106 To Love or Love (*Diligere uel Dileccio*)

Man ought to love three: himself, his neighbor, and God: himself discreetly, his neighbor orderly, and God most highly.

He ought to love himself discreetly, so that he might keep custody over his soul before all created things. Because he ought to subsume himself to it, that is, perfect the spirit, thus he nourishes the flesh in order to live, thus he cherishes it so that it does not become recalcitrant. For “A woman,” that is, the flesh, if she have superiority, is contrary to her husband,” that is, her spirit, Eccli. 25[:30]. For it is often experienced that in a beast of burden too much fight makes it recalcitrant, Deut. 32[:15]: “The beloved grew fat and kicked.”

Second, a man ought to love his neighbor orderly, that is, in that way by which he is held to love himself, or to that end by which he is held to love, that is, for eternal life. Wherefore in Matt. 22[:39] it is said “you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

About which it is to be noted that many things move one to a mutual loving. First, the debt from which no one can be absolved. For just a member naturally loves and supports another member, thus we should each other, because Eph. 4[:25]: “We are members one of another.” Rom. 13[:8]: “Owe no man anything, but to love one another.”

Second, the precept moves from which no one can be excused, concerning the giving of money the poor man may be excused, concerning making a pilgrimage, the sick may be excused, concerning singing, the hoarse may be excused, but all can love, John 15[:12]: “This is my commandment, that you love one another.”

¶ Third, the teaching moves which cannot be falsified. For nature teaches this, that “every beast loves its like,” Eccli. 13[:19]. The scriptures teach this, 1 Pet. 1[:22]: “From a sincere heart love one another earnestly.” Fraternal charity is when a brother honors a brother devotedly, corrects the dissolute, is accommodating to those present, does not pay back those absent, has compassion for the sick, congratulates the healthy, does not provoke the placated, assuages the irate, and respects one as an elder.

¶ Fourth, association moves one from which no one ought to be excluded. For anyone is held to go to schools of a better teacher. But God is the best teacher, John 13[:35]: “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another.”

¶ Fifth, God moves one because the more love he is pouring out, the more it is multiplied, and certainly this is charity, 1 Thes. 3[:12]: “May the Lord multiply you, and make you abound in charity.”

¶ Sixth, the example which out to be exchanged by men, [1] John 4[:11]: “If God has so loved us; we also ought to love one another.” Eph. [5:1]: “Be therefore followers of God, as most dear children.”

¶ Seventh, a blessing without which no one can be saved, [1] John 4[:12]: “If we love one another, God abides in us.”

¶ Again, first, note here what some people hate because it is to be hated, such as the sin of a good man, Psal. [118:163]: “I have hated iniquity.” Second, some people love what is to be loved, such as what is good for a man, Can. 1[:3]: “The righteous love you.” And in the Psal. [44:8]: “You have loved justice, and hated iniquity.” Third, others love what is to be hated, such as the sin of the evil man, John 3[:19]: “Men loved darkness rather than the light.” Fourth, they hate what is to be loved, such as the good of the evil man, Psal. [34:12]: “They repaid me evil for good,” [108:5]: “hatred for my love.” And Amos 5[:10]: “They have hated him that rebukes in the gate.”

¶ Again, note for this matter that love of one’s neighbor is to be commended. They require some conditions. And first, because it is first, it is without the expectation of temporal advantage, which is against many who do not love unless on account of profit. Just as a dog guards his mouth if there is in it anything to be gnawed on. And the tree is preserved while it bears fruit. Thus no one seems to love the old woman even though she is followed when she carries tripes to the market, but when she goes to church, she is not followed. Wherefore Seneca in *Epistula ad Lucilum,[[1]](#endnote-1)* flies follow honey, the wolf follows a carcass, but this crowd do not follow man as a prey. Wherefore, Gregory,[[2]](#endnote-2) when someone is loved in prosperity, it is uncertain whether the possessor or the prosperity is loved. Therefore, according to teaching, [1] John 3[:18]: “Let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.”

