

Homily 1 1 John 1:1-2:11

by St. Augustine

St. Augustine's homily emphasizes the importance of fellowship with God through confession and living in the light of Christ's teachings.

Scripture: 1 John 1:1-2

Topics: "Gods Love", "Christian Fellowship"

Description

St. Augustine preaches about the importance of abiding in the light of God's love and the dangers of walking in darkness by hating our brothers. He emphasizes the need for fellowship with God and the significance of confessing our sins to receive forgiveness and purification. St. Augustine highlights that true love for our brothers is a sign of abiding in the light, while hatred leads to stumbling in darkness and blindness to God's truth and presence.

Transcript

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, and which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life: and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us: the things which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and that our fellowship may be with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son shall cleanse us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And in this we do know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that says he knows Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keeps His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we be perfect. He that says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked. Beloved, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have

heard. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shines. He that says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loves his brother abides in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. For he that hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

1. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the word of life. Who is he that with hands does handle the Word, except because The Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us? Now this Word which was made flesh that it might be handled, began to be flesh, of the Virgin Mary: but not then began the Word, for the Apostle says, That which was from the beginning. See whether his epistle does not bear witness to his gospel, where ye lately heard, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. John 1:1 Perchance, Concerning the word of life one may take as a sort of expression concerning Christ, not the very body of Christ which was handled with hands. See what follows: And the Life was manifested. Christ therefore is the word of life. And whereby manifested? For it was from the beginning, only not manifested to men: but it was manifested to angels, who saw it and fed on it as their bread. But what says the Scripture? Man did eat angels' bread. Well then the Life was manifested in the flesh; because it exhibited in manifestation, that that which can be seen by the heart only, should be seen by the eyes also, that it might heal the hearts. For only by the heart is the Word seen: but the flesh is seen by the bodily eyes also. We had wherewith to see the flesh, but had not wherewith to see the Word: the Word was made flesh, which we might see, that so that in us might be healed wherewith we might see the Word.

2. And we have seen and are witnesses. 1 John 1:2 Perhaps some of the brethren who are not acquainted with the Greek do not know what the word witnesses is in Greek: and yet it is a term much used by all, and had in religious reverence; for what in our tongue we call witnesses, in Greek are martyrs. Now where is the man that has not heard of martyrs, or where the Christian in whose mouth the name of martyrs dwells not every day and would that it so dwelt in the heart also, that we should imitate the sufferings of the martyrs, not persecute them with our cups! Well then, We have seen and are witnesses, is as much as to say, We have seen and are martyrs. For it was for bearing witness of that which they had seen, and bearing witness of that which they had heard from them who had seen, that, while their testimony itself displeased the men against whom it was delivered, the martyrs suffered all that they did suffer. The martyrs are God's witnesses. It pleased God to have men for His witnesses, that men also may have God to be their witness. We have seen, says he, and are witnesses. Where have they seen? In the manifestation. What means, in the manifestation? In the sun, that is, in this light of day. And how should He be seen in the sun who made the sun, except as in the sun He has set His tabernacle; and Himself as a bridegroom going forth out of his chamber, exulted as a giant to run His course? He before the sun, who made the sun, He before the day-star, before all the stars, before all angels, the true Creator, (for all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made,) that He might be seen by eyes of flesh which see the sun, set His very tabernacle in the sun, that is, showed His flesh in manifestation of this light of day: and that Bridegroom's chamber was the Virgin's womb, because in that virginal womb were joined the two, the Bridegroom and the bride, the Bridegroom the Word, and the bride the flesh; because it is written, And they two shall be one flesh; Genesis 2:24 and the Lord says in the Gospel, Therefore they are no more two but one flesh. Matthew 19:6 And Esaias remembers right well that they are two: for speaking in the person of Christ he says, He has set a mitre upon me as upon a bridegroom, and adorned me with an ornament as a bride. One seems to speak, yet makes Himself at once Bridegroom and Bride; because not two, but one flesh: because the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us. To that flesh the Church is joined,

and so there is made the whole Christ, Head and body.

