christ is to judge and to preside. If we look at this closely we can see that John, like a skilful disputant, answers them with their own arguments: “I judge you out of your own mouth,” as said in Luke (19:22).

517 He shows how John is related to his own office when he says: **It is the groom who has the bride**. First, he gives a simile. Secondly, he applies it to his own situation. With respect to the first he does two things. First, he gives a simile which applies to Christ; and secondly, to himself.

518 As to the first, [he does two things: First he makes a comparison regarding what pertains to Christ, secondly regarding himself. As to the first,] we should note that on the human level it is the groom who regulates, governs and has the bride. Hence he says, **It is the groom who has the bride**. Now the groom is Christ: “Like a bridegroom coming out of his bridal chamber” (Ps 18:6). His bride is the Church, which is joined to him by faith: “I will espouse you to myself in faith” (Mos 2:20). In keeping with this figure, Zipporah said to Moses: “You are a spouse of blood to me” (Ex 4:25). We read of the marriage: “The marriage of the Lamb has come” (Rv 19:7). So, because Christ is the groom, he has the bride, that is, the Church; but my part is only to rejoice in the fact that he has the bride.

519 Consequently he says, **The groom’s friend waits there and listens to him, rejoicing at hearing his voice**. Although John had said earlier that he was not worthy to unfasten the strap of Jesus’ sandal, he here calls himself the friend of Jesus in order to bring out the faithfulness

affectu caritatis, sed spiritu servitutis; amicus vero ex amore, quae amici sunt procurat, et fideliter. Unde servus fidelis est sicut amicus domini sui; Eccli. XXXIII, 31: *si est tibi servus fidelis, sit tibi quasi anima tua*. Et ex hoc patet fidelitas servi, quando gaudet de bonis domini, et quando non sibi, sed domino suo bona procurat. Sic ergo, quia Ioannes sponsam sibi creditam, non sibi, sed sponso reservavit, servus fidelis fuit, et amicus sponsi. Et ideo ad hoc insinuandum, se amicum sponsi dicit.

Simile debent facere homines amici veritatis, ut sponsam eis ad custodiendum commissam non ad propriam utilitatem et gloriam convertant, sed ad honorem et gloriam sponsi honorifice praeservent: alias non essent amici sponsi, sed potius adulteri. Unde Gregorius dicit, quod adulterinae cogitationis puer reus est, si placere oculis sponsae desiderat, per quem sponsus dona transmittit. Quod non faciebat apostolus II Cor. c. XI, 2: *despondi enim vos uni viro virginem castam exhibere Christo*. Simile et Ioannes faciebat, quia sponsam, scilicet populum fidelem, non sibi retinuit, sed ad sponsum, scilicet Christum, duxit.

Sic ergo insinuat caritatis suae fidelitatem per hoc quod dicit *amicus sponsi*. Item permanentiam, cum dicit *stat*, firmus in amicitia et fidelitate, non elevans se supra se; Hab. II, 58: *super custodiam meam stabo*; I Cor. XV, 58: *estote stabiles et immobiles*; Eccli. VI, 11: *amicus, si permaneat fixus, erit tibi quasi coaequalis*.

Item attentionem, cum dicit *et audit eum*; idest, attente considerat modum quo sponsus sponsae coniungitur. In quo, secundum Chrysostomum, explicat modum istorum sponsalium; nam per fidem celebrantur: fides autem est ex auditu, Rom. X, 17. Vel *audit*, idest reverenter obedit, disponendo de sponsa secundum imperium sponsi; Is. I, 4: *audiam eum quasi magistrum*: quod est contra malos

of his love for Christ. For a servant does not act in the spirit of love in regard to the things that pertain to his master, but in a spirit of servitude; while a friend, on the other hand, seeks his friend's interests out of love and faithfulness. Hence a faithful servant is like a friend to his master: "If you have a faithful servant, treat him like yourself" (Sir 33:31). Indeed, it is proof of a servant's faithfulness when he rejoices in the prosperity of his master, and when he obtains various goods, not for himself, but for his master. And so because John did not keep the bride entrusted to his care for himself, but for the groom, we can see that he was a faithful servant and a friend of the groom. It is to suggest this that he calls himself **the groom's friend**.

Those who are friends of the truth should act in the same way, not turning the bride entrusted to their care to their own advantage and glory, but treating her honorably for the honor and glory of the groom; otherwise they would not be friends of the groom but adulterers. This is why Gregory says that a servant who is sent by the groom with gifts for the bride is guilty of adulterous thoughts if he himself desires to please the bride. This is not what the Apostle did: "I espoused you to one husband in order to present you to Christ as a chaste virgin" (2 Cor 11:2). And John did the same, because he did not keep the bride, i.e., the faithful, for himself, but brought them to the groom, that is, to Christ.

520 And so by saying, **the groom's friend**, he suggests the faithfulness of his love. Further, he suggests his constancy when he says, **waits**, firm in friendship and faithfulness, not extolling himself above what he really is: "I will stand my watch" (Hb 2:1); "Be steadfast and unchanging" (1 Cor 15:58); "A faithful friend, if he is constant, is like another self" (Sir 6:11).

He suggests his attention when he says, **and listens to him**, i.e., attentively considers the way in which the groom is united to the bride. For according to Chrysostom, these words explain the manner of this marriage, for it is accomplished through faith, and "faith comes through hearing" (Rom 10:17). Or, he **listens to him**, i.e., reverently obeys him, by caring for the bride according to the commands of the groom: "I will



praelatos, qui non secundum Christi mandatum disponunt Ecclesiam.

Item insinuat spiritualem iucunditatem, cum dicit *et gaudio gaudet propter vocem sponsi*; scilicet, cum sponsus sponsam suam alloquitur. Et dicit *gaudio gaudet*, ut ostendat veritatem et perfectionem sui gaudii. Qui enim non gaudet de bono, non vero gaudio gaudet. Et ideo, si ego dolerem ex hoc quod Christus, qui est verus sponsus, sponsae, idest Ecclesiae, praedicat, non essem amicus sponsi: sed ego non doleo.

Immo *in hoc gaudium meum impletum est*, scilicet quod video quod diu desideravi, sponsum videlicet sponsam alloquentem. Vel *in hoc gaudium meum impletum est*, idest, ad perfectam et debitam mensuram pervenit, quando sponsa iam coniungitur sponso: quia iam habeo gratiam meam, et officium meum perfeci; Habac. III, 18: *ego autem in domino gaudebo, et exultabo in Deo Iesu meo.*

Consequenter cum dicit *illum oportet crescere, me autem minui* solvit quaestionem quantum ad querimoniam de profectu gratiae Christi. Et primo ponit huius profectus convenientiam; secundo rationem assignat, ibi *qui de sursum est, super omnes est.*

Dicit ergo: vos dicitis, quod omnes currunt ad eum, idest ad Christum; et sic proficit in honore et fama populi: sed ego dico, quod hoc non est inconveniens, quia *illum oportet crescere*, non in se, sed quantum ad alios, in quantum eius virtus magis ac magis innotescit; sed *me oportet minui*, in reverentia et fama quoad populum: nam honor et reverentia non debetur mihi sicut principali, sed Christo. Et ideo ipso veniente, cessat exhibitio reverentiae quantum ad me; sed crescit quantum ad Christum: sicut veniente principe, cessat officium legati; I Cor. XIII, 10: *cum venerit quod perfectum est, evacuabitur quod ex parte est.* Et sicut in caelo Lucifer praecedat solem ad illuminandum,

listen to him as my master,” as is said in Isaiah (50:4). This is in opposition to those evil prelates who do not follow Christ’s command in governing the Church.

