Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

267 To See. The Soul sees (*Videre Anima videt*)

To See. The soul sees God in three ways. First in the state of glory after the resurrection. And this is the straightest way as if by upright letters. The second happens by the soul separated from the body and purified up to the resurrection

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in the empyrean heaven and it happens as if by broken lines.

¶ Third was in this as if by reflection and it is the weakest, [1] Cor. 13[:12]: “We see now through a glass in a dark manner.” Again,[[1]](#endnote-1) for right vision it is required that there be due proportion of distance. For this it happens that one’s own works namely have less power to be seen than the better works of others. Because minor things that are near are placed nearer to the eyes. Wherefore the verse:[[2]](#endnote-2) everyman watches over the work he has made.

¶ And just as Peter Alphonsus says,[[3]](#endnote-3) anyone naturally glories in his own song, just as in his son, whatever kind it may be. Wherefore also the monkey imagines having said about his offspring, To my thinking, here’s the boy to win.[[4]](#endnote-4) Similarly, some judge badly concerning the deeds of others because they are too far distant through hate. Wherefore Gregory,[[5]](#endnote-5) the intellect does not easily apprehend what the feeling abhors. And[[6]](#endnote-6) just as in the corporeal vision a due distance is required, so in the spiritual vision. For the knowledge of divine matters requires a great distance and distance from sin and infidelity, Isai. 59[:2]: “Your iniquities have divided between you and your God.” Again, it takes too much approximation through presumption, Prov. 25[:27]: “He that is a searcher of majesty, shall be overwhelmed by glory.” Therefore, it is said in Prov. 23[:4]: “Set bounds to your prudence.” Lest you lift your eyes to powers which you cannot have.

¶ Fourth,[[7]](#endnote-7) for vision it is required that solidity be in the thing seen. In which the scholars are informed that study in these solids, Wis. 13[:1]: “But all men are vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God.” It is that by which man knows God and himself. Wherefore, Bernard, in his *Meditationibus,*[[8]](#endnote-8) would that I may know you, God,[[9]](#endnote-9) and that I may know me, a brief but faithful prayer. Wherefore Augustine, *De trinitate*,[[10]](#endnote-10) more praiseworthy is that mind which knows even its own weakness, than that which, without regard to this, searches out the ways of the stars.

¶ And Seneca, *De liberalibus artibus*,[[11]](#endnote-11) he is foolish to study in the dimensions of the earth and not to measure himself. He is foolish to insist on the concord of the musicians and to be in discord with his neighbor.

1. Cf. Raymond Jordan, *Idiota opera omnia* Oculus Mysticus, cap. 11.3.15-16 (Paris: Iacobum Quesnel, 1654), pp. 538-539: 15. Tertio, requiritur ad visum proportio distantiae: nam si visibile super oculum ponitur, vel nimis distat ab oculo, non videtur. Modo consimili si scholaris ab aliqua scientia nimis distat per odium, vel si accedat nimis per amorem inordinatum, non videt eam, nec rectum iudicium de ea habet. Et, sicut dicit Seneca. Perit omne iudicium, cum res venit ad affectum. Hinc contingit aliquando quod multis opera propria non multum valentia, videntur aliorum operibus, quamuis praestantioribus melior: *Nam, quod fecit, homo quisque tuetur opus*.

   16. Vt enim ut dicit Petrus Alophonsus naturaliter quisque gloriatur in suo carmine qualecunque sit, sicut et simia in sua prole. Videtur enim simiae, quod sua proles caeteris antecellat in pulchritudine; cum tamen extremum locum teneat in deformitate. Vnde simia de suo filio fingitur dixisse, *Iudicio super est omnibus iste meo*. Sic etiam dicit Poetra, *Author opus laudat.* et iterum. *Est cupidus doctor, studiorum quisque suorum.* Sicut interdum home de suis operibus male iudicat, eo quod sunt ei nimis proxima per amorem; sic de aliorum operibus, si distens ab eius affectu per odum vel rancorem. Nam vt dicit Gregorius, non facile capit intellectus, quod aborret affectus.

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2. Ovid, *Ex Ponto* 4.28 (LCL 151:426-427): quod fecit, quisque tuetur opus.

   Every man watches over the work he has wrought. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Peter Alphonsus, *Disciplina clericalis* Fabula 6 (PL 157:681): Non recordaris illius philosophi qui dicit: In tribus delectatur homo, et si bona non sunt, in sua voce, suo carmine, suo filio. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. Avianus, *Fables* 14 (LCL 434:704-705): “Iuppiter hoc norit, maneat victoria si quem;

   iudicio superest omnibus iste meo.”