3. And we are witnesses, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us: i.e., manifested among us: which might be more plainly expressed, manifested to us. The things, therefore, which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you. 1 John 1:3 Those saw the Lord Himself present in the flesh, and heard words from the mouth of the Lord, and told them to us. Consequently we also have heard, but have not seen. Are we then less happy than those who saw and heard? And how does he add, That ye also may have fellowship with us? Those saw, we have not seen, and yet we are fellows; because we hold the faith in common. For there was one who did not believe even upon seeing, and would needs handle, and so believe, and said, I will not believe except I thrust my fingers into the place of the nails, and touch His scars. John 20:25-29 And He did give Himself for a time to be handled by the hands of men, who always gives Himself to be seen by the sight of the angels; and that disciple did handle, and exclaimed, My Lord, and my God! Because he touched the Man, he confessed the God. And the Lord, to console us who, now that He sits in heaven, cannot touch Him with the hand, but only reach Him with faith, said to him, Because you have seen, you have believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe. We are here described, we designated. Then let the blessedness take place in us, of which the Lord predicted that it should take place; let us firmly hold that which we see not; because those tell us who have seen. That ye also, says he, may have fellowship with us. And what great matter is it to have fellowship with men? Do not despise it; see what he adds: and our fellowship may be with God the Father, and Jesus Christ His Son. And these things, says he, we write unto you, that your joy may be full. 1 John 1:4 Full joy he means in that fellowship, in that charity, in that unity.

4. And this is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you. 1 John 1:5 What is this? Those same have seen, have handled with their hands, the Word of life: He was from the beginning, and for a time was made visible and palpable, the Only-begotten Son of God. For what thing did He come, or what new thing did He tell us? What was it His will to teach? Wherefore did He this which He did, that the Word should be made flesh, that God over all things should suffer indignities from men, that He should endure to be smitten upon the face by the hands which Himself had made? What would He teach? What would He show? What would He declare? Let us hear: for without the fruit of the precept the hearing of the story, how Christ was born, and how Christ suffered, is a mere pastime of the mind, not a strengthening of it. What great thing do you hear? With what fruit you hear, see to that. What would He teach? What declare? Hear. That God is light, says he, and there is no darkness in Him at all. Hitherto, he has named indeed the light, but the words are dark: good is it for us that the very light which he has named should enlighten our hearts, and we should see what he has said. This it is that we declare, that God is light, and there is no darkness in Him at all. Who would dare to say that there is darkness in God? Or what is the light? Or what darkness? Lest haply he speaks of such things as pertain to these eyes of ours. God is light. Says some man, The sun also is light, and the moon also is light, and a candle is light. It ought to be something far greater than these, far more excellent, and far more surpassing. How much God is distant from the creature, how much the Maker from the making, how much Wisdom from that which is made by Wisdom, far beyond all things must this light needs be. And haply we shall be near to it, if we get to know what this light is, and apply ourselves unto it, that by it we may be enlightened; because in ourselves we are darkness, and only when enlightened by it can we become light, and not be put to confusion by it, being put to confusion by ourselves. Who is he that is put to confusion by himself? He that knows himself to be a sinner. Who is he that by it is not put to confusion? He who by it is enlightened. What is it to be enlightened by it? He that now sees himself to be darkened by sins, and desires to be enlightened by it, draws near to it: whence the Psalm says, Draw near unto Him, and be ye enlightened; and your faces

shall not be ashamed. But you shall not be shamed by it, if, when it shall show you to yourself that you are foul, your own foulness shall displease you, that you may perceive its beauty. This it is that He would teach.

5. And may it be that we say this over-hastily? Let the apostle himself make this plain in what follows. Remember what was said at the outset of our discourse, that the present epistle commends charity: God is light, says he, and in Him is no darkness at all. And what said he above? That ye may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship may be with God the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. But moreover, if God be light, and in Him is no darkness at all, and we must have fellowship with Him, then from us also must the darkness be driven away, that there may be light created in us, for darkness cannot have fellowship with light.

To this end, see what follows: If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie. 1 John 1:6 You have also the Apostle Paul saying, Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 2 Corinthians 6:14 You say you have fellowship with God, and you walk in darkness; and God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all: then how should there be fellowship between light and darkness? At this point therefore a man may say to himself, What shall I do? How shall I be light?

I live in sins and iniquities. There steals upon him, as it were, a desperation and sadness. There is no salvation save in the fellowship of God. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. But sins are darkness, as the Apostle says of the devil and his angels, that they are rulers of this darkness. Ephesians 6:12 He would not call them of darkness, save as rulers of sins, having lordship over the wicked. Then what are we to do, my brethren? Fellowship with God must be had, other hope of life eternal is none; now God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all: now iniquities are darkness; by iniquities we are pressed down, that we cannot have fellowship with God: what hope have we then?