Likewise, he hints at his spiritual joy when he says, **rejoicing at hearing his voice**, that is, when the groom talks to his bride. And he says, **rejoicing** (literally, “rejoicing with joy”), to show the truth and perfection of his joy. For one whose rejoicing is not over the good, does not rejoice with true joy. And so, if it made me sad that Christ, who is the true groom, preaches to the bride, i.e., the Church, I would not be a friend of the groom; but I am not sad.

521 Therefore in this case my joy is complete, namely, in seeing what I have so long desired, that is, the groom speaking to his bride. Or, my joy is complete, i.e., brought to its perfect and due measure, when the bride is united to the groom, because I now have my grace and I have completed my work: “I will rejoice in the Lord, and I will take joy in God, my Jesus” (Hb 3:18).

522 Then when he says, **He must increase, and I must decrease**, he answers their question as to their complaint about the increasing esteem given to Christ. First, he notes that such an increase is fitting. Secondly, he gives the reason for it (v 31).

523 So he says: You say that all the people are flocking to him, i.e., to Christ, and therefore that he is growing in honor and esteem among the people. But I say that this is not unbecoming, because He must increase, not in himself, but in relation to others, in the sense that his power become more and more known. **And I must decrease**, in the reverence and esteem of the people: for esteem and reverence are not due to me as if I were a principal; but they are due to Christ. And therefore since he has come, the signs of honor are diminishing in my regard, but increasing in regard to Christ, just as with the coming of the prince, the office of the ambassador ceases: “When the perfect comes, what is imperfect will pass away” (1 Cor 13:10). And just as in the

quo veniente, cessat eius lux; ita Ioannes praecessit Christum: unde Lucifero comparatur; Iob XXXVIII, 32: *numquid produces Luciferum?*

Significatur hoc etiam in nativitate Ioannis, et in morte eius. In nativitate quidem, quia natus est Ioannes eo tempore quo dies decrescere incipiunt; Christus vero quando dies crescere incipiunt, scilicet octavo Kalendas Ianuarii. Quantum ad mortem vero, quia Ioannes mortuus minoratus per capitis abscissionem, Christus vero sublimatus per crucis exaltationem.

Moraliter autem hoc debet esse in unoquoque nostrum. *Oportet illum*, id est Christum, in te *crescere*, ut scilicet in cognitione et amore eius proficias: quia in quantum magis eum potes cognoscendo et amando percipere, tanto magis Christus crescit in te; sicut qui magis proficit in videndo unam et eandem lucem, reputat lucem magis crescere. Et ex hoc oportet homines sic proficientes minui in sua reputatione: quia quanto plus cognoscit quis de altitudine divina, tanto minorem reputat parvitatem humanam; unde Prov. XXX, 1, dicitur: *visio quam locutus est vir, cum quo est Deus*; et sequitur: *stultissimus sum virorum, et sapientia hominum non est mecum*. Et Iob ult., 5: *auditu auris audivi te, nunc autem oculus meus videt te: idcirco ipse me reprehendo, et ago poenitentiam in favilla et cinere*.

Consequenter cum dicit *qui desursum venit, super omnes est*, assignat rationem dictorum: et hoc dupliciter. Primo ex origine; secundo ex doctrina, ibi *qui de terra est, de terra loquitur*.

Circa primum sciendum est, quod in rebus unumquodque, ad hoc quod sit perfectum, oportet venire ad terminum sibi debitum ex sua origine: sicut si aliquis ex rege oritur, oportet eum tamdiu crescere quousque fiat rex. Christus autem habet originem excellentissimam

heavens the morning star appears and gives light before the sun, only to cease giving light when the sun appears, so John went before Christ and is compared to the morning star: "Can you bring out the morning star?" (Jb 38:32).

This is also signified in John's birth and in his death. In his birth, because John was born at a time when the days are getting shorter; Christ, however, was born when the days are growing longer, on the twenty-fifth of December. In his death, because John dies shortened by decapitation; but Christ died raised up by the lifting up of the cross.

524 In the moral sense, this should take place in each one of us. Christ must increase in you, i.e., you should grow in the knowledge and love of Christ, because the more you are able to grasp him by knowledge and love, the more Christ increases in you; just as the more one improves in seeing one and the same light, the more that light seems to increase. Consequently, as men advance in this way, their self-esteem decreases; because the more one knows of the divine greatness, the less he thinks of his human smallness. As we read in Proverbs (30:1): "The revelation spoken by the man close to God"; and then there follows: "I am the most foolish of men, and the wisdom of men is not in me." "I have heard you, but now I see you, and so I reprove myself, and do penance in dust and ashes," as we read in Job (42:5).

525 Then when he says, **The One who came from above is above all things**, he gives the reason for what he has just said. And he does this in two ways. First, on the basis of Christ's origin. And secondly, by considering Christ's teaching.

526 Regarding the first, we should note that in order for a thing to be perfect, it must reach the goal fixed for it by its origin; for example, if one is born from a king, he should continue to progress until he becomes a king. Now Christ has an origin that is most excellent and eternal;

et aeternam; et ideo oportet illum crescere per manifestationem suae virtutis, quantum ad alios, quousque innotescat, eum super omnes esse; et ideo dicit *qui desursum est*, scilicet Christus secundum divinitatem. Supra (hoc cap.): *nemo ascendit in caelum, nisi qui descendit de caelo*; infra c. VIII, 23: *vos de deorsum estis, ego autem de superius sum*.

Vel desursum venit secundum humanam naturam, idest de altitudine humanae naturae, assumendo eam in altitudine sua secundum quod fuit in quolibet statu. Consideratur enim secundum triplicem statum. Primus enim status humanae naturae est ante peccatum; et de hoc assumpsit puritatem, assumendo carnem non inquinatam contagio culpae originalis; Ex. XII, 5: *erit agnus anniculus absque macula*. Secundus status est post peccatum: et de hoc assumpsit passibilitatem et mortem, assumendo similitudinem carnis peccati, quantum ad poenam, non ipsum peccatum quantum ad culpam; secundum illud Rom. VIII, 3: *misit Deus filium suum in similitudinem carnis peccati*. Tertius est status resurrectionis et gloriae; et de hoc assumpsit impossibilitatem peccandi, et fruitionem animae.

Sed cavendus est hic error quorundam dicentium in Adam remansisse aliquod materialiter non inquinatum macula originali, et traductum in posteros, puta usque ad beatam virginem; et de hoc corpus Christi fuisse formatum. Quod quidem haereticum est: quia quicquid in Adam materialiter fuit, macula originalis peccati inquinatum est. Materia vero, de qua formatum est corpus Christi, depurata fuit virtute spiritus sancti, beatam virginem sanctificantis.

Iste, inquam, *qui desursum venit* secundum divinitatem et secundum humanam naturam, *super omnes est*, et per eminentiam gradus, secundum illud Ps. CXII, 4: *excelsus super omnes gentes dominus*, et per auctoritatem et potestatem; Eph. I, 22: *ipsum dedit caput super omnem Ecclesiam*.

therefore he must increase by the manifestation of his power, in relation to others, until it is recognized that he is above all things. Thus he says, **The One who came from above**, that is, Christ, according to his divinity. “No one has gone up to heaven except the One who came down from heaven” (above 3:13); “You are from below, I am from above” (below 8:23).

