

On the Predestination of the Saints

By Saint Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430)

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Addressed to Prosper and Hilary.

Wherein the [truth](#) of [predestination](#) and [grace](#) is defended against the semi-[Pelagians](#),— those people to wit, who by no means withdraw altogether from the Pelagian [heresy](#), in that they contend that the beginning of [salvation](#) and of [faith](#) is of ourselves; so that in [virtue](#), as it were, of this precedent merit, the other good gifts of God are attained. Augustin shows that not only the increase, but the very beginning also of [faith](#) is in God's gift. On this matter he does not disavow that he once thought differently, and that in some small works, written before his [episcopate](#), he was in [error](#), as in that exposition, which they object to him, of propositions from the epistle to the Romans. But he points out that he was subsequently convinced chiefly by this testimony, "but what have you that you have not received?" which he proves is to be taken as a testimony concerning [faith](#) itself also. He says that [faith](#) is to be counted among other works, which the apostle denies to anticipate God's [grace](#) when He says, "not of works." He declares that the hardness of the heart is taken away by [grace](#), and that all come to Christ who are taught to come by the Father; but that those whom He teaches, He teaches in mercy, while those whom He teaches not, in judgment He teaches not. That the passage from his hundred and second epistle, Question 2, "concerning the time of the [Christian religion](#)" which is alleged by the semi-[Pelagians](#), may rightly be explained without detriment to the doctrine of [grace](#) and [predestination](#). He teaches what is the difference between [grace](#) and [predestination](#). Further, he says that God in his [predestination](#) foreknew what he had purposed to do. He marvels greatly that the adversaries of [predestination](#), who are said to be unwilling to be dependent on the uncertainty of [God's will](#), prefer rather to trust themselves to their own weakness than to the strength of God's promise. He clearly points out that they abuse this authority, "If you believe, you shall be saved." That the [truth](#) of [grace](#) and perseverance shines forth in the case of infants that are saved, who are distinguished by no merits of their own from others who perish. For that there is no difference between them arising from the foreknowledge of merits which they would have had if they had lived longer. That testimony is wrongfully rejected by the adversaries as being uncanonical, which he adduced for the purpose of this discussion, "he was taken away lest [wickedness](#)," etc. That the most illustrious instance of [predestination](#) and [grace](#) is the Saviour Himself, in whom a man obtained the privilege of being the Saviour and the Only-begotten [Son of God](#), through being assumed into oneness of person by the Word co-[eternal](#) with the [Father](#), on account of no precedent merits, either of works or of [faith](#). That the [predestinated](#) are called by some certain calling peculiar to the [elect](#), and that they have been elected before the foundation of the world; not because they were foreknown as men who would [believe](#) and would be [holy](#), but in order that by means of that very election of [grace](#) they might be such, etc.

Chapter 1 [I.]—Introduction.

We [know](#) that in the Epistle to the Philippians the apostle said, "To write the same things to you to me indeed is not grievous but for you it is safe;" [Philippians 3:1](#) yet the same apostle writing to the Galatians when he saw that he had done enough among them of what he regarded as being needful for them, by the ministry of his preaching, said, "For the rest let no man [cause](#) me labour," [Galatians 6:17](#) or as it is read in many codices, "Let no one be troublesome to me." But although I confess that it causes me trouble that the divine word in which the [grace](#) of God is preached (which is absolutely no [grace](#) if it is given according to our merits), great and manifest as it is, is not yielded to, nevertheless my dearest sons, Prosper and Hilary, your [zeal](#) and brotherly affection—which makes you so reluctant to see any of the brethren in [error](#), as to wish that, after so many books and letters of mine on this subject, I should write again from here—I [love](#) more than I can tell, although I do not dare to say that I [love](#) it as much as I ought. Wherefore, behold, I write to you again. And although not with you, yet through you I am still doing what I thought I had done sufficiently.

Chapter 2.—To What Extent the Massilians Withdraw from the Pelagians.

For on consideration of your letters, I seem to see that those brethren on whose behalf you exhibit a [pious](#) care that they may not hold the poetical opinion in which it is affirmed, "Every one is a hope for himself," and so fall under that condemnation which is, not poetically, but [prophetically](#), declared, "Cursed is every man that has hope in man," [must be treated in that way wherein the apostle dealt with those to whom he said, "And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."](#) [Philippians 3:15](#) For as yet they are in darkness on the question concerning the [predestination](#) of the [saints](#), but they have that whence, "if in anything they are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this unto them," if they are walking in that to which they have attained. For which reason the apostle, when he had said, "If you are in anything otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you," says, "Nevertheless whereunto we have attained, let us walk in the same." [Philippians 3:16](#) And those brethren of ours, on whose behalf your [pious love](#) is solicitous, have attained with Christ's Church to the belief that the [human race](#) is born obnoxious to the [sin](#) of the first man, and that none can be delivered from that [evil](#) save by the righteousness of the Second Man. Moreover, they have attained to the confession that men's wills are anticipated by God's [grace](#); and to the agreement that no one can suffice to himself either for beginning or for completing any good work. These things, therefore, unto which they have attained, being held fast, abundantly distinguish them from the [error](#) of the [Pelagians](#). Further, if they walk in them, and beseech Him who gives understanding, if in anything concerning [predestination](#) they are otherwise minded, He will reveal even this unto them. Yet let us also spend upon them the influence of our [love](#), and the ministry of our discourse, according to His gift, whom we have asked that in these letters we might say what should be suitable and profitable to them. For whence do we [know](#) whether by this our service,

wherein we are serving them in the free [love](#) of [Christ](#), our God may not perchance will to effect that purpose?

Chapter 3 [II.]—Even the Beginning of Faith is of God's Gift.

Therefore I ought first to show that the [faith](#) by which we are [Christians](#) is the gift of [God](#), if I can do that more thoroughly than I have already done in so many and so large volumes. But I see that I must now reply to those who say that the divine testimonies which I have adduced concerning this matter are of avail for this purpose, to assure us that we have [faith](#) itself of ourselves, but that its increase is of [God](#); as if [faith](#) were not given to us by Him, but were only increased in us by Him, on the ground of the merit of its having begun from us. Thus there is here no departure from that opinion which Pelagius himself was constrained to condemn in the judgment of the [bishops](#) of Palestine, as is testified in the same Proceedings, "That the [grace](#) of God is given according to our merits," if it is not of God's [grace](#) that we begin to [believe](#), but rather that on account of this beginning an addition is made to us of a more full and perfect belief; and so we first give the beginning of our [faith](#) to [God](#), that His supplement may also be given to us again, and whatever else we faithfully ask.

Chapter 4.—Continuation of the Preceding.

But why do we not in opposition to this, rather hear the words, "Who has first given to Him and it shall be recompensed to him again? since of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things." [Romans 11:35](#) And from whom, then, is that very beginning of our [faith](#) if not from Him? For this is not excepted when other things are spoken of as of Him; but "of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are *all* things." But who can say that he who has already begun to [believe](#) deserves nothing from Him in whom he has [believed](#)? Whence it results that, to him who already deserves, other things are said to be added by a divine retribution, and thus that God's [grace](#) is given according to our merits. And this assertion when put before him, Pelagius himself condemned, that he might not be condemned. Whoever, then, wishes on every side to avoid this condemnable opinion, let him understand that what the apostle says is said with entire [truthfulness](#), "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to [believe](#) in Him, but also to suffer for His sake." [Philippians 1:29](#) He shows that both are the gifts of [God](#), because he said that both were given. And he does not say, "to [believe](#) in Him more fully and perfectly," but, "to [believe](#) in Him." Neither does he say that he himself had obtained mercy to be more faithful, but "to be faithful," [1 Corinthians 7:25](#) because he [knew](#) that he had not first given the beginning of his [faith](#) to [God](#), and had its increase given back to him again by Him; but that he had been made faithful by [God](#), who also had made him an apostle. For the beginnings of his [faith](#) are recorded, and they are very well known by being read in the church on an occasion calculated to distinguish them: how, being turned away from the [faith](#) which he was destroying, and being vehemently opposed to it, he was suddenly by a more powerful [grace](#) converted to it, by the conversion of Him, to whom as One who would do this very thing it was said by the [prophet](#), "You will turn and quicken us;" so

that not only from one who refused to [believe](#) he was made a willing believer, but, moreover, from being a persecutor, he suffered [persecution](#) in defence of that [faith](#) which he [persecuted](#). Because it was given him by Christ "not only to [believe](#) in Him, but also to suffer for His sake."

Chapter 5.—To Believe is to Think with Assent.

And, therefore, commending that [grace](#) which is not given according to any merits, but is the [cause](#) of all good merits, he says, "Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of [God](#)." [2 Corinthians 3:5](#) Let them give attention to this, and well weigh these words, who think that the beginning of [faith](#) is of ourselves, and the supplement of [faith](#) is of [God](#). For who cannot see that thinking is prior to believing? For no one believes anything unless he has first thought that it is to be [believed](#). For however suddenly, however rapidly, some thoughts fly before the will to [believe](#), and this presently follows in such wise as to attend them, as it were, in closest conjunction, it is yet necessary that everything which is [believed](#) should be [believed](#) after thought has preceded; although even belief itself is nothing else than to think with assent. For it is not every one who thinks that believes, since many think in order that they may not [believe](#); but everybody who believes, thinks,—both thinks in believing and believes in thinking. Therefore in what pertains to religion and [piety](#) (of which the apostle was speaking), if we are not capable of thinking anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of [God](#), we are certainly not capable of believing anything as of ourselves, since we cannot do this without thinking; but our sufficiency, by which we begin to [believe](#), is of [God](#). Wherefore, as no one is sufficient for himself, for the beginning or the completion of any good work whatever,—and this those brethren of yours, as what you have written intimates, already agree to be [true](#), whence, as well in the beginning as in the carrying out of every good work, our sufficiency is of [God](#),—so no one is sufficient for himself, either to begin or to perfect [faith](#); but our sufficiency is of [God](#). Because if [faith](#) is not a matter of thought, it is of no account; and we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of [God](#).

Chapter 6.—Presumption and Arrogance to Be Avoided.

Care must be taken, brethren, beloved of [God](#), that a man do not lift himself up in opposition to [God](#), when he says that he does what God has promised. Was not the [faith](#) of the nations promised to [Abraham](#), "and he, giving [glory](#) to [God](#), most fully [believed](#) that what He promised He is able also to perform"? [Romans 4:20](#) He therefore makes the [faith](#) of the [nations](#), who is able to do what He has promised. Further, if God works our [faith](#), acting in a wonderful manner in our hearts so that we [believe](#), is there any reason to [fear](#) that He cannot do the whole; and does man on that account arrogate to himself its first elements, that he may merit to receive its last from God? Consider if in such a way any other result be gained than that the [grace](#) of God is given in some way or other, according to our merit, and so [grace](#) is no more [grace](#). For on this principle it is rendered as debt, it is not given gratuitously; for it is due to the believer that his [faith](#) itself should

be increased by the Lord, and that the increased [faith](#) should be the wages of the [faith](#) begun; nor is it observed when this is said, that this wage is assigned to [believers](#), not of [grace](#), but of debt. And I do not at all see why the whole should not be attributed to [man](#),—as he who could originate for himself what he had not previously, can himself increase what he had originated,—except that it is impossible to withstand the most manifest divine testimony by which [faith](#), whence [piety](#) takes its beginning, is shown also to be the gift of God: such as is that testimony that "[God](#) has dealt to every man the measure of [faith](#);" [Romans 12:3](#) and that one, "Peace be to the brethren, and [love](#) with [faith](#), from [God](#) the [Father](#), and the [Lord Jesus Christ](#)," [Ephesians 6:23](#) and other similar passages. Man, therefore, unwilling to resist such clear testimonies as these, and yet desiring himself to have the merit of believing, compounds as it were with God to claim a portion of [faith](#) for himself, and to leave a portion for Him; and, what is still more arrogant, he takes the first portion for himself and gives the subsequent to Him; and so in that which he says belongs to both, he makes himself the first, and God the second!

Chapter 7 [III.]—Augustin Confesses that He Had Formerly Been in Error Concerning the Grace of God.

It was not thus that that [pious](#) and [humble](#) teacher thought—I speak of the most blessed Cyprian—when he said "that we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." And in order to show this, he appealed to the apostle as a [witness](#), where he said, "For what have you that you have not received? And if you have received it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?" [1 Corinthians 4:7](#) And it was chiefly by this testimony that I myself also was convinced when I was in a similar [error](#), thinking that [faith](#) whereby we [believe](#) in God is not God's gift, but that it is in us from ourselves, and that by it we obtain the gifts of [God](#), whereby we may live temperately and righteously and piously in this world. For I did not think that [faith](#) was preceded by God's [grace](#), so that by its means would be given to us what we might profitably ask, except that we could not [believe](#) if the proclamation of the [truth](#) did not precede; but that we should consent when the gospel was preached to us I thought was our own doing, and came to us from ourselves. And this my [error](#) is sufficiently indicated in some small works of mine written before my [episcopate](#). Among these is that which you have mentioned in your letters wherein is an exposition of certain propositions from the Epistle to the Romans. Eventually, when I was retracting all my small works, and was committing that retraction to writing, of which task I had already completed two books before I had taken up your more lengthy letters,—when in the first volume I had reached the retraction of this book, I then spoke thus:—"Also discussing, I say, 'what God could have chosen in him who was as yet unborn, whom He said that the elder should serve; and what in the same elder, equally as yet unborn, He could have rejected; concerning whom, on this account, the prophetic testimony is recorded, although declared long subsequently, "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I [hated](#),'" I carried out my reasoning to the point of saying: 'God did not therefore choose the works of any one in foreknowledge of what He Himself would give them, but he chose the [faith](#), in the foreknowledge that He would choose that very person whom He foreknew would [believe](#) in Him,—to whom He would give the [Holy Spirit](#), so that by doing good works he might obtain [eternal](#) life also.' I had not yet very carefully

sought, nor had I as yet found, what is the [nature](#) of the election of [grace](#), of which the apostle says, 'A remnant are saved according to the election of [grace](#).' [Romans 11:5](#) Which assuredly is not [grace](#) if any merits precede it; lest what is now given, not according to [grace](#), but according to debt, be rather paid to merits than freely given. And what I next subjoined: 'For the same apostle says, "The same God which works all in all;" [1 Corinthians 12:6](#) but it was never said, God [believes](#) all in all;' and then added, 'Therefore what we [believe](#) is our own, but what good thing we do is of Him who gives the [Holy Spirit](#) to them that [believe](#):' I certainly could not have said, had I already [known](#) that [faith](#) itself also is found among those gifts of God which are given by the same Spirit. Both, therefore, are ours on account of the choice of the will, and yet both are given by the spirit of [faith](#) and [love](#). For [faith](#) is not alone but as it is written, 'Love with [faith](#), from [God](#) the [Father](#), and [our Lord Jesus Christ](#).' [Ephesians 6:23](#) And what I said a little after, 'For it is ours to [believe](#) and to will, but it is His to give to those who [believe](#) and will, the power of doing good works through the [Holy Spirit](#), by whom [love](#) is shed abroad in our hearts,'—is [true](#) indeed; but by the same rule both are also God's, because God prepares the will; and both are ours too, because they are only brought about with our good wills. And thus what I subsequently said also: 'Because we are not able to will unless we are called; and when, after our calling, we would will, our willing is not sufficiently nor our running, unless God gives strength to us that run, and leads us whither He calls us;' and thereupon added: 'It is plain, therefore, that it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy, that we do good works'—this is absolutely most [true](#). But I discovered little concerning the calling itself, which is according to God's purpose; for not such is the calling of all that are called, but only of the elect. Therefore what I said a little afterwards: 'For as in those whom God elects it is not works but [faith](#) that begins the merit so as to do good works by the gift of [God](#), so in those whom He condemns, unbelief and impiety begin the merit of punishment, so that even by way of punishment itself they do [evil](#) works'—I spoke most [truly](#). But that even the merit itself of [faith](#) was God's gift, I neither thought of inquiring into, nor did I say. And in another place I say: 'For whom He has mercy upon, He makes to do good works, and whom He hardens He leaves to do [evil](#) works; but that mercy is bestowed upon the preceding merit of [faith](#), and that hardening is applied to preceding iniquity.' And this indeed is [true](#); but it should further have been asked, whether even the merit of [faith](#) does not come from God's mercy,—that is, whether that mercy is manifested in man only because he is a believer, or whether it is also manifested that he may be a believer? For we read in the apostle's words: 'I obtained mercy to be a believer.' [1 Corinthians 7:25](#) He does not say, 'Because I was a believer.' Therefore although it is given to the believer, yet it has been given also that he may be a believer. Therefore also, in another place in the same book I most [truly](#) said: 'Because, if it is of God's mercy, and not of works, that we are even called that we may [believe](#) and it is granted to us who [believe](#) to do good works, that mercy must not be grudged to the [heathen](#);'—although I there discoursed less carefully about that calling which is given according to God's purpose."

Chapter 8 [IV.]—What Augustin Wrote to Simplicianus, the Successor of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan.

You see plainly what was at that time my opinion concerning [faith](#) and works, although I was labouring in commending God's [grace](#); and in this opinion I see that those brethren of ours now are, because they have not been as careful to make progress with me in my writings as they were in reading them. For if they had been so careful, they would have found that question solved in accordance with the [truth](#) of the [divine Scriptures](#) in the first book of the two which I wrote in the very beginning of my [episcopate](#) to Simplicianus, of blessed memory, Bishop of the Church of Milan, and successor to St. Ambrose. Unless, perchance, they may not have [known](#) these books; in which case, take care that they do [know](#) them. Of this first of those two books, I first spoke in the second book of the *Retractations*; and what I said is as follows: "Of the books, I say, on which, as a [bishop](#), I have laboured, the first two are addressed to Simplicianus, president of the Church of Milan, who succeeded the most blessed Ambrose, concerning various questions, two of which I gathered into the first book from the Epistle of [Paul](#) the Apostle to the Romans. The former of them is about what is written: 'What shall we say, then? Is the law [sin](#)? By no means;' [Romans 7:7](#) as far as the passage where he says, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The [grace](#) of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' [Romans 7:24](#) And therein I have expounded those words of the apostle: 'The law is spiritual; but I am carnal,' [Romans 7:14](#) and others in which the flesh is declared to be in conflict against the Spirit in such a way as if a man were there described as still under law, and not yet established under [grace](#). For, long afterwards, I perceived that those words might even be (and probably were) the utterance of a spiritual man. The latter question in this book is gathered from that passage where the apostle says, 'And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one act of intercourse, even by our father Isaac,' [Romans 9:10](#) as far as that place where he says, 'Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we should be as Sodoma, and should have been like [Gomorrha](#).' [Romans 9:29](#) In the solution of this question I laboured indeed on behalf of the free choice of the human will, but God's [grace](#) overcame, and I could only reach that point where the apostle is perceived to have said with the most evident [truth](#), 'For who makes you to differ? and what have you that you have not received? Now, if you have received it, why do you [glory](#) as if you received it not?' [1 Corinthians 4:7](#) And this the [martyr](#) Cyprian was also desirous of setting forth when he compressed the whole of it in that title: 'That we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own.'" This is why I previously said that it was chiefly by this apostolic testimony that I myself had been convinced, when I thought otherwise concerning this matter; and this God revealed to me as I sought to solve this question when I was writing, as I said, to the Bishop Simplicianus. This testimony, therefore, of the apostle, when for the sake of repressing man's conceit he said, "For what have you which you have not received?" [1 Corinthians 4:7](#) does not allow any believer to say, I have [faith](#) which I received not. All the arrogance of this answer is absolutely repressed by these apostolic words. Moreover, it cannot even be said, "Although I have not a perfected [faith](#), yet I have its beginning, whereby I first of all [believed](#) in [Christ](#)." Because here also is answered: "But what have you that you have not received? Now, if you have received it, why do you [glory](#) as if you received it not?"

Chapter 9 [V.]—The Purpose of the Apostle in These Words.

The notion, however, which they entertain, "that these words, 'What have you that you have not received?' cannot be said of this [faith](#), because it has remained in the same nature, although corrupted, which at first was endowed with health and perfection," is perceived to have no force for the purpose that they desire if it be considered why the apostle said these words. For he was concerned that no one should [glory](#) in man, because dissensions had sprung up among the Corinthian [Christians](#), so that every one was saying, "I, indeed, am of [Paul](#), and another, I am of Apollos, and another, I am of Cephas;" [1 Corinthians 1:12](#) and thence he went on to say: "[God](#) has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong things; and God has chosen the ignoble things of the world, and contemptible things, and those things which are not, to make of no account things which are; that no flesh should [glory](#) before God." [1 Corinthians 1:27](#) Here the intention of the apostle is of a certainty sufficiently plain against the [pride](#) of [man](#), that no one should [glory](#) in man; and thus, no one should [glory](#) in himself. Finally, when he had said "that no flesh should [glory](#) before [God](#)," in order to show in what man ought to [glory](#), he immediately added, "But it is of Him that you are in [Christ Jesus](#), who is made unto us wisdom from [God](#), and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that [glories](#), let him [glory](#) in the Lord." [1 Corinthians 1:30](#) Thence that intention of his progressed, till afterwards rebuking them he says, "For you are yet carnal; for whereas there are among you envying and contention, are you not carnal, and walk according to man? For while one says I am of [Paul](#), and another, I am of Apollos, are you not men? What, then, is Apollos, and what [Paul](#)? Ministers by whom you [believed](#); and to every one as the Lord has given. I have planted, and Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. Therefore, neither is he that plants anything, nor he that waters, but God that gives the increase." Do you not see that the sole purpose of the apostle is that man may be humbled, and God alone exalted? Since in all those things, indeed, which are planted and watered, he says that not even are the planter and the waterer anything, but God who gives the increase: and the very fact, also, that one plants and another waters he attributes not to themselves, but to [God](#), when he says, "To every one as the Lord has given; I have planted, Apollos watered." Hence, therefore, persisting in the same intention he comes to the point of saying, "Therefore let no man [glory](#) in man," [1 Corinthians 3:21](#) for he had already said, "He that [glories](#), let him [glory](#) in the Lord." After these and some other matters which are associated therewith, that same intention of his is carried on in the words: "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes, that you might learn in us that no one of you should be puffed up for one against another above that which is written. For who makes you to differ? And what have you which you have not received? Now, if you have received it, why do you [glory](#) as if you received it not?" [1 Corinthians 4:6](#)

Chapter 10.—It is God's Grace Which Specially Distinguishes One Man from Another.

In this the apostle's most evident intention, in which he speaks against human [pride](#), so that none should [glory](#) in man but in [God](#), it is too absurd, as I think, to suppose God's natural gifts, whether man's entire and perfected nature itself as it was bestowed on him

in his first state, or the remains, whatever they may be, of his degraded nature. For is it by such gifts as these, which are common to all [men](#), that men are distinguished from men? But here he first said, "For who makes you to differ?" and then added, "And what have you that you have not received?" Because a [man](#), puffed up against another, might say, "My [faith](#) makes me to differ," or "My righteousness," or anything else of the kind. In reply to such notions, the good teacher says, "But what have you that you have not received?" And from whom but from Him who makes you to differ from another, on whom He bestowed not what He bestowed on you? "Now if," says he, "you have received it, why do you [glory](#) as if you received it not?" Is he concerned, I ask, about anything else save that he who [glories](#) should [glory](#) in the Lord? But nothing is so opposed to this feeling as for any one to [glory](#) concerning his own merits in such a way as if he himself had made them for himself, and not the [grace](#) of [God](#),—a [grace](#), however, which makes the good to differ from the [wicked](#), and is not common to the good and the [wicked](#). Let the [grace](#), therefore, whereby we are living and reasonable creatures, and are distinguished from cattle, be attributed to nature; let that [grace](#) also by which, among [men](#) themselves, the handsome are made to differ from the ill-formed, or the intelligent from the stupid, or anything of that kind, be ascribed to nature. But he whom the apostle was rebuking did not puff himself up as contrasted with cattle, nor as contrasted with any other man, in respect of any natural endowment which might be found even in the worst of men. But he ascribed to himself, and not to [God](#), some good gift which pertained to a [holy](#) life, and was puffed up therewith when he deserved to hear the rebuke, "Who has made you to differ? and what have you that you received not?" For though the capacity to have [faith](#) is of nature, is it also of nature to have it? "For all [men](#) have not [faith](#)," [although all men](#) have the capacity to have [faith](#). But the apostle does not say, "And what have you capacity to have, the capacity to have which you received not?" but he says, "And what have you which you received not?" Accordingly, the capacity to have [faith](#), as the capacity to have [love](#), belongs to men's nature; but to have [faith](#), even as to have [love](#), belongs to the [grace](#) of [believers](#). That nature, therefore, in which is given to us the capacity of having [faith](#), does not distinguish man from man, but [faith](#) itself makes the believer to differ from the unbeliever. And thus, when it is said, "For who makes you to differ? and what have you that you received not?" if any one dare to say, "I have [faith](#) of myself, I did not, therefore, receive it," he directly contradicts this most manifest [truth](#),—not because it is not in the choice of [man's](#) will to [believe](#) or not to [believe](#), but because in the elect the will is prepared by the Lord. Thus, moreover, the passage, "For who makes you to differ? and what have you that you received not?" refers to that very [faith](#) which is in the [will](#) of man.

Chapter 11 [VI.]—That Some Men are Elected is of God's Mercy.