Second, it is required that love be discreet, which, namely, he loves persons by reason of nature, but vices are pursued, nor thus does it stoop to persons because they are implicated in vices, Rom. 13[:10]: “The love of our neighbor works no evil.” Wherefore, Augustine, in the *Glossa* there,[[3]](#endnote-3) if you know how to love yourself, then I commit to you your neighbor, so that you may love him as yourself. If, however you love iniquity, you hate yourself, nor do you know how to love your neighbor, Psal. [10:6]: “He that loves iniquity hates his own soul.”

¶ Third, love ought to be continuous, Prov. 17[:17]: “He that is a friend loves at all times.” But “there is a friend a companion at the table, and he will not abide,” Eccli. 6[:10].

¶ Again, note that do two things for our neighbor, because in indigence we should give comfort, in ignorance we should teach. It is commanded on all sides, Matt. 22[:39]: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” It is not understood that in subjects, a wife, and children these things are implied. The neighbor ought to be equal, but because of our abundance, if he is in need, help is to be given to him, just as we wish help to be given to us. Because if we do not wish evil things to be said of us, neither in our presence nor our absence, although they would be true, neither ought we to hear or say such things about our neighbor. If you have taken one thing from your neighbor that is temporal, you cannot be absolved without restitution if you have the where with all to pay it back. But to defame your neighbor is more serious than to carry off a temporal thing. According to that of Prov. [22:1]: “A good name is better than great riches.” Therefore, this cannot be resolved unless his reputation is restored, but this is difficult, because, first, the defamer must serve up another matter concerning him. Second, the relator must serve up another matter concerning him. Third, the listener must take in another matter concerning him. How, therefore can the first defamer call everything back? Therefore, love your neighbor as yourself. For did not God at the beginning make one man of gold from whom all the nobles are propagated, and another man of clay from whom the commoners proceed. But according to Gregory in his *Pastoral Care*,[[4]](#endnote-4) nature begot all men equal, but fault set one man over another.

¶ From which, therefore, all men are of the same kind. No one ought to be despised by another. For from the same gain comes forth chaff and flour, from the same root the rose and the thorn. But perhaps you say to me how can I love him who has done so much evil to me? I respond, you ought to love him as a friend in God, an enemy on account of God, because thus God commanded, Luke 6[:27-28]: “Love your enemies … and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you.”

¶ Certainly the evil neighbor is like God’s rod by which the elect are purged, who in the end, unless he corrects himself will be cast into hell. Just as the father makes the son happy, whom he has beaten, by throwing the rod into the fire. And then according to the Psal. [57:11]: “The just shall rejoice when he shall see the revenge.” You ought not to impute the evil you feel to the stick, but to the one striking. Thus, neither should you impute to the enemy of man who is injuring you, but to the devil whose instrument is the evil man, according to that of Psal. [77:49]: “Which he sent by evil angels.”

Again, another consideration is because this one who is now evil could be good, and perhaps through your patience seen by him.

Again, there is another consideration because love of an enemy is more meritorious and more lucrative than love of a friend. For in commerce the merchants are usually more successful who put down their own money, and in the earth it is more fertile rather to sow, a fire is more forceful which burns in a matter contrary to itself than in, namely, what is more agreeable, and wheat is more tasty where it does not grow than where it does grow. Thus, love in the hating of malefactors leads us to God, but a benefactor obliges us to give back in return.

¶ However, he who acquires more is more beneficial than he who obliges. There one ought to love more as it seems, but discriminate her, because enemies, in so far as they are enemies, are not to be loved, because man is of necessity savable, but because they are loved in special, it is not of necessity, but of perfection, unless extreme necessity forces us, according to that of Prov. [25:21]: “If your enemy is hungry, give him to eat.” Thus, therefore, your neighbor is to be loved in this that he was made in nature of body and soul, but not in this that he himself made, that is, in this that he is a sinner.

¶ For in this manner God loves the sinner, Wis. 11[:25]: Lord, “you hate none of the things which you have made.” Wherefore, however, we must love in our neighbor this which nature has formed, not that which vice has deformed. Wherefore, it is narrated concerning the three companions[[5]](#endnote-5) at the same table of an important man. After the luncheon, to those seated, partly spoiled fruits were offered. One of the companions ate the fruit entirely. Wherefore also on account of the abomination to his stomach he quickly vomited up the whole again. And he was judged as uncivil.

