155 Joy (*Gaudium*)

Joy is triple. For some joy is of the perverse which is to be fled; some joy is of the just which is to be sought; some joy is of the blessed which is to be sought. Therefore, so that we may avoid the first, lest us come to the second, and let us arrive at the third.

¶ Therefore joy is said to be triple: temporal in which the evil rejoice; spiritual in which the good rejoice; celestial in which the blessed rejoice. The evil rejoice in the vanity of temporal matters; the just rejoice in the endurance of tribulations; the blessed in the fruition of rewards. The first joy is brief and damnable. The second is bitter and fruitful. The third is loveable and glorious.

Concerning the first, Wis. 2[:6]: “*Come therefore and let us enjoy the good things that are present and let us … use the creatures*.” He shows the brevity of this, Job 21[:12]: “They take the timbrel, and the harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ,” etc. And thus, for the just man of God in God “My harp is turned to mourning” of them, Job [30:31].

¶ Concerning the second, 2 Cor. 1[:5]: “For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us: so also, by Christ does our comfort abound.” And Act. [5:41]: “The apostles went from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus.”

Concerning the third, Matt. 5[:12]: “Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven.” Again,[[1]](#endnote-1) spiritual joy differs from worldly joy because the former is pure, and the latter is impure sprinkled over in bitterness according to Boethius, in book two of the *Consolation*.[[2]](#endnote-2) Isai. 1[:22]: “Your wine is mingled with water.” For worldly joy is mixed with remorse of conscience and tortuous solitude.

¶ The second difference[[3]](#endnote-3) is continuity because spiritual joy is continuous and, in the future, Prov. 15[:15]: “A secure mind is like a continual feast.” Earthly joy in truth is brief and transitory, Job 20[:5]: “The joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.” The worldly joy is hypocritical because the interior is corrupt, the exterior flowery. The joy of such a kind is as a moment because it does not have the height of perseverance, nor the width of friendship, nor the depth of good conscience.

¶ The third difference[[4]](#endnote-4) is dignity and lack of dignity, because spiritual joy is concerning matters worthy and divine, Philip. 4[:4]: “Rejoice in the Lord always.” Worldly joy is concerning unworthy matters, Prov. 3[:35]: “The promotion of fools is disgrace.”

¶ Again, concerning the three things, there is the joy concerning the conversion of the sinner, concerning the conversation of the penitent, concerning the consummation of perseverance. Concerning the first, Luke 15[:32]: “It was fit that we should make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead and is come to life again.” If there the sinner proposed to return, let not his brother envy nor impede him, because the merciful father is disposed to receive him. Concerning the second, Luke 15[:7]: “There shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that does penance.” Concerning the third, Philip. 4[:1]: “My joy and my crown; so, stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.” Once upon a time a certain person asked another what was the word of greater consolation in the Sacred Scriptures. He responded that which Christ spoke, Matt. [5:12; Luke 10:20]: “Be glad and rejoice … that your names are written in heaven.” But if there is so much joy concerning the promise of glory, what joy there is concerning the certain reception, no one can express it.

Wherefore, Gregory in a *Homilia,[[5]](#endnote-5)* what tongue can say or what intellect is enough to comprehend what or how many are the joys of those of the celestial city. Again, some joy in the vanity of the world, such as in riches and honors, John 16[:20]: “The world shall rejoice.” But this is vain and perilous out of which one easily comes to ruin, Ezech. 9[:1]: “Man does not know whether he be worthy of love, or hatred.” And, brief is its passing, Job. 20[:]: “The joy of the hypocrite,” that is, of the world, “but for a moment,” because it does not have length.

¶ Others rejoice in the pleasure of sin, Eccli. 19[:5]: “He that rejoices in iniquity, shall be censured,” that is, he shall be stricken from the page of the book of life, but this is also insane and dangerous.