527 Or, he **came from above**, as to his human nature, i.e., from the “highest” condition of human nature, by assuming it according to what was predominant in it in each of its states. For human nature is considered in three states. First, is the state of human nature before sin; and from this state he took his purity by assuming a flesh unmarked by the stain of original sin: “A lamb without blemish” (Ex 12:5). The second state is after sin; and from this he took his capability to suffer and die by assuming the likeness of sinful flesh as regards its punishment, but not in its guilt: “God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3). The third state is that of resurrection and glory; and from this he took his impossibility of sinning and his joy of soul.

528 Here we must be on guard against the error of those who say that there was left in Adam something materially unmarked by the original stain, and this was passed on to his descendants; for example, to the Blessed Virgin, and that Christ’s body was formed from this. This is heretical, because whatever existed in Adam in a material way was marked by the stain of original sin. Further, the matter from which the body of Christ was formed was purified by the power of the Holy Spirit when he sanctified the Blessed Virgin.

529 **The One who came from above**, according to his divinity as well as his human nature, **is above all things**, both by eminence of rank: “The Lord is high above all nations” (Ps 112:4), and by his authority and power: “He has made him the head of the Church,” as is said in Ephesians (1:22).

Hic ostendit rationem quantum ad doctrinam. Et primo ostendit modum doctrinae Christi, et eius altitudinem; secundo diversitatem recipientium vel non recipientium ipsam doctrinam, ibi *et testimonium eius nemo accipit* et cetera. Circa primum duo facit. Primo proponit conditionem doctrinae Ioannis; secundo conditionem doctrinae Christi; ibi *qui de caelo venit, super omnes est*.

Circa primum sciendum est quod homo per loquelam suam maxime cognoscitur, Matth. XXVI, 73: *loquela tua manifestum te facit*; et ibid. XII, 34: *ex abundantia cordis os loquitur*. Et inde est quod conditio doctrinae attenditur secundum conditionem suae originis. Sic ergo ad cognoscendum conditionem doctrinae Ioannis, consideremus primo conditionem suae originis; unde dicit *qui est de terra*, scilicet Ioannes, non solum materialiter, sed etiam active: quia corpus eius virtute creata formatum fuit; Job IV, 19: *qui habitant domos luteas, et terrenum habent fundamentum*. Secundo consideremus eius conditionem quae terrena est: unde dicit *de terra est*, idest terrenus. Et ideo tertio doctrina eius describitur; unde dicit *de terra loquitur*, idest de terrenis; Is. XXIX, 4: *de terra loqueris, et de humo audietur eloquium tuum*.

Sed quomodo de terra loquitur qui fuit spiritu sancto repletus adhuc ex utero matris suae? Respondeo, secundum Chrysostomum, dicendum, quod Ioannes de terra se loqui dicit in comparatione ad Christi doctrinam; quasi dicat: ea quae loquitur, parva et humilia sunt, qualia decens est suscipere terrestrem naturam, in comparatione ad illum, *in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae Dei absconditi*, ut dicitur Col. II, 3. Is. LV, v. 9: *sicut exaltantur caeli a terra, ita exaltatae sunt viae meae a viis vestris*.

Vel dicendum, secundum Augustinum, et melius, quod considerandum est in quolibet homine quid habeat ex se, et quid ex alio. Ioannes autem, et quilibet homo purus ex se habet quod sit de terra. Et ideo quantum ad ipsum pertinet, non habet quod loquatur nisi de terra; et si aliqua divina loquitur, hoc habet ex divina illuminatione; Eccli. XXXIV, 6: *cor tuum quasi phantasias patitur, nisi*

530 Now he gives the reason for what he had said above (v 30), by considering the teaching of Christ. First, he describes the doctrine of Christ and its grandeur. Secondly, the difference in those who receive or reject this doctrine (v 32b). He does two things with respect to the first. First, he describes John's doctrine. Secondly, he describes the doctrine of Christ (v 32).

531 As to the first we should note that a man is known mainly by what he says: "Your accent gives you away" (Mt 26:73); "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Mt 12:34). This is why the quality of a teaching or doctrine is considered according to the quality of its origin. Accordingly, in order to understand the quality of John's doctrine, we should first consider his origin. So he says, **He who is of earth**, that is John, not only as to the matter from which he was made, but also in his efficient cause: because the body of John was formed by a created power: "They dwell in houses of clay, and have a foundation of earth" (Jb 4:19). Secondly, we should consider the quality of John himself, which is earthly; and so he says, is earthly. Thirdly, the quality of his teaching is described: he **speaks of earthly things**. "You will speak of the earth" (Is 29:4).

532 But since John was full of the Holy Spirit while still in his mother's womb, how can he be said to speak of earthly things? I answer that, according to Chrysostom, John says he speaks of earthly things by comparison with the teaching of Christ. As if to say: The things I speak of are slight and inferior as becomes one of an earthly nature, in comparison to him "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3); "As the heavens are high above the earth, so my ways are high above your ways" (Is 55:9).

Or we could say according to Augustine, and this is a better explanation, that we can consider what any person has of himself and what he has received from another. Now John and every mere human of himself is of the earth. Therefore, from this standpoint, he has nothing to speak of except earthly things. And if he does speak of divine things, it is due to a divine enlightenment: "Your heart has visions, but unless they come

*ab omnipotente fuerit emissa visitatio.* Unde et apostolus dicit, I Cor. XV, 10: *non autem ego, sed gratia Dei mecum;* Matth. X, 20: *non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed spiritus patris vestri qui loquitur in vobis.* Sic ergo, quantum ad Ioannem pertinet, *de terra est, et de terra loquitur.* Si quid autem divinum in eo fuit, non recipientis, sed illuminantis est.

Hic proponit conditionem doctrinae Christi; et circa hoc tria facit. Primo enim ostendit conditionem originis quae caelestis est; unde dicit *qui de caelo venit, super omnes est.* Licet enim corpus Christi materialiter de terra fuerit, active tamen de caelo venit, in quantum virtute divina corpus eius formatum fuit. Venit etiam de caelo, quia persona aeterna et increata filii de caelo venit per carnis assumptionem. Supra eodem: *nemo ascendit in caelum, nisi qui descendit de caelo filius hominis, qui est in caelo.*

Secundo ostendit dignitatem suae conditionis, quae altissima est; unde dicit *super omnes est.* et hoc expositum est supra.

Tertio concludit dignitatem doctrinae suae, quae certissima est, quia *quod vidit et audivit, hoc testatur.* Christus enim, in quantum est Deus, est ipsa veritas; sed in quantum homo, est testis veritatis; infra XVIII, 37: *in hoc natus sum, et ad hoc veni, ut testimonium perhibeam veritati.* Ideo testimonium perhibet de seipso; infra VII, 13: *testimonium perhibes de teipso.* Sed testatur certa, quia quae audivit apud patrem; infra VIII, 26: *ego quae audivi a patre meo, haec loquor in mundo;* I Io. I, 3: *quod vidimus et audivimus.*

Sed nota, quod aliter habetur cognitio rei per visum, et aliter per auditum; nam per visum habetur cognitio rei per ipsam rem visam; sed per auditum non cognoscitur res per ipsam vocem auditam, sed per intellectum loquentis. Quia ergo dominus habet scientiam

from the Almighty, ignore them” (Sir 34:6). So the Apostle says, “It is not I, but the grace of God which is with me” (1 Cor 15:10); “For it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit who is speaking through you” (Mt 10:20). Accordingly, as regards John, he **is earthly and speaks of earthly things.** And if there was anything divine in him, it did not come from him, as he was the recipient, but from the one enlightening him.

