198 Joy (*Leticia*)

It is found to be threefold. For something is dangerous as those of the world who rejoice for nothing. Another is profitable as those of the just who rejoice over profit. The third is glorious as those of the blessed who rejoice as commonly for good food.

The first of these consists in riches, delights, and honors as far as the goods of fortune.

¶ Again, in strength and beauty as far as the goods of nature, Job 31[:25]: “If I have rejoiced over my delights.” Four things show this joy to be empty.

First is ignorance of our status because as Eccle. 9[:1-2]: “Man knows not whether he be worthy of love, or hatred: But all things are kept uncertain for the time to come.” One who has been incarcerated when he is led out fears his sentence, so it is concerning the soul incarcerated in the body, Tob. 5[:12]: “What manner of joy shall be to me, who sits in darkness.” Eccle. 9[:12]: “Man knows not his own end.”

Second is the ease of our fall because the senses and thought of man are prone to evil. There are four temperaments of man from the four elements of composition. Among which earth and melancholy draw man to the love of earthly matters. Water and phlegm to the flexibility of delights. Air and blood to the vanity of the world. Fire and cholera to wrath and curiosity. A sailor in a tempest does not rejoice, but empties out his ship and makes vows, such is the passage through this world. On the other hand, King Ezekiel was joyful and showed the messengers of Babylon his treasures, [4] Kings 20[:13-19]. Therefore, he lost all those things. Esther 5[:9]: “Aman went out that day joyful,” but shortly afterwards he was hanged. Therefore, how can we who are infirmly situated be joyful under such great perils, but many are like boys rejoicing for the silk cloak lying on the corpse of their father.

Third is the brevity of our joy. Not much does the king rejoice who knows the son born to him today and tomorrow he will die.

¶ It is said concerning the Siren[[1]](#endnote-1) that in a time of rain she sings, but during fair weather she weeps noting the mutability of the time, Eccli. 3[:31]: “The heart of the wise” where sadness afflicts the heart of the foolish, where joy the wise, so “Jonas was exceeding glad of the ivy,” which however the next day “it withered,” Jon. 4[:6-7]. And Baruc. 3[:16]: “The princes of the nations, and they that rule over them.”

¶ Note here the song of the swan which sings against its death.[[2]](#endnote-2)

Fourth is the generosity of our offence for in many things we show this. Every fool would be poor if he were obliged by due commands to be joyful. For faults are resolved duly by sad penance but are increased by the joy of unrestrained behavior. Therefore, Isai. 22[:12-13]: “And the Lord in that day shall call to weeping,” of contrition, “and to mourning,” of confession, and “to baldness,” of satisfaction. “Behold joy and gladness,” continually with skill.

Again, if you labor in an acute fever to sing would be a sign of frenzy or death, so it is concerning the sinner behaving wantonly, Prov. 2[:14]: “Who are glad when they have done evil and rejoice.” Consent in sin is evil, the doing itself is worse, and the worst is the habit itself.

Second is the joy of the just about which Psal. [99:2]: “Serve the Lord with gladness.” And this ought to be for three matters.
First for the benefits of God, just as the plants flower by the benefit of the sun, Psal. [63:11]: “The just shall rejoice in the Lord and shall hope in him.” Second for the conception of the world, just as the merchant rejoices for the profit of this merchandise, the sailor for escaping peril, Psal. [89:15]: “We have rejoiced for the days in which you have humbled us.” Therefore, the poor deservedly rejoice, Matt. 5[:3]. And the Satirist says:[[3]](#endnote-3) the empty-handed traveler will whistle in the robber’s face. Third concerning the prosperity of our neighbor just as one member of a community rejoices for another and one member receives influence from another.

¶ The third joy is of the good in glory, Psal. [149:5]: “The saints shall rejoice in glory: they shall be joyful in their beds.” This joy will be glossed on account of three reasons.

First, on account of the aspect of the beauty of grace, Psal. [20:7]: “You shall make him joyful in gladness with your countenance.”

Second, on account of the embrace of the greatest sweetness, 1 Pet. 1[:8]: “You shall rejoice with joy unspeakable.”

Third on account of the repulse of every injustice, Isai. 35[:10]: “They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away” from these on account of that said in Psal. [104:3]: “Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.” A man does not rejoice in seeking unless he hopes to find what he seeks, but he who seeks the divine can hope that he may find and consequently rejoice, Cant. 1[:3]: “Draw me, remembering your breasts,” that is, your consolations. A mother shows her breasts to her little son and the boy runs to her, so Christ shows us his consolations that we may run to meet him, Psal. [121:11]: “I rejoiced at the things that were said to me.”

Now God consoles us in speaking, but in the future, he will console us in doing, 1 Pet. 1[:8-9]: “The believing shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorified; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” The end of faith is the vision because the vision succeeds faith, according to Augustine, *De civitate,* book 22, at the end.[[4]](#endnote-4) Wherefore Chrysostom says, *Homilia* 24,[[5]](#endnote-5) joy of heart is to have a good conscience to the Lord. Then it is that the sinners say that of Wis. 2[:9]: “Let us everywhere leave tokens of our joy.” Because for certain they cannot have true joy but only outward signs. In the present, life can sometimes be happy, according to that of Job [20:5]: “The joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.” But rarely are similar ones here. Intrinsic joy, Aristotle in his book *On Sleep*,[[6]](#endnote-6) says that boys who drink much wine should consume it in small quantities. The sickness of falling in old age so they who eat delicately here in the end fall into hell. Therefore, it is said Eccle. 7[:5]: “The heart of the wise is where there is mourning, and the heart of fools where there is mirth.”