¶ For he would be foolish who would rejoice over the noose by which he is suspended over the fire by which he would be burned up, Prov. 15[:21], the joy of the foolish man to do foolishness. And, because the end of sin is sorrowful, Prov. 14[:13]: “Mourning takes hold of the end of joy.”

Others rejoice in the operation of the good, Prov. 21[:15]: “It is joy to the just to do judgment.” But also, this is useful and most fruitful if the joy comes from the benefits of God, Philip. 4[:4]: “Rejoice in the Lord always,” or if concerning the adversities of the world just like the merchant concerning his costly merchandise, James 1[:2]: “Brethren, count it all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations.” Act. 5[:41]: “The apostles indeed went from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy,” or even if joy should come concerning the prosperity of a neighbor just as one member concerning the health of another, Rom. 12[:15]: “Rejoice with them that rejoice.”

¶ Again, if one rejoices concerning the penance of sins, 2 Cor. 7[:9]: “I am glad … because you were made sorrowful unto penance.” Again, if one rejoices concerning the teaching of the ignorant, concerning the perseverance of those setting out, or concerning the holiness of the position in one’s neighbor or in oneself, Prov. 14[:10]: “The heart that knows the bitterness of his own soul, in his joy the stranger shall not intermeddle.”

¶ In the fourth place, they joy in the vision of God, Matt. 25[:21]

: “Good and faithful servant … enter into the joy of your lord.” Again, Augustine, *De verbis Apostoli,* homily 88,[[6]](#endnote-6) although we have not yet come to the plenitude of joy, we are not left without joy because of what the Apostle said [Rom. 12:12]: “Rejoicing in hope. Patient in tribulation.”

¶ Again, Chrysostom, *Homilia* 25,[[7]](#endnote-7) if it is good to rejoice bodily, through this understand that it is better to rejoice in the mind spiritually. Certainly, the joy of the flesh is finished with the flesh. Indeed, the joy of the soul perseveres with the soul. Wherefore, Seneca, *Epistula* 70,[[8]](#endnote-8) all things tend to joy, but where they end up, they do not know. Certainly, the wise man is never without joy, but this joy is not born except from the conscience of virtue, nor is it interrupted, nor does it fail. Because what fortune does not give, it cannot take away, 1 Pet. 4[:13]: “If you partake of the sufferings of Christ, rejoice that when his glory shall be revealed, you may also be glad.” Certainly [Job 20:5]: “The joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.” Because it does not have the length nor the width, etc., as above.

Where Augustine[[9]](#endnote-9) explaining that of 2 Cor. 6[:10]: “As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing,” so says the beggar indicating his sleep, he says thus, as if I was eating, as if I was riding horseback, as if I was finding a treasure. So as if he were not, he would not be a beggar; but because it was as if, therefore, he remains a beggar. Therefore, because just as sleep passes, so does present felicity and its joy and its adversity. Therefore, the whole passes just as if, and the truth of these will come, namely, the pain of hell and on the contrary it will be concerning the good, because it passes for these just as, namely, the adversity of this world and their eternal joy will come.

Wherefore Chrysostom, *Homilia* 45,[[10]](#endnote-10) true joy of the saints is to pass from this world, but servant, having finished the work, rejoices when this pilgrimage is completed to appear before God. Wherefore, Augustine, homily 7, *Super Joannem*,[[11]](#endnote-11) says that joy of this world is of the frenetic, who rejoice as lords most often of their own dangers, namely, in the book *De naturis*,[[12]](#endnote-12) it says that the dolphin never rejoices so much as against a storm, so the evil man.