Did I not promise to speak something during these days, that shall cause gladness? Which if I make not good, this is sadness. God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all; sins are darkness: what shall become of us? Let us hear, whether perhaps He will console, lift up, give hope, that we faint not by the way. For we are running, and running to our own country; and if we despair of attaining, by that very despair we fail. But He whose will it is that we attain, that He may keep us safe in our own land, feeds us in the way.

Hear we then: If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. Let us not say that we have fellowship with Him, if we walk in darkness. If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. 1 John 1:7 Let us walk in the light, as He is in the light, that we may be able to have fellowship with Him. And what are we to do about our sins? Hear what follows, And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son shall purge us from all sin.

Great assurance has God given! Well may we celebrate the Passover, wherein was shed the blood of the Lord, by which we are cleansed from all sin! Let us be assured: the handwriting which was against us, Colossians 2:14 the bond of our slavery, the devil held, but by the blood of Christ it is blotted out. The blood, says he, of His Son shall purge us from all sin. What means, from all sin? Mark: lo even now, in the name of Christ whom these here have now confessed, who are called infants, have all their sins been cleansed.

They came in old, they went out new. How, came in old, went out new? Old men they came in, infants they went out. For the old life is old age with all its dotage, but the new life is the infancy of regeneration. But what are we to do? The past sins are pardoned, not only to these but to us; and after the pardon and

abolition of all sins, by living in this world in the midst of temptations, some haply have been contracted. Therefore what he can, let man do; let him confess himself to be what he is, that he may be cured by Him who always is what He is: for He always was and is; we were not and are.

6. For see what He says; If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8 Consequently, if you have confessed yourself a sinner, the truth is in you: for the Truth itself is light. Your life has not yet shone in perfect brightness, because there are sins in you; but yet you have already begun to be enlightened, because there is in you the confession of sins. For see what follows: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to purge us from all iniquity. 1 John 1:9 Not only the past, but haply if we have contracted any from this life; because a man, so long as he bears the flesh, cannot but have some at any rate light sins. But these which we call light, do not make light of. If you make light of them when you weigh them, be afraid when you count them. Many light make one huge sin: many drops fill the river; many grains make the lump. And what hope is there? Before all, confession: lest any think himself righteous, and, before the eyes of God who sees that which is, man, that was not and is, lift up the neck. Before all, then, confession; then, love: for of charity what is said? Charity covers a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8 Now let us see whether he commends charity in regard of the sins which subsequently overtake us: because charity alone extinguishes sins. Pride extinguishes charity: therefore humility strengthens charity; charity extinguishes sins. Humility goes along with confession, the humility by which we confess ourselves sinners: this is humility, not to say it with the tongue, as if only to avoid arrogancy, lest we should displease men if we should say that we are righteous. This do the ungodly and insane: I know indeed that I am righteous, but what shall I say before men? If I shall call myself righteous, who will bear it, who tolerate? Let my righteousness be known unto God: I however will say that I am a sinner, but only that I may not be found odious for arrogancy. Tell men what you are, tell God what you are. Because if you tell not God what you are, God condemns what He shall find in you. Would you not that He condemn you? Condemn you. Would you that He forgive? Do you acknowledge, that you may be able to say unto God, Turn Your face from my sins. Say also to Him those words in the same Psalm, For I acknowledge mine iniquity. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to purge us from all iniquity. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1 John 1:9-10 If you shall say, I have not sinned, you make Him a liar, while you wish to make yourself true. How is it possible that God should be a liar, and man true, when the Scripture says the contrary, Every man a liar, God alone true? Romans 3:4 Consequently, God true through Himself, you true through God; because through yourself, a liar.

7. And lest haply he should seem to have given impunity for sins, in that he said, He is faithful and just to cleanse us from all iniquity; and men henceforth should say to themselves, Let us sin, let us do securely what we will, Christ purges us, is faithful and just, purges us from all iniquity: He takes from you an evil security, and puts in an useful fear. To your own hurt you would be secure; you must be solicitous. For He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, provided you always displease yourself, and be changing until you be perfected. Accordingly, what follows? My little children, these things I write unto you, that you sin not. 1 John 2:1 But perchance sin overtakes us from our mortal life: what shall be done then? What? Shall there be now despair? Hear: And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiator for our sins. 1 John 2:1-2 He then is the advocate; do your endeavor not to sin: if from the infirmity of this life sin shall overtake you, see to it straightway, straightway be displeased, straightway condemn it; and when you have condemned, you shall come assured unto the Judge. There have you the advocate: fear not to lose your cause in your confession. For if oft-times in this life a man commits his cause to an eloquent tongue, and is not lost; you commit yourself to the Word, and

shall you be lost? Cry, We have an advocate with the Father.