533 Now he describes the doctrine of Christ. And he does three things. First, he shows its origin, which is heavenly; hence he says, **The One who comes from heaven is above all things.** For although the body of Christ was of the earth as regards the matter of which it was made, yet it came from heaven as to its efficient cause, inasmuch as his body was formed by divine power. It also came from heaven because the eternal and uncreated person of the Son came from heaven by assuming a body. “No one has gone up to heaven except the One who came down from heaven, the Son of Man, who lives in heaven” (above 3:13).

Secondly, he shows the dignity of Christ, which is very great; so he says, **is above all things.** This was explained above.

Thirdly, he infers the dignity of Christ’s doctrine, which is most certain, because **he testifies to what he sees and to what he hears.** For Christ, as God, is truth itself; but as man, he is its witness: “For this was I born, and for this I came into the world: to testify to the truth” (below 18:37). Therefore, he gives testimony to himself: “You testify to yourself” (below 8:13). And he testifies to what is certain, because his testimony is about what he has heard with the Father: “I speak to the world what I have heard from my Father” (below 8:26); “What we have seen and heard” (1 Jn 1:3).

534 Note that knowledge of a thing is acquired in through sight and in one way another way through hearing. For by sight, a knowledge of a thing is acquired by means of the very thing seen; but by hearing, a thing is not made known by the very voice that is heard, but by means

acceptam a patre, ideo dicitur *quod vidit*, in quantum procedit de essentia patris, *et audivit*, in quantum procedit ut verbum intellectus paterni. Sed quia in rebus intelligentibus aliud est eorum esse, et aliud eorum intelligere; ideo aliter accipitur ab eis cognitio per visum, et aliter per auditum. Sed in Deo patre idem est esse et intelligere; ideo in filio idem est videre et audire. Similiter etiam quia in vidente non est ipsa essentia rei in se, sed similitudo eius, similiter et in audiente non est ipsa conceptio loquentis, sed signum ipsius; ideo videns non est ipsa essentia rei in se, nec audiens est ipsum verbum. In filio autem est ipsa essentia patris accepta per generationem, et est ipsum verbum; et ideo in ipso idem est videre et audire.

Et hoc sic concludit Ioannes, quod ex quo doctrina Christi altior et certior est quam mea, ideo magis audiendus est Christus quam ego.

of the understanding of the one speaking. And so, because the Lord has knowledge which he has received from the Father, he says, **to what he sees**, insofar as he proceeds from the essence of the Father; **and to what he hears**, insofar as he proceeds as the Word of the Father's intellect. Now because among intellectual beings, their act of being is other than their act of understanding, their knowledge through sight is other than their knowledge through hearing. But in God the Father, the act of being (*esse*) and the act of understanding (*intelligere*) are the same. Thus in the Son, to see and hear are the same thing. Moreover, since even in one who sees there is not the essence of the thing seen in itself but only its similitude, as also in the hearer there is not the actual thought of the speaker but only an indication of it, so the one who sees is not the essence of the thing in itself, nor is the listener the very thought expressed. In the Son, however, the very essence of the Father is received by generation, and he himself is the Word; and so in him to see and to hear are the same.

And so John concludes that since the doctrine of Christ has more grandeur and is more certain than his, one must listen to Christ rather than to him.

COMMENTARY ON  
THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

St. Thomas Aquinas

Lectio 6

32b καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν αὐτοῦ οὐδεὶς λαμβάνει. 33 ὁ λαβὼν αὐτοῦ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἐσφράγισεν ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἀληθὴς ἐστίν. 34 ὃν γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖ, οὐ γὰρ ἐκ μέτρου δίδωσιν τὸ πνεῦμα. 35 ὁ πατὴρ ἀγαπᾷ τὸν υἱόν, καὶ πάντα δέδωκεν ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ. 36 ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον: ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν τῷ υἱῷ οὐκ ὄψεται ζωὴν, ἀλλ' ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ μένει ἐπ' αὐτόν.

Supra Ioannes Baptista commendavit Christi doctrinam; hic vero agit de diversitate recipientium: unde tractat de fide adhibenda ipsi doctrinae, et circa hoc tria facit. Primo ostendit raritatem credentium; secundo credendi debitum, ibi *qui autem acceperit eius testimonium* etc.; tertio fidei praemium, ibi *qui credit in filium, habet vitam aeternam*.

Dicit ergo: dico quod Christus certam scientiam habet, et vera loquitur. Tamen licet pauci testimonium eius accipiant, non propter hoc doctrinae ipsius derogatur, quia hoc non est ex parte eius, sed ex parte eorum qui non recipiunt, scilicet discipulorum Ioannis, qui nondum credebant, et

LECTURE 6

32b “And his testimony no one accepts. 33 But whoever accepts his testimony has given a sign [or certifies] that God is true. 34 For the One whom God sends speaks the words of God, for God does not bestow the Spirit in fractions. 35 The Father loves the Son, and has put everything into his hands. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life. But whoever is unbelieving in the Son will not see life; rather, the anger of God rests on him.”

535 Above, John the Baptist commended the teaching of Christ; here, however, he considers the difference in those who receive it. Thus, he treats of the faith that must be given to this teaching. And he does three things. First, he shows the scarcity of those who believe. Secondly, the obligation to believe (v 33). Lastly, the reward for belief (v 36).

536 He says therefore: I say that Christ has certain knowledge and that he speaks the truth. Yet although few accept his testimony, that is no reflection on his teaching, because it is not the fault of the teaching but of those who do not accept it: namely, the disciples of

Pharisaeorum, qui ipsius doctrinae detrahebant. Et ideo dicit *et testimonium eius nemo accipit*.

Hoc autem quod dicit *nemo*, potest dupliciter exponi. Uno modo, *nemo*, idest pauci, et si aliqui accipiant. Et quod aliqui accipiant, ostendit subdens: *qui autem accepit eius testimonium* et cetera. Hoc modo loquendi usus est Evangelista cum dixit, supra I, 11: *in propria venit, et sui eum non receperunt*. quia pauci eum receperunt.

Alio modo, quia accipere eius testimonium est credere in Deum; sed nullus potest credere ex seipso, sed ex Deo; Eph. II, 8: *gratia salvatis estis*. Et ideo dicit *nemo accipit*, scilicet ex se, nisi donetur sibi a Deo.

Vel aliter. Consuetum est in Scriptura divina populo loqui de duobus. Quia quamdiu sumus in hoc mundo, mali sunt permixti bonis; et ideo Scriptura aliquando loquitur de populo, referendo intentionem suam ad malos, aliquando ad bonos. Et hic modus loquendi habetur Ier. XXVI: nam primo dicit: omnis populus et sacerdotes quaerebant occidere Ieremiam: referens intentionem suam ad malos: et postea statim dicit, quod omnis populus quaerebat eum liberare, loquens de bonis. Eodem modo et Ioannes Baptista habens oculos suos ad sinistram, idest ad malos, dicit *et testimonium eius nemo accipit*: et ex alia referens ad dexteram, idest ad bonos, dicit *qui autem acceperit eius testimonium* et cetera.

