Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

23 Of Goods (*Bonorum*)

There are five kinds of goods. Of which the first is the good of nature, as the body and the soul, Gen. 1[:31]: “God saw all the things that he had made, and they were very good.” 1 Tim. [4:4]: “Every creature of God is good,” and this obliges us to love God. For a dog is loved on account of the man, the son on account of the father, the work on account of the craftsman, and on the contrary, Amos 5[:15]: “Hate evil and love good.”

¶ Second is the good of fortune, as are these temporal matters, concerning which, Job 2[:10]: “If we have received good things at the hand of God,” and this obliges us to distribute them, just as a fountain fuller ought to give back more, Luke 19[:8]: “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor.” Not like the rich man, about whom, Luke 12[:19]: “Soul, you have many goods,” and yet he lost it all.

¶ Third is the good of grace, as are the spiritual goods, concerning which, Luke 11[:13]: “Your Father from heaven will give the good Spirit to them that ask him.” This is the good seed, concerning which, Matt. 12[:35] and Eccli. 12[:5]: “Give to the good and receive not a sinner.” And this good obliges us to work, just like money for profiting, now namely the work of grace, the kingdom of heaven, but not afterwards, Jer. 7[:3]: “Make your ways and your doings good.” Gal. 6[:9]: “And in doing good, let us not fail.”

¶ The fourth is the good of wisdom, concerning which, Psal. [118:72]: “The law of your mouth is good to me.” About which even it is said in Luke 9[:33]. This good obliges us to teaching, just as multiplication of fruits obliges us to sowing, 2 Tim. 4[:7]: “I have fought a good fight,” etc., Psal. [118:68]: “You are good; and in your goodness teach me,” etc. Just as a good fragrance is diffused to attract others, 2 Cor. 2:15: “We are the good odor unto God.” Prov. 13[:15]: “Good instruction shall give grace.”

¶ The fifth is the good of glory, about which, Psal. [16:13]: “I believe to see the good things of the Lord.” This good obliges us to inquire for a possession hoped for. If God gives such a great love on earth to his enemies, how much more will he give to his friends in heaven. Truly above all that good is to be sought, where there is a perfect abundance, Psal. [64:5]: “We shall be filled with the good things of your house.” And this good acquires mercy, Prov. 14[:22]: “Mercy and truth prepare good things.” There also is perpetual duration, Eccli. 31[:10-11]: “He that could have transgressed and has not transgressed. Therefore, are his good established in the Lord.” But good is acquired through innocence, Psal. [83:13]: “He will not deprive of good things them that walk in innocence.” Where there is also undefiled delight, Psal. [105:5]: “That we may see the good of your chosen.” This good

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acquired by continual love, Psal. [33:11]: “They that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good,” because they will have God in whom is every good.

¶ Again note that God gave us all things: because the goods of nature for being and helping; the goods of fortune for using; the goods of grace for meriting; the goods of glory for enjoying.

¶ Concerning the goods of fortune which are temporal things it is said, Psal. [8:8]: “You have subjected all things under his feet.” However, these goods are given for three causes. First for supporting necessities, such as milk for a child. Just as superior bodies influence humor and heat in inferior receivers which they have from the first cause, Matt. 6[:33]: “Seek you therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.” Three kinds of goods are touched on here, namely, eternal, spiritual, and temporal. Of which the first are the greatest, the second less, the third the least. The first ought to be in intention: therefore, he says: “Seek you therefore first the kingdom of God.” The second in operation: therefore, he says: “and his justice.”The third in dispensation, therefore he says, “and all these things shall be added unto you.” But, alas, many, like pigs, eat acorns but do not look whence they come, Deut. 32[:15]: “The beloved grew fat and kicked.”

Second temporal good are given for contempt of possession. For they are given as counsel concerning the contempt of temporal matters, so thus we may more easily transit to eternal, Matt. 19[:27]: “Behold we have left all things,” etc. Therefore, these temporal matters are to be relinquished not wasted, but from affect they are useful lest other thing happened, they are left as useless, Wis. 5[:8]: “What hath pride profited us?” etc. See therefore the contempt of rewards, the transit of temporal matters. The example of the wise. Where the gloss upon that of John 6[:15]: Christ “fled” when they wanted to take “him” to be “king.” Christ as man contemned earthly matters, so that in contemning them he might show evil things, he bore up so that not in those things should felicity be sought, nor in these things should adversity be feared, Philip. 3[:8]: “I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but as dung, that I may gain Christ.” But alas because in Philip. 2[:21] it is said “For all seek the things that are their own; not the things that are Jesus Christ's.”

Third they give temporal matters as a foment of charity. For mutual gifts foment and show love just as is evident concerning alms, Luke 16[:9]: “Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity.” And Matt. 19[:21]: “If you will be perfect, go,” against the fat and procrastinating,

“sell,” against the proprietary

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retaining part for themselves, “what you have,” against the raptors administrating for another, “and give to the poor,” against those who practice simony and the ambitious who give so that they may have as well the matter by the affect of the mind, “and follow me, by the effect of work and you will have in that the infallibility of treasures in which there is the steadfastness in heaven in which there is security. Great therefore is the iniquity of the avaricious to deny the Lord his own property, just like the dog throwing [dirt] over his meal which he does not eat nor permit others [to eat], Psal. [48:17]: “Be not afraid when a man shall be made rich,” etc. For it is better that I make according to that of [1] Paralip. the last chapter [29:14]: “Lord, all things are yours: and we have given you what we received or your hand.”

¶ Again, according to Augustine,[[1]](#endnote-1) certain things are good, but not pleasing, such as the works of penance. Certain things are pleasant, but not good, such as the works of uncleanness. Certain things are good and pleasant, such as fatherly love.

1. Augustine, *Sermones ad fratres in eremo* 2 (PL 40:1238): quod quaedam sunt bona quae non sunt jucunda, quaedam jucunda quae non sunt bona. Verbi gratia, bona sunt jejunia, vigiliae, macerationes, et similia. Haec enim sunt bona, et non jucunda, quia caro in his non jucundatur, sed laeditur. Jucunda quippe sunt comessationes, ebrietates, sed non sunt bona. Haec agentes laetantur cum male fecerint, et exsultant de rebus pessimis. O monache, vix poteris invenire in praesenti unum, quod sit bonum et jucundum. Cupis tamen illud unum invenire? [↑](#endnote-ref-1)