"Many hear the word of [truth](#); but some [believe](#), while others contradict. Therefore, the former will to [believe](#); the latter do not will." Who does not [know](#) this? Who can deny this? But since in some the will is prepared by the Lord, in others it is not prepared, we must assuredly be able to distinguish what comes from God's mercy, and what from His judgment. "What [Israel](#) sought for," says the apostle, "he has not obtained, but the

election has obtained it; and the rest were blinded, as it is written, God gave to them the spirit of compunction,—eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, even to this day. And David said, Let their table be made a snare, a retribution, and a stumblingblock to them; let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see; and bow down their back always." [Romans 11:7](#) Here is mercy and judgment,—mercy towards the election which has obtained the righteousness of [God](#), but judgment to the rest which have been blinded. And yet the former, because they willed, [believed](#); the latter, because they did not will [believed](#) not. Therefore mercy and judgment were manifested in the very wills themselves. Certainly such an election is of [grace](#), not at all of merits. For he had before said, "So, therefore, even at this present time, the remnant has been saved by the election of [grace](#). And if by [grace](#), now it is no more of works; otherwise [grace](#) is no more [grace](#)." [Romans 11:5](#) Therefore the election obtained what it obtained gratuitously; there preceded none of those things which they might first give, and it should be given to them again. He saved them for nothing. But to the rest who were blinded, as is there plainly declared, it was done in recompense. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and [truth](#)." But His ways are unsearchable. Therefore the mercy by which He freely delivers, and the [truth](#) by which He righteously judges, are equally unsearchable.

Chapter 12 [VII.]—Why the Apostle Said that We are Justified by Faith and Not by Works.

But perhaps it may be said: "The apostle distinguishes [faith](#) from works; he says, indeed, that [grace](#) is not of works, but he does not say that it is not of [faith](#)." This, indeed, is [true](#). But Jesus says that [faith](#) itself also is the work of [God](#), and commands us to work it. For the [Jews](#) said to Him, "What shall we do that we may work the work of God? Jesus answered, and said unto them, This is the work of [God](#), that you [believe](#) in Him whom He has sent." [John 6:28](#) The apostle, therefore, distinguishes [faith](#) from works, just as Judah is distinguished from [Israel](#) in the two kingdoms of the Hebrews, although Judah is [Israel](#) itself. And he says that a man is justified by [faith](#) and not by works, because [faith](#) itself is first given, from which may be obtained other things which are specially characterized as works, in which a man may live righteously. For he himself also says, "By [grace](#) you are saved through [faith](#); and this not of yourselves; but it is the gift of [God](#)," [Ephesians 2:8](#)—that is to say, "And in saying 'through [faith](#),' even [faith](#) itself is not of yourselves, but is God's gift." "Not of works," he says, "lest any man should be lifted up." For it is often said, "He deserved to [believe](#), because he was a [good](#) man even before he [believed](#)." Which may be said of Cornelius [Acts x](#) since his [alms](#) were accepted and his [prayers](#) heard before he had [believed](#) on Christ; and yet without some [faith](#) he neither gave [alms](#) nor [prayed](#). For how did he call on him on whom he had not [believed](#)? But if he could have been saved without the [faith](#) of Christ the Apostle Peter would not have been sent as an architect to build him up; although, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it." And we are told, Faith is of ourselves; other things which pertain to works of righteousness are of the Lord; as if [faith](#) did not belong to the building,—as if, I say, the foundation did not belong to the building. But if this primarily and especially belongs to it, he labours in vain who seeks to build up the [faith](#) by preaching, unless the Lord in His mercy builds it up from within. Whatever, therefore, of good works

Cornelius performed, as well before he [believed](#) in Christ as when he [believed](#) and after he had [believed](#), are all to be ascribed to [God](#), lest, perchance any man be lifted up.

Chapter 13 [VIII.]—The Effect of Divine Grace.

Accordingly, our only Master and Lord Himself, when He had said what I have above mentioned,—“This is the work of [God](#), that you [believe](#) in Him whom He has sent,”—says a little afterwards in that same discourse of His, “I said unto you that you also have seen me and have not [believed](#). All that the Father gives me shall come to me.” [John 6:36](#) What is the meaning of “shall come to me,” but, “shall [believe](#) in me”? But it is the Father's gift that this may be the case. Moreover, a little after He says, “Murmur not among yourselves. No one can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the [prophets](#), And they shall be all teachable of [God](#). Every man that has heard of the [Father](#), and has learned, comes unto me.” What is the meaning of, “Every man that has heard from the [Father](#), and has learned, comes unto me,” except that there is none who hears from the [Father](#), and learns, who comes not to me? For if every one who has heard from the [Father](#), and has learned, comes, certainly every one who does not come has not heard from the Father; for if he had heard and learned, he would come. For no one has heard and learned, and has not come; but every one, as the Truth declares, who has heard from the [Father](#), and has learned, comes. Far removed from the senses of the flesh is this teaching in which the Father is heard, and teaches to come to the Son. Engaged herein is also the Son Himself, because He is His Word by which He thus teaches; and He does not do this through the ear of the flesh, but of the heart. Herein engaged, also, at the same time, is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son; and He, too, teaches, and does not teach separately, since we have learned that the workings of the Trinity are inseparable. And that is certainly the same [Holy Spirit](#) of whom the apostle says, “We, however, having the same Spirit of [faith](#).” [2 Corinthians 4:13](#) But this is especially attributed to the [Father](#), for the reason that of Him is begotten the Only Begotten, and from Him proceeds the [Holy Spirit](#), of which it would be tedious to argue more elaborately; and I think that my work in fifteen books on the Trinity which God is, has already reached you. Very far removed, I say, from the senses of the flesh is this instruction wherein God is heard and teaches. We see that many come to the Son because we see that many [believe](#) in Christ, but when and how they have heard this from the [Father](#), and have learned, we see not. It is [true](#) that that [grace](#) is exceedingly secret, but who doubts that it is [grace](#)? This [grace](#), therefore, which is hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift, is rejected by no hard heart, because it is given for the sake of first taking away the hardness of the heart. When, therefore, the Father is heard within, and teaches, so that a man comes to the [Son](#), He takes away the heart of stone and gives a heart of flesh, as in the declaration of the [prophet](#) He has promised. Because He thus makes them children and vessels of mercy which He has prepared for [glory](#).

Chapter 14.—Why the Father Does Not Teach All that They May Come to Christ.

Why, then, does He not teach all that they may come to [Christ](#), except because all whom He teaches, He teaches in mercy, while those whom He teaches not, in judgment He teaches not? Since, "On whom He will He has mercy, and whom He will He hardens." [Romans 9:18](#) But He has mercy when He gives [good](#) things. He hardens when He recompenses what is deserved. Or if, as some would prefer to distinguish them, those words also are his to whom the apostle says, "You say then unto me," so that he may be regarded as having said, "Therefore has He mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardens," as well as those which follow,—to wit, "What is it that is still complained of? for who resists His [will](#)?" does the apostle answer, "O man, what you have said is false?" No; but he says, "O man, who are you that repliest against God? Doth the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why have you made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump?" and what follows, which you very well [know](#). And yet in a certain sense the Father teaches all [men](#) to come to His [Son](#). For it was not in vain that it was written in the [prophets](#), "And they shall all be teachable of [God](#)." [John 6:45](#) And when He too had premised this testimony, He added, "Every man, therefore, who has heard of the [Father](#), and has learned, comes to me." As, therefore, we speak [justly](#) when we say concerning any teacher of literature who is alone in a city, He teaches literature here to everybody,—not that all [men](#) learn, but that there is none who learns literature there who does not learn from him,—so we [justly](#) say, God teaches all [men](#) to come to [Christ](#), not because all come, but because none comes in any other way. And why He does not teach all [men](#) the apostle explained, as far as he judged that it was to be explained, because, "willing to show His [wrath](#), and to exhibit His power, He endured with much patience the vessels of [wrath](#) which were perfected for destruction; and that He might make [known](#) the riches of His [glory](#) on the vessels of mercy which He has prepared for [glory](#)." [Romans 9:22](#) Hence it is that the "word of the cross is foolishness to them that perish; but unto them that are saved it is the power of [God](#)." [1 Corinthians 1:18](#) God teaches all such to come to [Christ](#), for He wills all such to be saved, and to come to the [knowledge](#) of the [truth](#). And if He had willed to teach even those to whom the word of the cross is foolishness to come to [Christ](#), beyond all [doubt](#) these also would have come. For He neither deceives nor is deceived when He says, "Everyone that has heard of the [Father](#), and has learned, comes to me." Away, then, with the thought that any one comes not, who has heard of the Father and has learned.

Chapter 15.—It is Believers that are Taught of God.

"Why," say they, "does He not teach all [men](#)?" If we should say that they whom He does not teach are unwilling to learn, we shall be met with the answer: And what becomes of what is said to Him, "O [God](#), You will turn us again, and quicken us"? Or if God does not make men willing who were not willing, on what principle does the Church [pray](#), according to the Lord's commandment, for her persecutors? For thus also the blessed Cyprian would have it to be understood that we say, "Your will be done, as in heaven so in earth,"—that is, as in those who have already [believed](#), and who are, as it were, *heaven*, so also in those who do not [believe](#), and on this account are still *the earth*. What, then, do we [pray](#) for on behalf of those who are unwilling to [believe](#), except that God would work in them to will also? Certainly the apostle says, "Brethren, my heart's good will, indeed, and my [prayer](#) to God for them, is for their [salvation](#)." [Romans 10:1](#) He

[prays](#) for those who do not [believe](#),—for what, except that they may [believe](#)? For in no other way do they obtain [salvation](#). If, then, the [faith](#) of the petitioners precede the [grace](#) of [God](#), does the [faith](#) of them on whose behalf [prayer](#) is made that they may [believe](#) precede the [grace](#) of God?—since this is the very thing that is besought for them, that on them that [believe](#) not—that is, who have not [faith](#)—[faith](#) itself may be bestowed? When, therefore, the gospel is preached, some [believe](#), some [believe](#) not; but they who [believe](#) at the voice of the preacher from without, hear of the Father from within, and learn; while they who do not [believe](#), hear outwardly, but inwardly do not hear nor learn;—that is to say, to the former it is given to [believe](#); to the latter it is not given. Because "no man," says He, "comes to me, except the Father which sent me draw him." [John 6:44](#) And this is more plainly said afterwards. For after a little time, when He was speaking of eating his flesh and drinking His blood, and some even of His [disciples](#) said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it? Jesus, [knowing](#) in Himself that His [disciples](#) murmured at this, said unto them, Doth this offend you?" And a little after He said, "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life; but there are some among you which [believe](#) not." And immediately the [evangelist](#) says, "For Jesus [knew](#) from the beginning who were the [believers](#), and who should betray Him; and He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father." Therefore, to be drawn to Christ by the [Father](#), and to hear and learn of the Father in order to come to [Christ](#), is nothing else than to receive from the Father the gift by which to [believe](#) in [Christ](#). For it was not the hearers of the gospel that were distinguished from those who did not hear, but the [believers](#) from those who did not [believe](#), by Him who said, "No man comes to me except it were given him of my Father."

Chapter 16.—Why the Gift of Faith is Not Given to All.

Faith, then, as well in its beginning as in its completion, is God's gift; and let no one have any [doubt](#) whatever, unless he desires to resist the plainest sacred writings, that this gift is given to some, while to some it is not given. But why it is not given to all ought not to disturb the believer, who believes that from one all have gone into a condemnation, which undoubtedly is most righteous; so that even if none were delivered therefrom, there would be no just [cause](#) for finding fault with [God](#). Whence it is plain that it is a great [grace](#) for many to be delivered, and to acknowledge in those that are not delivered what would be due to themselves; so that he that [glories](#) may [glory](#) not in his own merits, which he sees to be equalled in those that are condemned, but in the Lord. But why He delivers one rather than another,— "His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out." [Romans 11:33](#) For it is better in this case for us to hear or to say, "O man, who are you that replest against God?" [Romans 9:20](#) than to dare to speak as if we could [know](#) what He has chosen to be kept secret. Since, moreover, He could not will anything unrighteous.

Chapter 17 [IX.]—His Argument in His Letter Against Porphyry, as to Why the Gospel Came So Late into the World.

But that which you remember my saying in a certain small treatise of mine against Porphyry, under the title of *The Time of the Christian Religion*, I so said for the sake of escaping this more careful and elaborate argument about grace; although its meaning, which could be unfolded elsewhere or by others, was not wholly omitted, although I had been unwilling in that place to explain it. For, among other matters, I spoke thus in answer to the question proposed, why it was after so long a time that Christ came: "Accordingly, I say, since they do not object to Christ that all do not follow His teaching (for even they themselves feel that this could not be objected at all with any justice, either to the wisdom of the philosophers or even to the deity of their own gods), what will they reply, if—leaving out of the question that depth of God's wisdom and knowledge where perchance some other divine plan is far more secretly hidden, without prejudging also other causes, which cannot be traced out by the wise—we say to them only this, for the sake of brevity in the arguing of this question, that Christ willed to appear to men, and that His doctrine should be preached among them, at that time when He knew, and at that place where He knew, that there were some who would believe in Him. For at those times, and in those places, at which His gospel was not preached, He foreknew that all would be in His preaching such as, not indeed all, but many were in His bodily presence, who would not believe in Him, even when the dead were raised by Him; such as we see many now, who, although the declarations of the prophets concerning Him are fulfilled by such manifestations, are still unwilling to believe, and prefer to resist by human astuteness, rather than yield to divine authority so clear and perspicuous, and so lofty, and sublimely made known, so long as the human understanding is small and weak in its approach to divine truth. What wonder is it, then, if Christ knew the world in former ages to be so full of unbelievers, that He should reasonably refuse to appear, or to be preached to them, who, as He foreknew, would believe neither His words nor His miracles? For it is not incredible that all at that time were such as from His coming even to the present time we marvel that so many have been and are. And yet from the beginning of the human race, sometimes more hiddenly, sometimes more evidently, even as to Divine Providence the times seemed to be fitting, there has neither been a failure of prophecy, nor were there wanting those who believed on Him; as well from Adam to Moses, as in the people of Israel itself which by a certain special mystery was a prophetic people; and in other nations before He had come in the flesh. For as some are mentioned in the sacred Hebrew books, as early as the time of Abraham,—neither of his fleshly race nor of the people of Israel nor of the foreign society among the people of Israel,—who were, nevertheless, sharers in their sacrament, why may we not believe that there were others elsewhere among other people, here and there, although we do not read any mention of them in the same authorities? Thus the salvation of this religion, by which only true one true salvation is truly promised, never failed him who was worthy of it; and whoever it failed was not worthy of it. And from the very beginning of the propagation of man, even to the end, the gospel is preached, to some for a reward, to some for judgment; and thus also those to whom the faith was not announced at all were foreknown as those who would not believe; and those to whom it was announced, although they were not such as would believe, are set forth as an example for the former; while those to whom it is announced who should believe, are prepared for the kingdom of heaven, and the company of the holy angels."

Chapter 18.—The Preceding Argument Applied to the Present Time.

Do you not see that my desire was, without any prejudgment of the hidden counsel of [God](#), and of other reasons, to say what might seem sufficient about Christ's foreknowledge, to convince the unbelief of the [pagans](#) who had brought forward this question? For what is more [true](#) than that Christ foreknew who should [believe](#) in Him, and at what times and places they should [believe](#)? But whether by the preaching of Christ to themselves by themselves they were to have [faith](#), or whether they would receive it by God's gift,—that is, whether God only foreknew them, or also [predestinated](#) them, I did not at that time think it necessary to inquire or to discuss. Therefore what I said, "that Christ willed to appear to men at that time, and that His doctrine should be preached among them when He [knew](#), and where He [knew](#), that there were those who would [believe](#) in Him," may also thus be said, "That Christ willed to appear to men at that time, and that His gospel should be preached among those, whom He [knew](#), and where He [knew](#), that there were those who had been elected in Himself before the foundation of the world." But since, if it were so said, it would make the reader desirous of asking about those things which now by the warning of Pelagian [errors](#) must of necessity be discussed with greater copiousness and care, it seemed to me that what at that time was sufficient should be briefly said, leaving to one side, as I said, the depth of the wisdom and [knowledge](#) of [God](#), and without prejudging other reasons, concerning which I thought that we might more fittingly argue, not then, but at some other time.

Chapter 19 [X]—In What Respects Predestination and Grace Differ.

Moreover, that which I said, "That the [salvation](#) of this religion has never been lacking to him who was worthy of it, and that he to whom it was lacking was not worthy,"—if it be discussed and it be asked whence any man can be worthy, there are not wanting those who say—by human will. But we say, by [divine grace](#) or [predestination](#). Further, between [grace](#) and [predestination](#) there is only this difference, that [predestination](#) is the preparation for [grace](#), while [grace](#) is the donation itself. When, therefore the apostle says, "Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus in good works," [Ephesians 2:9-10](#) it is [grace](#); but what follows—"which God has prepared that we should walk in them"—is [predestination](#), which cannot exist without foreknowledge, although foreknowledge may exist without [predestination](#); because God foreknew by [predestination](#) those things which He was about to do, whence it was said, "He made those things that shall be." [Isaiah 45:11](#) Moreover, He is able to foreknow even those things which He does not Himself do,—as all [sins](#) whatever. Because, although there are some which are in such wise [sins](#) as that they are also the penalties of [sins](#), whence it is said, "[God](#) gave them over to a reprobate [mind](#), to do those things which are not convenient," [Romans 1:28](#) it is not in such a case the [sin](#) that is God's, but the judgment. Therefore God's [predestination](#) of good is, as I have said, the preparation of [grace](#); which [grace](#) is the effect of that [predestination](#). Therefore when God promised to

[Abraham](#) in his seed the [faith](#) of the [nations](#), saying, "I have established you a father of many nations," [Genesis 17:5](#) whence the apostle says, "Therefore it is of [faith](#), that the promise, according to [grace](#), might be established to all the seed," [Romans 4:16](#) He promised not from the power of our will but from His own [predestination](#). For He promised what He Himself would do, not what men would do. Because, although men do those [good](#) things which pertain to God's worship, He Himself makes them to do what He has commanded; it is not they that [cause](#) Him to do what He has promised. Otherwise the fulfilment of God's promises would not be in the power of [God](#), but in that of men; and thus what was promised by God to [Abraham](#) would be given to [Abraham](#) by men themselves. [Abraham](#), however, did not [believe](#) thus, but "he [believed](#), giving [glory](#) to [God](#), that what He promised He is able also to do." [Romans 4:21](#) He does not say, "to foretell"—he does not say, "to foreknow;" for He can foretell and foreknow the doings of strangers also; but he says, "He is able also to do;" and thus he is speaking not of the doings of others, but of His own.

Chapter 20.—Did God Promise the Good Works of the Nations and Not Their Faith, to Abraham?

Did [God](#), perchance, promise to [Abraham](#) in his seed the good works of the [nations](#), so as to promise that which He Himself does, but did not promise the [faith](#) of the [Gentiles](#), which men do for themselves; but so as to promise what He Himself does, did He foreknow that men would effect that [faith](#)? The apostle, indeed, does not speak thus, because God promised children to [Abraham](#), who should follow the footsteps of his [faith](#), as he very plainly says. But if He promised the works, and not the [faith](#) of the [Gentiles](#) certainly since they are not good works unless they are of [faith](#) (for "the righteous lives of [faith](#)," [Habakkuk 2:4](#) and, "Whatsoever is not of [faith](#) is [sin](#)," [Romans 14:23](#) and, "Without [faith](#) it is impossible to please" [Hebrews 11:6](#)), it is nevertheless in man's power that [God](#) should fulfil what He has promised. For unless man should do what without the gift of God pertains to [man](#), he will not [cause](#) God to give,—that is, unless man have [faith](#) of himself. God does not fulfil what He has promised, that works of righteousness should be given by [God](#). And thus that [God](#) should be able to fulfil His promises is not in God's power, but man's. And if [truth](#) and [piety](#) do not forbid our believing this, let us [believe](#) with [Abraham](#), that what He has promised He is able also to perform. But He promised children to [Abraham](#); and this men cannot be unless they have [faith](#), therefore He gives [faith](#) also.

Chapter 21.—It is to Be Wondered at that Men Should Rather Trust to Their Own Weakness Than to God's Strength.

Certainly, when the apostle says, "Therefore it is of [faith](#) that the promise may be sure according to [grace](#)," [Romans 4:16](#) I marvel that men would rather entrust themselves to their own weakness, than to the strength of God's promise. But do you say, [God's will](#) concerning myself is to me uncertain? What then? Is your own will concerning yourself

certain to you? and do you not [fear](#),—"Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall"? [1 Corinthians 10:12](#) Since, then, both are uncertain, why does not man commit his [faith](#), hope, and [love](#) to the stronger will rather than to the weaker?

Chapter 22.—God's Promise is Sure.

"But," say they, "when it is said, 'If you believe, you shall be saved,' one of these things is required; the other is offered. What is required is in man's power; what is offered is in God's." Why are not both in God's, as well what He commands as what He offers? For He is asked to give what He commands. Believers ask that their [faith](#) may be increased; they ask on behalf of those who do not [believe](#), that [faith](#) may be given to them; therefore both in its increase and in its beginnings, [faith](#) is the gift of [God](#). But it is said thus: "If you believe, you shall be saved," in the same way that it is said, "If by the Spirit you shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live." [Romans 8:13](#) For in this case also, of these two things one is required, the other is offered. It is said, "If by the Spirit you shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live." Therefore, that we mortify the deeds of the flesh is required, but that we may live is offered. Is it, then, fitting for us to say, that to mortify the deeds of the flesh is not a gift of [God](#), and not to confess it to be a gift of [God](#), because we hear it required of us, with the offer of life as a reward if we shall do it? Away with this being approved by the partakers and champions of [grace](#)! This is the condemnable [error](#) of the [Pelagians](#), whose mouths the apostle immediately stopped when he added, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of [God](#), they are the sons of [God](#);" [Romans 8:14](#) lest we should [believe](#) that we mortify the deeds of the flesh, not by God's Spirit, but by our own. And of this Spirit of [God](#), moreover, he was speaking in that place where he says, "But all these works that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing unto every man what is his own, as He will;" [1 Corinthians 12:11](#) and among all these things, as you [know](#), he also named [faith](#). As, therefore, although it is the gift of God to mortify the deeds of the flesh, yet it is required of us, and life is set before us as a reward; so also [faith](#) is the gift of [God](#), although when it is said, "If you believe, you shall be saved," [faith](#) is required of us, and [salvation](#) is proposed to us as a reward. For these things are both commanded us, and are shown to be God's gifts, in order that we may understand both that we do them, and that God makes us to do them, as He most plainly says by the [prophet](#) Ezekiel. For what is plainer than when He says, "I will [cause](#) you to do"? [Ezekiel 36:27](#) Give heed to that passage of Scripture, and you will see that God promises that He will make them to do those things which He commands to be done. He [truly](#) is not silent as to the merits but as to the [evil deeds](#), of those to whom He shows that He is returning good for [evil](#), by the very fact that He causes them thenceforth to have good works, in causing them to do the divine commands.

Chapter 23 [XII.]—Remarkable Illustrations of Grace and Predestination in Infants, and in Christ.

But all this reasoning, whereby we maintain that the [grace](#) of God through Jesus Christ our Lord is [truly grace](#), that is, is not given according to our merits, although it is most manifestly asserted by the [witness](#) of the divine declarations, yet, among those who think

that they are withheld from all [zeal](#) for [piety](#) unless they can attribute to themselves something, which they first give that it may be recompensed to them again, involves somewhat of a difficulty in respect of the condition of grown-up people, who are already exercising the choice of will. But when we come to the case of infants, and to the Mediator between [God](#) and [man](#) Himself, the man Christ Jesus, there is wanting all assertion of human merits that precede the [grace](#) of [God](#), because the former are not distinguished from others by any preceding good merits that they should belong to the Deliverer of men; any more than He Himself being Himself a [man](#), was made the Deliverer of men by virtue of any precedent human merits.

Chapter 24.—That No One is Judged According to What He Would Have Done If He Had Lived Longer.

For who can hear that infants, [baptized](#) in the condition of mere infancy, are said to depart from this life by reason of their future merits, and that others not [baptized](#) are said to die in the same age because their future merits are foreknown,—but as [evil](#); so that God rewards or condemns in them not their good or [evil](#) life, but no life at all? The apostle, indeed, fixed a limit which man's incautious suspicion, to speak gently, ought not to transgress, for he says, "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive according to the things which he has done by means of the body, whether it be good or [evil](#)." [2 Corinthians 5:10](#) "Has done," he said; and he did not add, "or would have done." But I [know](#) not whence this thought should have entered the minds of such men, that infants' future merits (which shall not be) should be punished or honoured. But why is it said that a man is to be judged according to those things which he has done by means of the body, when many things are done by the mind alone, and not by the body, nor by any member of the body; and for the most part things of such importance, that a most righteous punishment would be due to such thought, such as,—to say nothing of others,—that "The fool has said in his heart there is no God"? What, then, is the meaning of, "According to those things that he has done by means of the body," except according to those things which he has done during that time in which he was in the body, so that we may understand "by means of the body" as meaning "throughout the season of bodily life"? But after the body, no one will be in the body except at the last resurrection,—not for the purpose of establishing any claims of merit, but for the sake of receiving recompenses for good merits, and enduring punishments for [evil](#) merits. But in this intermediate period between the putting off and the taking again of the body, the [souls](#) are either tormented or they are in repose, according to those things which they have done during the period of the bodily life. And to this period of the bodily life moreover pertains, what the [Pelagians](#) deny, but Christ's Church confesses, original [sin](#); and according to whether this is by God's [grace](#) loosed, or by God's judgment not loosed, when infants die, they pass, on the one hand, by the merit of regeneration from [evil](#) to good, or on the other, by the merit of their origin from [evil](#) to [evil](#). The catholic [faith](#) acknowledges this, and even some [heretics](#), without any contradiction, agree to this. But in the height of wonder and astonishment I am unable to discover whence men, whose intelligence your letters show to be by no means contemptible, could entertain the opinion that any one should be judged not according to the merits that he had as long as

he was in the body, but according to the merits which he would have had if he had lived longer in the body; and I should not dare to [believe](#) that there were such men, if I could venture to disbelieve you. But I hope that God will interpose, so that when they are admonished they may at once perceive, that if those [sins](#) which, as is said, would have been, can rightly be punished by God's judgment in those who are not [baptized](#), they may also be rightly remitted by God's [grace](#) in those who are [baptized](#). For whoever says that future [sins](#) can only be punished by God's judgment, but cannot be pardoned by God's mercy, ought to consider how great a wrong he is doing to [God](#) and His [grace](#); as if future [sin](#) could be foreknown, and could not be foregone. And if this is absurd, it is the greater reason that help should be afforded to those who would be sinners if they lived longer, when they die in early life, by means of that laver wherein [sins](#) are washed away.