8. See John himself observing humility. Assuredly he was a righteous and a great man, who from the Lord's bosom drank in the secrets of His mysteries; he, the man who by drinking from the Lord's bosom indited of His Godhead, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God: he, being such a man as this, says not, You have an advocate with the Father; but, If any man sin, an advocate, says he, have we. He says not, you have; nor says, you have me; nor says, you have Christ Himself: but he puts Christ, not himself, and says, also, We have, not, you have. He chose rather to put himself in the number of sinners that he might have Christ for his advocate, than to put himself in Christ's stead as advocate, and to be found among the proud that shall be condemned. Brethren, Jesus Christ the righteous, even Him have we for our advocate with the Father; He, even He, is the propitiation for our sins. This whoso has held fast, has made no heresy; this whoso has held fast, has made no schism. For whence came schisms? When men say, we are righteous, when men say, we sanctify the unclean, we justify the ungodly; we ask, we obtain. But what says John? And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. But some man will say: then do the saints not ask for us? Then do bishops and rulers not ask for the people? Yea, but mark the Scriptures, and see that rulers also commend themselves to the prayers of the people. Thus the apostle says to the congregation, Praying withal for us also. Colossians 4:3 The apostle prays for the people, the people prays for the apostle. We pray for you, brethren: but do ye also pray for us. Let all the members pray one for another; let the Head intercede for all. Therefore it is no marvel that he here goes on and shuts the mouths of them that divide the Church of God. For he that has said, We have Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins: having an eye to those who would divide themselves, and would say, Lo, here is Christ, lo, there; Matthew 24:23 and would show Him in a part who bought the whole and possesses the whole, he immediately goes on to say, Not our sins only, but also the sins of the whole world. What is this, brethren? Certainly we have found it in the fields of the woods, we have found the Church in all nations. Behold, Christ is the propitiation for our sins; not ours only, but also the sins of the whole world. Behold, you have the Church throughout the whole world; do not follow false justifiers who in truth are cutters off. Be in that mountain which has filled the whole earth: because Christ is the propitiation for our sins; not only ours, but also the sins of the whole world, which He has bought with His blood.

9. And in this, says he, we do know Him, if we keep His commandments. 1 John 2:3-4 What commandments? He that says, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But still you ask, What commandments? But whoso, says he, keeps His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. 1 John 2:5 Let us see whether this same commandment be not called love. For we were asking, what commandments, and he says, But whoso keeps His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. Mark the Gospel, whether this be not the commandment: A new commandment, says the Lord, give I unto you, that you love one another. John 13:34 -- In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we be perfected. Perfected in love, he calls them: what is perfection of love? To love even enemies, and love them for this end, that they may be brethren. For not a carnal love ought ours to be. To wish a man temporal good, is good; but though that fail, let the soul be safe. Do you wish life to any that is your friend? You do well. Do you rejoice at the death of your enemy? You do badly. But haply both to your friend the life you wish him is not for his good, and to your enemy the death you rejoice at has been for his good. It is uncertain whether this present life be profitable to any man or unprofitable: but the life which is with God without doubt is profitable. So love your enemies as to wish them to become your brethren; so love your enemies as that they may be called into your fellowship. For so loved He who, hanging on the cross, said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Luke 23:34 For he did not say, Father let them live

long, me indeed they kill, but let them live. He was casting out from them the death which is for ever and ever, by His most merciful prayer, and by His most surpassing might. Many of them believed, and the shedding of the blood of Christ was forgiven them. At first they shed it while they raged; now they drank it while they believed. In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we be made perfect. Touching the very perfection of love of enemies, the Lord admonishing, says, Be therefore perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:48 He, therefore, that says he abides in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked. 1 John 2:6 How, brethren? What does he advise us? He that says he abides in Him, i.e., in Christ, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked. Haply the advice is this, that we should walk on the sea? That be far from us! It is this then, that we walk in the way of righteousness. In what way? I have already mentioned it. He was fixed upon the cross, and yet was He walking in this very way: this way is the way of charity, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. If, therefore, you have learned to pray for your enemy, you walk in the way of the Lord.