Which seeing the second companion did not wish to taste hardly anything of his fruit. Wherefore also he was judged to be uncivil.

¶ In truth the third companion separated out the rottenness from his fruit and ate the rest. And wherefore he himself was judged to be polite.

Thus, morally some love others indifferently, because nothing in love displeases, but in the end, it is necessary to vomit up such ones if they ought to be saved. There are others to whom nothing is pleasing about their neighbor, neither in word nor deed. And there are a third sort who see what is good in another and approve, because in truth they reject the evil. Only these love orderly, according to that of Jer. 15[:19]: “If you will separate the precious from the vile, you shall be as my mouth.”

Second,[[6]](#endnote-6) we must assist our neighbor in his need, according to what is expressed in the six works of mercy, Matt. [25:34] which are to bury the dead, just as Tobias [1:21] did, or spiritually to hide the evil report concerning our neighbor. Again, to clothe the naked, just as Martin[[7]](#endnote-7) have hospitality to the pilgrim. Just as Martha [Luke 10:40] and thus concerning the remaining works touching upon them corporally and spiritually, [1] John 3[:17]: “He that has the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his heart from him: how does the charity of God abide in him?” As if saying, therefore, no one through the opposite, who assists his neighbor, sometimes by sharing, sometimes by giving back, the charity of God is in that one.

¶ Third, the lesson for loving is God, and this is the greatest, thus because nothing is set before him. Wherefore also our love to him ought to be inseparable. Therefore, compared to death unable to be overcome. Therefore, compared to hell insatiable. Therefore, compared to fire, which never says enough, so inextinguishable. Therefore, compared to water. However, there are many things which move us to loving God, but especially his benefits which he has conferred.

Concerning which, see above, chapter [92] To give (*Dare*).

For more things about love, see above, chapter [14] Love (*Amor*), and chapter [49] Charity (*Caritas*).

¶ Again, it is to be noted in this material that although all goods are to be loved, however, from charity there are four steps for loving, according to Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine,* first book, c. 6,[[8]](#endnote-8) for the first step of loving is that it is above us, that is, God is above all things and in himself and on account of himself, because also in himself the highest good and to us the most useful and beneficial. The second order of loving is what is within us, that is, what we are, this is our souls, but under God and for God and above God a good death. Third step of loving is what is next to us, namely, our neighbor as ourselves, that is, for a similar good. Where it is to be noted that this conjunction, as it does not say there equality, but similitude and conformity, so that if you love your neighbor as yourself, that is for the good and because of yourself, that is, spiritually, not on account of temporal utility or corporal love, and as much as yourself, that is, to love your neighbor more than a temporal thing and in the same quality as yourself, that is, so that you assist your neighbor in necessity, just as you wish yourself to be aided in a similar circumstance. These things are proved, C. 23, q. 4, c. *Debent*,[[9]](#endnote-9) and *De penitencia*, D. 1, c. *Ergo*.[[10]](#endnote-10) And before our neighbors, to be loved are first, our parents, second, our children, third, our household members who, if they are good, are to be preferred to those similar ones who are evil. According to Ambrose,[[11]](#endnote-11) a fourth to be loved is that one which is below us, that is, our body in which every creature is understood as in the name of our neighbor the good angels are understood.

¶ Again, love is natural by which one loves himself and his neighbor for himself and this is for everyone, Eccli. 13[:19]: “Every beast loves its like,” and in this love man loves God more than himself.

¶ There is even a worldly love by which one loves what is useful for himself, and this is the sinner, Luck 6[:32]: “Sinners also love those that love them.” And Matt. 5[:46]: “If you love them that love you, what reward shall you have?” As if saying, none.

¶ Again, there is spiritual love by which one loves what is to be loved on account of the commandment of God. And this is of the elect, Luke 6[:27]: “Love your enemies.”

¶ But, alas, because many love salmon more than Salomon, garlic (*allia*) more than alleluia, roasted fish (*piscem assum*) more than Christ having suffered (*Christum passum*), boiled lamb (*agnum lixum*) more than the crucifixion.