Chapter 25 [XIII.]—Possibly the Baptized Infants Would Have Repented If They Had Lived, and the Unbaptized Not.

But if, perchance, they say that [sins](#) are re-remitted to penitents, and that those who die in infancy are not [baptized](#) because they are foreknown as not such as would repent if they should live, while God has foreknown that those who are [baptized](#) and die in infancy would have repented if they had lived, let them observe and see that if it be so it is not in this case original [sins](#) which are punished in infants that die without [baptism](#), but what would have been the [sins](#) of each one had he lived; and also in [baptized](#) infants, that it is not original [sins](#) that are washed away, but their own future [sins](#) if they should live, since they could not [sin](#) except in more mature age; but that some were foreseen as such as would repent, and others as such as would not repent, therefore some were [baptized](#), and others departed from this life without [baptism](#). If the [Pelagians](#) should dare to say this, by their denial of original [sin](#) they would thus be relieved of the necessity of seeking, on behalf of infants outside of the [kingdom of God](#), for some place of I [know](#) not what [happiness](#) of their own; especially since they are convinced that they cannot have [eternal](#) life because they have not eaten the flesh nor drank the blood of Christ; and because in them who have no [sin](#) at all, [baptism](#), which is given for the remission of [sins](#), is falsified. For they would go on to say that there is no original [sin](#), but that those who as infants are released are either [baptized](#) or not [baptized](#) according to their future merits if they should live, and that according to their future merits they either receive or do not receive the body and blood of [Christ](#), without which they absolutely cannot have life; and are [baptized](#) for the [true](#) remission of [sins](#) although they derived no [sins](#) from Adam, because the [sins](#) are remitted unto them concerning which God foreknew that they would repent. Thus with the greatest ease they would plead and would win their [cause](#), in which they deny that there is any original [sin](#), and contend that the [grace](#) of God is only given according to our merits. But that the future merits of [men](#), which merits will never come into [existence](#) are beyond all [doubt](#) no merits at all, it is certainly most easy to see: for this reason even the [Pelagians](#) were not able to say this; and much rather these ought not to say it. For it cannot be said with what pain I find that they who with us on catholic authority condemn the [error](#) of those [heretics](#), have not seen this, which the [Pelagians](#) themselves have seen to be most false and absurd.

Chapter 26 [XIV]—Reference to Cyprian's Treatise "On the Mortality."

Cyprian wrote a work *On the Mortality*, [known](#) with approval to many and almost all who [love](#) ecclesiastical literature, wherein he says that death is not only not disadvantageous to [believers](#), but that it is even found to be advantageous, because it withdraws men from the risks of sinning, and establishes them in a security of not sinning. But wherein is the advantage of this, if even future [sins](#) which have not been committed are punished? Yet he argues most copiously and well that the risks of sinning are not wanting in this life, and that they do not continue after this life is done; where also he adduces that testimony from the book of Wisdom: "He was taken away, lest [wickedness](#) should alter his understanding." [Wisdom 4:11](#) And this was also adduced by me, though you said that those brethren of yours had rejected it on the ground of its not having been brought forward from a canonical book; as if, even setting aside the attestation of this book, the thing itself were not clear which I wished to be taught therefrom. For what [Christian](#) would dare to deny that the righteous man, if he should be prematurely laid hold of by death, will be in repose? Let who will, say this, and what man of sound [faith](#) will think that he can withstand it? Moreover, if he should say that the righteous man, if he should depart from his righteousness in which he has long lived, and should die in that impiety after having lived in it, I say not a year, but one day, will go hence into the punishment due to the [wicked](#), his righteousness having no power in the future to avail him,—will any believer contradict this evident [truth](#)? Further, if we are asked whether, if he had died then at the time that he was righteous, he would have incurred punishment or repose, shall we hesitate to answer, repose? This is the whole reason why it is said,—whoever says it,—"He was taken away lest [wickedness](#) should alter his understanding." For it was said in reference to the risks of this life, not with reference to the foreknowledge of [God](#), who foreknew that which was to be, not that which was not to be—that is, that He would bestow on him an untimely death in order that he might be withdrawn from the uncertainty of [temptations](#); not that he would [sin](#), since he was not to remain in [temptation](#). Because, concerning this life, we read in the book of Job, "Is not the life of man upon earth a [temptation](#)?" [Job 7:1](#) But why it should be granted to some to be taken away from the perils of this life while they are righteous, while others who are righteous until they fall from righteousness are kept in the same risks in a more lengthened life,—who has [known](#) the mind of the Lord? And yet it is permitted to be understood from this, that even those righteous people who maintain good and [pious](#) characters, even to the maturity of old age and to the last day of this life, must not [glory](#) in their own merits, but in the [Lord](#), since He who took away the righteous man from the shortness of life, lest [wickedness](#) should alter his understanding, Himself guards the righteous man in any length of life, that [wickedness](#) may not alter his understanding. But why He should have kept the righteous man here to fall, when He might have withdrawn him before,—His judgments, although absolutely righteous, are yet unsearchable.

Chapter 27.—The Book of Wisdom Obtains in the Church the Authority of Canonical Scripture.

And since these things are so, the judgment of the book of Wisdom ought not to be repudiated, since for so long a course of years that book has deserved to be read in the Church of Christ from the station of the readers of the Church of [Christ](#), and to be heard by all [Christians](#), from [bishops](#) downwards, even to the lowest lay [believers](#), penitents, and [catechumens](#), with the veneration paid to divine authority. For assuredly, if, from those who have been before me in commenting on the [divine Scriptures](#), I should bring forward a defence of this judgment, which we are now called upon to defend more carefully and copiously than usual against the new [error](#) of the [Pelagians](#),—that is, that God's [grace](#) is not given according to our merits, and that it is given freely to whom it is given, because it is neither of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy; but that by righteous judgment it is not given to whom it is not given, because there is no unrighteousness with [God](#);—if, therefore, I should put forth a defence of this opinion from catholic commentators on the divine oracles who have preceded us, assuredly these brethren for whose sake I am now discoursing would acquiesce, for this you have intimated in your letters. What need is there, then, for us to look into the writings of those who, before this [heresy](#) sprang up, had no necessity to be conversant in a question so difficult of solution as this, which beyond a [doubt](#) they would have done if they had been compelled to answer such things? Whence it arose that they touched upon what they thought of God's [grace](#) briefly in some passages of their writings, and cursorily; but on those matters which they argued against the enemies of the [Church](#), and in exhortations to every [virtue](#) by which to serve the living and [true](#) God for the purpose of attaining [eternal](#) life and [true happiness](#), they dwelt at length. But the [grace](#) of [God](#), what it could do, shows itself artlessly by its frequent mention in [prayers](#); for what God commands to be done would not be asked for from [God](#), unless it could be given by Him that it should be done.

Chapter 28.—Cyprian's Treatise "On the Mortality."

But if any wish to be instructed in the opinions of those who have handled the subject, it behoves them to prefer to all commentators the book of Wisdom, where it is read, "He was taken away, that [wickedness](#) should not alter his understanding;" because illustrious commentators, even in the times nearest to the [apostles](#), preferred it to themselves, seeing that when they made use of it for a testimony they [believed](#) that they were making use of nothing but a divine testimony; and certainly it appears that the most blessed Cyprian, in order to commend the advantage of an earlier death, contended that those who end this life, wherein [sin](#) is possible, are taken away from the risks of [sins](#). In the same treatise, among other things, he says, "Why, when you are about to be with Christ, and are secure of the divine promise, do you not embrace being called to [Christ](#), and [rejoice](#) that you are free from the [devil](#)?" And in another place he says, "Boys escape the peril of their unstable age." And again, in another place, he says, "Why do we not hasten and run, that we may see our country, that we may hail our [relatives](#)? A great number of those who are dear to us are expecting us there,—a dense and abundant crowd of [parents](#), brethren,

sons, are longing for us; already secure of their own safety, but still anxious about our [salvation](#)." By these and such like sentiments, that teacher sufficiently and plainly testifies, in the clearest light of the catholic [faith](#), that perils of [sin](#) and trials are to be feared even until the putting off of this body, but that afterwards no one shall suffer any such things. And even if he did not testify thus, when could any manner of [Christian](#) be in [doubt](#) on this matter? How, then, should it not have been of advantage to a man who has lapsed, and who finishes his life wretchedly in that same state of lapse, and passes into the punishment due to such as he,—how, I say, should it not have been of the greatest and highest advantage to such an one to be snatched by death from this sphere of [temptations](#) before his fall?

Chapter 29.—God's Dealing Does Not Depend Upon Any Contingent Merits of Men.

And thus, unless we indulge in reckless disputation, the entire question is concluded concerning him who is taken away lest [wickedness](#) should alter his understanding. And the book of Wisdom, which for such a series of years has deserved to be read in Christ's Church, and in which this is read, ought not to suffer [injustice](#) because it withstands those who are mistaken on behalf of men's merit, so as to come in opposition to the most manifest [grace](#) of God: and this [grace](#) chiefly appears in infants, and while some of these [baptized](#), and some not [baptized](#), come to the end of this life, they sufficiently point to God's mercy and His judgment,—His mercy, indeed, gratuitous, His judgment, of debt. For if men should be judged according to the merits of their life, which merits they have been prevented by death from actually having, but would have had if they had lived, it would be of no advantage to him who is taken away lest [wickedness](#) should alter his understanding; it would be of no advantage to those who die in a state of lapse if they should die before. And this no [Christian](#) will venture to say. Wherefore our brethren, who with us on behalf of the catholic [faith](#) assail the pest of the Pelagian [error](#), ought not to such an extent to favour the Pelagian opinion, wherein they conceive that God's [grace](#) is given according to our merits, as to endeavour (which they cannot dare) to invalidate a [true](#) sentiment, plainly and from ancient times [Christian](#),—"He was taken away, lest [wickedness](#) should alter his understanding;" and to build up that which we should think, I do not say, no one would [believe](#), but no one would dream,—to wit, that any deceased person would be judged according to those things which he would have done if he had lived for a more lengthened period. Surely thus what we say manifests itself clearly to be incontestable,—that the [grace](#) of God is not given according to our merits; so that ingenious men who contradict this [truth](#) are constrained to say things which must be rejected from the ears and from the thoughts of all [men](#).

Chapter 30 [XV.]—The Most Illustrious Instance of Predestination is Christ Jesus.

Moreover, the most illustrious Light of [predestination](#) and [grace](#) is the Saviour Himself,—the Mediator Himself between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. And, [pray](#),

by what preceding merits of its own, whether of works or of [faith](#), did the [human nature](#) which is in Him procure for itself that it should be this? Let this have an answer, I beg. That man, whence did He deserve this—to be assumed by the Word co-[eternal](#) with the Father into unity of person, and be the only-begotten [Son of God](#)? Was it because any kind of goodness in Him preceded? What did He do before? What did He [believe](#)? What did He ask, that He should attain to this unspeakable excellence? Was it not by the act and the assumption of the Word that that man, from the time He began to be, began to be the only [Son of God](#)? Did not that [woman](#), full of [grace](#), conceive the only [Son of God](#)? Was He not born the only [Son of God](#), of the [Holy Spirit](#) and the [Virgin Mary](#),—not of the [lust](#) of the flesh, but by God's peculiar gift? Was it to be feared that as age matured this man, He would [sin](#) of [free will](#)? Or was the will in Him not free on that account? and was it not so much the more free in proportion to the greater impossibility of His becoming the servant of [sin](#)? Certainly, in Him [human nature](#)—that is to say, our nature—specially received all those specially admirable gifts, and any others that may most [truly](#) be said to be peculiar to Him, by virtue of no preceding merits of its own. Let a man here answer to God if he dare, and say, Why was it not I also? And if he should hear, "O man, who are you that repliest against God?" [Romans 9:10](#) let him not at this point restrain himself, but increase his impudence and say, "How is it that I hear, Who are you, O man? since I am what I hear,—that is, a [man](#), and He of whom I speak is but the same? Why should not I also be what He is? For it is by [grace](#) that He is such and so great; why is [grace](#) different when nature is common? Assuredly, there is no respect of [persons](#) with [God](#)." I say, not what [Christian](#) man, but what madman will say this?

Chapter 31.—Christ Predestinated to Be the Son of God.

Therefore in Him who is our Head let there appear to be the very fountain of [grace](#), whence, according to the measure of every man, He diffuses Himself through all His members. It is by that [grace](#) that every man from the beginning of his [faith](#) becomes a [Christian](#), by which [grace](#) that one man from His beginning became Christ. Of the same Spirit also the former is born again of which the latter was born. By the same Spirit is effected in us the remission of [sins](#), by which Spirit it was effected that He should have no [sin](#). God certainly foreknew that He would do these things. This, therefore, is that same [predestination](#) of the [saints](#) which most especially shone forth in the Saint of [saints](#); and who is there of those who rightly understand the declarations of the [truth](#) that can deny this [predestination](#)? For we have learned that the Lord of [glory](#) Himself was [predestinated](#) in so far as the man was made the [Son of God](#). The teacher of the [Gentiles](#) exclaims, in the beginning of his epistles, "[Paul](#), a servant of [Jesus Christ](#), called to be an [apostle](#), separated unto the gospel of God (which He had promised afore by His [prophets](#) in the [Holy Scriptures](#)) concerning His Son, which was made of the seed of [David](#) according to the flesh, who was [predestinated](#) the [Son of God](#) in power, according to the Spirit of sanctification by the resurrection of the dead." Therefore Jesus was [predestinated](#), so that He who was to be the Son of David according to the flesh should yet be in power the [Son of God](#), according to the Spirit of sanctification, because He was born of the [Holy Spirit](#) and of the Virgin Mary. This is that ineffably accomplished sole

taking up of man by [God the Word](#), so that He might [truly](#) and properly be called at the same time the [Son of God](#) and the [Son of man](#),—[Son of man](#) on account of the man taken up, and the [Son of God](#) on account of the God only-begotten who took Him up, so that a Trinity and not a Quaternity might be [believed](#) in. Such a transporting of [human nature](#) was [predestinated](#), so great, so lofty, and so sublime that there was no exalting it more highly,—just as on our behalf that divinity had no possibility of more humbly putting itself off, than by the assumption of [man's](#) nature with the weakness of the flesh, even to the death of the cross. As, therefore, that one man was [predestinated](#) to be our Head, so we being many are [predestinated](#) to be His members. Here let human merits which have perished through Adam keep silence, and let that [grace](#) of God reign which reigns through Jesus Christ our Lord, the only [Son of God](#), the one Lord. Let whoever can find in our Head the merits which preceded that peculiar generation, seek in us His members for those merits which preceded our manifold regeneration. For that generation was not recompensed to [Christ](#), but given; that He should be born, namely, of the Spirit and the Virgin, separate from all entanglement of [sin](#). Thus also our being born again of water and the Spirit is not recompensed to us for any merit, but freely given; and if [faith](#) has brought us to the laver of regeneration, we ought not therefore to suppose that we have first given anything, so that the regeneration of [salvation](#) should be recompensed to us again; because He made us to [believe](#) in [Christ](#), who made for us a Christ on whom we [believe](#). He makes in men the beginning and the completion of the [faith](#) in Jesus who made the man Jesus the beginner and finisher of [faith](#); [Hebrews 12:2](#) for thus, as you [know](#), He is called in the epistle which is addressed to the Hebrews.

Chapter 32 [XVI.]—The Twofold Calling.

God indeed calls many [predestinated](#) children of His, to make them members of His only [predestinated](#) Son,—not with that calling with which they were called who would not come to the marriage, since with that calling were called also the [Jews](#), to whom Christ crucified is an offence, and the [Gentiles](#), to whom Christ crucified is foolishness; but with that calling He calls the [predestinated](#) which the apostle distinguished when he said that he preached Christ, the wisdom of [God](#) and the power of [God](#), to them that were called, [Jews](#) as well as Greeks. For thus he says "But unto them which are called," [1 Corinthians 1:24](#) in order to show that there were some who were not called; [knowing](#) that there is a certain sure calling of those who are called according to God's purpose, whom He has foreknown and [predestinated](#) before to be conformed to the image of His [Son](#). And it was this calling he meant when he said, "Not of works, but of Him that calls; it was said unto her, That the elder shall serve the younger." [Romans 9:12](#) Did he say, "Not of works, but of him that [believes](#)"? Rather, he actually took this away from man, that he might give the whole to [God](#). Therefore he said, "But of Him that calls,"—not with any sort of calling whatever, but with that calling wherewith a man is made a believer.

Chapter 33.—It is in the Power of Evil Men to Sin; But to Do This or That by Means of that Wickedness is in God's Power Alone.

Moreover, it was this that he had in view when he said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." [Romans 11:29](#) And in that saying also consider for a little what was its purport. For when he had said, "For I would not, brethren, that you should be [ignorant](#) of this [mystery](#), that you may not be wise in yourselves, that blindness in part is happened to [Israel](#), until the fulness of the [Gentiles](#) be come in, and so all [Israel](#) should be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion one who shall deliver, and turn away impiety from Jacob: and this is the covenant to them from me, when I shall take away their [sins](#);" he immediately added, what is to be very carefully understood, "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes: but as concerning the election, they are beloved for their fathers' sakes." [Romans 11:28](#) What is the meaning of, "as concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sake," but that their enmity wherewith they put Christ to death was, without [doubt](#), as we see, an advantage to the gospel? And he shows that this came about by God's ordering, who [knew](#) how to make a good use even of [evil](#) things; not that the vessels of [wrath](#) might be of advantage to Him, but that by His own good use of them they might be of advantage to the vessels of mercy. For what could be said more plainly than what is actually said, "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes"? It is, therefore, in the power of the [wicked](#) to [sin](#); but that in sinning they should do this or that by that [wickedness](#) is not in their power, but in God's, who divides the darkness and regulates it; so that hence even what they do contrary to [God's will](#) is not fulfilled except it be [God's will](#). We read in the Acts of the Apostles that when the [apostles](#) had been sent away by the [Jews](#), and had come to their own friends, and shown them what great things the [priests](#) and elders said to them, they all with one consent lifted up their voices to the Lord and said, "Lord, you are [God](#), which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who, by the mouth of our father David, your [holy](#) servant, hast said, Why did the [heathen](#) rage, and the peoples [imagine](#) vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For in [truth](#), there have assembled together in this city against Your [holy](#) child Jesus, whom You have anointed, [Herod](#) and [Pilate](#), and the people of [Israel](#), to do whatever Your hand and counsel [predestinated](#) to be done." See what is said: "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes." Because God's hand and counsel [predestinated](#) such things to be done by the hostile [Jews](#) as were necessary for the gospel, for our sakes. But what is it that follows? "But as concerning the election, they are beloved for their fathers' sakes." For are those enemies who perished in their enmity and those of the same people who still perish in their opposition to [Christ](#),—are those chosen and beloved? Away with the thought! Who is so utterly foolish as to say this? But both expressions, although contrary to one another—that is, "enemies" and "beloved"—are appropriate, though not to the same men, yet to the same Jewish people, and to the same carnal seed of Israel, of whom some belonged to the falling away, and some to the blessing of [Israel](#) himself. For the apostle previously explained this meaning more clearly when he said, "That which Israel wrought for, he has not obtained; but the election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded?"

[Romans 11:7](#) Yet in both cases it was the very same [Israel](#). Where, therefore, we hear, "[Israel](#) has not obtained," or, "The rest were blinded," there are to be understood the enemies for our sakes; but where we hear, "that the election has obtained it," there are to be understood the beloved for their father's sakes, to which fathers those things were assuredly promised; because "the promises were made to [Abraham](#) and his seed," [Galatians 3:16](#) whence also in that olive-tree is grafted the wild olive-tree of the [Gentiles](#). Now subsequently we certainly ought to fall in with the election, of which he says that it is according to [grace](#), not according to debt, because "there was made a remnant by the election of [grace](#)" [Romans 11:5](#) This election obtained it, the rest being blinded. As concerning this election, the [Israelites](#) were beloved for the sake of their fathers. For they were not called with that calling of which it is said, "Many are called," but with that whereby the chosen are called. Whence also after he had said, "But as concerning the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes," he went on to add those words whence this discussion arose: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,"—that is, they are firmly established without change. Those who belong to this calling are all teachable by [God](#); nor can any of them say, "I [believed](#) in order to being thus called," because the mercy of God anticipated him, because he was so called in order that he might [believe](#). For all who are teachable of God come to the Son because they have heard and learned from the Father through the [Son](#), who most clearly says, "Every one who has heard of the [Father](#), and has learned, comes unto me." [John 6:45](#) But of such as these none perishes, because "of all that the Father has given Him, He will lose none." [John 6:39](#) Whoever, therefore, is of these does not perish at all; nor was any who perishes ever of these. For which reason it is said, "They went out from among us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would certainly have continued with us." [John 2:19](#)

Chapter 34 [XVII.]—The Special Calling of the Elect is Not Because They Have Believed, But in Order that They May Believe.

Let us, then, understand the calling whereby they become elected,—not those who are elected because they have [believed](#), but who are elected that they may [believe](#). For the Lord Himself also sufficiently explains this calling when He says, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." [John 15:16](#) For if they had been elected because they had [believed](#), they themselves would certainly have first chosen Him by believing in Him, so that they should deserve to be elected. But He takes away this supposition altogether when He says, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." And yet they themselves, beyond a [doubt](#), chose Him when they [believed](#) on Him. Whence it is not for any other reason that He says, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," than because they did not choose Him that He should choose them, but He chose them that they might choose Him; because His mercy preceded them according to [grace](#), not according to debt. Therefore He chose them out of the world while He was wearing flesh, but as those who were already chosen in Himself before the foundation of the world. This is the changeless [truth](#) concerning [predestination](#) and [grace](#). For what is it that the apostle says, "As He has chosen us in Himself before the foundation of the world"?

[Ephesians 1:4](#) And assuredly, if this were said because God foreknew that they would [believe](#), not because He Himself would make them [believers](#), the Son is speaking against such a foreknowledge as that when He says, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you;" when God should rather have foreknown this very thing, that they themselves would have chosen Him, so that they might deserve to be chosen by Him. Therefore they were elected before the foundation of the world with that [predestination](#) in which God foreknew what He Himself would do; but they were elected out of the world with that calling whereby God fulfilled that which He [predestinated](#). For whom He [predestinated](#), them He also called, with that calling, to wit, which is according to the purpose. Not others, therefore, but those whom He [predestinated](#), them He also called; nor others, but those whom He so called, them He also justified; nor others, but those whom He [predestinated](#), called, and justified, them He also [glorified](#); assuredly to that end which has no end. Therefore God elected [believers](#); but He chose them that they might be so, not because they were already so. The Apostle James says: "Has not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in [faith](#), and heirs of the kingdom which God has promised to them that [love](#) Him?" [James 2:5](#) By choosing them, therefore; He makes them rich in [faith](#), as He makes them heirs of the kingdom; because He is rightly said to choose that in them, in order to make which in them He chose them. I ask, who can hear the Lord saying, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," and can dare to say that men [believe](#) in order to be elected, when they are rather elected to [believe](#); lest against the judgment of [truth](#) they be found to have first chosen Christ to whom Christ says, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you"? [John 16:16](#)

Chapter 35 [XVIII.]—Election is for the Purpose of Holiness.

Who can hear the apostle saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of [our Lord Jesus Christ](#), who has blessed us in all spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ; as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be [holy](#) and without spot in His sight; in [love predestinating](#) us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His [will](#), wherein He has shown us favour in His beloved Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, the remission of [sins](#) according to the riches of His [grace](#), which has abounded to us in all wisdom and [prudence](#); that He might show to us the [mystery](#) of His [will](#) according to His good pleasure, which He has purposed in Himself, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, to restore all things in [Christ](#), which are in heaven, and in the earth, in Him: in whom also we have obtained a share, being [predestinated](#) according to the purpose; who works all things according to the counsel of His [will](#), that we should be to the praise of his [glory](#);"—who, I say, can hear these words with attention and intelligence, and can venture to have any [doubt](#) concerning a [truth](#) so clear as this which we are defending? God chose Christ's members in Him before the foundation of the world; and how should He choose those who as yet did not exist, except by [predestinating](#) them? Therefore He chose us by [predestinating](#) us. Would he choose the [unholy](#) and the unclean? Now if the question be proposed, whether He would choose such, or rather the [holy](#) and unstained,

who can ask which of these he may answer, and not give his opinion at once in favour of the [holy](#) and pure?

Chapter 36.—God Chose the Righteous; Not Those Whom He Foresaw as Being of Themselves, But Those Whom He Predestinated for the Purpose of Making So.

"Therefore," says the Pelagian, "He foreknew who would be [holy](#) and immaculate by the choice of [free will](#), and on that account elected them before the foundation of the world in that same foreknowledge of His in which He foreknew that they would be such. Therefore He elected them," says he, "before they [existed](#), [predestinating](#) them to be children whom He foreknew to be [holy](#) and immaculate. Certainly He did not make them so; nor did He foresee that He would make them so, but that they would be so." Let us, then, look into the words of the apostle and see whether He chose us before the foundation of the world because we were going to be [holy](#) and immaculate, or in order that we might be so. "Blessed," says he, "be the God and Father of [our Lord Jesus Christ](#), who has blessed us in all spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ; even as He has chosen us in Himself before the foundation of the world, that we should be [holy](#) and unspotted." [Ephesians 1:3](#) Not, then, because we were to be so, but that we might be so. Assuredly it is certain,—assuredly it is manifest. Certainly we were to be such for the reason that He has chosen us, [predestinating](#) us to be such by His [grace](#). Therefore "He blessed us with spiritual blessing in the heavens in [Christ Jesus](#), even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be [holy](#) and immaculate in His sight, in order that we might not in so great a benefit of [grace glory](#) concerning the good pleasure of our will. "In which," says he, "He has shown us favour in His beloved [Son](#),"—in which, certainly, His own will, He has shown us favour. Thus, it is said, He has shown us [grace](#) by [grace](#), even as it is said, He has made us righteous by righteousness. "In whom," he says, "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of [sins](#), according to the riches of His [grace](#), which has abounded to us in all wisdom and [prudence](#); that he might show to us the [mystery](#) of His [will](#), according to His good pleasure." In this [mystery](#) of His [will](#), He placed the riches of His [grace](#), according to His good pleasure, not according to ours, which could not possibly be good unless He Himself, according to His own good pleasure, should aid it to become so. But when he had said, "According to His good pleasure," he added, "which He purposed in Him," that is, in His beloved [Son](#), "in the dispensation of the fulness of times to restore all things in [Christ](#), which are in heaven, and which are in earth, in Him: in whom also we too have obtained a lot, being [predestinated](#) according to His purpose who works all things according to the counsel of His [will](#); that we should be to the praise of His [glory](#)."