*Qui autem acceperit eius testimonium*, ubi ostendit debitum fidei, quod est supponere se veritati divinae. Et circa hoc quatuor facit. Primo proponit divinam veritatem; secundo subdit divinae veritatis denuntiationem, ibi *quem enim misit Deus, verba Dei loquitur*; tertio insinuat denunciandi facultatem, ibi *non enim ad mensuram dat Deus spiritum*; quarto assignat facultatis rationem, ibi *pater diligit filium* et cetera.

John, who did not yet believe, and the Pharisees, who slandered his teaching. Thus he says, **And his testimony no one accepts**.

537 **No one** can be explained in two ways. First, so that it implies a few; and so some did accept his testimony. He shows that some did accept it when he adds, "But whoever accepts his testimony." The Evangelist used this way of speaking before when he said: "He came unto his own, and his own did not receive him" (above 1:11): because a few did receive him.

In another way, to accept his testimony is understood as to believe in God. But no one can believe of himself, but only due to God: "You are saved by grace" (Eph 2:8). And so he says, his testimony no one accepts, i.e., of himself, but it is given to him by God.

This can be explained in another way by realizing that Scripture refers to people in two ways. As long as we are in this world the wicked are mingled with the good; and so Scripture sometimes speaks of "the people," or "they," meaning those who are good; while at other times, the same words can refer to the wicked. We can see this in Jeremiah (26): for first it says that all the people and the priests sought to kill Jeremiah, and this referred to those who were evil; then at once it says that all the people sought to free him, and this referred to those who were good. In the same way, John the Baptist says, looking to the left, i.e., toward those who are evil, **And his testimony no one accepts**; and later, referring to those on the right, i.e., to the good, he says, **But whoever accepts his testimony**.

538 **But whoever accepts his testimony**. Here he speaks of the obligation to believe, i.e., to submit oneself to divine truth. As to this he does four things. First, he presents the divine truth. Secondly, he speaks of the proclamation of the divine truth (v 34). Thirdly, of the ability to proclaim it (v 34b). Fourthly, he gives the reason for this ability (v 35).



Debitum autem fidei est ut homo veritati divinae se supponat; et ideo dicit quod si pauci testimonium eius accipiunt, tamen aliqui accipiunt; unde dicit *qui autem acceperit eius testimonium*; idest quicumque sit ille, *signavit*, idest signum quoddam in corde suo ponere debet seu posuit, quod ipse Christus est Deus. Et *est verax*, quia ipse dicebat se esse Deum: quod si non esset, non esset verax, cum tamen scriptum sit, Rom. III, 4: *est autem Deus verax* et cetera. De isto signaculo dicitur Cant. VIII, 6: *pone me ut signaculum super cor tuum*. Et II Tim. II, 19: *firmum fundamentum Dei stat, habens signaculum* et cetera.

Vel, secundum Chrysostomum, *signavit*, idest monstravit, *quia Deus*, scilicet pater, *verax est*, quia scilicet misit filium suum, quem promisit mittendum. Quod ideo dicit Evangelista ut ostendat eos qui non credunt Christo, veritatem patris negare.

Et ideo statim subdit divinae veritatis commendationem, dicens *quem enim misit Deus, verba Dei loquitur*; quasi dicat: hoc signavit, quod Christus, cuius testimonium accipit, *quem Deus misit, verba Dei loquitur*. et ideo qui credit ei, credit patri, infra VIII, 26: *ego quae audivi a patre loquor in mundo*. Unde non loquebatur nisi patrem, et verba patris; quia missus erat a patre, et quia ipse est verbum patris: unde etiam se loqui patrem dicit.

Vel si hoc quod dicit, *quod Deus verax est*, referatur ad Christum, datur intelligi distinctio personarum: cum enim pater sit Deus verax, et Christus est verax Deus; sequitur, quod verus Deus misit Deum verum, distinctum ab eo in persona, non in natura.

539 Man's obligation to the faith is to submit himself to divine truth, and so he says that if few accept his testimony that means that some do. Hence he says, **whoever accepts his testimony**, i.e., whoever he may be, **has given a sign**, i.e., he ought to affix a certain sign or has in fact placed a seal in his own heart, that Christ is God. And he [Christ] is true, because he said that he is God. If he were not, he would not be true, but it is written: "God is true" (Rom 3:4). Concerning this seal it is said: "Set me as a seal on your heart" (Sg 8:6), and "The foundation of God stands firm, bearing a seal, etc." as we read in 2 Timothy (2:19).

Or, following Chrysostom, he has given a sign, i.e., he has shown **that God**, that is, the Father, **is true**, because he sent his Son whom he promised to send. The Fvangelist says this to show that those who do not believe Christ deny the truthfulness of the Father.

540 Then immediately he adds a commendation of divine truth, saying, **For the One whom God sends speaks the words of God**. As if to say: He has given this as a sign, namely, that Christ, whose testimony he accepts, **the One whom God sends speaks the words of God**. Consequently, one who believes Christ believes the Father: "I speak to the world what I have heard from the Father" (below 8:26). So he expressed verbally nothing but the Father and the words of the Father, because he has been sent by the Father, and because he is the Word of the Father. Hence, he says that he even bespeaks the Father.

Or, if the statement **God is true** refers to Christ, we understand the distinction of persons; for since the Father is true God, and Christ is true God, it follows that the true God sent the true God, who is distinct from him in person, but not in nature.

Denuntiandi autem facultas subest Christo maxima, quia non ad mensuram recipit spiritum; et ideo dicit *non enim ad mensuram dat Deus spiritum*.

Posses enim dicere, quod licet miserit eum Deus, tamen non omnia a Deo loquitur, sed aliqua: nam et prophetae aliquando quidem locuti sunt ex spiritu suo, aliquando vero ex spiritu Dei. Sicut II Reg. VII, 3 legitur de Nathan propheta, quod ex spiritu suo loquens, consuluit David, quod aedificaret templum; quod quidem postmodum ex spiritu et nutu divino retractavit. Sed hoc ostendit Baptista locum non habere in Christo; quia prophetae quidem accipiunt spiritum Dei mensurate, scilicet quantum ad aliquid non quantum ad omnia, et ideo non quantum ad omnia verba Dei loquuntur; Christus autem, qui absque mensura et quantum ad omnia spiritum recepit, ideo quantum ad omnia verba Dei loquitur.

Sed quomodo spiritus sanctus datur ad mensuram, cum sit immensus, secundum Athanasium in suo symbolo: *immensus pater, immensus filius, immensus spiritus sanctus*? Responsio. Dicendum, quod spiritus sanctus datur ad mensuram, non quantum ad essentiam suam et virtutem eius, secundum quod est infinitus; sed quantum ad dona, quae dantur mensurate. Ephes. IV, 7: *unicuique nostrum data est gratia secundum mensuram*.