¶ Again, he created me when I was not, etc.[[12]](#endnote-12) Therefore, what will I give back to God for all these things? Certainly, I do not have anything, unless I love much, for, I err if I do not love him, who gives me my soul so that I may live, grace that I may live well, wisdom that I may live orderly and, finally, it will be given me that I may live well.

1. Pseudo-Seneca, *Seneca’s De remediis Fortuitorum and the Elizabethans*, ed. Ralph Graham Palmer (Chicago: Institute of Elizabethan Studies, 1953), p. 50: Mel muscae sequuntur, cadauera lupi, frumenta formice, predam sequitur ista turba non hominem. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Gregory, *Moralia* 7.24.29 (PL 75:781): Cum enim quis positus in prosperitate diligitur, incertum valde est utrum prosperitas an persona diligatur. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Augustine, *Sermo*: De scripturis 128.3.5 (PL 38.715): Prius vide si jam nosti diligere te ipsum; et committo tibi proximum, quem diligas sicut te ipsum. Si autem nondum nosti diligere te; timeo ne decipias proximum tuum sicut te. Si enim amas iniquitatem, non diligis te. Psalmus testis est: Qui autem diligit iniquitatem, odit animam suam (Psal. X, 6). [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Gregory, *Regulae pastoralis* 2.6 (PL 77:34): liquet quod omnes homines natura aequales genuit, [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. *Fasciculus morum*, ed. Siegfried Wenzel (pp. 190-193): Unde narratur de tribus sociis ad mensam cuiusdam magni positis, quibus in fine prandii tria poma apponebantur, sicud largitur in yeme fructus *pur deynte*, quorum singula alquantulum in una parte putrida erant. Unus ergo istorum trium pomum suum accepit et comedit totalister, scilicet, corruptum cum integro. Et cito post tantam sensit abhominacionem quod illud oportuit expuere. Unde gulososus reputabatur. Quod videns alius de pomo suo noluit gustare; unde ineducatus dicebatur. Set tercius accepit pomum suum et separavit corruptum ab integro, et quod bonum erat et sanum gustavit, reliquum reiecit; unde iste curialis dicebatur. Revera sic istis diebus aliqui sic fatue diligunt quod quicquid fecerint illi quos diligunt, sive bene sive male, in nullo displicet. Etcerte tales sumunt corruptum cum integro. Set certe ille amor non valet, quia cum venerint ad propriam conscienciam in fine, velint nolint, propter abhominacionem corrupti facti oportet totum illum amorem expellere. Alii autem sunt qui tantum alios detestantur quod quicquid fecerint, sive bene sive male, omnia displicent. Et ille totum pomum, idest totam vita proximi, abicit. Et hic nulla dilectio apparet set odium apertissimum. Set certe sunt alii qui quicquid vident in proximo de bono accipiunt et gaudent, malum vero abiciunt et detestantur. Et certe isti tantum caritative et ordinate diligunt; Ieremie 15: “Si separaveris preciosum a vili, quasi os meum eris.”

There is a story about three companions who were invited to the table of a nobleman. At the end of the meal they were offered three apples, as in winter fruit is served for dessert. Each one was partially spoiled. Then one of the three companions took his apple and ate it all up, the spoiled part with the whole. Soon thereafter he felt such a revulsion that he had to spit it out. For that he was considered a glutton. The second chap, when he saw this, did not want to taste his apple at all; and for that he was reckoned unmannered. But the third took his apple and cut the spoiled part from what was whole; the latter he ate, the rest he threw away; and for that he was said to be a gentleman. In similar fashion, some people nowadays love so foolishly that whatever those whom they love do, be it good, be it evil, it never displeases them at all. Certainly, such people take the spoiled part with the whole. But such love is no good, for when they gain the proper insight in the end, because of their revulsion to the spoiled part they willy-nilly must give up that love altogether. Others there are who detest other people so much that whatever they have done, it good, be it evil, it displeases them altogether. And these throw the entire apple away, that is, their neighbor’s entire life. In this there is no love but only open hatred. But truly, there are still others who accept and rejoice in whatever good they find in their neighbor, but what there is evil they reject and detest. These alone love with true and well-ordered charity; Jeremiah 15: “If you will separate the precious from the vile, you will be as my mouth.” [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. *Fasciculus morum*, ed. Siegfried Wenzel (pp. 190-193): Secunda, dilectio et caritas erga proximum in necessariorum supportacione est, qua scilicet iuxta beatum Gregorium afflictis et indignentibus compatimur et pro posse iuvamus. Et si queras que est illa, respondeo quod modo mortuos sepelire, modo infirmos pascere et curare, sicut fecit sanctus Thobias; modo eciam pauperes hospitare, sicut fecit beata Martha; modo nudos vestire, sicut fecit beatus Martinus, et cetera huiusmodi. Et ista dicuntur opera misericordie. Unde Iohannis canonic, capitulo 3: “Qui habuerit substanciam huius mundi et viderit fratrem necessitatem habere et clauserit viscera sua ab eo, quomodo caritas Dei manet in illo?” Quasi diceret, nullo modo. Ergo oppositum: Qui subvenerit proximo indigenti, modo dando, modo accomodando, modo remittendo, certe perfecta caritas manet in illo, sicut habetur secundum Iohannem canonica ubi supra: “Deus caritas est, et qui manet in caritate, in Deo manet et Deus in eo.”