Chapter 37.—We Were Elected and Predestinated, Not Because We Were Going to Be Holy, But in Order that We Might Be So.

It would be too tedious to argue about the several points. But you see without [doubt](#), you see with what evidence of apostolic declaration this [grace](#) is defended, in opposition to which human merits are set up, as if man should first give something for it to be recompensed to him again. Therefore God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, [predestinating](#) us to the adoption of children, not because we were going to be of ourselves [holy](#) and immaculate, but He chose and [predestinated](#) us that we might be so. Moreover, He did this according to the good pleasure of His [will](#), so that nobody might [glory](#) concerning his own will, but about [God's will](#) towards himself. He did this according to the riches of His [grace](#), according to His good-will, which He purposed in His beloved Son; in whom we have obtained a share, being [predestinated](#) according to the purpose, not ours, but His, who works all things to such an extent as that He works in us to will also. Moreover, He works according to the counsel of His [will](#), that we may be to the praise of His [glory](#). [Philippians 2:13](#) For this reason it is that we cry that no one should [glory](#) in man, and, thus, not in himself; but whoever [glories](#) let him [glory](#) in the [Lord](#), that he may be for the praise of His [glory](#). Because He Himself works according to His purpose that we may be to the praise of His [glory](#), and, of course, [holy](#) and immaculate, for which purpose He called us, [predestinating](#) us before the foundation of the world. Out of this, His purpose, is that special calling of the elect for whom He co-works with all things for good, because they are called according to His purpose, and "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." [Romans 11:29](#)

Chapter 38 [XIX.]—What is the View of the Pelagians, and What of the Semi-[Pelagians](#), Concerning Predestination.

But these brethren of ours, about whom and on whose behalf we are now discoursing, say, perhaps, that the [Pelagians](#) are refuted by this [apostolical](#) testimony in which it is said that we are chosen in Christ and [predestinated](#) before the foundation of the world, in order that we should be [holy](#) and immaculate in His sight in [love](#). For they think that "having received God's commands we are of ourselves by the choice of our [free will](#) made [holy](#) and immaculate in His sight in [love](#); and since God foresaw that this would be the case," they say, "He therefore chose and [predestinated](#) us in Christ before the foundation of the world." Although the apostle says that it was not because He foreknew that we should be such, but in order that we might be such by the same election of His [grace](#), by which He showed us favour in His beloved Son. When, therefore, He [predestinated](#) us, He foreknew His own work by which He makes us [holy](#) and immaculate. Whence the Pelagian [error](#) is rightly refuted by this testimony. "But we say," say they, "that God did not foreknow anything as ours except that [faith](#) by which we begin to [believe](#), and that He chose and [predestinated](#) us before the foundation of the world, in order that we might be [holy](#) and immaculate by His [grace](#) and by His work." But let them also hear in this testimony the words where he says, "We have obtained a lot, being [predestinated](#) according to His purpose who works all things." [Ephesians 1:11](#) He, therefore, works the beginning of our belief who works all things; because [faith](#) itself does not precede that calling of which it is said: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;" [Romans 11:29](#) and of which it is said: "Not of works, but of Him

that calls" [Romans 9:12](#) (although He might have said, "of Him that [believes](#)"); and the election which the Lord signified when He said: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." [John 15:16](#) For He chose us, not because we [believed](#), but that we might [believe](#), lest we should be said first to have chosen Him, and so His word be false (which be it far from us to think possible), "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Neither are we called because we [believed](#), but that we may [believe](#); and by that calling which is without repentance it is effected and carried through that we should [believe](#). But all the many things which we have said concerning this matter need not to be repeated.

Chapter 39—The Beginning of Faith is God's Gift.

Finally, also, in what follows this testimony, the apostle gives thanks to God on behalf of those who have [believed](#);—not, certainly, because the gospel has been declared to them, but because they have [believed](#). For he says, "In whom also after ye had heard the word of [truth](#), the gospel of your [salvation](#); in whom also, after that you [believed](#), you were sealed with the [Holy Spirit](#) of promise, which is the pledge of our inheritance, to the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His [glory](#). Wherefore I also, after I had heard of your [faith](#) in Christ Jesus and with reference to all the [saints](#), cease not to give thanks for you." Their [faith](#) was new and recent on the preaching of the gospel to them, which [faith](#) when he hears of, the apostle gives thanks to God on their behalf. If he were to give thanks to man for that which he might either think or [know](#) that man had not given, it would be called a flattery or a mockery, rather than a giving of thanks. "Do not [err](#), for God is not mocked;" [Galatians 6:7](#) for His gift is also the beginning of [faith](#), unless the apostolic giving of thanks be rightly judged to be either mistaken or fallacious. What then? Does that not appear as the beginning of the [faith](#) of the Thessalonians, for which, nevertheless, the same apostle gives thanks to God when he says, "For this [cause](#) also we thank God without ceasing, because when you had received from us the word of the hearing of [God](#), you received it not as the word of [men](#), but as it is in [truth](#) the word of [God](#), which effectually works in you and which you [believed](#)"? [What is that for which he here gives thanks to God? Assuredly it is a vain and idle thing if He to whom he gives thanks did not Himself do the thing. But, since this is not a vain and idle thing, certainly \[God\]\(#\), to whom he gave thanks concerning this work, Himself did it; that when they had received the word of the hearing of \[God\]\(#\), they received it not as the word of \[men\]\(#\), but as it is in \[truth\]\(#\) the word of \[God\]\(#\). \[God\]\(#\), therefore, works in the hearts of men with that calling according to His purpose, of which we have spoken a great deal, that they should not hear the gospel in vain, but when they heard it, should be converted and \[believe\]\(#\), receiving it not as the word of \[men\]\(#\), but as it is in \[truth\]\(#\) the word of \[God\]\(#\).](#)

Chapter 40 [XX.]—Apostolic Testimony to the Beginning of Faith Being God's Gift.

Moreover, we are admonished that the beginning of men's [faith](#) is God's gift, since the apostle signifies this when, in the Epistle to the Colossians, he says, "Continue in [prayer](#), and watch in the same in giving of thanks. Withal [praying](#) also for us that God would open unto us the door of His word, to speak the [mystery](#) of [Christ](#), for which also I am in

bonds, that I may so make it manifest as I ought to speak." How is the door of His word opened, except when the sense of the hearer is opened so that he may [believe](#), and, having made a beginning of [faith](#), may admit those things which are declared and reasoned, for the purpose of building up wholesome doctrine, lest, by a heart closed through unbelief, he reject and repel those things which are spoken? Whence, also, he says to the Corinthians: "But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great and evident door is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." [1 Corinthians 16:8](#) What else can be understood here, save that, when the gospel had been first of all preached there by him, many had [believed](#), and there had appeared many adversaries of the same [faith](#), in accordance with that saying of the Lord, "No one comes unto me, unless it were given him of my Father;" [John 6:66](#) and, "To you it is given to [know](#) the [mysteries](#) of the [kingdom of heaven](#), but to them it is not given?" [Luke 8:10](#) Therefore, there is an open door in those to whom it is given, but there are many adversaries among those to whom it is not given.

Chapter 41.—Further Apostolic Testimonies.

And again, the same apostle says to the same people, in his second Epistle: "When I had come to [Troas](#) for the gospel of [Christ](#), and a door had been opened unto me in the [Lord](#), I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus, my brother: but, making my farewell to them, I went away into Macedonia." [2 Corinthians 2:12-13](#) To whom did he bid farewell but to those who had [believed](#),—to wit, in whose hearts the door was opened for his preaching of the gospel? But attend to what he adds, saying, "Now thanks be unto [God](#), who always causes us to triumph in [Christ](#), and makes manifest the savour of His [knowledge](#) by us in every place: because we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them who are saved, and in them who perish: to some, indeed, we are the savour of death unto death, but to some the savour of life unto life." See concerning what this most [zealous](#) soldier and invincible defender of [grace](#) gives thanks. See concerning what he gives thanks,—that the [apostles](#) are a sweet savour of Christ unto [God](#), both in those who are saved by His [grace](#), and in those who perish by His judgment. But in order that those who little understand these things may be less enraged, he himself gives a warning when he adds the words: "And who is sufficient for these things?" [2 Corinthians 2:16](#) But let us return to the opening of the door by which the apostle signified the beginning of [faith](#) in his hearers. For what is the meaning of, "Withal [praying](#) also for us that God would open unto us a door of the word," [Colossians 4:3](#) unless it is a most manifest demonstration that even the very beginning of [faith](#) is the gift of God? For it would not be sought for from Him in [prayer](#), unless it were [believed](#) to be given by Him. This gift of heavenly [grace](#) had descended to that seller of purple [Acts 16:14](#) for whom, as Scripture says in the Acts of the Apostles, "The Lord opened her heart, and she gave heed unto the things which were said by [Paul](#);" for she was so called that she might [believe](#). Because God does what He will in the hearts of [men](#), either by assistance or by judgment; so that, even through their means, may be fulfilled what His hand and counsel have [predestinated](#) to be done.

Chapter 42.—Old Testament Testimonies.

Therefore also it is in vain that objectors have alleged, that what we have [proved](#) by Scripture testimony from the books of Kings and Chronicles is not pertinent to the subject of which we are discoursing: such, for instance, as that when God wills that to be done which ought only to be done by the willing men, their hearts are inclined to will this,—inclined, that is to say, by His power, who, in a marvellous and ineffable manner, works in us also to will. What else is this than to say nothing, and yet to contradict? Unless perchance, they have given some reason to you for the view that they have taken, which reason you have preferred to say nothing about in your letters. But what that reason can be I do not [know](#). Whether, possibly, since we have shown that God has so acted on the hearts of [men](#), and has induced the wills of those whom He pleased to this point, that Saul or David should be established as king,—do they not think that these instances are appropriate to this subject, because to reign in this world temporally is not the same thing as to reign eternally with God? And so do they suppose that God inclines the wills of those whom He pleases to the attainment of earthly kingdoms, but does not incline them to the attainment of a heavenly kingdom? But I think that it was in reference to the [kingdom of heaven](#), and not to an earthly kingdom, that it was said, "Incline my heart unto Your testimonies;" or, "The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He will will His way;" or, "The will is prepared by the Lord;" or, "Let our Lord be with us as with our fathers; let Him not forsake us, nor turn Himself away from us; let Him incline our hearts unto Him, that we may walk in all His ways;" [1 Kings 8:57](#) or, "I will give them a heart to [know](#) me, and ears that hear;" [Baruch 2:31](#) or, "I will give them another heart, and a new spirit will I give them." [Ezekiel 11:19](#) Let them also hear this, "I will give my Spirit within you, and I will [cause](#) you to walk in my righteousness; and you shall observe my judgments, and do them." [Ezekiel 36:27](#) Let them hear, "Man's goings are directed by the Lord, and how can a man understand His ways?" [Proverbs 20:24](#) Let them hear, "Every man seems right to himself, but the Lord directs the hearts." [Proverbs 21:2](#) Let them hear, "As many as were ordained to [eternal](#) life believed." [Acts 13:48](#) Let them hear these passages, and whatever others of the kind I have not mentioned in which God is declared to prepare and to convert men's wills, even for the [kingdom of heaven](#) and for [eternal](#) life. And consider what sort of a thing it is to [believe](#) that God works men's wills for the foundation of earthly kingdoms, but that men work their own wills for the attainment of the [kingdom of heaven](#).

Chapter 43 [XXI.]—Conclusion.

I have said a great deal, and, perchance, I could long ago have persuaded you what I wished, and am still speaking this to such intelligent minds as if they were obtuse, to whom even what is too much is not enough. But let them pardon me, for a new question has compelled me to this. Because, although in my former little treatises I had [proved](#) by sufficiently appropriate [proofs](#) that [faith](#) also was the gift of [God](#), there was found this ground of contradiction, viz., that those testimonies were good for this purpose, to show that the increase of [faith](#) was God's gift, but that the beginning of [faith](#), whereby a man first of all believes in [Christ](#), is of the man himself, and is not the gift of [God](#),—but that God requires this, so that when it has preceded, other gifts may follow, as it were on the ground of this merit, and these are the gifts of [God](#); and that none of them is given freely, although in them God's [grace](#) is declared, which is not [grace](#) except as being gratuitous.

And you see how absurd all this is. Wherefore I determined, as far as I could, to set forth that this very beginning also is God's gift. And if I have done this at a greater length than perhaps those on whose account I did it might wish, I am prepared to be reproached for it by them, so long as they nevertheless confess that, although at greater length than they wished, although with the disgust and weariness of those that understand, I have done what I have done: that is, I have taught that even the beginning of [faith](#), as continence, patience, righteousness, [piety](#), and the rest, concerning which there is no dispute with them, is God's gift. Let this, therefore, be the end of this treatise, lest too great length in this one may give offence.

On the Predestination of the Saints (Book II)

In the first part of the book he proves that the perseverance by which a man perseveres in Christ to the end is God's gift; for that it is a mockery to ask of God that which is not [believed](#) to be given by [God](#). Moreover, that in the [Lord's prayer](#) scarcely anything is asked for but perseverance, according to the exposition of the [martyr](#) Cyprian, by which exposition the enemies to this [grace](#) were convicted before they were born. He teaches that the [grace](#) of perseverance is not given according to the merits of the receivers, but to some it is given by God's mercy; to others it is not given, by His righteous judgment. That it is inscrutable why, of adults, one rather than another should be called; just as, moreover, of two infants it is inscrutable why the one should be taken, the other left. But that it is still more inscrutable why, of two [pious persons](#), to one it should be given to persevere, to the other it should not be given; but that this is most certain, that the former is of the [predestinated](#), the latter is not. He observes that the [mystery](#) of [predestination](#) is set forth in our Lord's words concerning the people of [Tyre](#) and Sidon, who would have repented if the same [miracles](#) had been done among them which had been done in Chorazin. He shows that the case of infants is of force to confirm the [truth](#) of [predestination](#) and [grace](#) in older people; and he answers the passage of his third book on [free will](#), unsoundly alleged on this point by his adversaries. Subsequently, in the second part of this work, he rebuts what they say,—to wit, that the definition of [predestination](#) is opposed to the usefulness of exhortation and rebuke. He asserts, on the other hand, that it is advantageous to preach [predestination](#), so that man may not [glory](#) in himself, but in the Lord. As to the objections, however, which they make against [predestination](#), he shows that the same objections may be twisted in no unlike manner either against God's foreknowledge or against that [grace](#) which they all agree to be necessary for other [good](#) things (with the exception of the beginning of [faith](#) and the completion of perseverance). For that the [predestination](#) of the [saints](#) is nothing else than God's foreknowledge and preparation for His benefits, by which whoever are delivered are most certainly delivered. But he bids that [predestination](#) should be preached in a harmonious manner, and not in such a way as to seem to an unskilful multitude as if it were disproved by its very preaching. Lastly, he commends to us Jesus Christ, as placed before our eyes, as the most eminent instance of [predestination](#).

Chapter 1 [I.]—Of the Nature of the Perseverance Here Discoursed of.

I Have now to consider the subject of perseverance with greater care; for in the former book also I said some things on this subject when I was discussing the beginning of [faith](#). I assert, therefore, that the perseverance by which we persevere in Christ even to the end is the gift of [God](#); and I call that the end by which is finished that life wherein alone there is peril of falling. Therefore it is uncertain whether any one has received this gift so long as he is still alive. For if he fall before he dies, he is, of course, said not to have persevered; and most [truly](#) is it said. How, then, should he be said to have received or to have had perseverance who has not persevered? For if any one have continence, and fall away from that [virtue](#) and become incontinent,—or, in like manner, if he have righteousness, if patience, if even [faith](#), and fall away, he is rightly said to have had these [virtues](#) and to have them no longer; for he was continent, or he was righteous, or he was patient, or he was believing, as long as he was so; but when he ceased to be so, he no longer is what he was. But how should he who has not persevered have ever been persevering, since it is only by persevering that any one shows himself persevering,—and this he has not done? But lest any one should object to this, and say, If from the time at which any one became a believer he has lived—for the sake of argument—ten years, and in the midst of them has fallen from the [faith](#), has he not persevered for five years? I am not contending about words. If it be thought that this also should be called perseverance, as it were for so long as it lasts, assuredly he is not to be said to have had in any degree that perseverance of which we are now discoursing, by which one perseveres in Christ even to the end. And the believer of one year, or of a period as much shorter as may be conceived of, if he has lived faithfully until he died, has rather had this perseverance than the believer of many years' standing, if a little time before his death he has fallen away from the steadfastness of his [faith](#).

Chapter 2 [II.]—Faith is the Beginning of a Christian Man. Martyrdom for Christ's Sake is His Best Ending.

This matter being settled, let us see whether this perseverance, of which it was said, "He that perseveres unto the end, the same shall be saved," [Matthew 10:22](#) is a gift of [God](#). And if it be not, how is that saying of the apostle [true](#): "Unto you it is given in the behalf of [Christ](#), not only to [believe](#) in Him, but also to suffer for His sake"? [Philippians 2:29](#) Of these things, certainly, one has respect to the beginning, the other to the end. Yet each is the gift of [God](#), because both are said to be given; as, also, I have already said above. For what is more [truly](#) the beginning for a [Christian](#) than to [believe](#) in Christ? What end is better than to suffer for Christ? But so far as pertains to believing in [Christ](#), whatever kind of contradiction has been discovered, that not the beginning but the increase of [faith](#) should be called God's gift,—to this opinion, by God's gift, I have answered enough, and more than enough. But what reason can be given why perseverance to the end should not be given in Christ to him to whom it is given to suffer for [Christ](#), or, to speak more distinctly, to whom it is given to die for Christ? For the Apostle Peter, showing that this

is the gift of [God](#), says, "It is better, if the [will](#) of [God](#) be so, to suffer for well-doing than for [evil-doing](#)." [1 Peter 3:17](#) When he says, "If the [will](#) of [God](#) be so," he shows that this is divinely given, and yet not to all [saints](#), to suffer for [Christ's](#) sake. For certainly those whom the [will](#) of [God](#) does not will to attain to the experience and the [glory](#) of suffering, do not fail to attain to the kingdom of God if they persevere in Christ to the end. But who can say that this perseverance is not given to those who die in Christ from any weakness of body, or by any kind of accident, although a far more difficult perseverance is given to those by whom even death itself is undergone for [Christ's](#) sake? Because perseverance is much more difficult when the persecutor is engaged in preventing a man's perseverance; and therefore he is sustained in his perseverance unto death. Hence it is more difficult to have the former perseverance,—easier to have the latter; but to Him to whom nothing is difficult it is easy to give both. For God has promised this, saying, "I will put my [fear](#) in their hearts, that they may not depart from me." [And what else is this than, "Such and so great shall be my fear](#) that I will put into their hearts that they will perseveringly cleave to me"?

Chapter 3.—God is Besought for It, Because It is His Gift.

But why is that perseverance asked for from God if it is not given by God? Is that, too, a mocking petition, when that is asked from Him which it is [known](#) that He does not give, but, though He gives it not, is in man's power; just as that giving of thanks is a mockery, if thanks are given to God for that which He did not give nor do? But what I have said there, I say also here again: "Be not deceived," says the apostle, "[God](#) is not mocked." [Galatians 6:6](#) O man, God is a [witness](#) not only of your words, but also of your thoughts. If you ask anything in [truth](#) and [faith](#) of one who is so rich, [believe](#) that you receive from Him from whom you ask, what you ask. Abstain from honouring Him with your lips and extolling yourself over Him in your heart, by believing that you have from yourself what you are pretending to beseech from Him. Is not this perseverance, perchance, asked for from Him? He who says this is not to be rebuked by any arguments, but must be overwhelmed with the [prayers](#) of the [saints](#). Is there any of these who does not ask for himself from God that he may persevere in Him, when in that very [prayer](#) which is called the Lord's—because the Lord taught it—when it is [prayed](#) by the [saints](#), scarcely anything else is understood to be [prayed](#) for but perseverance?

Chapter 4.—Three Leading Points of the Pelagian Doctrine.

Read with a little more attention its exposition in the treatise of the blessed [martyr](#) Cyprian, which he wrote concerning this matter, the title of which is, *On the Lord's Prayer*; and see how many years ago, and what sort of an antidote was prepared against those poisons which the [Pelagians](#) were one day to use. For there are three points, as you [know](#), which the catholic Church chiefly maintains against them. One of these is, that the [grace](#) of God is not given according to our merits; because even every one of the merits

of the righteous is God's gift, and is conferred by God's [grace](#). The second is, that no one lives in this corruptible body, however righteous he may be, without [sins](#) of some kind. The third is, that man is born obnoxious to the first man's [sin](#), and bound by the chain of condemnation, unless the guilt which is contracted by generation be loosed by regeneration. Of these three points, that which I have placed last is the only one that is not treated of in the above-named book of the [glorious martyr](#); but of the two others the discourse there is of such perspicuity, that the above-named [heretics](#), modern enemies of the [grace](#) of [Christ](#), are found to have been convicted long before they were born. Among these merits of the [saints](#), then, which are no merits unless they are the gifts of [God](#), he says that perseverance also is God's gift, in these words: "We say, 'Hallowed be Your name;' not that we ask for God that He may be hallowed by our [prayers](#), but that we beseech of Him that His name may be hallowed in us. But by whom is God sanctified, since He Himself sanctifies? Well, because He says, Be [holy](#) because I also am [holy](#), we ask and entreat that we, who were sanctified in [baptism](#), may persevere in that which we have begun to be." And a little after, still arguing about that self-same matter, and teaching that we entreat perseverance from the Lord, which we could in no wise rightly and [truly](#) do unless it were His gift, he says: "We [pray](#) that this sanctification may abide in us; and because our Lord and Judge warns the man that was healed and quickened by Him to [sin](#) no more, lest a worse thing happen unto him, we make this supplication in our constant [prayers](#); we ask this, day and night, that the sanctification and quickening which is received from the [grace](#) of God may be preserved by His protection." That teacher, therefore, understands that we are asking from Him for perseverance in sanctification, that is, that we should persevere in sanctification, when we who are sanctified say, "Hallowed be Your name." For what else is it to ask for what we have already received, than that it be given to us also not to cease from its possession? As, therefore, the saint, when he asks God that he may be [holy](#), is certainly asking that he may continue to be [holy](#), so certainly the chaste person also, when he asks that he may be chaste, the continent that he may be continent, the righteous that he may be righteous, the [pious](#) that he may be [pious](#), and the like,—which things, against the [Pelagians](#), we maintain to be God's gifts,—are asking, without [doubt](#), that they may persevere in those [good](#) things which they have acknowledged that they have received. And if they receive this, assuredly they also receive perseverance itself, the great gift of [God](#), whereby His other gifts are preserved.

Chapter 5.—The Second Petition in the Lord's Prayer.

What, when we say, "Your kingdom come," do we ask else, but that that should also come to us which we do not [doubt](#) will come to all [saints](#)? And therefore here also, what do they who are already [holy pray](#) for, save that they may persevere in that [holiness](#) which has been given them? For no otherwise will the kingdom of God come to them; which it is certain will come not to others, but to those who persevere to the end.

Chapter 6 [III.]—The Third Petition. How Heaven and Earth are Understood in the Lord's Prayer.

The third petition is, "Your will be done in heaven and in earth;" or, as it is read in many codices, and is more frequently made use of by petitioners, "As in heaven, so also in earth," which many people understand, "As the [holy angels](#), so also may we do your will." That teacher and [martyr](#) will have heaven and earth, however, to be understood as spirit and flesh, and says that we [pray](#) that we may do the [will](#) of [God](#) with the full concord of both. He saw in these words also another meaning, congruous to the soundest [faith](#), of which meaning I have already spoken above,—to wit, that for unbelievers, who are as yet *earth*, bearing in their first birth only the earthly man, [believers](#) are understood to [pray](#), who, being clothed with the heavenly man, are not unreasonably called by the name of *heaven*; where he plainly shows that the beginning of [faith](#) also is God's gift, since the [holy](#) Church [prays](#) not only for [believers](#), that [faith](#) may be increased or may continue in them, but, moreover, for unbelievers, that they may begin to have what they have not had at all, and against which, besides, they were indulging hostile feelings. Now, however, I am arguing not concerning the beginning of [faith](#), of which I have already spoken much in the former book, but of that perseverance which must be had even to the end,—which assuredly even the [saints](#), who do the [will](#) of [God](#), seek when they say in [prayer](#), "Your will be done." For, since it is already done in them, why do they still ask that it may be done, except that they may persevere in that which they have begun to be? Nevertheless, it may here be said that the [saints](#) do not ask that the [will](#) of [God](#) may be done in heaven, but that it may be done in earth as in heaven,—that is to say, that earth may imitate heaven, that is, that man may imitate the [angel](#), or that an unbeliever may imitate a believer; and thus that the [saints](#) are asking that that may be which is not yet, not that that which is may continue. For, by whatever [holiness](#) men may be distinguished, they are not yet equal to the [angels](#) of [God](#); not yet, therefore, is the [will](#) of [God](#) done in them as it is in heaven. And if this be so, in that portion indeed in which we ask that men from unbelievers may become [believers](#), it is not perseverance, but beginning, that seems to be asked for; but in that in which we ask that men may be made equal to the [angels](#) of [God](#) in doing [God's will](#),—where the [saints pray](#) for this, they are found to be [praying](#) for perseverance; since no one attains to that highest blessedness which is in the kingdom, unless he shall persevere unto the end in that [holiness](#) which he has received on earth.