Therefore, Christ giving us an example of contemplating the vain joy of the world, “who having joy set before him, endured the cross,” Heb. 12[:2]. Again, according to the Philosopher, book 8,[[13]](#endnote-13) the lion who as if always rejoices in his life as the king of beasts, cries against his death. On the other hand, according to Jerome, *Epistola* 36,[[14]](#endnote-14) the swan which also brought forth its whole life and some tarry against their death and sing, so the joy of world has a sorrowful end and in opposition the sorrow of the world has an end of joy in the waters of penance, Prov. 14[:13]: “Laughter shall be mingled with sorrow, and mourning takes hold of the end of joy.” Again James 4[:9]: “Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into sorrow.” Wherefore, Bede,[[15]](#endnote-15) it is not true joy which is mixed with weeping. Therefore, this is to be wept with weeping, rejoiced with rejoicing, because in hell there will always be weeping, in heaven only rejoicing. Wherefore, Jerome, *Epistola* 34,[[16]](#endnote-16) you are delicate, brother, if you wish to rejoice here with the world and afterwards reign with Christ, Eccli. 2[:2]: “Laughter I counted error: and to mirth I said: Why are you vainly deceived?” Again, Augustine, book 21, *De civitate*,[[17]](#endnote-17) chapter 14, says concerning Zoroaster, who by laughter in his birth, that the laughter portended nothing good, but rather monstrous, when in a natural birth of man, he ought to begin by weeping.

¶ Again, we ought not to rejoice concerning an evil or our enemy, Eccli. 8[:8]: “Rejoice not at the death of your enemy.” And Prov. 24[:17]: “When your enemy shall fall, be not glad.” Job 31[:29]: “If I have been glad at the downfall of him that hated me.”

1. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 8.1 (8:326b-327a): Gaudium vero mundanum, sicut vinum cum aqua misxtum, ad inebriandum debilissimum, et insipidum; de quo dicitur: *Vinum tuum mixtum est aqua*: quia, ut dicit Boetius, “dulcedo felicitatis humanae, multis amaritudinibus est respersa.” Et notandum, quod gaudium humanum cum duobus est admixtum, scilicet cum remorsu conscientiae, et sollicitudine crucianted [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae,* lib. 2, prosa 4 (PL 63:684): Quam multis amaritudinibus humanae felicitatis dulcedo respersa est! quae si etiam fruenti jucunda esse videatur, tamen, quo minus, cum velit, abeat, retineri non possit. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 8.1 (8:327a): Secunda differentia spiritualis gaudii est continuitas et discontinuitas. Spirituale gaudium est continuum et securum; unde dicitur: *Secura mens quasi juge convivium*. Gaudium vero mundanum est breve et transitorium, quia, ut dicitur: *gaudium hypocritae instar puncti*. *Hypocrita* dicitur este mundus, quia hypocrita licet interius sit corruptus, exterius tamen apparet bonus et mundus.... sicut punctus qui caret longitudine, quam habet linea; et latitudine, quam habet superficies; et profunditate, quam habet corpus. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 8.1 (8:327a-b): Tertia differentia spiritualis gaudii, et mundani, est dignitas et indignitas. Gaudium enim spirituale est de rebus valde dignis, quia de Deo precipue, et de rebus divinis. Unde dicit Apostolus: *Gaudete in Domino semper*, etc. Gaudium vero mundi est de rebus indignis, et praecipue, sicut de voluptate carnis ... De quo gaudio turpissimo dicitur: *Stultorum exultatio ignominia*. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Gregory, *Homilia* 37 (PL 76:1275): Quae autem lingua dicere, vel quis intellectus capere sufficit illa supernae civitatis quanta sint gaudia. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Augustine, *Sermo* 157.4.4 (PL 38:861): Quamvis enim nondum venerit nostri [H]postolus gaudio re-us in proximogaudii plenitudo: nec modo tamen sine gaudio relicti sumus; quia spe salvi facti sumus. Ideo et ipse Apostolus, qui ait, Si quod non videmus speramus, per patientiam exspectamus; dicit alio loco, Spe gaudentes, in tribulatione patientes (Rom. XII, 12). [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Matthaeum*, Homilia 25 ex cap. 10 (PG 56:764): Utputa, scis quia bonum est gaudere carnaliter: per hoc intellige, quia melius est gaudium animae: Gaudium quippe carnis cum carne finitur, gaudium autem animae cum anima perseverat. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Seneca, *Epistula* 59.15-18 (LCL 75:418-423): Omnis, inquam, illi tendunt ad gaudium, sed unde stabile magnumque consequantur, ignorant. … Habes ergo et quare velis sapiens esse, si numquam since gaudio est. Gaudium hoc non nascitur nisi ex virtutum conscientia. … Cum fatigaverunt se vino ac libidinibus, cum illos nox inter vitia defecit. … Quod non dedit fortuna, non eripit. ...