Wherefore Chrysostom, book 3, *Homilia*,[[7]](#endnote-7) every present joy is dangerous. Security in falling. Full happiness is impeded by snares. Wherefore Bernard in his *Sermone*,[[8]](#endnote-8) Concerning the circumcision, we cannot seek joy in transitory matters. For with wood running out the fire fails, so the world goes, and its concupiscence; no doubt just so its joy as well. Therefore, Bernard says in his *Sermone de capite jejunio,[[9]](#endnote-9)* your joy and sadness are converted equally, so that namely, you will rejoice according to God. For sadness, which is according to the flesh, works death. If therefore you sorrow for sins of your neighbor as his adversities or his prosperities you do well thinking so, according to that [Rom. 12:15]: “Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.” But the evil when they rejoice, they are mad. These are the ones who rejoice over nothing, for also the vine by the reason cited withered, about which up to that hour he was happy.

¶ Again, note that joy is in heaven. First because of the absence of its contrary which is sorrow. For the cause of sorrow is double, either because evil accepts what we do not want, or because the good does not happen to follow what we want. But in heaven every good follows upon what we want, Luke 12[:44]: “He will set him over all that he possesses.” 3 Kings 11[:37]: “You shall reign over all that your soul desires.”

Again, he does not accept the evil of pain in heaven, because Apo. 7[:17]: “God shall wipe away all tears from the eyes of the saints.” Isai. 35[:10]: “They shall come into Sion with praise.” Second because the presence of every good delight, for in God is every delight according to all the senses, Psal. [15:11]: “At your right hand are delights.”

¶ Again, every joy rises either in a corporal or a spiritual creature, but either is in God. Therefore, in him we will rejoice totally, Tob. 13[:9]: “I and my soul will rejoice in him” and he himself will be in heaven. Third because the hoped-for victory over the enemies, for then should men be happy, Isai. 9[:3]: “We shall rejoice before you, as they that rejoice in the harvest, as conquerors rejoice after taking a prey.” And 1 Cor. 15[:54]: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

1. Pierre Bersuire, Reductorii Moralis, *opera omnia totam S. Scripturae, morum, naturae* 7.5 (Antwerp: Joannem Keerbergium, 1609), (1:182): Alauda est auis summa lætitiæ & ideo alaudando secundum Isidorum dicta fuit. Ista enim in sereno tempore femper cantat, nunquam vero in tempore pluuioso. Ifta etiam quamdiu est in terra nunquam dicitur cantare, sed dum est sursum in aére, & versus cælum ascendit tunc folet multiplicer modulari. Charissimi tempus turbulentum significat statum peccari Alauda significat hominem, qui ad laudandum Dominum est electus. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Pliny, *Natural History* 10.32.63 (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.

The story is true of the Whooper Swan but not of the ordinary Mute Swan. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. Juvenal, *Satires* 10.22 (LCL 91:194-195): cantabit vacuus latrone viator.

the empty-handed traveller will whistle in the robber’s face. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 22.29.1 (PL 41:797): Propter quod ait Apostolus, quod paulo ante dixi, Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem. Praemium itaque fidei nobis visio ista servatur, de qua et Joannes apostolus loquens, Cum apparuerit, inquit, similes ei erimus, quoniam videbimus eum sicuti est (I Joan. III, 2). Facies autem Dei manifestatio ejus intelligenda est, non aliquod tale membrum, quale nos habemus in corpore, atque isto nomine nuncupamus. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Matthaeum* Homilia 33 cap. 19 (PG 56:810): Laetitia enim cordis est bonam conscientiam habere ad Deum. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Aristotle, *On Sleep* 3 457a14-17 (Barnes 1:726): This explains why wines are not good for infants or for wet nurses (for it makes no difference, doubtless, whether the infants themselves, or their nurses, drink them), but such persons should drink them dilut4ed with water and in small quantity. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Chrysostom, cf. Rupertus Tuitiensis, *In Librum Judicum Commentariorum* 12 (PL 167:1040-1041): Exstat de hoc homilia Joannis qui Chrysostomus dictus est, qua et hoc factum Jephte inter illa computare non dubitavit, de quibus dictum est: Haec autem omnia in figura contingebant illis (I Cor. X).... Haec Ecclesia cultoribus suis laetitiam non promittit, neque in praesenti saeculo securitatem: quia revera [Col.1041C] omnis laetitia periculosa est, omnis securitas casibus plena, omnis jucunditas laqueis impeditur. Haec praedictus Joannes. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Bernard, *In Octava Epiphaniae* Sermo 804.5 (PL 183:154): Vae autem his qui praetergrediuntur viam, qui, relicta justitia, vanam et transitoriam laetitiam quaerunt! Cum enim de transitoriis quaerunt laetitiam, non poterit non transire, transeuntibus his de quibus erat. Sicut enim lignis deficientibus deficit ignis, sic mundus transit, et concupiscentia ejus; haud dubium quin et laetitia quoque. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Bernard, *In capite Jejunii* 2.3 (PL 183:173): Sic et gaudium tuum, et tristitia tua aeque convertantur ad ipsum. Hoc autem ita fiet, si nonnisi secundum eum doleas, aut laeteris. Quid enim perversum magis, quam laetari cum male feceris, et in rebus pessimis exsultare? Sed et ea quoque quae secundum carnem est tristitia, mortem operatur. Si pro tuo sive proximi peccato doles, bene facis, et haec tristitia est ad salutem (II Cor. VII, 10). Si gaudeas ad munera gratiae, hoc gaudium sanctum est, et securum gaudium in Spiritu sancto. Debes et in dilectione Christi fraternis congaudere prosperitatibus, et adversitatibus condolere, sicut scriptum est: Gaudere cum gaudentibus, flere cum flentibus (Rom. XII, 15). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)