Chapter 7 [IV.]—The Fourth Petition.

The fourth petition is, "Give us this day our daily bread," [Matthew 6:11](#) where the blessed Cyprian shows how here also perseverance is understood to be asked for. Because he says, among other things, "And we ask that this bread should be given to us daily, that we who are in [Christ](#), and daily receive the Eucharist for the food of [salvation](#), may not by the interposition of some heinous [sin](#) be separated from Christ's body by being withheld from communicating and prevented from partaking of the heavenly bread." These words of the [holy](#) man of God indicate that the [saints](#) ask for perseverance directly from [God](#), when with this intention they say, "Give us this day our daily bread," that they may not be separated from Christ's body, but may continue in that [holiness](#) in which they allow no crime by which they may deserve to be separated from it.

Chapter 8 [V.]—The Fifth Petition. It is an Error of the Pelagians that the Righteous are Free from Sin.

In the fifth sentence of the [prayer](#) we say, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors," [Matthew 6:12](#) in which petition alone perseverance is not found to be asked for. For the [sins](#) which we ask to be forgiven us are past, but perseverance, which saves us for [eternity](#), is indeed necessary for the time of this life; but not for the time which is past, but for that which remains even to its end. Yet it is worth the labour to consider for a little, how even already in this petition the [heretics](#) who were to arise long after were transfixed by the tongue of Cyprian, as if by the most invincible dart of [truth](#). For the [Pelagians](#) dare to say even this: that the righteous man in this life has no [sin](#) at all, and that in such men there is even at the present time a Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, [Ephesians 5:27](#) which is the one and only bride of Christ; as if she were not His bride who throughout the whole earth says what she has learned from Him, "Forgive us our debts." But observe how the most [glorious](#) Cyprian destroys these. For when he was expounding that very clause of the Lord's Prayer, he says among other things: "And how necessarily, how providently, and salutarily are we admonished that we are sinners, since we are compelled to entreat for our [sins](#); and while pardon is asked for from [God](#), the [soul](#) recalls its own consciousness. Lest any one should flatter himself that he is innocent, and by exalting himself should more deeply perish, he is instructed and taught that he [sins](#) daily, in that he is bidden daily to entreat for his [sins](#). Thus, moreover, John also in his Epistle warns us, and says, [1 John 1:8](#) 'If we say that we have no [sin](#), we deceive ourselves, and the [truth](#) is not in us.'" And the rest, which it would be long to insert in this place.

Chapter 9.—When Perseverance is Granted to a Person, He Cannot But Persevere.

Now, moreover, when the [saints](#) say, "Lead us not into [temptation](#), but deliver us from [evil](#)," [Matthew 6:13](#) what do they [pray](#) for but that they may persevere in [holiness](#)? For, assuredly, when that gift of God is granted to them,—which is sufficiently plainly shown to be God's gift, since it is asked of Him,—that gift of [God](#), then, being granted to them that they may not be led into [temptation](#), none of the [saints](#) fails to keep his perseverance in [holiness](#) even to the end. For there is not any one who ceases to persevere in the [Christian](#) purpose unless he is first of all led into [temptation](#). If, therefore, it be granted to him according to his [prayer](#) that he may not be led, certainly by the gift of God he persists in that sanctification which by the gift of God he has received.

Chapter 10 [VI.]—The Gift of Perseverance Can Be Obtained by Prayer.

But you write that "these brethren will not have this perseverance so preached as that it cannot be obtained by [prayer](#) or lost by obstinacy." In this they are little careful in

considering what they say. For we are speaking of that perseverance whereby one perseveres unto the end, and if this is given, one does persevere unto the end; but if one does not persevere unto the end, it is not given, which I have already sufficiently discussed above. Let not men say, then, that perseverance is given to any one to the end, except when the end itself has come, and he to whom it has been given has been found to have persevered unto the end. Certainly, we say that one whom we have [known](#) to be chaste is chaste, whether he should continue or not in the same [chastity](#); and if he should have any other divine endowment which may be kept and lost, we say that he has it as long as he has it; and if he should lose it, we say that he had it. But since no one has perseverance to the end except he who does persevere to the end, many people may have it, but none can lose it. For it is not to be feared that perchance when a man has persevered unto the end, some [evil](#) will may arise in him, so that he does not persevere unto the end. This gift of [God](#), therefore, may be obtained by [prayer](#), but when it has been given, it cannot be lost by contumacy. For when any one has persevered unto the end, he neither can lose this gift, nor others which he could lose before the end. How, then, can that be lost, whereby it is brought about that even that which could be lost is not lost?

Chapter 11.—Effect of Prayer for Perseverance.

But, lest perchance it be said that perseverance even to the end is not indeed lost when it has once been given,—that is, when a man has persevered unto the end,—but that it is lost, in some sense, when a man by contumacy so acts that he is not able to attain to it; just as we say that a man who has not persevered unto the end has lost [eternal](#) life or the [kingdom of God](#), not because he had already received and actually had it, but because he would have received and had it if he had persevered;—let us lay aside controversies of words, and say that some things even which are not possessed, but are hoped to be possessed, may be lost. Let any one who dares, tell me whether God cannot give what He has commanded to be asked from Him. Certainly he who affirms this, I say not is a fool, but he is mad. But God commanded that His [saints](#) should say to Him in [prayer](#), "Lead us not into [temptation](#)." Whoever, therefore, is heard when he asks this, is not led into the [temptation](#) of contumacy, whereby he could or would be worthy to lose perseverance in [holiness](#).

Chapter 12.—Of His Own Will a Man Forsakes God, So that He is Deservedly Forsaken of Him.

But, on the other hand, "of his own will a man forsakes [God](#), so as to be deservedly forsaken by [God](#)." Who would deny this? But it is for that reason we ask not to be led into [temptation](#), so that this may not happen. And if we are heard, certainly it does not happen, because God does not allow it to happen. For nothing comes to pass except what either He Himself does, or Himself allows to be done. Therefore He is powerful both to turn wills from [evil](#) to good, and to convert those that are inclined to fall, or to direct them into a way pleasing to Himself. For to Him it is not said in vain, "O [God](#), You shall turn again and quicken us;" it is not vainly said, "Give not my foot to be moved;" it is not vainly said, "Give me not over, O Lord, from my desire to the sinner;" finally, not to

mention many passages, since probably more may occur to you, it is not vainly said, "Lead us not into [temptation](#)." [Matthew 6:13](#) For whoever is not led into [temptation](#), certainly is not led into the [temptation](#) of his own [evil](#) will; and he who is not led into the [temptation](#) of his own [evil](#) will, is absolutely led into no [temptation](#). For "every one is tempted," as it is written, "when he is drawn away of his own [lust](#), and enticed;" [James 1:14](#) "but God tempts no man," [James 1:13](#) —that is to say, with a hurtful [temptation](#). For [temptation](#) is moreover beneficial by which we are not deceived or overwhelmed, but [proved](#), according to that which is said, "Prove me, O Lord, and try me." Therefore, with that hurtful [temptation](#) which the apostle signifies when he says, "Lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain," "[God](#) tempts no man," as I have said,—that is, He brings or leads no one into [temptation](#). For to be tempted and not to be led into [temptation](#) is not [evil](#),—nay, it is even good; for this it is to be [proved](#). When, therefore, we say to [God](#), "Lead us not into [temptation](#)," what do we say but, "Permit us not to be led"? Whence some [pray](#) in this manner, and it is read in many codices, and the most blessed Cyprian thus uses it: "Do not suffer us to be led into [temptation](#)." In the Greek gospel, however, I have never found it otherwise than, "Lead us not into [temptation](#)." We live, therefore, more securely if we give up the whole to [God](#), and do not entrust ourselves partly to Him and partly to ourselves, as that venerable [martyr](#) saw. For when he would expound the same clause of the [prayer](#), he says among other things, "But when we ask that we may not come into [temptation](#), we are reminded of our infirmity and weakness while we thus ask, lest any should insolently vaunt himself,—lest any should proudly and arrogantly assume anything to himself,—lest any should take to himself the [glory](#) either of confession or suffering as his own; since the Lord Himself, teaching humility, said, 'Watch and [pray](#), that you enter not into [temptation](#); the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' So that when a [humble](#) and submissive confession comes first and all is attributed to [God](#), whatever is sought for suppliantly, with the [fear](#) of [God](#), may be granted by His own loving-kindness."

Chapter 13 [VII.]—Temptation the Condition of Man.

If, then, there were no other [proofs](#), this Lord's Prayer alone would be sufficient for us on behalf of the [grace](#) which I am defending; because it leaves us nothing wherein we may, as it were, [glory](#) as in our own, since it shows that our not departing from God is not given except by [God](#), when it shows that it must be asked for from [God](#). For he who is not led into [temptation](#) does not depart from [God](#). This is absolutely not in the strength of [free will](#), such as it now is; but it had been in man before he fell. And yet how much this freedom of will availed in the excellence of that primal state appeared in the [angels](#); who, when the [devil](#) and his [angels](#) fell, stood in the [truth](#), and deserved to attain to that perpetual security of not falling, in which we are most certain that they are now established. But, after the fall of [man](#), God willed it to pertain only to His [grace](#) that man should approach to Him; nor did He will it to pertain to anything but His [grace](#) that man should not depart from Him.

Chapter 14.—It is God's Grace Both that Man Comes to Him, and that Man Does Not Depart from Him.

This [grace](#) He placed "in Him in whom we have obtained a lot, being [predestinated](#) according to the purpose of Him who works all things." [Ephesians 1:11](#) And thus as He works that we come to Him, so He works that we do not depart. Wherefore it was said to Him by the mouth of the [prophet](#), "Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, and upon the [Son of man](#) whom You made strong for Yourself, and we will not depart from You." This certainly is not the first Adam, in whom we departed from Him, but the second Adam, upon whom His hand is placed, so that we do not depart from Him. For Christ altogether with His members is—for the Church's sake, which is His body—the fulness of Him. When, therefore, God's hand is upon Him, that we depart not from [God](#), assuredly God's work reaches to us (for this is God's hand); by which work of God we are caused to be abiding in Christ with God—not, as in Adam, departing from [God](#). For "in Christ we have obtained a lot, being [predestinated](#) according to His purpose who works all things." This, therefore, is God's hand, not ours, that we depart not from [God](#). That, I say, is His hand who said, "I will put my [fear](#) in their hearts, that they depart not from me."

Chapter 15.—Why God Willed that He Should Be Asked for that Which He Might Give Without Prayer.

[Wherefore, also He willed that He should be asked that we may not be led into temptation](#), because if we are not led, we by no means depart from Him. And this might have been given to us even without our [praying](#) for it, but by our [prayer](#) He willed us to be admonished from whom we receive these benefits. For from whom do we receive but from Him from whom it is right for us to ask? Truly in this matter let not the Church look for laborious disputations, but consider its own daily [prayers](#). It [prays](#) that the unbelieving may [believe](#); therefore God converts to the [faith](#). It [prays](#) that [believers](#) may persevere; therefore God gives perseverance to the end. God foreknew that He would do this. This is the very [predestination](#) of the [saints](#), "whom He has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be [holy](#) and unspotted before Him in [love](#); [predestinating](#) them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His [will](#), to the praise of the [glory](#) of His [grace](#), in which He has shown them favour in His beloved [Son](#), in whom they have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of [sins](#) according to the riches of His [grace](#), which has abounded towards them in all wisdom and [prudence](#); that He might show them the [mystery](#) of His [will](#) according to His good pleasure which He has purposed in Him, in the dispensation of the fulness of times to restore all things in Christ which are in heaven and which are in earth; in Him, in whom also we have obtained a lot, being [predestinated](#) according to His purpose who works all things." [Ephesians 1:4-11](#) Against a trumpet of [truth](#) so clear as this, what man of sober and watchful [faith](#) can receive any human arguments?

Chapter 16 [VIII.]—Why is Not Grace Given According to Merit?

But "why," says one, "is not the [grace](#) of God given according to men's merits?" I answer, Because God is merciful. "Why, then," it is asked, "is it not given to all?" And here I reply, Because God is a Judge. [Romans 9:20](#) And thus [grace](#) is given by Him freely; and by His righteous judgment it is shown in some what [grace](#) confers on those to whom it is given. Let us not then be ungrateful, that according to the good pleasure of His [will](#) a merciful God delivers so many to the praise of the [glory](#) of His [grace](#) from such deserved perdition; as, if He should deliver no one therefrom, He would not be unrighteous. Let him, therefore, who is delivered [love](#) His [grace](#). Let him who is not delivered acknowledge his due. If, in remitting a debt, goodness is perceived, in requiring it, [justice](#)—unrighteousness is never found to be with [God](#).

Chapter 17.—The Difficulty of the Distinction Made in the Choice of One and the Rejection of Another.

"But why," it is said, "in one and the same case, not only of infants, but even of twin children, is the judgment so diverse?" Is it not a similar question, "Why in a different case is the judgment the same?" Let us recall, then, those labourers in the vineyard who worked the whole day, and those who toiled one hour. Certainly the case was different as to the labour expended, and yet there was the same judgment in paying the wages. Did the murmurers in this case hear anything from the householder except, Such is my will? Certainly such was his liberality towards some, that there could be no [injustice](#) towards others. And both these classes, indeed, are among the good. Nevertheless, so far as it concerns [justice](#) and [grace](#), it may be [truly](#) said to the guilty who is condemned, also concerning the guilty who is delivered, "Take what thine is, and go your way;" [Matthew 20:14](#), etc. "I will give unto this one that which is not due;" "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will? is your eye [evil](#) because I am good?" And how if he should say, "Why not to me also?" He will hear, and with reason, "Who are you, O man, that repliest against God?" [Romans 9:20](#) And although assuredly in the one case you see a most benignant benefactor, and in your own case a most righteous exactor, in neither case do you behold an [unjust](#) God. For although He would be righteous even if He were to punish both, he who is delivered has good ground for thankfulness, he who is condemned has no ground for finding fault.

Chapter 18.—But Why Should One Be Punished More Than Another?

"But if," it is said, "it was necessary that, although all were not condemned, He should still show what was due to all, and so He should commend His [grace](#) more freely to the vessels of mercy; why in the same case will He punish me more than another, or deliver him more than me?" I say not this. If you ask wherefore; because I confess that I can find no answer to make. And if you further ask why is this, it is because in this matter, even as His [anger](#) is righteous and as His mercy is great, so His judgments are unsearchable.

Chapter 19.—Why Does God Mingle Those Who Will Persevere with Those Who Will Not?

Let the inquirer still go on, and say, "Why is it that to some who have in good [faith](#) worshipped Him He has not given to persevere to the end?" Why except because he does not speak [falsely](#) who says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, doubtless they would have continued with us." [1 John 2:19](#) Are there, then, two [natures](#) of men? By no means. If there were two [natures](#) there would not be any [grace](#), for there would be given a gratuitous deliverance to none if it were paid as a debt to nature. But it seems to men that all who appear good [believers](#) ought to receive perseverance to the end. But God has judged it to be better to mingle some who would not persevere with a certain number of His [saints](#), so that those for whom security from [temptation](#) in this life is not desirable may not be secure. For that which the apostle says, checks many from mischievous elation: "Wherefore let him who seems to stand take heed lest he fall." [1 Corinthians 10:12](#) But he who falls, falls by his own will, and he who stands, stands by [God's will](#). "For God is able to make him stand;" [Romans 14:4](#) therefore he is not able to make himself stand, but God. Nevertheless, it is [good](#) not to be high-minded, but to [fear](#). Moreover, it is in his own thought that every one either falls or stands. Now, as the apostle says, and as I have mentioned in my former treatise, "We are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of [God](#)." [2 Corinthians 3:5](#) Following whom also the blessed Ambrose ventures to say, "For our heart is not in our own power, nor are our thoughts." And this everybody who is humbly and [truly pious](#) feels to be most [true](#).

Chapter 20.—Ambrose on God's Control Over Men's Thoughts.

And when Ambrose said this, he was speaking in that treatise which he wrote concerning Flight from the World, wherein he taught that this world was to be fled not by the body, but by the heart, which he argued could not be done except by God's help. For he says: "We hear frequent discourse concerning fleeing from this world, and I would that the mind was as careful and solicitous as the discourse is easy; but what is worse, the enticement of earthly [lusts](#) constantly creeps in, and the pouring out of vanities takes possession of the mind; so that what you desire to avoid, this you think of and consider in your mind. And this is difficult for a man to beware of, but impossible to get rid of. Finally, the [prophet](#) bears [witness](#) that it is a matter of wish rather than of accomplishment, when he says, 'Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to [covetousness](#).' For our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power, and these, poured forth unexpectedly, confuse our mind and [soul](#), and draw them in a different direction from that which you have proposed to yourself; they recall you to worldly things, they interpose things of time, they suggest voluptuous things, they inweave enticing things, and in the very moment when we are seeking to elevate our [mind](#), we are for the most part filled with vain thoughts and cast down to earthly things." Therefore it is not in the power of [men](#), but in that of [God](#), that men have power to become sons of [God](#).

[John 1:12](#) Because they receive it from Him who gives [pious](#) thoughts to the human heart, by which it has [faith](#), which works by [love](#); [Galatians 5:6](#) for the receiving and keeping of which benefit, and for carrying it on perseveringly unto the end, we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of [God](#), [2 Corinthians 3:5](#) in whose power is our heart and our thoughts.

Chapter 21 [IX.]—Instances of the Unsearchable Judgments of God.

Therefore, of two infants, equally bound by original [sin](#), why the one is taken and the other left; and of two [wicked](#) men of already mature years, why this one should be so called as to follow Him that calls, while that one is either not called at all, or is not called in such a manner,—the judgments of God are unsearchable. But of two [pious](#) men, why to the one should be given perseverance unto the end, and to the other it should not be given, God's judgments are even more unsearchable. Yet to [believers](#) it ought to be a most certain fact that the former is of the [predestinated](#), the latter is not. "For if they had been of us," says one of the [predestinated](#), who had drunk this secret from the breast of the Lord, "certainly they would have continued with us." [1 John 2:19](#) What, I ask, is the meaning of, "They were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would certainly have continued with us"? Were not both created by God—both born of Adam—both made from the earth, and given from Him who said, "I have created all breath," [souls](#) of one and the same nature? Lastly, had not both been called, and followed Him that called them? and had not both become, from [wicked](#) men, justified men, and both been renewed by the laver of regeneration? But if he were to hear this who beyond all [doubt knew](#) what he was saying, he might answer and say: These things are [true](#). In respect of all these things, they were of us. Nevertheless, in respect of a certain other distinction, they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they certainly would have continued with us. What then is this distinction? God's books lie open, let us not turn away our view; the [divine Scripture](#) cries aloud, let us give it a hearing. They were not of them, because they had not been "called according to the purpose;" they had not been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; they had not gained a lot in Him; they had not been [predestinated](#) according to His purpose who works all things. For if they had been this, they would have been of them, and without [doubt](#) they would have continued with them.

Chapter 22.—It is an Absurdity to Say that the Dead Will Be Judged for Sins Which They Would Have Committed If They Had Lived.

For not to say how possible it may be for [God](#) to convert the wills of men averse and opposed to His [faith](#), and to operate on their hearts so that they yield to no adversities, and are overcome by no [temptation](#) so as to depart from Him,—since He also can do what the apostle says, namely, not allow them to be tempted above that which they are able;—not, then, to say this, God foreknowing that they would fall, was certainly able to take them away from this life before that fall should occur. Are we to return to that point

of still arguing how absurdly it is said that dead men are judged even for those [sins](#) which God foreknew that they would have committed if they had lived? which is so abhorrent to the feelings of [Christians](#), or even of human beings, that one is even ashamed to rebut it. Why should it not be said that even the gospel itself has been preached, with so much labour and sufferings of the [saints](#), in vain, or is even still preached in vain, if men could be judged, even without hearing the gospel, according to the contumacy or [obedience](#) which God foreknew that they would have had if they had heard it? [Tyre](#) and Sidon would not have been condemned, although more slightly than those cities in which, although they did not [believe](#), [wonderful works](#) were done by Christ the Lord; because if they had been done in them, they would have repented in dust and ashes, as the utterances of the Truth declare, in which words of His the Lord Jesus shows to us the loftier [mystery](#) of [predestination](#).

Chapter 23.—Why for the People of Tyre and Sidon, Who Would Have Believed, the Miracles Were Not Done Which Were Done in Other Places Which Did Not Believe.

For if we are asked why such [miracles](#) were done among those who, when they saw them, would not [believe](#) them, and were not done among those who would have [believed](#) them if they had seen them, what shall we answer? Shall we say what I have said in that book wherein I answered some six questions of the Pagans, yet without prejudice of other matters which the wise can inquire into? This indeed I said, as you [know](#), when it was asked why Christ came after so long a time: "that at those times and in those places in which His gospel was not preached, He foreknew that all [men](#) would, in regard of His preaching, be such as many were in His bodily presence,—people, namely, who would not [believe](#) in Him, even though the dead were raised by Him." Moreover, a little after in the same book, and on the same question, I say, "What wonder, if Christ [knew](#) in former ages that the world was so filled with unbelievers, that He was, with reason, unwilling for His gospel to be preached to them whom He foreknew to be such as would not [believe](#) either His words or His [miracles](#)"? Certainly we cannot say this of [Tyre](#) and Sidon; and in their case we recognise that those divine judgments had reference to those causes of [predestination](#), without prejudice to which hidden causes I said that I was then answering such questions as those. Certainly it is easy to accuse the unbelief of the [Jews](#), arising as it did from their [free will](#), since they refused to [believe](#) in such great wonders done among themselves. And this the Lord, reproaching them, declares when He says, "Woe unto you, Chorazin and [Bethsaida](#), because if the mighty works had been done in [Tyre](#) and Sidon which have been done in you, they would long ago have repented in dust and ashes." [Luke 10:13](#) But can we say that even the Tyrians and Sidonians would have refused to [believe](#) such mighty works done among them, or would not have [believed](#) them if they had been done, when the Lord Himself bears [witness](#) to them that they would have repented with great humility if those signs of divine power had been done among them? And yet in the day of judgment they will be punished; although with a less punishment than those cities which would not [believe](#) the mighty works done in them.

For the Lord goes on to say, "Nevertheless, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for [Tyre](#) and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you." [Matthew 11:22](#) Therefore the former shall be punished with greater severity, the latter with less; but yet they shall be punished. Again, if the dead are judged even in respect of deeds which they would have done if they had lived, assuredly since these would have been [believers](#) if the gospel had been preached to them with so great [miracles](#), they certainly ought not to be punished; but they will be punished. It is therefore false that the dead are judged in respect also of those things which they would have done if the gospel had reached them when they were alive. And if this is false, there is no ground for saying, concerning infants who perish because they die without [baptism](#), that this happens in their case deservedly, because God foreknew that if they should live and the gospel should be preached to them, they would hear it with unbelief. It remains, therefore, that they are kept bound by original [sin](#) alone, and for this alone they go into condemnation; and we see that in others in the same case this is not remitted, except by the gratuitous [grace](#) of [God](#) in regeneration; and that, by His secret yet righteous judgment—because there is no unrighteousness with God—that some, who even after [baptism](#) will perish by [evil](#) living, are yet kept in this life until they perish, who would not have perished if bodily death had forestalled their lapse into [sin](#), and so come to their help. Because no dead man is judged by the good or [evil](#) things which he would have done if he had not died, otherwise the Tyrians and Sidonians would not have suffered the penalties according to what they did; but rather according to those things that they would have done, if those evangelical mighty works had been done in them, they would have obtained [salvation](#) by great repentance, and by the [faith](#) of [Christ](#).

Chapter 24 [X.]—It May Be Objected that The People of Tyre and Sidon Might, If They Had Heard, Have Believed, and Have Subsequently Lapsed from Their Faith.

A certain catholic disputant of no mean [reputation](#) so expounded this passage of the gospel as to say, that the Lord foreknew that the Tyrians and Sidonians would have afterwards departed from the [faith](#), although they had [believed](#) the [miracles](#) done among them; and that in mercy He did not work those [miracles](#) there, because they would have been liable to severer punishment if they had forsaken the [faith](#) which they had once held, than if they had at no time held it. In which opinion of a learned and exceedingly acute man, why am I now concerned to say what is still reasonably to be asked, when even this opinion serves me for the purpose at which I aim? For if the Lord in His mercy did not do mighty works among them, since by these works they might possibly become [believers](#), so that they might not be more severely punished when they should subsequently become unbelievers, as He foreknew that they would,—it is sufficiently and plainly shown that no dead person is judged for those [sins](#) which He foreknew that he would have done, if in some manner he were not helped not to do them; just as Christ is said to have come to the aid of the Tyrians and Sidonians, if that opinion be [true](#), who He would rather should not come to the [faith](#) at all, than that by a much greater [wickedness](#) they should depart from the [faith](#), as, if they had come to it, He foresaw they would have done. Although if it be

said, "Why was it not provided that they should rather [believe](#), and this gift should be bestowed on them, that before they forsook the [faith](#) they should depart from this life"? I am [ignorant](#) what reply can be made. For he who says that to those who would forsake their [faith](#) it would have been granted, as a kindness, that they should not begin to have what, by a more serious impiety, they would subsequently forsake, sufficiently indicates that a man is not judged by that which it is foreknown he would have done ill, if by any act of kindness he may be prevented from doing it. Therefore it is an advantage also to him who is taken away, lest [wickedness](#) should alter his understanding. But why this advantage should not have been given to the Tyrians and Sidonians, that they might [believe](#) and be taken away, lest [wickedness](#) should alter their understanding, he perhaps might answer who was pleased in such a way to solve the above question; but, as far as concerns what I am discussing, I see it to be enough that, even according to that very opinion, men are shown not to be judged in respect of those things which they have not done, even although they may have been foreseen as certain to have done them. However, as I have said, let us think shame even to refute this opinion, whereby [sins](#) are supposed to be punished in people who die or have died because they have been foreknown as certain to do them if they had lived; lest we also may seem to have thought it to be of some importance, although we would rather repress it by argument than pass it over in silence.

Chapter 25 [XI.]—God's Ways, Both in Mercy and Judgment, Past Finding Out.