The second kind of love and charity toward our neighbor consists in supporting him in the things he needs. Through this charity, according to blessed Gregory, we have pity on the afflicted and needy and help them as much as we can. And if you ask what such charity is, I answer: now it is to bury the dead, now to feed and care for thbe sick, as the saintly Tobit did; now to give the poor shelter, as did Blessed Martha; now to clothe the naked, as did Blessed Martin; and other such works. These are called the deeds of mercy. Whence John says in chapter 3 of his Epistle: “He eho has the substance of this world and sees his brother in need and shuts up his bowels from him, how does the love of God abide in him?” as if he were saying: in no way. Therefore, on the contrary, he who helps his needy neighbor, whether by giving or putting him at ease or forgiving him, surely in such a person is perfect charity, according to Blessed John in the Epistle quoted above: “God is love, and he who abides in love, abides in God, and God in him.” [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend* 166 (Ryan 2:292): Once, in a wintertime, he was passing through the city gate of Amiens whan a poor man, almost naked, confronted him. No one had given him an alms, and Martin understood that this man had been kept for him, so he drew his sword and cut the cloak he was wearing into two halves, giving one half to the beggar and wrapping himself in the other. The following night he had a vision of Christ wearing the part of his cloak with which he had covered the beggar, and heard Christ say to the angels who surrounded him: “Martin, whis still a catechumen, gave me this to cover me.”

Cf. Martinmas, Nov. 11, feast of St. Martin of Tours. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Augustine,  *De doctrina Christiana* 1.23.22 (PL 34:27): Cum ergo quatuor sint diligenda, unum quod supra nos est, alterum quod nos sumus, tertium quod juxta nos est, quartum quod infra nos est; de secundo et quarto nulla praecepta danda erant. Quamtumlibet enim homo excidat a veritate, remanet illi dilectio sui et dilectio corporis sui. Fugax enim animus ab incommutabili lumine omnium regnatore, id agit ut ipse sibi regnet et corpori suo; et ideo non potest nisi et se et corpus suum diligere. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Decretum, C. 23, q. 4, c. 53. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Decretum, *De poen.,* D. 1, c. 36, Gr. p. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Ambrose, cf. Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* 1.23.22 (PL 34:27): Cum ergo quatuor sint diligenda, unum quod supra nos est, alterum quod nos sumus, tertium quod juxta nos est, quartum quod infra nos est; de secundo et quarto nulla praecepta danda erant. Quamtumlibet enim homo excidat a veritate, remanet illi dilectio sui et dilectio corporis sui. Fugax enim animus ab incommutabili lumine omnium regnatore, id agit ut ipse sibi regnet et corpori suo; et ideo non potest nisi et se et corpus suum diligere. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Cf. Bonaventure, *Soliloquium de Quaturo Mentalibus Exercitiis,* [Anima is speaking] …diligere Deum meum, qui me creavit cum non eram, redemit cum perieram, & de multis periculis liberavit me…. in Walter Kay Smart, *Some English and Latin sources and parallels for the morality of Wisdom* (Menash, Wis.: George Banta Publ. Co., 1912), p. 33. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)