Notandum autem, quod hoc quod dicitur hic de Christo, quod non ad mensuram dedit ei Deus pater spiritum, potest dupliciter intelligi. Uno modo intelligitur de Christo secundum quod Deus; alio modo secundum quod homo. Ad hoc enim datur alicui aliquid ut habeat illud: habere autem spiritum sanctum, convenit Christo et in quantum Deus et in quantum homo; et sic secundum utrumque habet spiritum sanctum. Sed in quantum homo, habet spiritum sanctum ut sanctificantem; Is. LXI, 1: *spiritus domini super me, eo quod unxerit me*, scilicet hominem; in quantum vero Deus habet spiritum sanctum ut manifestantem tantum,

541 The ability to proclaim divine truth is present in Christ in the highest degree, because he does not receive the Spirit in a partial way; and so he says, **for God does not bestow the Spirit in fractions.**

You might say that although God sent Christ, yet not all that Christ says is from God, but only some of the things; for even the prophets spoke at times from their own spirit, and at other times from the Spirit of God. For example, we read that the prophet Nathan (2 Sm 7:3), speaking out of his own spirit, advised David to build a temple, but that later, under the influence of the Spirit of God, he retracted this. However, the Baptist shows that such is not the case with Christ. For the prophets receive the Spirit of God only fractionally, i.e., in reference to some things, but not as to all things. Consequently, not all they say are the words of God. But Christ, who received the Spirit fully and in regards to all things, speaks the words of God as to all things.

542 But how can the Holy Spirit be given in fractions, since he is immense or infinite, according to the Creed of Athanasius: "Immense is the Father, immense the Son, immense the Holy Spirit"? I answer that the Holy Spirit is given in fractions, not in respect to his essence or power, according to which he is infinite, but as to his gifts, which are given fractionally: "Grace has been given to each of us according to degree" (Eph 4:7).

543 We should note that we can understand in two ways what is said here, namely, that God the Father did not give the Spirit to Christ in a partial way. We can understand it as applying to Christ as God, and, in another way, as applying to Christ as man. Something is given to someone in order that he may have it: and it is appropriate to Christ to have the Spirit, both as God and as man. And so he has the Holy Spirit with respect to both. As man, Christ has the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me" (Is 6 1:1), namely, as man. But as God, he has the Holy Spirit only as manifesting himself, inasmuch as the Spirit

secundum quod ab eo procedit. Io. XVI, 14: *ille clarificabit*, idest manifestabit, *quia de meo accipiet*.

Sic ergo utroque modo, scilicet in quantum Deus et in quantum homo, Christus habet spiritum sanctum non ad mensuram. Nam Christo, in quantum Deus, dicitur Deus pater dare spiritum sanctum, non ad mensuram, quia dat ei virtutem et potestatem spirandi spiritum sanctum, qui, cum sit infinitus, in infinitum dat ei pater: quem quidem pater dat ei sicut ipse habet, ut scilicet sicut ab eo procedit, ita et filio. Et hoc dedit ei per aeternam generationem. Similiter et Christus, in quantum homo, non ad mensuram habuit spiritum; nam hominibus datur spiritus sanctus ad mensuram, quia gratia eius ad mensuram eis datur; sed Christus in quantum homo non ad mensuram recepit gratiam: et ideo non ad mensuram recepit spiritum sanctum.

Sed notandum, quod in Christo est triplex gratia, scilicet unionis, singularis personae, quae est habitualis, et capitis, quae est influentiae; et quamlibet istarum recepit Christus non ad mensuram.

Nam gratia unionis, quae non est habitualis, sed quoddam gratuitum donum, datur Christo, ut scilicet in humana natura sit verus filius Dei non per participationem, sed per naturam, in quantum scilicet humana natura Christi unita filio Dei in persona sit: quae quidem unio gratia dicitur, quia nullis praecedentibus meritis hoc habuit. Natura autem divina infinita est: unde ex ipsa unione accepit donum infinitum. Sic ergo non ad mensuram recepit spiritum sanctum, idest donum et gratiam unionis, quae spiritui sancto attribuitur in quantum gratuita.

Gratia autem habitualis dicitur, secundum quod anima Christi plena fuit gratia et sapientia, secundum quod dicitur supra I, 14: *vidimus eum quasi unigenitum a patre, plenum gratiae* et cetera. De qua quidem

proceeds from him: “He will give glory to me,” that is, make known, “because he will have received from me,” as is said below (16:14).

Therefore, both as God and as man, Christ has the Holy Spirit beyond measure. For God the Father is said to give the Holy Spirit without measure to Christ as God, because he gives to Christ the power and might to bring forth (*spirandi*) the Holy Spirit, who, since he is infinite, was infinitely given to him by the Father: for the Father gives it just as he himself has it, so that the Holy Spirit proceeds from him as much as from the Son. And he gave him this by an everlasting generation. Similarly, Christ as man has the Holy Spirit without measure, for the Holy Spirit is given to different men in differing degrees, because grace is given to each “by measure” [cf., e.g., Mk 4:24; Mt 7:2]. But Christ as man did not receive a certain amount of grace; and so he did not receive the Holy Spirit in any limited degree.

544 It should be noted, however, that there are three kinds of grace in Christ: the grace of [the hypostatic] union, the grace of a singular person, which is habitual, and the grace of headship, which animates all the members. And Christ received each of these graces without measure.

The grace of union, which is not habitual grace, but a certain gratuitous gift, is given to Christ in order that in his human nature he be the true Son of God, not by participation, but by nature, insofar as the human nature of Christ is united to the Son of God in person. This union is called a grace because he had it without any preceding merits. Now the divine nature is infinite; hence from that union he received an infinite gift. Thus it was not by degree or measure that he received the Holy Spirit, i.e., the gift and grace of union which, as gratuitous, is attributed to the Holy Spirit.

His grace is termed habitual insofar as the soul of Christ was full of grace and wisdom: “the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (above 1:14). We might wonder if Christ did receive this

gratia dubium esse potest, an recepit eam non ad mensuram. Cum enim huiusmodi gratia sit donum creatum, confiteri oportet quod habeat essentiam finitam: quod quidem quantum ad essentiam, secundum quod quid creatum est, ipsa gratia habitualis finita fuit.

Sed tamen Christus dicitur eam recepisse non ad mensuram, triplici ratione. Primo quidem ex parte recipientis. Manifestum est enim uniuscuiusque naturae capacitatem esse finitam: quia, etsi infinitum bonum recipere possit cognoscendo, et amando, et fruendo, tamen ipsum recipit fruendo finite. Est autem cuiuslibet creaturae, secundum suam speciem et naturam, determinata capacitatis mensura; quae tamen divinae potestati non praeiudicat quin posset aliam creaturam facere maioris capacitatis; sed iam non esset eiusdem naturae secundum speciem; sicut si ternario addatur unitas, erit alia species numeri. Quando igitur alicui naturae non datur de bonitate divina, quanta est capacitas naturalis speciei suae, videtur ei secundum aliquam mensuram donatum; quando vero tota naturalis capacitas impletur, non videtur ei secundum mensuram donatum; quia etsi sit mensura ex parte recipientis, non est tamen mensura ex parte dantis, qui totum paratus est dare: sicut aliquis vas ad fluvium deferens, absque mensura invenit ibi aquam paratam, quamvis ipse cum mensura accipiat, propter vasis determinatam quantitatem. Sic igitur gratia Christi habitualis, finita quidem est secundum essentiam, sed infinite, et non secundum mensuram dicitur dari, quia tantum ei datur quantum natura creata capere potest.