Accordingly, as says the apostle, "It is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy," [Romans 9:16](#) who both comes to the help of such infants as He will, although they neither will nor run, since He chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world as those to whom He intended to give His [grace](#) freely,—that is, with no merits of theirs, either of [faith](#) or of works, preceding; and does not come to the help of those who are more mature, although He foresaw that they would [believe](#) His [miracles](#) if they should be done among them, because He wills not to come to their help, since in His [predestination](#) He, secretly indeed, but yet righteously, has otherwise determined concerning them. For "there is no unrighteousness with [God](#);" [Romans 9:14](#) but "His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways are past finding out; all the ways of the Lord are mercy and [truth](#)." Therefore the mercy is past finding out by which He has mercy on whom He will, no merits of his own preceding; and the [truth](#) is unsearchable by which He hardens whom He will, even although his merits may have preceded, but merits for the most part common to him with the man on whom He has mercy. As of two twins, of which one is taken and the other left, the end is unequal, while the deserts are common, yet in these the one is in such wise delivered by God's great goodness, that the other is condemned by no [injustice](#) of God's. For is there unrighteousness with God? Away with the thought! but His ways are past finding out. Therefore let us [believe](#) in His mercy in the case of those who are delivered, and in His [truth](#) in the case of those who are punished, without any hesitation; and let us not endeavour to look into that which is inscrutable, nor to trace that which cannot be found out. Because out of the mouth of babes and sucklings He perfects His praise, so that what we see in those whose

deliverance is preceded by no good deservings of theirs, and in those whose condemnation is only preceded by original [sin](#), common alike to both,—this we by no means shrink from as occurring in the case of grown-up people, that is, because we do not think either that [grace](#) is given to any one according to his own merits, or that any one is punished except for his own merits, whether they are alike who are delivered and who are punished, or have unequal degrees of [evil](#); so that he who thinks he stands may take heed lest he fall, and he who [glories](#) may [glory](#) not in himself, but in the Lord.

Chapter 26.—The Manicheans Do Not Receive All the Books of the Old Testament, and of the New Only Those that They Choose.

But wherefore is "the case of infants not allowed," as you write, "to be alleged as an example for their elders," by men who do not hesitate to affirm against the [Pelagians](#) that there is original [sin](#), which entered by one man into the world, and that from one all have gone into condemnation? This, the Manicheans, too, do not receive, who not only reject all the [Scriptures](#) of the [Old Testament](#) as of authority, but even receive those which belong to the [New Testament](#) in such a manner as that each man, by his own prerogative as it were, or rather by his own sacrilege, takes what he likes, and rejects what he does not like,—in opposition to whom I treated in my writings on Free Will, whence they think that they have a ground of objection against me. I have been unwilling to deal plainly with the very laborious questions that occurred, lest my work should become too long, in a case which, as opposed to such perverse men, I could not have the assistance of the authority of the sacred Scriptures. And I was able,—as I actually did, whether anything of the divine testimonies might be [true](#) or not, seeing that I did not definitely introduce them into the argument,—nevertheless, by certain reasoning, to conclude that God in all things is to be praised, without any necessity of believing, as they would have us, that there are two co-[eternal](#), confounded substances of good and [evil](#).

Chapter 27.—Reference to the "Retractations."

Finally, in the first book of the *Retractations*, which work of mine you have not yet read, when I had come to the reconsidering of those same books, that is, on the subject of Free Will, I thus spoke: "In these books," I say, "many things were so discussed that on the occurring of some questions which either I was not able to elucidate, or which required a long discussion at once, they were so deferred as that from either side, or from all sides, of those questions in which what was most in harmony with the [truth](#) did not appear, yet my reasoning might be conclusive for this, namely, that whichever of them might be [true](#), God might be [believed](#), or even be shown, to be worthy of praise. Because that discussion was undertaken for the sake of those who deny that the origin of [evil](#) is derived from the free choice of the will, and contend that [God](#),—if He be so,—as the Creator of all natures, is worthy of blame; desiring in that manner, according to the [error](#) of their impiety (for they are Manicheans), to introduce a certain immutable nature of [evil](#) co-[eternal](#) with [God](#)." Also, after a little time, in another place I say: "Then it was said, From this misery,

most righteously inflicted on sinners, God's [grace](#) delivers, because man of his own accord, that is, by [free will](#), could fall, but could not also rise. To this misery of just condemnation belong the [ignorance](#) and the difficulty which every man suffers from the beginning of his birth, and no one is delivered from that [evil](#) except by the [grace](#) of [God](#). And this misery the [Pelagians](#) will not have to descend from a just condemnation, because they deny original [sin](#); although even if the [ignorance](#) and difficulty were the natural beginnings of [man](#), God would not even thus deserve to be reproached, but to be praised, as I have argued in the same third book. Which argument must be regarded as against the Manicheans, who do not receive the [holy Scriptures](#) of the [Old Testament](#), in which original [sin](#) is narrated; and whatever thence is read in the apostolic epistles, they contend was introduced with a detestable impudence by the corrupters of the [Scriptures](#), assuming that it was not said by the [apostles](#). But against the [Pelagians](#) that must be maintained which both Scriptures commend, as they profess to receive them." These things I said in my first book of *Retractions*, when I was reconsidering the books on Free Will. Nor, indeed, were these things all that were said by me there about these books, but there were many others also, which I thought it would be tedious to insert in this work for you, and not necessary; and this I think you also will judge when you have read all. Although, therefore, in the third book on Free Will I have in such wise argued concerning infants, that even if what the [Pelagians](#) say were [true](#),—that [ignorance](#) and difficulty, without which no man is born, are elements, not punishments, of our nature,—still the Manicheans would be overcome, who will have it that the two [natures](#), to wit, of good and [evil](#), are co-[eternal](#). Is, therefore, the [faith](#) to be called in question or forsaken, which the catholic Church maintains against those very [Pelagians](#), asserting as she does that it is original [sin](#), the guilt of which, contracted by generation, must be remitted by regeneration? And if they confess this with us, so that we may at once, in this matter of the [Pelagians](#), destroy [error](#), why do they think that it must be [doubted](#) that God can deliver even infants, to whom He gives His [grace](#) by the sacrament of [baptism](#), from the power of darkness, and translate them into the kingdom of the Son of His [love](#)? [Colossians 1:13](#) In the fact, therefore, that He gives that [grace](#) to some, and does not give it to others, why will they not sing to the Lord His mercy and judgment? Why, however, is it given to these, rather than to those,—who has [known](#) the mind of the Lord? who is able to look into unsearchable things? who to trace out that which is past finding out?

Chapter 28 [XII.]—God's Goodness and Righteousness Shown in All.

It is therefore settled that God's [grace](#) is not given according to the deserts of the recipients, but according to the good pleasure of His [will](#), to the praise and [glory](#) of His own [grace](#); so that he who [glories](#) may by no means [glory](#) in himself, but in the [Lord](#), who gives to those men to whom He will, because He is merciful, what if, however, He does not give, He is righteous: and He does not give to whom He will not, that He may make [known](#) the riches of His [glory](#) to the vessels of mercy. [Romans 9:23](#) For by giving to some what they do not deserve, He has certainly willed that His [grace](#) should be gratuitous, and thus genuine [grace](#); by not giving to all, He has shown what all deserve. Good in His goodness to some, righteous in the punishment of others; both good in

respect of all, because it is [good](#) when that which is due is rendered, and righteous in respect of all, since that which is not due is given without wrong to any one.

Chapter 29.—God's True Grace Could Be Defended Even If There Were No Original Sin, as Pelagius Maintains.

But God's [grace](#), that is, [true grace](#) without merits, is maintained, even if infants, when [baptized](#), according to the view of the [Pelagians](#), are not plucked out of the power of darkness, because they are held guilty of no [sin](#), as the [Pelagians](#) think, but are only transferred into the Lord's kingdom: for even thus, without any good merits, the kingdom is given to those to whom it is given; and without any [evil](#) merits it is not given to them to whom it is not given. And this we are in the [habit](#) of saying in opposition to the same [Pelagians](#), when they object to us that we attribute God's [grace](#) to [fate](#), when we say that it is given not in respect to our merits. For they themselves rather attribute God's [grace](#) to [fate](#) in the case of infants, if they say that when there is no merit it is [fate](#). Certainly, even according to the [Pelagians](#) themselves, no merits can be found in infants to [cause](#) that some of them should be admitted into the kingdom, and others should be alienated from the kingdom. But now, just as in order to show that God's [grace](#) is not given according to our merits, I preferred to maintain this [truth](#) in accordance with both opinions,—both in accordance with our own, to wit, who say that infants are bound by original [sin](#), and according to that of the [Pelagians](#), who deny that there is original [sin](#), and yet I cannot on that account [doubt](#) that infants have what He can pardon them who saves His people from their [sins](#): so in the third book on Free Will, according to both views, I have withstood the Manicheans, whether [ignorance](#) and difficulty be punishments or elements of nature without which no man is born; and yet I hold one of these views. There, moreover, it is sufficiently evidently declared by me, that that is not the [nature](#) of man as he was ordained, but his punishment as condemned.

Chapter 30.—Augustin Claims the Right to Grow in Knowledge.

Therefore it is in vain that it is prescribed to me from that old book of mine, that I may not argue the case as I ought to argue it in respect of infants; and that thence I may not persuade my opponents by the light of a manifest [truth](#), that God's [grace](#) is not given according to men's merits. For if, when I began my books concerning Free Will as a [layman](#), and finished them as a [presbyter](#), I still [doubted](#) of the condemnation of infants not born again, and of the deliverance of infants that were born again, no one, as I think, would be so unfair and [envious](#) as to hinder my progress, and judge that I must continue in that uncertainty. But it can more correctly be understood that it ought to be [believed](#) that I did not [doubt](#) in that matter, for the reason that they against whom my purpose was directed seemed to me in such wise to be rebutted, as that whether there was a punishment of original [sin](#) in infants, according to the [truth](#), or whether there was not, as some mistaken people think, yet in no degree should such a confusion of the two [natures](#)

be [believed](#) in, to wit, of good and [evil](#), as the [error](#) of the Manicheans introduces. Be it therefore far from us so to forsake the case of infants as to say to ourselves that it is uncertain whether, being regenerated in [Christ](#), if they die in infancy they pass into [eternal salvation](#); but that, not being regenerated, they pass into the second death. Because that which is written, "By one man [sin](#) entered into the world, and death by [sin](#), and so death passed upon all [men](#)," [Romans 5:12](#) cannot be rightly understood in any other manner; nor from that [eternal](#) death which is most righteously repaid to [sin](#) does any deliver any one, small or great, save He who, for the sake of remitting our [sins](#), both original and personal, died without any [sin](#) of His own, either original or personal. But why some rather than others? Again and again we say, and do not shrink from it, "O man, who are you that repliest against God?" [Romans 9:20](#) "His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out." [Romans 11:33](#) And let us add this, "Seek not out the things that are too high for you, and search not the things that are above your strength." [Sirach 3:21](#)

Chapter 31.—Infants are Not Judged According to that Which They are Foreknown as Likely to Do If They Should Live.

For you see, beloved, how absurd it is, and how foreign from soundness of [faith](#) and sincerity of [truth](#), for us to say that infants, when they die, should be judged according to those things which they are foreknown to be going to do if they should live. For to this opinion, from which certainly every human feeling, on however little reason it may be founded, and especially every [Christian](#) feeling, revolts, they are compelled to advance who have chosen in such wise to be withdrawn from the [error](#) of the [Pelagians](#) as still to think that they must [believe](#), and, moreover, must profess in argument, that the [grace](#) of [God](#), through Jesus Christ our Lord, by which alone after the fall of the first man, in whom we all fell, help is afforded to us, is given according to our merits. And this belief Pelagius himself, before the Eastern [bishops](#) as judges, condemned in [fear](#) of his own condemnation. And if this be not said of the good or bad works of those who have died, which they would have done if they had lived,—and thus of no works, and works that would never exist, even in the foreknowledge of [God](#),—if this, therefore, be not said, and you see under how great a mistake it is said, what will remain but that we confess, when the darkness of contention is removed, that the [grace](#) of God is not given according to our merits, which position the catholic Church defends against the Pelagian [heresy](#); and that we see this in more evident [truth](#) especially in infants? For God is not compelled by [fate](#) to come to the help of these infants, and not to come to the help of those,—since the case is alike to both. Or shall we think that human affairs in the case of infants are not managed by [Divine Providence](#), but by fortuitous chances, when rational [souls](#) are either to be condemned or delivered, although, indeed, not a sparrow falls to the ground without the [will](#) of our Father which is in heaven? [Matthew 10:29](#) Or must we so attribute it to the negligence of [parents](#) that infants die without [baptism](#), as that heavenly judgments have nothing to do with it; as if they themselves who in this way die badly had of their own will chosen the negligent [parents](#) for themselves of whom they were born? What shall I say when an infant expires some time before he can possibly be advantaged by the

ministry of [baptism](#)? For often when the [parents](#) are eager and the ministers prepared for giving [baptism](#) to the infants, it still is not given, because God does not choose; since He has not kept it in this life for a little while in order that [baptism](#) might be given it. What, moreover, when sometimes aid could be afforded by [baptism](#) to the children of unbelievers, that they should not go into perdition, and could not be afforded to the children of [believers](#)? In which case it is certainly shown that there is no acceptance of [persons](#) with [God](#); otherwise He would rather deliver the children of His worshippers than the children of His enemies.

Chapter 32 [XIII.]—The Inscrutability of God's Free Purposes.

But now, since we are now treating of the gift of perseverance, why is it that aid is afforded to the person about to die who is not [baptized](#), while to the [baptized](#) person about to fall, aid is not afforded, so as to die before? Unless, perchance, we shall still listen to that absurdity by which it is said that it is of no advantage to any one to die before his fall, because he will be judged according to those actions which God foreknew that he would have done if he had lived. Who can hear with patience this perversity, so violently opposed to the soundness of the [faith](#)? Who can bear it? And yet they are driven to say this who do not confess that God's [grace](#) is not bestowed in respect of our deservings. They, however, who will not say that any one who has died is judged according to those things which God foreknew that he would have done if he had lived, considering with how manifest a [falsehood](#) and how great an absurdity this would be said, have no further reason to say, what the Church condemned in the [Pelagians](#), and caused to be condemned by Pelagius himself,—that the [grace](#) of [God](#), namely, is given according to our merits,—when they see some infants not regenerated taken from this life to [eternal](#) death, and others regenerated, to [eternal](#) life; and those themselves that are regenerated, some going hence, persevering even to the end, and others kept in this life even until they fall, who certainly would not have fallen if they had departed hence before their lapse; and again some falling, but not departing from this life until they return, who certainly would have perished if they had departed before their return.

Chapter 33.—God Gives Both Initiatory and Persevering Grace According to His Own Will.

From all which it is shown with sufficient clearness that the [grace](#) of [God](#), which both begins a man's [faith](#) and which enables it to persevere unto the end, is not given according to our merits, but is given according to His own most secret and at the same time most righteous, wise, and beneficent will; since those whom He [predestinated](#), them He also called, [Romans 8:30](#) with that calling of which it is said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." [Romans 11:29](#) To which calling there is no man that can be said by men with any certainty of affirmation to belong, until he has departed from this world; but in this life of [man](#), which is a state of trial upon the earth, [Job 7:1](#) he who seems to stand must take heed lest he fall. [1 Corinthians 10:12](#) Since (as I have already

said before) those who will not persevere are, by the most foreseeing [will](#) of [God](#), mingled with those who will persevere, for the reason that we may learn not to mind high things, but to consent to the lowly, and may "work out our own [salvation](#) with [fear](#) and trembling; for it is God that works in us both to will and to do for His good pleasure." [Philippians 2:12-13](#) We therefore will, but God works in us to will also. We therefore work, but God works in us to work also for His good pleasure. This is profitable for us both to [believe](#) and to say,—this is [pious](#), this is [true](#), that our confession be lowly and submissive, and that all should be given to [God](#). Thinking, we [believe](#); thinking, we speak; thinking, we do whatever we do; [2 Corinthians 3:5](#) but, in respect of what concerns the way of [piety](#) and the [true](#) worship of [God](#), we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of [God](#). For "our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power;" whence the same Ambrose who says this says also: "But who is so blessed as in his heart always to rise upwards? And how can this be done without divine help? Assuredly, by no means. Finally," he says, "the same Scripture affirms above, 'Blessed is the man whose help is of You; O Lord, ascent is in his heart.'" Assuredly, Ambrose was not only enabled to say this by reading in the [holy](#) writings, but as of such a man is to be without [doubt believed](#), he felt it also in his own heart. Therefore, as is said in the [sacraments](#) of [believers](#), that we should lift up our hearts to the Lord, is God's gift; for which gift they to whom this is said are admonished by the [priest](#) after this word to give thanks to our Lord God Himself; and they answer that it is "meet and right so to do." For, since our heart is not in our own power, but is lifted up by the divine help, so that it ascends and takes cognizance of those things which are above, [Colossians 3:1](#) where Christ is sitting at the right hand of [God](#), and, not those things that are upon the earth, to whom are thanks to be given for so great a gift as this unless to our Lord God who does this,—who in so great kindness has chosen us by delivering us from the abyss of this world, and has [predestinated](#) us before the foundation of the world?

Chapter 34 [XIV.]—The Doctrine of Predestination Not Opposed to the Advantage of Preaching.

But they say that the "definition of [predestination](#) is opposed to the advantage of preaching,"—as if, indeed, it were opposed to the preaching of the apostle! Did not that teacher of the [heathen](#) so often, in [faith](#) and [truth](#), both commend [predestination](#), and not cease to preach the word of God? Because he said, "It is God that works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure," [Philippians 2:13](#) did he not also exhort that we should both will and do what is pleasing to God? or because he said, "He who has begun a good work in you shall carry it on even unto the day of Christ Jesus," [Philippians 1:6](#) did he on that account cease to persuade men to begin and to persevere unto the end? Doubtless, our Lord Himself commanded men to [believe](#), and said, "Believe in [God](#), [believe](#) also in me:" [John 14:1](#) and yet His opinion is not therefore false, nor is His definition idle when He says, "No man comes unto me"—that is, no man [believes](#) in me—"except it has been given him of my Father." [John 6:66](#) Nor, again, because this definition is [true](#), is the former precept vain. Why, therefore, do we think the definition of [predestination](#) useless to preaching, to precept, to exhortation, to rebuke,—all which

things the [divine Scripture](#) repeats frequently,—seeing that the same Scripture commends this doctrine?

Chapter 35.—What Predestination is.

Will any man dare to say that God did not foreknow those to whom He would give to [believe](#), or whom He would give to His Son, that of them He should lose none? [John 18:9](#) And certainly, if He foreknew these things, He as certainly foreknew His own kindnesses, wherewith He condescends to deliver us. This is the [predestination](#) of the [saints](#),—nothing else; to wit, the foreknowledge and the preparation of God's kindnesses, whereby they are most certainly delivered, whoever they are that are delivered. But where are the rest left by the righteous divine judgment except in the mass of ruin, where the Tyrians and the Sidonians were left? who, moreover, might have [believed](#) if they had seen Christ's wonderful [miracles](#). But since it was not given to them to [believe](#), the means of believing also were denied them. From which fact it appears that some have in their understanding itself a naturally divine gift of intelligence, by which they may be moved to the [faith](#), if they either hear the words or behold the signs congruous to their minds; and yet if, in the higher judgment of [God](#), they are not by the [predestination](#) of [grace](#) separated from the mass of perdition, neither those very divine words nor deeds are applied to them by which they might [believe](#) if they only heard or saw such things. Moreover, in the same mass of ruin the [Jews](#) were left, because they could not [believe](#) such great and eminent mighty works as were done in their sight. For the gospel has not been silent about the reason why they could not [believe](#), since it says: "But though He had done such great [miracles](#) before them, yet they [believed](#) not on Him; that the saying of Isaiah the [prophet](#) might be fulfilled which he spoke, [Isaiah 53:1](#) Lord, who has [believed](#) our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? And, therefore, they could not [believe](#), because that Isaiah said again, [Isaiah 6:10](#) He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." Therefore the eyes of the Tyrians and Sidonians were not so blinded nor was their heart so hardened, since they would have [believed](#) if they had seen such mighty works, as the [Jews](#) saw. But it did not profit them that they were able to [believe](#), because they were not [predestinated](#) by Him whose judgments are inscrutable and His ways past finding out. Neither would inability to [believe](#) have been a hindrance to them, if they had been so [predestinated](#) as that [God](#) should illuminate those blind eyes, and should will to take away the stony heart from those hardened ones. But what the Lord said of the Tyrians and Sidonians may perchance be understood in another way: that no one nevertheless comes to Christ unless it were given him, and that it is given to those who are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, he confesses beyond a [doubt](#) who hears the divine utterance, not with the deaf ears of the flesh, but with the ears of the heart; and yet this [predestination](#), which is plainly enough unfolded even by the words of the [gospels](#), did not prevent the Lord's saying as well in respect of the commencement, what I have a little before mentioned, "Believe in [God](#); [believe](#) also in me," as in respect of perseverance, "A man ought always to [pray](#), and not to faint." [Luke 18:1](#) For they hear these things and do them to whom it is given; but they do them not, whether they hear or do not hear, to whom it is not given. Because, "To you," said He, "it is given to [know](#) the [mystery](#) of the [kingdom of heaven](#),

but to them it is not given." [Matthew 13:11](#) Of these, the one refers to the mercy, the other to the judgment of Him to whom our [soul](#) cries, "I will sing of mercy and judgment unto You, O Lord."

Chapter 36.—The Preaching of the Gospel and the Preaching of Predestination the Two Parts of One Message.

Therefore, by the preaching of [predestination](#), the preaching of a persevering and progressive [faith](#) is not to be hindered; and thus they may hear what is necessary to whom it is given that they should [obey](#). For how shall they hear without a preacher? Neither, again, is the preaching of a progressive [faith](#) which continues even to the end to hinder the preaching of [predestination](#), so that he who is living faithfully and obediently may not be lifted up by that very [obedience](#), as if by a benefit of his own, not received; but that he that [glories](#) may [glory](#) in the Lord. For "we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." And this, Cyprian most faithfully saw and most fearlessly explained, and thus he pronounced [predestination](#) to be most assured. For if we must boast in nothing, seeing that nothing is our own, certainly we must not boast of the most persevering [obedience](#). Nor is it so to be called our own, as if it were not given to us from above. And, therefore, it is God's gift, which, by the confession of all [Christians](#), God foreknew that He would give to His people, who were called by that calling whereof it was said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." [Romans 11:29](#) This, then, is the [predestination](#) which we faithfully and humbly preach. Nor yet did the same teacher and doer, who both [believed](#) on Christ and most perseveringly lived in [holy obedience](#), even to suffering for [Christ](#), cease on that account to preach the gospel, to exhort to [faith](#) and to [pious](#) manners, and to that very perseverance to the end, because he said, "We must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own;" and here he declared without ambiguity the [true grace](#) of [God](#), that is, that which is not given in respect of our merits; and since God foreknew that He would give it, [predestination](#) was announced beyond a [doubt](#) by these words of Cyprian; and if this did not prevent Cyprian from preaching [obedience](#), it certainly ought not to prevent us.

Chapter 37.—Ears to Hear are a Willingness to Obey.

Although, therefore, we say that [obedience](#) is the gift of [God](#), we still exhort men to it. But to those who obediently hear the exhortation of [truth](#) is given the gift of God itself—that is, to hear obediently; while to those who do not thus hear it is not given. For it was not some one only, but Christ who said, "No man comes unto me, except it were given him of my Father;" [John 6:66](#) and, "To you it is given to [know](#) the [mystery](#) of the [kingdom of heaven](#), but to them it is not given." [Matthew 13:11](#) And concerning continence He says, "Not all receive this saying, but they to whom it is given." [Matthew 19:11](#) And when the apostle would exhort married people to conjugal [chastity](#), he says, "I would that all [men](#) were even as I myself; but every man has his proper gift of [God](#), one after this manner, another after that;" [1 Corinthians 7:7](#) where he plainly shows

not only that continence is a gift of [God](#), but even the [chastity](#) of those who are married. And although these things are [true](#), we still exhort to them as much as is given to any one of us to be able to exhort, because this also is His gift in whose hand are both ourselves and our discourses. Whence also says the apostle, "According to this [grace](#) of God which is given unto me, as a wise architect, I have laid the foundation." [1 Corinthians 3:10](#) And in another place he says, "Even as the Lord has given to every man: I have planted, Apollos has watered, but God has given the increase. Therefore neither is he that plants anything, nor he that waters, but God that gives the increase." [1 Corinthians 3:5](#) And thus as only he preaches and exhorts rightly who has received this gift, so assuredly he who obediently hears him who rightly exhorts and preaches is he who has received this gift. Hence is what the Lord said, when, speaking to those who had their fleshly ears open, He nevertheless told them, "He that has ears to hear let him hear;" [Luke 8:8](#) which beyond a [doubt](#) he [knew](#) that not all had. And from whom they have, whosoever they be that have them, the Lord Himself shows when He says, "I will give them a heart to [know](#) me, and ears to hear." [Baruch 2:31](#) Therefore, having ears is itself the gift of [obeying](#), so that they who had that came to Him, to whom "no one comes unless it were given to him of His Father." Therefore we exhort and preach, but they who have ears to hear obediently hear us, while in them who have them not, it comes to pass what is written, that hearing they do not hear,—hearing, to wit, with the bodily sense, they do not hear with the assent of the heart. But why these should have ears to hear, and those have them not,—that is, why to these it should be given by the Father to come to the [Son](#), while to those it should not be given,—who has [known](#) the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counsellor? Or who are you, O man, that repliest against God? Must that which is manifest be denied, because that which is hidden cannot be comprehended? Shall we, I say, declare that what we see to be so is not so, because we cannot find out why it is so?

Chapter 38 [XV.]—Against the Preaching of Predestination the Same Objections May Be Alleged as Against Predestination.