10. Dearly beloved, I write unto you no new commandment, but the old commandment which you had from the beginning. 1 John 2:7 What commandment calls he old? Which you had, says he, from the beginning. Old then, in this regard, that you have already heard it: otherwise he will contradict the Lord, where He says, A new commandment give I unto you, that you love one another. John 13:34 But why an old commandment? Not as pertaining to the old man. But why? Which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have heard. Old then, in this regard, that you have already heard it. And the selfsame he shows to be new, saying, Again, a new commandment write I unto you. 1 John 2:8 Not another, but the selfsame which he has called old, the same is also new. Why? Which thing is true in Him and in you. Why old, you have already heard: i.e., because you knew it already. But why new? Because the darkness is past, and the true light now shines. Lo, whence it is new: because the darkness pertains to the old man, but the light to the new man. What says the Apostle Paul? Put off the old man, and put on the new. Colossians 3:9-10 And again what says he? You were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. Ephesians 5:8

11. He that says he is in the light-- now he is making all clear that he has been saying-- he that says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. 1 John 2:9 What! My brethren, how long shall we say to you, Love your enemies? Matthew 5:44 See whether, what is worse, you do not hate your brethren. If you loved only your brethren, you would be not yet perfect: but if you hate your brethren, what are you, where are you? Let each look to his own heart: let him not keep hatred against his brother for any hard word; on account of earthly contention let him not become earth. For whoso hates his brother, let him not say that he walks in the light. He that says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. Thus, some man who was a pagan has become a Christian; mark well: behold he was in darkness, while he was a pagan: now is he made henceforth a Christian; thanks be to God, say all joyfully; the apostle is read, where he says joyfully, For you were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. Ephesians 5:8 Once he worshipped idols, now he worships God; once he worshipped the things he made, now he worships Him that made him. He is changed: thanks be to God, say all Christians with joyful greeting. Why? Because henceforth he is one that adores the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; one that detests demons and idols. Yet still is John solicitous about our convert: while many greet him with joy, by him he is still looked upon with apprehension. Brethren, let us gladly welcome a mother's solicitude. Not without cause is the mother solicitous about us when others rejoice: by the mother, I mean charity: for she dwelt in the heart of John, when he spoke these words. Wherefore, but because there is something he fears in us, even when men now hail us with joy? What is it that he fears? He that says he is in the light-- What is this? He that says now he is a Christian--and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now.

Which there is no need to expound: but to be glad of it, if it be not so, or to bewail it, if it be.

12. He that loves his brother abides (manet) in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 1 John 2:10 -- I beseech you by Christ: God is feeding us, we are about to refresh our bodies in the name of Christ; they both are in some good measure refreshed, and are to be refreshed: let the mind be fed. Not that I am going to speak for a long time, do I say this; for behold, the lesson is now coming to an end: but lest haply of weariness we should hear less attentively than we ought that which is most necessary.-- He that loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no scandal, or none occasion of stumbling, in him.

Who are they that take scandal or make scandal? They that are offended in Christ, and in the Church. They that are offended in Christ, are as if burnt by the sun, those in the Church as by the moon. But the Psalm says, The sun shall not burn you by day, neither the moon by night: i.e., if you hold fast charity, neither in Christ shall you have occasion of falling, nor in the Church; neither Christ shall you forsake, nor the Church. For he that forsakes the Church, how is he in Christ who is not in the members of Christ?

How is he in Christ who is not in the body of Christ? Those therefore take scandal, or, occasion of falling, who forsake Christ or the Church. Whence do we understand that the Psalm in saying, By day shall the sun not burn you, nor the moon by night, says it of this, that the burning means scandal, or occasion of stumbling? In the first place mark the similitude itself. Just as the person whom something is burning says, I cannot bear it, I cannot away with it, and draws back; so those persons who cannot bear some things in the Church, and withdraw themselves either from the name of Christ or from the Church, are taking scandal.

For see how those took scandal as from the sun, those carnal ones to whom Christ preached of His flesh, saying, He that eats not the flesh of the Son of Man and drinks His blood, shall have no life in him. John 6:54-69 Some seventy persons said, This is an hard saying, and went back from Him, and there remained the twelve. All those the sun burnt, and they went back, not being able to bear the force of the Word. There remained therefore the twelve. And lest haply men should imagine that they confer a benefit upon Christ by believing on Christ, and not that the benefit is conferred by Him upon them; when the twelve were left, the Lord said to them, Will you also go?

