154 Sons of God (*Filii Dei*)

They are proven through many ways.

First, through the expression of likeness. For son (*filius*) is said as if he becomes like that one (*fit ut ille*), that is, because he is like the parent, or because he speaks like the father, or because he bears himself in a similar way. But God is soft in speaking. In a sign of which when the passions are read in the Church, the words of Christ are pronounced with a humble voice, Can. 2[:14]: “Your voice is sweet.”

¶ Again, God is holy in work. Therefore, whoever is like him is a son, [1] John 3[:1]: “Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be … the sons of God.” Rather it is said the son of that animal which bears the likeness of God in his customs, as if he were rapacious of the wolf or of the lion, he is called the son and so concerning the other beasts, Eccle. 2[:15]: “I said in my heart,” concerning the sons of men so that God may prove them that he may show them to be similar to the beasts in whose figure John saw them in the Apoc. 13[:1-2]: the antichrist in the form of a certain beast whose body “was like to a leopard” on account of the variety of sins, “and his feet were as the feet of a bear,” on account of his rapacity, “and his mouth as the mouth of a lion,” on account of his exalted words.

¶ Again, in the sign of this Nabugodonosor was changed into a beast because of his sins, Dan. 4[:30]. Psal. [48:13]: “Man when he was in honor did not understand; he is compared to senseless beasts.” Wherefore it is to be noted here that it is thus concerning God and sons, namely, just as concerning Eve and her daughters. For chicks when they have been raised to puberty, having left the parents, fly away, so men leave God, Isai. 1[:2]: “I have brought up children and exalted them: but they have despised me.”

Second, we are proved sons on account of the easy giving away of the beloved and each naturally is kind to his own flesh, but the son is the flesh of the father, therefore the father will be kind to the son, but we are of the flesh of God, Judges 9[:2]: “I am your bone, and your flesh.” Therefore, you will be kind, Psal. [102:13]: “As a father has compassion on his children, so has the Lord compassion.”

¶ Therefore when there is mercy for the good of paternity and sonship because no one would hand his own son for love and God is easily merciful to us penitents. Therefore, we are proved to be his sons, [1] Paral. 17[:13]: “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son: and I will not take my mercy away from him.”

Third, we are proved sons because of his benign correction. For a son when he is delinquent is corrected by the rod, but the servant with disgrace and his hire is taken away, Prov. 13[:24]: “He that spares the rod hates his son,” etc., so also, we when we are delinquent in constancy and damages. Just like a king with little switches overturns rules of eternal pain and subtraction of glory, Wis. 12[:19]: “You have made your children to be of a good hope: because in judging you give place for repentance for sins,” etc. Heb. 12[:6]: “God scourges every son whom he receives.”