But they say, as you write: "That no one can be aroused by the incentives of rebuke if it be said in the assembly of the [Church](#) to the multitude of hearers: The definite meaning of [God's will](#) concerning [predestination](#) stands in such wise, that some of you will receive the will to [obey](#) and will come out of unbelief unto [faith](#), or will receive perseverance and abide in the [faith](#); but others who are lingering in the delight of [sins](#) have not yet arisen, for the reason that the aid of pitying [grace](#) has not yet indeed raised you up. But yet, if there are any whom by His [grace](#) He has [predestinated](#) to be chosen, who are not yet called, you shall receive that [grace](#) by which you may will and be chosen; and if any [obey](#), if you are [predestinated](#) to be rejected, the strength to [obey](#) shall be withdrawn from you, so that you may cease to [obey](#)." Although these things may be said, they ought not so to deter us from confessing the [true grace](#) of [God](#),—that is, the [grace](#) which is not given to us in respect of our merits,—and from confessing the [predestination](#) of the [saints](#) in accordance therewith, even as we are not deterred from confessing God's foreknowledge, although one should thus speak to the people concerning it, and say: "Whether you are now living righteously or unrighteously, you shall be such by and by as

the Lord has foreknown that you will be,—either good, if He has foreknown you as good, or bad, if He has foreknown you as bad." For if on the hearing of this some should be turned to torpor and slothfulness, and from striving should go headlong to [lust](#) after their own desires, is it therefore to be counted that what has been said about the foreknowledge of God is false? If God has foreknown that they will be good, will they not be good, whatever be the depth of [evil](#) in which they are now engaged? And if He has foreknown them [evil](#), will they not be [evil](#), whatever goodness may now be discerned in them? There was a man in our monastery, who, when the brethren rebuked him for doing some things that ought not to be done, and for not doing some things that ought to be done, replied, "Whatever I may now be, I shall be such as God has foreknown that I shall be." And this man certainly both said what was [true](#), and was not profited by this [truth](#) for good, but so far made way in [evil](#) as to desert the society of the monastery, and become a dog returned to his vomit; and, nevertheless, it is uncertain what he is yet to become. For the sake of [souls](#) of this kind, then, is the [truth](#) which is spoken about God's foreknowledge either to be denied or to be kept back,—at such times, for instance, when, if it is not spoken, other [errors](#) are incurred?

Chapter 39 [XVI]—Prayer and Exhortation.

There are some, moreover, who either do not [pray](#) at all, or [pray](#) coldly, because, from the Lord's words, they have learned that God [knows](#) what is necessary for us before we ask it of Him. Must the [truth](#) of this declaration be given up, or shall we think that it should be erased from the gospel because of such people? Nay, since it is manifest that God has prepared some things to be given even to those who do not [pray](#) for them, such as the beginning of [faith](#), and other things not to be given except to those who [pray](#) for them, such as perseverance even unto the end, certainly he who thinks that he has this latter from himself does not [pray](#) to have it. Therefore we must take care lest, while we are afraid of exhortation growing lukewarm, [prayer](#) should be stifled and arrogance stimulated.

Chapter 40.—When the Truth Must Be Spoken, When Kept Back.

Therefore let the [truth](#) be spoken, especially when any question impels us to declare it; and let them receive it who are able, lest, perchance, while we are silent on account of those who cannot receive it, they be not only defrauded of the [truth](#) but be taken captive by [falsehood](#), who are able to receive the [truth](#) whereby [falsehood](#) may be avoided. For it is easy, nay, and it is useful, that some [truth](#) should be kept back because of those who are incapable of apprehending it. For whence is that word of our Lord: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now"? [John 16:12](#) And that of the apostle: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal: as if unto babes in Christ I have given you to drink milk, and not meat, for hitherto ye were not able, neither yet indeed now are you able"? [1 Corinthians 3:1](#) Although, in a certain manner of speaking, it might happen that what is said should be both milk to infants and meat for grown-up [persons](#). As "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with [God](#), and

the Word was [God](#)," [John 1:1](#) what [Christian](#) can keep it back? Who can receive it? Or what in sound doctrine can be found more comprehensive? And yet this is not kept back either from infants or from grown-up people, nor is it hidden from infants by those who are mature. But the reason of keeping back the [truth](#) is one, the necessity of speaking the [truth](#) is another. It would be a tedious business to inquire into or to put down all the reasons for keeping back the [truth](#); of which, nevertheless, there is this one,—lest we should make those who do not understand worse, while wishing to make those who do understand more learned; although these latter do not become more learned when we withhold any such thing on the one hand, but also do not become worse. When, however, a [truth](#) is of such a nature that he who cannot receive it is made worse by our speaking it, and he who can receive it is made worse by our silence concerning it, what do we think is to be done? Must we not speak the [truth](#), that he who can receive it may receive it, rather than keep silence, so that not only neither may receive it, but that even he who is more intelligent should himself be made worse? For if he should hear and receive it, by his means also many might learn. For in proportion as he is more capable of learning, he is the more fitted for teaching others. The enemy of [grace](#) presses on and urges in all ways to make us [believe](#) that [grace](#) is given according to our deservings, and thus [grace](#) is no more [grace](#); and are we unwilling to say what we can say by the testimony of Scripture? Do we [fear](#), forsooth, to offend by our speaking him who is not able to receive the [truth](#)? and are we not afraid lest by our silence he who can receive the [truth](#) may be involved in [falsehood](#)?

Chapter 41.—Predestination Defined as Only God's Disposing of Events in His Foreknowledge.

For either [predestination](#) must be preached, in the way and degree in which the [Holy Scripture](#) plainly declares it, so that in the [predestinated](#) the gifts and calling of God may be without repentance; or it must be avowed that God's [grace](#) is given according to our merits,—which is the opinion of the [Pelagians](#); although that opinion of theirs, as I have often said already, may be read in the Proceedings of the Eastern [bishops](#) to have been condemned by the lips of Pelagius himself. Further, those on whose account I am discoursing are only removed from the [heretical](#) perversity of the [Pelagians](#), inasmuch as, although they will not confess that they who by God's [grace](#) are made [obedient](#) and so abide, are [predestinated](#), they still confess, nevertheless, that this [grace](#) precedes their will to whom it is given; in such a way certainly as that [grace](#) may not be thought to be given freely, as the [truth](#) declares, but rather according to the merits of a preceding will, as the Pelagian [error](#) says, in contradiction to the [truth](#). Therefore, also, [grace](#) precedes [faith](#); otherwise, if [faith](#) precedes [grace](#), beyond a [doubt](#) will also precedes it, because there cannot be [faith](#) without will. But if [grace](#) precedes [faith](#) because it precedes will, certainly it precedes all [obedience](#); it also precedes [love](#), by which alone God is [truly](#) and pleasantly [obeyed](#). And all these things [grace](#) works in him to whom it is given, and in whom it precedes all these things. [XVII.] Among these benefits there remains perseverance unto the end, which is daily asked for in vain from the Lord, if the Lord by His [grace](#) does not effect it in him whose [prayers](#) He hears. See now how foreign it is from the [truth](#) to deny that perseverance even to the end of this life is the gift of [God](#);

since He Himself puts an end to this life when He wills, and if He puts an end before a fall that is threatening, He makes the man to persevere even unto the end. But more marvellous and more manifest to [believers](#) is the largess of God's goodness, that this [grace](#) is given even to infants, although there is no [obedience](#) at that age to which it may be given. To whomsoever, therefore, God gives His gifts, beyond a [doubt](#) He has foreknown that He will bestow them on them, and in His foreknowledge He has prepared them for them. Therefore, those whom He [predestinated](#), them He also called with that calling which I am not reluctant often to make mention of, of which it is said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." [Romans 11:24](#) For the ordering of His future works in His foreknowledge, which cannot be deceived and changed, is absolute, and is nothing but, [predestination](#). But, as he whom [God](#) has foreknown to be chaste, although he may regard it as uncertain, so acts as to be chaste, so he whom He has [predestinated](#) to be chaste, although he may regard that as uncertain, does not, therefore, fail to act so as to be chaste because he hears that he is to be what he will be by the gift of [God](#). Nay, rather, his [love](#) rejoices, and he is not puffed up as if he had not received it. Not only, therefore, is he not hindered from this work by the preaching of [predestination](#), but he is even assisted to it, so that although he glories he may [glory](#) in the Lord.

Chapter 42.—The Adversaries Cannot Deny Predestination to Those Gifts of Grace Which They Themselves Acknowledge, and Their Exhortations are Not Hindered by This Predestination Nevertheless.

And what I said of [chastity](#), can be said also of [faith](#), of [piety](#), of [love](#), of perseverance, and, not to enumerate single [virtues](#), it may be said with the utmost [truthfulness](#) of all the [obedience](#) with which God is [obeyed](#). But those who place only the beginning of [faith](#) and perseverance to the end in such wise in our power as not to regard them as God's gifts, nor to think that God works on our thoughts and wills so as that we may have and retain them, grant, nevertheless, that He gives other things,—since they are obtained from Him by the [faith](#) of the believer. Why are they not afraid that exhortation to these other things, and the preaching of these other things, should be hindered by the definition of [predestination](#)? Or, perchance, do they say that such things are not [predestinated](#)? Then they are not given by [God](#), or He has not [known](#) that He would give them. Because, if they are both given, and He foreknew that He would give them, certainly He [predestinated](#) them. As, therefore, they themselves also exhort to [chastity](#), charity, [piety](#), and other things which they confess to be God's gifts, and cannot deny that they are also foreknown by Him, and therefore [predestinated](#); nor do they say that their exhortations are hindered by the preaching of God's [predestination](#), that is, by the preaching of God's foreknowledge of those future gifts of His: so they may see that neither are their exhortations to [faith](#) or to perseverance hindered, even although those very things may be said, as is the [truth](#), to be gifts of [God](#), and that those things are foreknown, that is, [predestinated](#) to be given; but let them rather see that by this preaching of [predestination](#) only that most pernicious [error](#) is hindered and overthrown, whereby it is said that the

[grace](#) of God is given according to our deservings, so that he who glories may [glory](#) not in the [Lord](#), but in himself.

Chapter 43.—Further Development of the Foregoing Argument.

And in order that I may more openly unfold this for the sake of those who are somewhat slow of apprehension, let those who are endowed with an intelligence that flies in advance bear with my delay. The Apostle James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of [God](#), who gives to all [men](#) liberally and upbraids not, and it shall be given him." [James 1:5](#) It is written also in the Proverbs of Solomon, "Because the Lord gives wisdom." [Proverbs 2:6](#) And of continency it is read in the book of Wisdom, whose authority has been used by great and learned men who have commented upon the divine utterances long before us; there, therefore, it is read, "When I [knew](#) that no one can be continent unless God gives it, and that this was of wisdom, to [know](#) whose gift this was." [Wisdom 8:21](#) Therefore these are God's gifts,—that is, to say nothing of others, wisdom and continency. Let those also acquiesce: for they are not [Pelagians](#), to contend against such a manifest [truth](#) as this with hard and [heretical](#) perversity. "But," say they, "that these things are given to us of God is obtained by [faith](#), which has its beginning from us;" and both to begin to have this [faith](#), and to abide in it even to the end, they contend is our own doing, as if we received it not from the Lord. This, beyond a [doubt](#), is in contradiction to the apostle when he says, "For what have you that you have not received?" [1 Corinthians 4:7](#) It is in contradiction also to the saying of the [martyr](#) Cyprian, "That we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." When we have said this, and many other things which it is wearisome to repeat, and have shown that both the commencement of [faith](#) and perseverance to the end are gifts of [God](#); and that it is impossible that [God](#) should not foreknow any of His future gifts, as well what should be given as to whom they should be given; and that thus those whom He delivers and crowns are [predestinated](#) by Him; they think it well to reply, "that the assertion of [predestination](#) is opposed to the advantage of preaching, for the reason that when this is heard no one can be stirred up by the incentives of rebuke." When they say this, "they are unwilling that it should be declared to [men](#), that coming to the [faith](#) and abiding in the [faith](#) are God's gifts, lest despair rather than encouragement should appear to be suggested, inasmuch as they who hear think that it is uncertain to human [ignorance](#) on whom God bestows, or on whom He does not bestow, these gifts." Why, then, do they themselves also preach with us that wisdom and continency are God's gifts? But if, when these things are declared to be God's gifts, there is no hindrance of the exhortation with which we exhort men to be wise and continent; what is after all the reason for their thinking that the exhortation is hindered wherewith we exhort men to come to the [faith](#), and to abide in it to the end, if these also are said to be God's gifts, as is [proved](#) by the [Scriptures](#), which are His witnesses?

Chapter 44.—Exhortation to Wisdom, Though Wisdom is God's Gift.

Now, to say nothing more of continency, and to argue in this place of wisdom alone, certainly the Apostle James above mentioned says, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, modest, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, inestimable, without simulation." [James 3:17](#) Do you not see, I beseech you, how this wisdom descends from the Father of Lights, laden with many and great benefits? Because, as the same apostle says, "Every excellent gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of Lights." [James 3:17](#) Why, then—to set aside other matters—do we rebuke the impure and contentious, to whom we nevertheless preach that the gift of God is wisdom, pure and peaceable; and are not afraid that they should be influenced, by the uncertainty of the divine will, to find in this preaching more of despair than of exhortation; and that they should not be stirred up by the incentives of rebuke rather against us than against themselves, because we rebuke them for not having those things which we ourselves say are not produced by human will, but are given by the divine liberality? Finally, why did the preaching of this [grace](#) not deter the Apostle James from rebuking restless [souls](#), and saying, "If you have bitter envying, and contentions are in your hearts, [glory](#) not, and be not liars against the [truth](#). This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, animal, devilish; for where envying and contention are, there are inconstancy and every [evil](#) work"? [James 3:14](#) As, therefore, the restless are to be rebuked, both by the testimony of the divine declarations, and by those very impulses of ours which they have in common with ourselves; and is it no argument against this rebuke that we declare the peaceful wisdom, whereby the contentions are corrected and healed, to be the gift of [God](#); unbelievers are in such wise to be rebuked, as those who do not abide in the [faith](#), without any hindrance to that rebuke from the preaching of God's [grace](#), although that preaching commends that very [grace](#) and the continuance in it as the gifts of [God](#). Because, although wisdom is obtained from [faith](#), even as James himself, when he had said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of [God](#), who gives to all liberally and upbraids not, and it shall be given," [James 1:5](#) immediately added, "But let him ask in [faith](#), nothing wavering:" it is not, nevertheless, because [faith](#) is given before it is asked for by him to whom it is given, that it must therefore be said not to be the gift of [God](#), but to be of ourselves, because it is given to us without our asking for it! For the apostle very plainly says, "Peace be to the brethren, and [love](#) with [faith](#) from [God](#) the Father and the [Lord Jesus Christ](#)." [Ephesians 6:23](#) From whom, therefore, are peace and [love](#), from Him also is [faith](#); wherefore, from Him we ask not only that it may be increased to those that possess it, but also that it may be given to those that possess it not.

Chapter 45.—Exhortation to Other Gifts of God in Like Manner.

Nor do those on whose account I am saying these things, who cry out that exhortation is checked by the preaching of [predestination](#) and [grace](#), exhort to those gifts alone which they contend are not given by [God](#), but are from ourselves, such as are the beginning of [faith](#), and perseverance in it even to the end. This certainly they ought to do, in such a way as only to exhort unbelievers to [believe](#), and [believers](#) to continue to [believe](#). But those things which with us they do not deny to be God's gifts, so as that with us they

demolish the [error](#) of the [Pelagians](#), such as modesty, continence, patience, and other [virtues](#) that pertain to a [holy](#) life, and are obtained by [faith](#) from the Lord, they ought to show as needing to be [prayed](#) for, and to [pray](#) for only, either for themselves or others; but they ought not to exhort any one to strive after them and retain them. But when they exhort to these things, according to their ability, and confess that men ought to be exhorted,—certainly they show plainly enough that exhortations are not hindered by that preaching, whether they are exhortations to [faith](#) or to perseverance to the end, because we also preach that such things are God's gifts, and are not given by any man to himself, but are given by [God](#).

Chapter 46.—A Man Who Does Not Persevere Fails by His Own Fault.

But it is said, "It is by his own fault that any one deserts the [faith](#), when he yields and consents to the [temptation](#) which is the [cause](#) of his desertion of the [faith](#)." Who denies it? But because of this, perseverance in the [faith](#) is not to be said not to be a gift of [God](#). For it is this that a man daily asks for when he says, "Lead us not into [temptation](#);" [Matthew 6:13](#) and if he is heard, it is this that he receives. And thus as he daily asks for perseverance, he assuredly places the hope of his perseverance not in himself, but in [God](#). I, however, am loth to exaggerate the case with my words, but I rather leave it to them to consider, and see what it is of which they have persuaded themselves—to wit, "that by the preaching of [predestination](#), more of despair than of exhortation is impressed upon the hearers." For this is to say that a man then despairs of his [salvation](#) when he has learned to place his hope not in himself, but in [God](#), although the [prophet](#) cries, "Cursed is he who has his hope in man."

Chapter 47.—Predestination is Sometimes Signified Under the Name of Foreknowledge.

[These gifts, therefore, of God](#), which are given to the elect who are called according to God's purpose, among which gifts is both the beginning of belief and perseverance in the [faith](#) to the termination of this life, as I have [proved](#) by such a concurrent testimony of reasons and authorities,—these gifts of [God](#), I say, if there is no such [predestination](#) as I am maintaining, are not foreknown by [God](#). But they are foreknown. This, therefore, is the [predestination](#) which I maintain. [XVIII.] Consequently sometimes the same [predestination](#) is signified also under the name of foreknowledge; as says the apostle, "[God](#) has not rejected His people whom He foreknew." [Romans 11:2](#) Here, when he says, "He foreknew," the sense is not rightly understood except as "He [predestinated](#)," as is shown by the context of the passage itself. For he was speaking of the remnant of the [Jews](#) which were saved, while the rest perished. For above he had said that the [prophet](#) had declared to [Israel](#), "All day long I have stretched forth my hands to an unbelieving and a gainsaying people." And as if it were answered, What, then, has become of the promises of God to [Israel](#)? he added in continuation, "I say, then, has God cast away His people? God forbid! for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of [Abraham](#), of the tribe of

Benjamin." Then he added the words which I am now treating: "[God](#) has not cast away His people whom He foreknew." And in order to show that the remnant had been left by God's [grace](#), not by any merits of their works, he went on to add, "Do you not [know](#) what the [Scripture](#) says in Elias, in what way he makes intercession with God against [Israel](#)?" and the rest. "But what," says he, "says the answer of God unto him? 'I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee before [Baal](#).'" [Romans 11:5](#) For He says not, "There are left to me," or "They have reserved themselves to me," but, "I have reserved to myself." "Even so, then, at this present time also there is made a remnant by the election of [grace](#). And if of [grace](#), then it is no more by works; otherwise [grace](#) is no more [grace](#)." And connecting this with what I have above quoted, "What then?" [Romans 11:7](#) and in answer to this inquiry, he says, "[Israel](#) has not obtained that which he was seeking for, but the election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Therefore, in the election, and in this remnant which were made so by the election of [grace](#), he wished to be understood the people which God did not reject, because He foreknew them. This is that election by which He elected those, whom He willed, in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be [holy](#) and without spot in His sight, in [love](#), [predestinating](#) them unto the adoption of sons. No one, therefore, who understands these things is permitted to [doubt](#) that, when the apostle says, "[God](#) has not cast away His people whom He foreknew," He intended to signify [predestination](#). For He foreknew the remnant which He should make so according to the election of [grace](#). That is, therefore, He [predestinated](#) them; for without [doubt](#) He foreknew if He [predestinated](#); but to have [predestinated](#) is to have foreknown that which He should do.

Chapter 48 [XIX.]—Practice of Cyprian and Ambrose.

What, then, hinders us, when we read of God's foreknowledge in some commentators on God's word, and they are treating of the calling of the [elect](#), from understanding the same [predestination](#)? For they would perchance have rather used in this matter this word which, moreover, is better understood, and which is not inconsistent with, nay, is in accordance with, the [truth](#) which is declared concerning the [predestination](#) of [grace](#). This I [know](#), that no one has been able to dispute, except erroneously, against that [predestination](#) which I am maintaining in accordance with the [Holy Scriptures](#). Yet I think that they who ask for the opinions of commentators on this matter ought to be satisfied with men so [holy](#) and so laudably celebrated everywhere in the [faith](#) and [Christian](#) doctrine as Cyprian and Ambrose, of whom I have given such clear testimonies; and that for both doctrines—that is, that they should both [believe](#) absolutely and preach everywhere that the [grace](#) of God is gratuitous, as we must [believe](#) and declare it to be; and that they should not think that preaching opposed to the preaching whereby we exhort the indolent or rebuke the [evil](#); because these celebrated men also, although they were preaching God's [grace](#) in such a manner as that one of them said, "That we must boast in nothing, because nothing is our own;" and the other, "Our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power;" yet ceased not to exhort and rebuke, in order that the divine commands might be [obeyed](#). Neither were they afraid of its being said to them, "Why do you exhort us, and why do you rebuke us, if no good thing that we have is from us, and if our hearts are not in our own power?" These [holy](#) men could by no means [fear](#) that such things should be said to them, since they were of the mind to understand that it is given to

very few to receive the teaching of [salvation](#) through God Himself, or through the [angels](#) of heaven, without any human preaching to them; but that it is given to many to [believe](#) in God through human agency. Yet, in whatever manner the word of God is spoken to [man](#), beyond a [doubt](#) for man to hear it in such a way as to [obey](#) it, is God's gift.

Chapter 49.—Further References to Cyprian and Ambrose.

Wherefore, the above-mentioned most excellent commentators on the divine declarations both preached the [true grace](#) of God as it ought to be preached,—that is, as a [grace](#) preceded by no human deservings,—and urgently exhorted to the doing of the divine commandments, that they who might have the gift of [obedience](#) should hear what commands they ought to [obey](#). For if any merits of ours precede [grace](#), certainly it is the merit of some deed, or word, or thought, wherein also is understood a good will itself. But he very briefly summed up the kinds of all deservings who said, "We must [glory](#) in nothing, because nothing is our own." And he who says, "Our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power," did not pass over acts and words also, for there is no act or word of man which does not proceed from the heart and the thought. But what more could that most [glorious martyr](#) and most luminous doctor Cyprian say concerning this matter, than when he impressed upon us that it behoves us to [pray](#), in the Lord's Prayer, even for the adversaries of the [Christian faith](#), showing what he thought of the beginning of the [faith](#), that it also is God's gift, and pointing out that the Church of Christ [prays](#) daily for perseverance unto the end, because none but God gives that perseverance to those who have persevered? Moreover, the blessed Ambrose, when he was expounding the passage where the Evangelist Luke says, "It seemed good to me also," [Luke 1:3](#) says, "What he declares to have seemed good to himself cannot have seemed good to him alone. For not alone by human will did it seem good, but as it pleased Him who speaks in me, Christ, who effects that that which is [good](#) may also seem good to us: for whom He has mercy on He also calls. And therefore he who follows Christ may answer, when he is asked why he wished to become a [Christian](#), 'It seemed good to me also.' And when he says this, he does not deny that it seemed good to [God](#); for the [will](#) of men is prepared by [God](#). For it is God's [grace](#) that [God](#) should be honoured by the saint." Moreover, in the same work,—that is, in the exposition of the same [Gospel](#), when he had come to that place where the [Samaritans](#) would not receive the Lord when His face was as going to Jerusalem,—he says, "Learn at the same time that He would not be received by those who were not converted in simpleness of mind. For if He had been willing, He would have made them devout who were undevout. And why they would not receive Him, the [evangelist](#) himself mentioned, saying, 'Because His face was as of one going towards Jerusalem.' [Luke 9:53](#) But the [disciples](#) earnestly desired to be received into [Samaria](#). But God calls those whom He makes worthy, and makes religious whom He will." What more evident, what more manifest do we ask from commentators on God's word, if we are pleased to hear from them what is clear in the [Scriptures](#)? But to these two, who ought to be enough, let us add also a third, the [holy](#) Gregory, who testifies that it is the gift of God both to [believe](#) in God and to confess what we [believe](#), saying, "I beg of you confess the Trinity of one godhead; but if you wish otherwise, say that it is of one nature, and God will be besought

that a voice shall be given to you by the [Holy Spirit](#);" that is, God will be besought to allow a voice to be given to you by which you may confess what you [believe](#). "For He will give, I am certain. He who gave what is first, will give also what is second." He who gave belief, will also give confession.

Chapter 50.—Obedience Not Discouraged by Preaching God's Gifts.

Such doctors, and so great as these, when they say that there is nothing of which we may boast as if of our own which God has not given us, and that our very heart and our thoughts are not in our own power; and when they give the whole to [God](#), and confess that from Him we receive that we are converted to Him in such wise as to continue,—that that which is [good](#) appears also to us to be good, and we wish for it,—that we [honour](#) God and receive Christ,—that from undevout people we are made devout and religious,—that we [believe](#) in the Trinity itself, and also confess with our voice what we [believe](#):—certainly attribute all these things to God's [grace](#), acknowledge them as God's gifts, and testify that they come to us from Him, and are not from ourselves. But will any one say that they in such wise confessed that [grace](#) of God as to venture to deny His foreknowledge, which not only learned but unlearned men also confess? Again, if they had so [known](#) that God gives these things that they were not [ignorant](#) that He foreknew that He would give them, and could not have been [ignorant](#) to whom He would give them: beyond a [doubt](#) they had [known](#) the [predestination](#) which, as preached by the [apostles](#), we laboriously and diligently maintain against the modern [heretics](#). Nor would it be with any manner of [justice](#) said, nevertheless, to them because they preach [obedience](#), and fervently exhort, to the extent of the ability of each one, to its practice, "If you do not wish that the [obedience](#) to which you are stirring us up should grow cold in our heart, forbear to preach to us that [grace](#) of God by which you confess that God gives what you are exhorting us to do."

Chapter 51 [XX.]—Predestination Must Be Preached.