All men of this stamp, I maintain, are pressing on in pursuit of joy, but they do not know where they may obtain a joy that is both great and enduring. ...  You have, then, a reason for wishing to be wise, if the wise man is never deprived of joy. This joy springs only from the knowledge that you possess the virtues. ...  When men have wearied themselves with wine and lust, when night fails them before their debauch is done, ... That which Fortune has not given, she cannot take away. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 48:16 sermo 2.5 (PL 36:559): In tantis tribulationibus, semper gaudentes, semper tristes: semper gaudentes, quia ipse dixit, Quasi tristes, semper autem gaudentes. Tristitia nostra habet quasi; gaudium nostrum non habet quasi, quia in spe certa est. Quare tristitia nostra quasi habet? Quia sicut somnus transiet, et dominabuntur recti mane. Novit enim Charitas Vestra, quia qui somnium indicat, addit quasi. Quasi sedebam, quasi loquebar, quasi prandebam, quasi equitabam, quasi disputabam. Totum quasi; quia cum evigilaverit, non invenit quod videbat. Quasi thesaurum inveneram, dicit mendicus. Si quasi non esset, mendicus non esset: sed quia quasi erat, mendicus est. Itaque modo qui ad laetitias saeculares oculos aperiunt, et cor claudunt, transit quasi eorum, et venit verum ipsorum. Quasi ipsorum felicitas est saeculi, verum ipsorum poena est. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Pseudo-Chrysostomus, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum* homilia 27 cap. 11 (PG 56:771): quia verum gaudium est sanctorum, exire de mundo. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Augustine, *In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus* 7.2 (PL 35:1438): Gaudium enim ipsorum quasi phreneticorum est. Quomodo autem phreneticus gaudet in insania plerumque, et ridet; et plangit illum qui sanus est: sic et nos, charissimi, si recepimus medicinam de coelo venientem, quia et nos omnes phrenetici eramus, tanquam salvi facti, quia ea quae diligebamus non diligimus, gemamus ad Deum de iis qui adhuc insaniunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Alexander Neckam, *De naturis rerum* De laudibus divinae sapientiae 377-380 (Wright, p. 365): Delphin, quem citharista puer revocavit ab undis, / Invida dilecto fata fuisse gemit. / Aequoreas haec mallet onus vectare per undas, / Consuetrum laetus sponte subiret onus. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Aristotle, cf. Isadore, *Etymologiae* 12.2.3 (PL 82:434): Leo autem Graece, Latine rex interpretatur, eo quod princeps sit omnium bestiarum. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Jerome, cf. Pliny, *Historia naturalis* 10.32 (LCL 353:332-333): olorum morte narratur flebilis cantus, falso, ut arbitror aliquot experimentis.

A story is told about the mournful song of swans at their death—a false story as I judge on the strength of a certain number of experiences [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Bede, *Homilia* 7 (PL 94:165): Sed non est plenum gaudium quod fletu variante miscetur. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Jerome, *Epistola* 14.10 (PL 22:354): Delicatus es, frater, si et hic vis gaudere cum saeculo, et postea regnare cum Christo. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 21.14 (PL 41:728): Solum, quando natus est, ferunt risisse Zoroastrem , nec ei boni aliquid monstrosus risus ille portendit. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)