100 Delights (*Delicie*)

The three kinds of delights are carnal, spiritual, and celestial. The carnal are to be fled because they are the cause of multiple evil. The spiritual are to be loved because they are the cause of multiple good. The celestial are to be sought for because their possession is the status of the best.

¶ Concerning the first, corporal delights are to be fled just as both riches and superiorities, because they are the occasion of evil. First of lasciviousness and dissolution, for commonly it is said,[[1]](#endnote-1) The satiated belly plays, Jer. 31[:22]: “How long will you be dissolute in deliciousness, O wandering daughter?” 2 Pet. 2[:13]: “Sporting themselves to excess, rioting in their feasts.” Second, they are the occasion of contumacy and rebellion, as the fat horse is recalcitrant, Deut. 32[:15]: “The beloved grew fat and kicked.” Commonly it is said that hens and geese are silent in autumn. This is on account of the abundance of the pasture at that time, Prov. 29[:21]: “He that nourishes his servant delicately from his childhood, afterwards shall find him stubborn.” Third are the occasions of spiritual death, just as a hook under the bait for a fish. Commonly it is said the honey is too dearly bought which is to be licked from the thorn, 1 Tim. 5[:5-6]: “A widow … that lives in pleasures, is dead while she is living.” Apo. 18[:7]: “As much as she has glorified herself, and lived in delicacies, so much torment give to her.”

On the contrary, spiritual delights are to be loved because they are the occasions of good. For they make one aspire to God, just as a garment however more delightful so much the dearer and more loveable, Can. 7[:6]: "How beautiful are you, and how comely, my dearest, in delights!” Isai. last chapter [66:11]: “That you may milk out, and flow with delights.”

And according to Gregory, *Super Evangelium*,[[2]](#endnote-2) there is a great different between the corporal and spiritual delights. For corporal delights, since they are not possessed in themselves, they kindle a serious desire, when, in truth, they are possessed, they turn it into fastidiousness through satiety. But on the contrary, spiritual delights since they are not possessed in fastidiousness, however much the more they are confirmed by the one tasting, so much the more they are tasted in corporal delights by the one hungering. Appetite pleases, experience displeases. In spiritual delights the appetite is serious; experience pleases more. Spiritual delights not possessed cannot be bitter because the taste of them is not known. For who can love what he does not know? Thence warns the Psal. 33[:9]: “Taste and see that the Lord is sweet.” But if he might say, You do not know his sweetness, if you taste this at least. These spiritual delights man then lost when he sinned in paradise. Wherefore also we born in this hardship, we do not know what we ought to desire, therefore now the soul does not long for internal delights, by which to taste them it has long done without. But celestial piety not abandoning us, he abandons himself.

Therefore, he adds contented delights to his memory when he says, “A certain man made a great supper, and invited many,” etc., to which they should come, [Luke 14:16-17].

To the third kind of delights they seek celestial delights which are to be acquired through the works of penance. Just as familiarity of the Lord is acquired by buying. After the offense, Job 22[:23-26]: “If you will return to the Almighty … then shall you abound in delights.”

Concerning which and what kind of delights, see above, Chapter [39] Blessedness (*Beatitudo*) and Chapter [53] Heaven (*Celum*).

1. Cf. Albert the Great, *Commentarii in Psalmum*  89:14, in *Opera Omnia* ed. August Borgnet, (Paris: Ludovicus Vives, 1892), 16:500b: Post repletionem sequitur exsultatio, quia in Gallico proverbium est: “Venter saturates ludit.” [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Gregory, *Homilia in Evangelia* 2.36.1 (PL 76:1266): Hoc distare, fratres charissimi, inter delicias corporis et cordis solet, quod corporales deliciae cum non habentur grave in se desiderium accendunt, cum vero habitae eduntur comedentem protinus in fastidium per satietatem vertunt. At contra spiritales deliciae cum non habentur in fastidio sunt, cum vero habentur in desiderio; tantoque a comedente amplius esuriuntur, quanto et ab esuriente amplius comeduntur. In illis appetitus placet, experientia displicet: in istis appetitus vilis est, et experientia magis placet. In illis appetitus saturitatem, saturitas fastidium generat; in istis autem appetitus saturitatem, saturitas appetitum parit. Augent enim spiritales deliciae desiderium in mente, dum satiant, quia quanto magis earum sapor percipitur, eo amplius cognoscitur quod avidius ametur. Et idcirco non habitae amari non possunt, quia earum sapor ignoratur. Quis enim amare valeat quod ignorat? Proinde Psalmista nos admonet, dicens: Gustate, et videte quoniam suavis est Dominus (Psal. XXXIII, 9). Ac si aperte dicat: Suavitatem ejus non cognoscitis, si hanc minime gustatis. Sed cibum vitae ex palato cordis tangite, ut probantes ejus dulcedinem amare valeatis. Has autem homo delicias tunc amisit, cum in paradiso peccavit (Genes. III, 6); extra exiit, cum os a cibo aeternae dulcedinis clausit. Unde nos quoque nati in hujus peregrinationis aerumna, huc fastidiosi jam venimus, nec scimus quid desiderare debeamus; tantoque se amplius fastidii nostri morbus exaggerat, quanto magis ab esu illius dulcedinis animus elongat; et eo jam internas delicias non appetit, quo eas comedere diu longeque desuevit. Fastidio ergo nostro tabescimus, et longa inediae peste fatigamur. Et quia gustare intus nolumus paratam dulcedinem, amamus foris miseri famem nostram. Sed superna nos pietas nec deserentes se deserit. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)