Secundo vero ex parte doni recepti. Nam omnis forma, seu actus secundum rationem suam consideratus, non est finitus eo modo quo, finitur per subiectum in quo recipitur; sed nihil prohibet illum secundum suam essentiam finitum esse, in quantum esse suum est in aliquo receptum. Illud enim secundum essentiam suam infinitum est, quod habet totam plenitudinem essendi: quod quidem soli Deo convenit, qui est summum esse. Si autem ponatur aliqua forma spiritualis esse non

grace without measure. For since such grace is a created gift, we must admit that it has a finite essence. Therefore, as far as its essence is concerned, since it is something created, this habitual grace was finite. Yet Christ is not said to have received this in a limited degree for three reasons.

First, because of the one who is receiving the grace. For it is plain that each thing's nature has a finite capacity, because even though one might receive an infinite good by knowing, loving and enjoying it, nevertheless one receives it by enjoying it in a finite way. Further, each creature has, according to its species and nature, a finite amount of capacity. But this does not make it impossible for the divine power to make another creature possessing a greater capacity; but then such a creature would not be of a nature which is specifically the same, just as when one is added to three, there is another species of number. Therefore, when some nature is not given as much of the divine goodness as its natural capacity is able to contain, then it is seen to be given to it by measure; but when its total natural capacity is filled, it is not given to it by measure, because even though there is a measure on the part of the one receiving, there is none on the part of the one giving, who is prepared to give all. Thus, if someone takes a pail to a river, he sees water present without measure, although he takes the water by measure on account of the limited dimensions of the pail. Thus, the habitual grace of Christ is indeed finite according to its essence, but it is said to be given in an infinite way and not by measure or partially, because as much was given to him as created nature was able to hold.

Secondly, Christ did not receive habitual grace in a limited way by considering the gift which is received. For every form or act, considered in its very nature, is not finite in the way in which it is made finite by the subject in which it is received. Nevertheless, there is nothing to prevent it from being finite in its essence, insofar as its existence (*esse*) is received in some subject. For that is infinite according to its essence which has the entire fulness of being

in subiecto existens, puta albedo, vel color, non quidem haberet essentiam infinitam, quia essentia eius esset determinata ad genus, vel speciem; nihilominus tamen totam plenitudinem illius speciei possideret: unde secundum rationem speciei, absque termino, vel mensura esset, habens quicquid ad illam speciem pertinere potest. Si autem in aliquo subiecto recipiatur albedo, vel color, non habet semper totum quicquid pertinet ad rationem formae huius de necessitate et semper, sed solum quando sic habetur sicut perfecte haberi potest; ita scilicet quod modus habendi adaequet rei habitae potestatem. Sic igitur gratia Christi habitualis, finita quidem fuit secundum essentiam; sed tamen dicitur absque termino et mensuram fuisse, quia quicquid ad rationem gratiae poterat pertinere, totum Christus accepit. Alii autem non totum accipiunt; sed unus sic, et alius sic. *Divisiones enim gratiarum sunt.* I Cor. XII, 4.

Tertio autem ex parte causae. In causa enim quodammodo habetur effectus. Cuicumque ergo adest causa infinitae virtutis ad influendum, dicitur habere illud quod influitur, absque mensura, et aliquo modo infinite. Puta, si quis haberet fontem, qui aquam infinitam posset effluere, infinite diceretur et absque mensura aquam habere. Sic anima Christi, infinitam et absque mensuram gratiam habet, ex hoc ipso quod habet verbum sibi unitum, quod est totius emanationis creaturarum infinitum et indeficiens principium.

Patet autem ex his quae dicta sunt, quod gratia ipsius Christi, quae dicitur capitis, secundum quod Christus est caput Ecclesiae, est infinita quantum ad influentiam. Ex hoc enim quod habuit unde effunderet absque mensura spiritus dona, accepit virtutem effundendi ipsa absque mensura, ut scilicet gratia Christi non solum sufficiat ad salutem

(*essendi*): and this is true of God alone, who is the supreme esse. But if we consider some “spiritual” form as not existing in a subject, for example, whiteness or color, it would not be infinite in essence, because its essence would be confined to some genus or species; nevertheless it would still possess the entire fulness of that species. Thus, considering the nature of the species, it would be without limit or measure, since it would have everything that can pertain to that species. But if whiteness or color should be received into some subject, it does not always have everything that pertains necessarily and always to the nature of this form, but only when the subject has it as perfectly as it is capable of being possessed, i.e., when the way the subject possesses it is equivalent to the power of the thing possessed. Thus, Christ’s habitual grace was finite according to its essence; yet it is said to have been in him without a limit or measure because he received everything that could pertain to the nature of grace. Others, however, do not receive all this, but one receives in one way, and another in another way: “There are different graces”

The third reason for saying that the habitual grace of Christ was not received in a limited way is based on its cause. For an effect is in some way present in its cause. Therefore, if someone has an infinite power to produce something, he is said to have what can be produced without measure and, in a way, infinitely. For example, if someone has a fountain which could produce an infinite amount of water, he would be said to have water in an infinite way and without measure. Thus, the soul of Christ has infinite grace and grace without measure from the fact that he has united to himself the Word, which is the infinite and unfailing source of the entire emanation of all created things.

From what has been said, it is clear that the grace of Christ which is called capital grace, insofar as he is head of the Church, is infinite in its influence. For from the fact that he possessed that from which the gifts of the Spirit could flow out without measure, he received the power to pour them out without measure, so that the grace of Christ

hominum aliquorum, sed hominum totius mundi, secundum illud I Io. II, 2: *ipse est propitiatio pro peccatis nostris, et non pro nostris tantum, sed etiam totius mundi, ac etiam plurium mundorum, si essent.*

Habet etiam Christus denuntiandi veritatem divinam opportunam facultatem, quia omnia sunt in potestate eius; unde dicit *pater diligit filium, et omnia dedit in manu eius*: quod quidem potest referri ad Christum secundum quod homo, et secundum quod Deus; sed aliter et aliter. Si enim referatur ad Christum, secundum naturam divinam, tunc *diligit* non designat principium, sed signum: non enim possumus dicere quod pater omnia filio dat, quia diligit eum, propter duo. Primo, diligere est actus voluntatis; dare autem naturam filio, est generare ipsum. Si ergo pater daret voluntate naturam filio, voluntas patris esset principium generationis filii; et sic sequeretur quod pater generaret filium voluntate, et non natura: quod est haeresis Ariana.

Secundo autem, quia dilectio patris ad filium est spiritus sanctus. Si ergo dilectio patris ad filium esset ratio quare dedit omnia pater in manu filii, sequeretur quod spiritus sanctus esset principium generationis filii; quod est inconveniens. Dicendum est ergo, quod *ly diligit* importat signum tantum, ut dicatur, quod dilectio perfecta, qua *pater diligit filium*, est signum quod pater *dedit omnia in manu eius*, quae scilicet pater habet. Matth. XI, 27: *omnia mihi tradita sunt a patre meo*. Infra XIII, 3: *sciens quia omnia dedit ei pater in manus*.

Si referatur autem ad Christum, secundum quod homo, sic *ly diligit* dicit rationem principii, ut dicatur pater omnia in manu filii tradidisse, scilicet quae in caelis et quae in terris sunt, secundum illud Matth. ult., 18: *data est mihi omnis potestas in caelo et in terra*. Hebr. I, 2: *quem constituit heredem universorum*. Et huius traditionis ratio est, quia diligit eum; unde dicit *pater diligit filium*: dilectio enim patris ratio est creandi

is sufficient not merely for the salvation of some men, but for all the people of the entire world: "He is the offering for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the entire world" ( 1 Jn 2:2), and even for many worlds, if they existed.