That you may know that I am necessary to you, not you to me. But those whom the sun had not burnt, answered by the voice of Peter: Lord, You have the word of eternal life; whither shall we go? But who are they that the Church as the moon burns by night? They that have made schisms. Hear the very word used in the apostle: Who is offended, and I burn not? 2 Corinthians 11:29 In what sense then is it, that there is no scandal or occasion of stumbling in him that loves his brother?

Because he that loves his brother, bears all things for unity's sake; because it is in the unity of charity that brotherly love exists. Some one, I know not who, offends you: whether it be a bad man, or as you suppose a bad man, or as you pretend a bad man: and do you desert so many good men? What sort of brotherly love is that which has appeared in these persons? While they accuse the Africans, they have deserted the whole world! What, were there no saints in the whole world?

Or was it possible they should be condemned by you unheard? But oh! If you loved your brethren, there would be none occasion of stumbling in you. Hear the Psalm, what it says: Great peace have they that love Your law, and there is to them none occasion of stumbling. Great peace it says there is for them that love the law of God, and that is why there is to them none occasion of stumbling. Those then who take scandal, or, occasion of stumbling, destroy peace. And of whom says he that they take not and make not

occasion of stumbling?

They that love God's law. Consequently they are in charity. But some man will say, He said it of them that love God's law, not of the brethren. Hear what the Lord says: A new commandment give I unto you that you love one another. John 13:34 What is the Law but commandment? Moreover, how is it they do not take occasion of stumbling, but because they forbear one another? As Paul says, Forbearing one another in love, studying to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3 And to show that this is the law of Christ, hear the same apostle commending this very law. Bear one another's burdens, says he, and so shall you fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

13. For he that hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes. 1 John 2:11 A great thing, my brethren: mark it, we beseech you. He that hates his brother walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. What so blind as these who hate their brethren? For that you may know that they are blind, they have stumbled at a Mountain. I say the same things often, that they may not slip out of your memory.

The Stone which was cut out of the Mountain without hands, is it not Christ, who came of the kingdom of the Jews, without the work of man? Has not that Stone broken in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth, that is, all the dominations of idols and demons? Has not that Stone grown, and become a great mountain, and filled the whole earth? Do we point with the finger to this Mountain in like manner as the moon on its third day is pointed out to men? For example, when they wish people to see the new moon, they say, Lo, the moon! lo, where it is!

And if there be some there who are not sharp-sighted, and say, Where? Then the finger is put forth that they may see it. Sometimes when they are ashamed to be thought blind, they say they have seen what they have not seen. Do we in this way point out the Church, my brethren? Is it not open? Is it not manifest? Has it not possessed all nations? Is not that fulfilled which so many years before was promised to Abraham, that in his seed should all nations be blessed? Genesis 22:18 It was promised to one believer, and the world is filled with thousands of believers.

Behold here the mountain filling the whole face of the earth! Behold the city of which it is said, A city set upon a mountain cannot be hid! Matthew 5:14 But those stumble at the mountain, and when it is said to them, Go up; There is no mountain, say they, and dash their heads against it sooner than seek a habitation there. Esaias was read yesterday; whosoever of you was awake not with his eyes only but with his ear, and not the ear of the body but the ear of the heart, noted this; In the last days shall the mountain of the house of the Lord be manifest, prepared upon the top of the mountains.

Isaiah 2:2 What so manifest as a mountain? But there are even mountains unknown, because they are situated in one part of the earth. Which of you knows Mount Olympus? Just as the people who dwell there do not know our Giddaba. These mountains are in different parts of the earth. But not so that Mountain, for it has filled the whole face of the earth, and of it is said, Prepared upon the top of the mountains. It is a Mountain above the tops of all mountains. And, says he, to it shall be gathered all nations.

Who can fail to be aware of this Mountain? Who breaks his head by stumbling against it? Who is ignorant of the city set upon a mountain? But marvel not that it is unknown by these who hate the brethren, because they walk in darkness and know not whither they go, because the darkness has blinded their eyes. They do not see the Mountain: I would not have you marvel; they have no eyes. How is it they have

no eyes? Because the darkness has blinded them. How do we prove this? Because they hate the brethren, in that, while they are offended at Africans, they separate themselves from the whole earth: in that they do not tolerate for the peace of Christ those whom they defame, and do tolerate for the sake of Donatus those whom they condemn.

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