   “Let Jupiter determine whether victory is in store for anyone; to my mind the little monkey before you beats the lot.” [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Gregory, cf. Raymond Jordan, *Idiota opera omnia,* Oculus Mysticus 11.3.16 (Paris: Apud Jacobum Quesnel, 1654), (p. 539): Sicut interdum homo de suis operibus male iudicat, eo quod sunt ei nimis proxima per amorem; sic de aliorum operibus, si distent ab eius affectu per odiu7m vel rancorem. Nam ut dicit Gregorius, non facile capit intellectus, quod abhorret affectus. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. Raymond Jordan, *Idiota opera omnia* Oculus Mysticus, cap. 11.3.17 (Paris: Iacobum Quesnel, 1654), p. 539: Potest etiam poni secundum alium modum proportio distantiae, que reequiritur ad visum; vt dicatur quod sicut distantia temperata ad visionem requiritur, ita vt nec ex superflua distancia, nec ex approximatione nimia, visibile videatur; sic et in spirituali visione requiritur. Nam elongatio a Deo per finfidelitatem et multitudinem peccatorum, tollit notitiam divinorum. Vnde Isaias, *Iniquitates vestra diuiserunt inter vos, et Deum vestrum; et peccata vestra absconderunt faciem eius a vobis.* Et Augustinus dicit. Errat qui se veritatem cognoscere putat, si adhuc nequiter viuat. Hoc etiam impedit praesumptio diuinae familiaritatis nimia, et perscrutatio maiestatis, secundum illud *Scrutator maiestatis opprimetur a gloria*. Et in Canticis dicit Sponsus ad Ssponsam. *Auerte oculos tuos a me; quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.* [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. Raymond Jordan, *Idiota opera omnia* Oculus Mysticus, cap. 11.4.18 (Paris: Iacobum Quesnel, 1654), p. 539-540: Quarto, Ad visionem requiritur soliditas rei visae: vnde quia aer not est corpus solidum, non est visionis obiectum. In quo informantur Scholastici citra intellectu ales visiones intenti vt studeant in scientiis solidis, non in vanis. Dicitur autem in libro Sapientieae. *Vani sunt omnes homines, in quibus non est scientia Dei.* Scientia autem Dei est sacra doctrina, per quam homo cognoscit Deum, et seipsum Et Beatus Bernardus orans, sanctus quidam, Deus (inquit) nouerim me, nouerim te. Breuis oratio, sed fidelis; hec enim est vera Philosophia, et vtraque cognitio prorsus necessaria ad salutem. Ex priori quidem concipitur fides, et humilitas: ex posteriori spes, et charitas generatur. Et Augustinus dicit. Scientiam coelestium tenes triumque rerum, magni aestimare solet genus humanum, et quo profecto meliores; sunt qui huic scientiae praeponunt nosse semetipsos. Laudabilior quippe est animus cui not est infirmitas sua, quam qui ea non respecta vias syderum scrutatur etiam cogniturus; aut qui iam cognitas tenet, ignorans ipse viam qua ingrediatur ad salutem. Et Seneca dicit Fatuum est studere divisionibus terrarum, et seipsum nescire metiri: stultum que est vacare concordiae musicorum, et non habere concordiam cum proximo vel cum seipso. Et Bernardus super Cantica; Vtilitas scientiae in modo sciendi consistit; ut schias quo ordine, quo studio, quo fine, quantum scire oporteat. Quo ordine, vt id prius, quod magis necessarium est ad salutem: quo studio, vt illud ardentius, quod vehementius ad amorem: wuo fine, vut non ad inanem gloriam, aut curiositatem, aut aliquid simile, sed ta ntum ad aedificationem tui, vel proximi. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Bernard, *Sermo* 2.1 (PL 183:542): Huic duplici considerationi tota haec vestra vocatio tribuatur, sicut sanctus orabat: «Deus, noverim me, noverim te (AUGUSTINUS, in Confess. libris).» [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. At this point F 128 adds: Just as it is treated above, c. [344] Knowledge (*Scientia*). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Augustine, *De Trinitate* 4.Proemium.1 (PL 42:885): laudabiliorque est animus cui nota est vel infirmitas sua, quam qui ea non respecta, vias siderum scrutatur etiam cogniturus, aut qui jam cognitas tenet, ignorans ipse qua ingrediatur ad salutem ad firmitatem suam. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Seneca, *Epistula* 88.9-10 (LCL 76:354-355): Ad musicum transeo: doces me, quomodo inter se acutae ac graves consonent, quomodo nervorum disparem reddentium sonum fiat concordia; fac potius, quomodo animus secum meus consonet nec consilia mea discrepent. Monstras mihi, qui sint modi flebiles; monstra potius, quomodo inter adversa non emittam flebilem vocem. Metiri me geometres docet latifundia potius quam doceat, quomodo metiar, quantum homini satis sit.

    Now I will transfer my attention to the musician. You, sir, are teaching me how the treble and the bass are in accord with one another, and how, though the strings produce different notes, the result is a harmony; rather bring my soul into harmony with itself, and let not my purposes be out of tune. You are showing me what the doleful keys are; show me rather how, in the midst of adversity, I may keep from uttering a doleful note. The mathematician teaches me how to lay out the dimensions of my estates; but I should rather be taught how to lay out what is enough for a man to own. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)