545 Christ also had the ability appropriate for declaring divine truth, because all things are in his power; hence he says, **The Father loves the Son, and has put everything into his hands**. This can refer to Christ both as man and as God, but in different ways. If it refers to Christ according to his divine nature, then **loves** does not indicate a principle but a sign: for we cannot say that the Father gives all things to the Son because he loves him. There are two reasons for this. First, because to love is an act of the will; but to give a nature to the Son is to generate him. Therefore, if the Father gave a nature to the Son by his will, the will of the Father would be the principle of the generation of the Son; and then it would follow that the Father generated the Son by will, and not by nature; and this is the Arian heresy.

Secondly, because the love of the Father for the Son is the Holy Spirit. So, if the love of the Father for the Son were the reason why the Father put everything into his hands, it would follow that the Holy Spirit would be the principle of the generation of the Son; and this is not acceptable. Therefore, we should say that **loves** implies only a sign. As if to say: The perfect love with which **the Father loves the Son**, is a sign that the Father **has put everything into his hands**, i.e., everything which the Father has: "All things have been given to me by my Father (Mt 11:27); "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands" (below 13:3).

But if **loves** refers to Christ as man, then it implies the notion of a principle, so that the Father is said to have put everything into the hands of the Son, everything, that is, that is in heaven and on earth: "All authority has been given to me, in heaven and on earth," as he says in Matthew (28:18); "He has appointed him [the Son] the heir of all things" (Heb 1:2). And the reason why the Father gives to the Son

quamlibet creaturam. Sap. XI, 25: *diligis omnia quae sunt, et nihil odisti eorum quae fecisti*. De dilectione autem filii habetur Lc. c. III, et Matth. III, 17: *hic est filius meus dilectus, in quo complacui mihi*. Et Coloss. I, v. 13: *transtulit nos in regnum filii dilectionis suae*, idest filii sui dilecti.

Consequenter cum dicit *qui credit in filium, habet vitam aeternam*, ostendit fructum fidei: et primo ponit fidei praemium; secundo infidelitatis supplicium, ibi *qui autem incredulus est* et cetera.

Sed praemium fidei est inaestimabile, quia vita aeterna; et ideo dicit *qui credit in filium habet vitam aeternam*. Et hoc ex praemissis ostenditur. Si pater omnia dedit filio, scilicet quae habet, et ipse habet vitam aeternam: ergo et filio dedit ut sit vita aeterna. Infra V, 26: *sicut pater habet vitam in semetipso, sic dedit et filio habere vitam in semetipso*: quod quidem competit Christo in quantum est verus et naturalis Dei filius. I Io. ult., v. 20: *ut sitis in vero filio eius Christo: hic est verus Deus, et vita aeterna*. Qui credit in eum habet illud in quod tendit, scilicet ipsum filium in quem credit; sed ipse est vita aeterna: ergo qui credit in eum, habet vitam aeternam. Infra X, 17: *oves meae vocem meam audiunt (...) et ego vitam aeternam do eis*.

Supplicium autem infidelitatis est intolerabile et quantum ad poenam damni, et quantum ad poenam sensus. Quantum quidem ad poenam damni, quia privatur vita; unde dicit *qui autem incredulus est filio, non videbit vitam*. Non autem dicit non habebit sed *non videbit*: quia vita aeterna in visione verae vitae consistit. Infra XVII, 3: *haec est vita aeterna, ut cognoscant te solum Deum verum, et quem misisti Iesum Christum*: quam quidem visionem et cognitionem increduli non habebunt; Iob XX, v. 17: *non videat rivulos lactis* etc., idest dulcedinem

is because he loves the Son; hence he says, **The Father loves the Son**, for the Father's love is the reason for creating each creature: "You love everything which exists, and hate nothing which you have made" (Wis 11:25). Concerning his love for the Son we read in Matthew (3:17): "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"; "He has brought us into the kingdom of the Son of his love," that is, i.e., of his beloved Son (Col 1:13).

546 Then when he says, **Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life**, he shows the fruit of faith. First, he sets forth the reward for faith. Secondly, the penalty for unbelief (v 36b).

547 The reward for faith is beyond our comprehension, because it is eternal life. Hence he says, **Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life**. And this is shown from what has already been said. For if the Father has given everything he has to the Son, and the Father has eternal life, then he has given to the Son to be eternal life: "Just as the Father possesses life in himself, so he has given it to the Son to have life in himself" (below 5:26): and this belongs to Christ insofar as he is the true and natural Son of God. "That you may be in his true Son, Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 Jn 5:20). **Whoever believes in the Son** has that toward which he tends, that is, the Son, in whom he believes. But the Son is eternal life; therefore, whoever believes in him has eternal life. As it says below (10:27): "My sheep hear my voice ... and I give them eternal life."

548 The penalty for unbelief is unendurable, both as to the punishment of loss and as to the punishment of sense. As to the punishment of loss, because it deprives one of life; hence he says, **whoever is unbelieving in the Son will not see life**. He does not say, "will not have," but will not see, because eternal life consists in the vision of the true life: "This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (below 17:3): and unbelievers will not have this vision and this knowledge: "Let him not see the brooks of honey" (Jb 4:19), that is,

vitae aeternae. Dicit autem *non videbit*, quia videre vitam ipsam, est proprium praemium fidei formatae.

Quantum vero ad poenam sensus, quia graviter punitur; unde dicit *sed ira Dei manet super eum*. Ira enim in Scripturis pro afflictione qua Deus malos punit, accipitur; unde cum dicit *ira Dei patris manet super eum*, idem est ac si dicat: sentient poenam a Deo patre.

Et licet pater *omne iudicium dederit filio*, ut dicitur infra V, 22 tamen Baptista refert hoc ad patrem, intendens per hoc Iudaeos reducere ad credendum filio. Et de isto iudicio dicitur Hebr. X, 31: *horrendum est incidere in manus Dei viventis*. Dicit autem *manet super eum*, quia ista poena numquam ab incredulis desistet; et quia omnes qui nascuntur in ista vita mortali, habent secum iram Dei, quam accepit primus Adam. Eph. II, 3: *eramus natura*, idest per nativitatem, *filiis irae*. Ab hac autem ira non liberamur nisi per fidem Christi; et ideo qui non credunt in Christum filium Dei, manet in eis ira Dei.

the sweetness of eternal life. And he says, **will not see**, because to see life itself is the proper reward for faith united with love.

The punishment of sense is unendurable because one is severely punished; so he says: **the anger of God rests on him**. For in the Scriptures anger indicates the pain with which God punishes those who are evil. So when he says, the anger of God, the Father, rests on him, it is the same as saying: They will feel punishment from God the Father.

Although the Father “has given all judgment to the Son,” as we read below (5:22), the Baptist refers this to the Father in order to lead the Jews to believe in the Son. It is written about this judgment: “It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb 10:31). He says, **rests on him**, because this punishment will never be absent from the unbelieving, and because all who are born into this mortal life are the objects of God’s anger, which was first felt by Adam: “We were by nature,” that is, through birth, “children of anger” (Eph 2:3). And we are freed from this anger only by faith in Christ; and so the anger of God rests on those who do not believe in Christ, the Son of God.