Wherefore, if both the [apostles](#) and the [teachers of the Church](#) who succeeded them and imitated them did both these things,—that is, both [truly](#) preached the [grace](#) of God which is not given according to our merits, and inculcated by wholesome precepts a [pious obedience](#),—what is it which these people of our time think themselves rightly bound by the invincible force of [truth](#) to say, "Even if what is said of the [predestination](#) of God's benefits be [true](#), yet it must not be preached to the people"? It must absolutely be preached, so that he who has ears to hear, may hear. And who has them if he has not received them from Him who says, "I will give them a heart to [know](#) me, and ears to hear?" [Baruch 2:31](#) Assuredly, he who has not received may reject; while, yet, he who receives may take and drink, may drink and live. For as [piety](#) must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, God may be rightly worshipped; modesty must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, no illicit act may be perpetrated by his fleshly nature; charity must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, God and his neighbours may

be loved;—so also must be preached such a [predestination](#) of God's benefits that he who has ears to hear may [glory](#), not in himself, but in the Lord.

Chapter 52.—Previous Writings Anticipatively Refuted the Pelagian Heresy.

But in respect of their saying "that it was not necessary that the hearts of so many people of little intelligence should be disquieted by the uncertainty of this kind of disputation, since the catholic [faith](#) has been defended for so many years, with no less advantage, without this definition of [predestination](#), as well against others as especially against the [Pelagians](#), in so many books that have gone before, as well of catholics and others as our own;" —I much wonder that they should say this, and not observe—to say nothing of other writings in this place—that those very treatises of mine were both composed and published before the [Pelagians](#) had begun to appear; and that they do not see in how many passages of those treatises I was unawares cutting down a future Pelagian [heresy](#), by preaching the [grace](#) by which God delivers us from [evil errors](#) and from our habits, without any preceding merits of ours,—doing this according to His gratuitous mercy. And this I began more fully to apprehend in that disputation which I wrote to Simplicianus, the [bishop](#) of the Church of Milan, of blessed memory, in the beginning of my [episcopate](#), when, moreover, I both perceived and asserted that the beginning of [faith](#) is God's gift.

Chapter 53.—Augustin's "Confessions."

And which of my smaller works has been able to be more generally and more agreeably [known](#) than the books of my *Confessions*? And although I published them before the Pelagian [heresy](#) had come into [existence](#), certainly in them I said to my [God](#), and said it frequently, "Give what Thou commandest, and command what You will." Which words of mine, Pelagius at [Rome](#), when they were mentioned in his presence by a certain brother and fellow [bishop](#) of mine, could not bear; and contradicting somewhat too excitedly, nearly came to a quarrel with him who had mentioned them. But what, indeed, does God primarily and chiefly command, but that we [believe](#) in Him? And this, therefore, He Himself gives, if it is well said to Him, "Give what Thou commandest." And, moreover, in those same books, in respect of what I have related concerning my conversion, when God converted me to that [faith](#) which, with a most miserable and raging talkativeness, I was destroying, do you not remember that it was so narrated how I showed that I was granted to the faithful and daily tears of my mother, that I should not perish? Where certainly I declared that God by His [grace](#) converted to the [true faith](#) the wills of [men](#), which were not only averse to it, but even adverse to it. Further, in what manner I besought God concerning my growth in perseverance, you [know](#), and you are able to review if you wish it. Therefore, that all the gifts of God which in that work I either asked for or praised, were foreknown by God that He would give, and that He could never be [ignorant](#) of the [persons](#) to whom He would give them, who can dare, I will not say to deny, but even to [doubt](#)? This is the manifest and assured [predestination](#) of the [saints](#), which subsequently necessity compelled me more carefully and laboriously to

defend when I was already disputing against the [Pelagians](#). For I learned that each special [heresy](#) introduced its own peculiar questions into the Church—against which the sacred Scripture might be more carefully defended than if no such necessity compelled their defence. And what compelled those passages of Scripture in which [predestination](#) is commended to be defended more abundantly and clearly by that labour of mine, than the fact that the [Pelagians](#) say that God's [grace](#) is given according to our merits; for what else is this than an absolute denial of [grace](#)?

Chapter 54 [XXI.]—Beginning and End of Faith is of God.

Therefore that this opinion, which is displeasing to [God](#), and hostile to those gratuitous benefits of God whereby we are delivered, may be destroyed, I maintain that both the beginning of [faith](#) and the perseverance therein, even to the end, are, according to the [Scriptures](#)—of which I have already quoted many—God's gifts. Because if we say that the beginning of [faith](#) is of ourselves, so that by it we deserve to receive other gifts of [God](#), the [Pelagians](#) conclude that God's [grace](#) is given according to our merits. And this the catholic [faith](#) held in such dread, that Pelagius himself, in [fear](#) of condemnation, condemned it. And, moreover, if we say that our perseverance is of ourselves, not of [God](#), they answer that we have the beginning of our [faith](#) of ourselves in such wise as the end, thus arguing that we have that beginning of ourselves much more, if of ourselves we have the continuance unto the end, since to perfect is much greater than to begin; and thus repeatedly they conclude that the [grace](#) of God is given according to our merits. But if both are God's gifts, and God foreknew that He would give these His gifts (and who can deny this?), [predestination](#) must be preached,—that God's [true grace](#), that is, the [grace](#) which is not given according to our merits, may be maintained with insuperable defence.

Chapter 55.—Testimony of His Previous Writings and Letters.

And, indeed, in that treatise of which the title is, *Of Rebuke and Grace*, which could not suffice for all my lovers, I think that I have so established that it is the gift of God also to persevere to the end, as I have either never before or almost never so expressly and evidently maintained this in writing, unless my memory deceives me. But I have now said this in a way in which no one before me has said it. Certainly the blessed Cyprian, in the Lord's Prayer, as I have already shown, so explained our petitions as to say that in its very first petition we were asking for perseverance, asserting that we [pray](#) for it when we say, "Hallowed be Your name," [Matthew 6:9](#) although we have been already hallowed in [baptism](#),—so that we may persevere in that which we have begun to be. Let those, however, to whom, in their [love](#) for me, I ought not to be ungrateful, who profess that they embrace, over and above that which comes into the argument, all my views, as you write,—let those, I say, see whether, in the latter portions of the first book of those two which I wrote in the beginning of my [episcopate](#), before the appearance of the Pelagian [heresy](#), to Simplicianus, the [bishop](#) of Milan, there remained anything whereby it might

be called in question that God's [grace](#) is not given according to our merits; and whether I have not there sufficiently argued that even the beginning of [faith](#) is God's gift; and whether from what is there said it does not by consequence result, although it is not expressed, that even perseverance to the end is not given, except by Him who has [predestinated](#) us to His kingdom and [glory](#). Then, did not I many years ago publish that letter which I had already written to the [holy Paulinus](#), [bishop](#) of Nola, against the [Pelagians](#), which they have lately begun to contradict? Let them also look into that letter which I sent to Sixtus, the [presbyter](#) of the Roman Church when we contended in a very sharp conflict against the [Pelagians](#), and they will find it such as is that one to [Paulinus](#). Whence they may gather that the same sort of things were already said and written several years ago against the Pelagian [heresy](#), and that it is to be wondered at that these should now displease them; although I should wish that no one would so embrace all my views as to follow me, except in those things in which he should see me not to have erred. For I am now writing treatises in which I have undertaken to retract my smaller works, for the purpose of demonstrating that even I myself have not in all things followed myself; but I think that, with God's mercy, I have written progressively, and not begun from perfection; since, indeed, I speak more arrogantly than [truly](#), if even now I say that I have at length in this age of mine arrived at perfection, without any [error](#) in what I write. But the difference is in the extent and the subject of an [error](#), and in the facility with which any one corrects it, or the pertinacity with which one endeavours to defend his [error](#). Certainly there is [good](#) hope of that man whom the last day of this life shall find so progressing that whatever was wanting to his progress may be added to him, and that he should be adjudged rather to need perfecting than punishment.

Chapter 56.—God Gives Means as Well as End.

Wherefore if I am unwilling to appear ungrateful to men who have loved me, because some advantage of my labour has attained to them before they loved me, how much rather am I unwilling to be ungrateful to [God](#), whom we should not [love](#) unless He had first loved us and made us to [love](#) Him! since [love](#) is of Him, [1 John 4:7](#) as they have said whom He made not only His great lovers, but also His great preachers. And what is more ungrateful than to deny the [grace](#) of God itself, by saying that it is given to us according to our merits? And this the catholic [faith](#) shuddered at in the [Pelagians](#), and this it objected to Pelagius himself as a capital crime; and this Pelagius himself condemned, not indeed from [love](#) of God's [truth](#), but yet for [fear](#) of his own condemnation. But whoever as a faithful catholic is horrified to say that the [grace](#) of God is given according to our merits, let him not withdraw [faith](#) itself from God's [grace](#), whereby he obtained mercy that he should be faithful; and thus let him attribute also perseverance to the end to God's [grace](#), whereby he obtains the mercy which he daily asks for, not to be led into [temptation](#). But between the beginning of [faith](#) and the perfection of perseverance there are those means whereby we live righteously, which they themselves are agreed in regarding as given by God to us at the [prayer](#) of [faith](#). And all these things—the beginning of [faith](#), to wit, and His other gifts even to the end—God foreknew that He would bestow on His called. It is a matter therefore, of too excessive contentiousness to contradict [predestination](#), or to [doubt](#) concerning [predestination](#).

Chapter 57 [XXII.]—How Predestination Must Be Preached So as Not to Give Offence.

And yet this doctrine must not be preached to congregations in such a way as to seem to an unskilled multitude, or a people of slower understanding, to be in some measure confuted by that very preaching of it. Just as even the foreknowledge of [God](#), which certainly men cannot deny, seems to be refuted if it be said to them, "Whether you run or sleep, you shall be that which He who cannot be deceived has foreknown you to be." And it is the part of a deceitful or an unskilled physician so to compound even a useful medicament, that it either does no good or does harm. But it must be said, "So run that you may lay hold; [1 Corinthians 9:24](#) and thus by your very running you may [know](#) yourselves to be foreknown as those who should run lawfully:" and in whatever other manner the foreknowledge of God may be so preached, that the slothfulness of man may be repulsed.

Chapter 58.—The Doctrine to Be Applied with Discrimination.

Now, therefore, the definite determination of [God's will](#) concerning [predestination](#) is of such a kind that some from unbelief receive the will to [obey](#), and are converted to the [faith](#) or persevere in the [faith](#), while others who abide in the delight of damnable [sins](#), even if they have been [predestinated](#), have not yet arisen, because the aid of pitying [grace](#) has not yet lifted them up. For if any are not yet called whom by His [grace](#) He has [predestinated](#) to be elected, they will receive that [grace](#) whereby they may will to be elected, and may be so; and if any [obey](#), but have not been [predestinated](#) to His kingdom and [glory](#), they are for a season, and will not abide in the same [obedience](#) to the end. Although, then, these things are [true](#), yet they must not be so said to the multitude of hearers as that the address may be applied to themselves also, and those words of those people may be said to them which you have set down in your letter, and which I have above introduced: "The definite determination of [God's will](#) concerning [predestination](#) is of such a kind that some of you from unbelief shall receive the will to [obey](#), and come to the [faith](#)." What need is there for saying, "Some of you"? For if we speak to God's Church, if we speak to [believers](#), why do we say that "some of them" had come to the [faith](#), and seem to do a wrong to the rest, when we may more fittingly say the definite determination of the [will](#) of [God](#) concerning [predestination](#) is of such a kind that from unbelief you shall receive the will to [obey](#), and come to the [faith](#), and shall receive perseverance, and abide to the end?

Chapter 59.—Offence to Be Avoided.

Neither is what follows by any means to be said,—that is, "But others of you who abide in the delight of [sins](#) have not yet arisen, because the aid of pitying [grace](#) has not yet lifted you up;" when it may be and ought to be well and conveniently said, "But if any of you are still delaying in the delightfulness of damnable [sins](#), lay hold of the most

wholesome discipline; and yet when you have done this be not lifted up, as if by your own works, nor boast as if you had not received this. For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good will, [Philippians 1:13](#) and your steps are directed by the Lord, so that you choose His way. But of your own good and righteous course, learn carefully that it is attributable to the [predestination](#) of [divine grace](#)."

Chapter 60.—The Application to the Church in General.

Moreover, what follows where it is said, "But yet if any of you are not yet called, whom by his [grace](#) He has [predestinated](#) to be called, you shall receive that [grace](#) whereby you shall will to be, and be, elected," is said more hardly than it could be said if we consider that we are speaking not to men in general, but to the Church of [Christ](#). For why is it not rather said thus: "And if any of you are not yet called, let us [pray](#) for them that they may be called. For perchance they are so [predestinated](#) as to be granted to our [prayers](#), and to receive that [grace](#) whereby they may will, and be made elected"? For [God](#), who fulfilled all that He [predestinated](#), has willed us also to [pray](#) for the enemies of the [faith](#), that we might hence understand that He Himself also gives to the unbelievers the gift of [faith](#), and makes willing men out of those that were unwilling.

Chapter 61.—Use of the Third Person Rather Than the Second.

But now I marvel if any weak brother among the [Christian](#) congregation can hear in any way with patience what is connected with these words, when it is said to them, "And if any of you [obey](#), if you are [predestinated](#) to be rejected, the power of [obeying](#) will be withdrawn from you, that you may cease to [obey](#)." For what does saying this seem, except to curse, or in a certain way to predict [evils](#)? But if, however, it is desirable or necessary to say anything concerning those who do not persevere, why is it not rather at least said in such a way as was a little while ago said by me,—first of all, so that this should be said, not of them who hear in the congregation, but about others to them; that is, that it should not be said, "If any of you [obey](#), if you are [predestinated](#) to be rejected," but, "If any [obey](#)," and the rest, using the third person of the verb, not the second? For it is not to be said to be desirable, but abominable, and it is excessively harsh and hateful to fly as it were into the face of an audience with abuse, when he who speaks to them says, "And if there are any of you who [obey](#), and are [predestinated](#) to be rejected, the power of [obedience](#) shall be withdrawn from you, that you may cease to [obey](#)." For what is wanting to the doctrine if it is thus expressed: "But if any [obey](#), and are not [predestinated](#) to His kingdom and [glory](#), they are only for a season, and shall not continue in that [obedience](#) unto the end"? Is not the same thing said both more [truly](#) and more fittingly, so that we may seem not as it were to be desiring so much for them, as to relate of others the [evil](#) which they [hate](#), and think does not belong to them, by hoping and [praying](#) for better things? But in that manner in which they think that it must be said, the same judgment may be pronounced almost in the same words also of God's foreknowledge, which

certainly they cannot deny, so as to say, "And if any of you [obey](#), if you are foreknown to be rejected you shall cease to [obey](#)." Doubtless this is very [true](#), assuredly it is; but it is very monstrous, very inconsiderate, and very unsuitable, not by its false declaration, but by its declaration not wholesomely applied to the health of human infirmity.

Chapter 62.—Prayer to Be Inculcated, Nevertheless.

But I do not think that manner which I have said should be adopted in the preaching of [predestination](#) ought to be sufficient for him who speaks to the congregation, except he adds this, or something of this kind, saying, "You, therefore, ought also to hope for that perseverance in [obedience](#) from the Father of Lights, from whom comes down every excellent gift and every perfect gift, [James 1:17](#) and to ask for it in your daily [prayers](#); and in doing this ought to trust that you are not aliens from the [predestination](#) of His people, because it is He Himself who bestows even the power of doing this. And far be it from you to despair of yourselves, because you are bidden to have your hope in Him, not in yourselves. For cursed is every one who has hope in man; [James 17:5](#) and it is [good](#) rather to trust in the Lord than to trust in man, because blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. Holding this hope, serve the Lord in [fear](#), and [rejoice](#) unto Him with trembling. Because no one can be certain of the life [eternal](#) which God who does not lie has promised to the children of promise before the times of [eternity](#),—no one, unless that life of his, which is a state of trial upon the earth, is completed. [Job 7:1](#) But He will make us to persevere in Himself unto the end of that life, since we daily say to Him, 'Lead us not into [temptation](#).'" [Matthew 6:13](#) When these things and things of this kind are said, whether to few [Christians](#) or to the multitude of the [Church](#), why do we [fear](#) to preach the [predestination](#) of the [saints](#) and the [true grace](#) of [God](#),—that is, the [grace](#) which is not given according to our merits,—as the [Holy Scripture](#) declares it? Or, indeed, must it be feared that a man should then despair of himself when his hope is shown to be placed in [God](#), and should not rather despair of himself if he should, in his excess of [pride](#) and unhappiness, place it in himself?

Chapter 63 [XXIII.]—The Testimony of the Whole Church in Her Prayers.

And I wish that those who are slow and weak of heart, who cannot, or cannot as yet, understand the [Scriptures](#) or the explanations of them, would so hear or not hear our arguments in this question as to consider more carefully their [prayers](#), which the Church has always used and will use, even from its beginnings until this age shall be completed. For of this matter, which I am now compelled not only to mention, but even to protect and defend against these new [heretics](#), the Church has never been silent in its [prayers](#), although in its discourses it has not thought that it need be put forth, as there was no adversary compelling it. For when was not [prayer](#) made in the Church for unbelievers and its opponents that they should [believe](#)? When has any believer had a friend, a neighbour, a wife, who did not [believe](#), and has not asked on their behalf from the Lord for a [mind obedient](#) to the [Christian faith](#)? And who has there ever been who has not [prayed](#) for himself that he might abide in the Lord? And who has dared, not only with his voice, but

even in thought, to blame the [priest](#) who invokes the Lord on behalf of [believers](#), if at any time he has said, "Give to them, O Lord, perseverance in You to the end!" and has not rather responded, over such a benediction of his, as well with confessing lips as believing heart, "[Amen](#)"? Since in the Lord's Prayer itself the [believers](#) do not [pray](#) for anything else, especially when they say that petition, "Lead us not into [temptation](#)," save that they may persevere in [holy obedience](#). As, therefore, the Church has both been born and grows and has grown in these [prayers](#), so it has been born and grows and has grown in this [faith](#), by which [faith](#) it is [believed](#) that God's [grace](#) is not given according to the merits of the receivers. For, certainly, the Church would not [pray](#) that [faith](#) should be given to unbelievers, unless it [believed](#) that God converts to Himself both the averse and adverse wills of men. Nor would the Church [pray](#) that it might persevere in the [faith](#) of [Christ](#), not deceived nor overcome by the [temptations](#) of the world, unless it [believed](#) that the Lord has our heart in His power, in such wise as that the good which we do not hold save by our own will, we nevertheless do not hold except He works in us to will also. For if the Church indeed asks these things from Him, but thinks that the same things are given to itself by itself, it makes use of [prayers](#) which are not [true](#), but perfunctory,—which be far from us! For who [truly](#) groans, desiring to receive what he [prays](#) for from the Lord, if he thinks that he receives it from himself, and not from the Lord?

Chapter 64.—In What Sense the Holy Spirit Solicits for Us, Crying, Abba, Father.

And this especially since "we [know](#) not what to [pray](#) for as we ought," says the apostle, "but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; and He that searches the hearts [knows](#) what is the mind of the [Spirit](#), because He makes intercession for the [saints](#) according to [God](#)." [Romans 3:26](#) What is "the Spirit Himself makes intercession," but, "causes to make intercession," "with groanings that cannot be uttered," but "truthful," since the Spirit is [truth](#)? For He it is of whom the apostle says in another place, "[God](#) has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, "crying, Abba, Father!" [Galatians 4:6](#) And here what is the meaning of "crying," but "making to cry," by that figure of speech whereby we call a day that makes people glad, a glad day? And this he makes plain elsewhere when he says, "For you have not received the Spirit of bondage again in [fear](#), but you have received the Spirit of the adoption of sons, in whom we cry, Abba, Father." [Romans 8:15](#) He there said, "crying," but here, "in whom we cry;" opening up, that is to say, the meaning with which he said "crying,"—that is, as I have already explained, "causing to cry," when we understand that this is also itself the gift of [God](#), that with a [true](#) heart and spiritually we cry to [God](#). Let them, therefore, observe how they are mistaken who think that our seeking, asking, knocking is of ourselves, and is not given to us; and say that this is the case because [grace](#) is preceded by our merits; that it follows them when we ask and receive, and seek and find, and it is opened to us when we knock. And they will not understand that this is also of the divine gift, that we [pray](#); that is, that we ask, seek, and knock. For we have received the spirit of adoption of sons, in which we cry, Abba, Father. And this the blessed Ambrose also said. For he says, "To [pray](#) to God also is the work of spiritual [grace](#), as it is written, No one says, Jesus is the Lord, but in the [Holy Spirit](#)."

Chapter 65.—The Church's Prayers Imply the Church's Faith.

These things, therefore, which the Church asks from the Lord, and always has asked from the time she began to exist, God so foreknew that He would give to His called, that He has already given them in [predestination](#) itself; as the apostle declares without any ambiguity. For, writing to Timothy, he says, "Labour along with the gospel according to the power of [God](#), who saves us, and calls us with His [holy](#) calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and [grace](#), which was given us in Christ Jesus before the times of [eternity](#), but is now made manifest by the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ." [2 Timothy 1:8](#), etc. Let him, therefore, say that the Church at any time has not had in its belief the [truth](#) of this [predestination](#) and [grace](#), which is now maintained with a more careful heed against the late [heretics](#); let him say this who dares to say that at any time it has not [prayed](#), or not [truthfully prayed](#), as well that unbelievers might [believe](#), as that [believers](#) might persevere. And if the Church has always [prayed](#) for these benefits, it has always [believed](#) them to be certainly God's gifts; nor was it ever right for it to deny that they were foreknown by Him. And thus Christ's Church has never failed to hold the [faith](#) of this [predestination](#), which is now being defended with new solicitude against these modern [heretics](#).

Chapter 66 [XXIV.]—Recapitulation and Exhortation.

But what more shall I say? I think that I have taught sufficiently, or rather more than sufficiently, that both the beginning of [faith](#) in the [Lord](#), and continuance in the Lord unto the end, are God's gifts. And other [good](#) things which pertain to a good life, whereby God is rightly worshipped, even they themselves on whose behalf I am writing this treatise concede to be God's gifts. Further, they cannot deny that God has foreknown all His gifts, and the people on whom He was going to bestow them. As, therefore, other things must be preached so that he who preaches them may be heard with [obedience](#), so [predestination](#) must be preached so that he who hears these things with [obedience](#) may [glory](#) not in man, and therefore not in himself, but in the Lord; for this also is God's precept, and to hear this precept with [obedience](#)—to wit, that he who glories should [glory](#) in the Lord [1 Corinthians 1:31](#)—in like manner as the rest, is God's gift. And he who has not this gift,—I shrink not from saying it,—whatever others he has, has them in vain. That the [Pelagians](#) may have this we [pray](#), and that our own brethren may have it more abundantly. Let us not, therefore, be prompt in arguments and indolent in [prayers](#). Let us [pray](#), dearly beloved, let us [pray](#) that the [God](#) of [grace](#) may give even to our enemies, and especially to our brethren and lovers, to understand and confess that after that great and unspeakable ruin wherein we have all fallen in one, no one is delivered save by God's [grace](#), and that [grace](#) is not repaid according to the merits of the receivers as if it were due, but is given freely as [true grace](#), with no merits preceding.

Chapter 67.—The Most Eminent Instance of Predestination is Christ Jesus.

But there is no more illustrious instance of [predestination](#) than Jesus Himself, concerning which also I have already argued in the former treatise; and in the end of this I have chosen to insist upon it. There is no more eminent instance, I say, of [predestination](#) than the Mediator Himself. If any believer wishes thoroughly to understand this doctrine, let him consider Him, and in Him he will find himself also. The believer, I say; who in Him believes and confesses the [true human nature](#) that is our own, however singularly elevated by assumption by [God the Word](#) into the only [Son of God](#), so that He who assumed, and what He assumed, should be one person in Trinity. For it was not a Quaternity that resulted from the assumption of [man](#), but it remained a Trinity, inasmuch as that assumption ineffably made the [truth](#) of one person in [God](#) and [man](#). Because we say that Christ was not only [God](#), as the Manichean [heretics](#) contend; nor only man, as the Photinian [heretics](#) assert; nor in such wise man as to have less of anything which of a certainty pertains to [human nature](#),—whether a [soul](#), or in the [soul](#) itself a rational [mind](#), or flesh not taken of the [woman](#), but made from the Word converted and changed into flesh,—all which three false and empty notions have made the three various and diverse parties of the [Apollinarian heretics](#); but we say that Christ was [true God](#), born of [God](#) the Father without any beginning of time; and that He was also [true](#) or very man, born of human mother in the certain fulness of time; and that His humanity, whereby He is less than the [Father](#), does not diminish anything from His divinity, whereby He is equal to the Father. For both of them are One Christ—who, moreover, most [truly](#) said in respect of the [God](#), "I and the Father are one;" [John 10:30](#) and most [truly](#) said in respect of the man, "My Father is greater than I." [John 14:28](#) He, therefore, who made of the seed of [David](#) this righteous man, who never should be unrighteous, without any merit of His preceding will, is the same who also makes righteous men of unrighteous, without any merit of their will preceding; that He might be the head, and they His members. He, therefore, who made that man with no precedent merits of His, neither to deduce from His origin nor to commit by His [will](#) any [sin](#) which should be remitted to Him, the same makes [believers](#) on Him with no preceding merits of theirs, to whom He forgives all [sin](#). He who made Him such that He never had or should have an [evil](#) will, the same makes in His members a good will out of an [evil](#) one. Therefore He [predestinated](#) both Him and us, because both in Him that He might be our head, and in us that we should be His body, He foreknew that our merits would not precede, but that His doings should.

Chapter 68.—Conclusion.

Let those who read this, if they understand, give God thanks, and let those who do not understand, [pray](#) that they may have the inward Teacher, from whose presence comes [knowledge](#) and understanding. [Proverbs 2:6](#) But let those who think that I am in [error](#), consider again and again carefully what is here said, lest perchance they themselves may be mistaken. And when, by means of those who read my writings, I become not only wiser, but even more perfect, I acknowledge God's favour to me; and this I especially look for at the hands of the teachers of the [Church](#), if what I write comes into their hands, and they condescend to acknowledge it.

