

For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.*

John was writing his eye-witness account of Jesus some thirty years later than the other three accounts, possibly around 95AD. There had been time for growth, reflection and observation. Many thousands of Christians had by then lost their lives for their faith in the Lord Jesus, both in Rome and in Jerusalem. John himself had been in prison and was now in exile, the last of Jesus' twelve apostles to remain alive.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

Continuation of John 12: 29-50

Ver. 29.— *The people therefore that stood by, and heard it* (this trumpet voice of God the Father) *said that it thundered.* Because it was very loud and resonant. Or perhaps because it was not articulate, but like the confused sound of thunder. S. Chrysostom says, “The voice was clear and significant enough, but they being dull and carnal, it soon passed away, and they retained merely the sound of it.” And further on, “They knew it was articulate, but did not take in its meaning.” But the truer meaning, Rupertus, and after him Maldonatus, say is this, “That they all heard this articulate voice and understood its meaning, viz., that Jesus was the Son of God; but that on account of the loudness of the voice they could not persuade themselves it was really a voice, but that either it was thunder, and that they were mistaken in supposing they had heard an articulate voice as of a man, or that it was certainly the voice of an angel.” They thought also that the Evangelist mentioned this, in order to show that it was not a low or indistinct voice, such as Christ only could hear, and that there were no other witnesses, but that it was so loud and so clear that they not only all heard it, but heard it so plainly that some thought it was thunder, some the voice of an angel,

Christ alludes to Eccles. i. 5, “The Word of God Most High is a fountain of wisdom, and the entrance thereto everlasting commandments;” and to Baruch iii. 9. “If then,” says S. Augustine (*Serm. cxxxvi. (nunc cclxvii.) De Temp.*), “ye wish to have the Holy Spirit, hold fast to charity, love the truth, long for unity, and ye will attain to eternity.”

Christ therefore summed up all His teaching to the people in this saying, “His commandment is eternal life,” in order, when he was now going to death, to impress on the Jews and on all who should come after the perpetual memory of eternity, and a longing for life everlasting; to stimulate them to follow His faith and examples. For nothing so stimulates the mind for good, as a serious and frequent meditation on eternity. As the Psalmist says (Ps. cxix. 96), “I have seen an end of all perfection, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad.” This means, all sublunary things have an end, but the commandment of God has no end. It endures for ever, and leads those who keep it to a blessed eternity, but those who despise it to eternal punishments. Sufferings are momentary, but delights are eternal. But momentary are our delights, our sufferings eternal.

Symbolically, S. Augustine says, “If the Son Himself is eternal life, and the commandment of God is eternal life, what else is meant, but that I am the commandment of the Father?”

Whatsoever I speak therefore (“in announcing Myself to be the Word,” says the Interlinear Gloss), *even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.* That is, “As He who is True begat Me who am Truth, so I the Truth proclaim Myself as Truth.” And S. Augustine, “Just as the Father spake as being True, so does the Son speak as being the Truth; the True begat the Truth.”

The genuine printed commentary of S. Cyril here begins again.

person, and as a witness against unbelievers before Christ as Judge in the day of judgment.

Ver. 49.—*For I have not spoken of Myself, &c.* This gives the reason why the word of Christ would condemn the Jews, because He spake at the command of the Father, and therefore he who believed not in Him believed not in God. He who despised Him despised God, and would therefore experience Him as his judge. So the Syriac version. Rupertus somewhat differently says, “The word which I spake has the force of a judgment, for I speak not of Myself.” SS. Augustine, Ambrose, and Bede think that Christ is here speaking of Himself as God. I, as God, speak not from Myself, but from the Father who gave Me My Divine Nature, and with It omniscience, and My full power of saying and speaking. Hear S. Augustine, “In the Wisdom of the Father, which is the Word, are all the commands of the Father. But the command is said to be given, since He to whom it is given, is not of Himself. But to give to the Son is the same as begetting the Son.” “All these things were said,” says S. Chrysostom, “for their sakes that they might have no excuse.” And the Gloss, “The Father gave the command to the Son, by begetting Him, as His Very Word and Wisdom, as He gave Him life by begetting Him who is life.”

More simply S. Cyril and Chrysostom think that Christ is here speaking of Himself as man. For thus did He properly receive a command from the Father to say or speak this or that, and nothing else. Christ speaks of Himself in an humble manner, in order to move the haughty Jews, who believed Him not to be God. As if He said, “Granting that I am a mere man, as ye think, yet ye ought to believe Me, for I speak nothing of Myself, but all things which I speak I have heard of the Father.” Hence theologians infer (though some deny it) that Christ received a command from God for saying everything He said, and for doing everything He did. For if the Father commanded Him in these lesser matters, He did so in greater matters, as the working of miracles and mighty deeds. What Rupertus says is an adaptation to circumstances. “I have received a commandment from the Father what to say now forbearingly to those who gainsay Me, and what I shall pronounce terribly in the last judgment, when no one will dare to gainsay Me.”

What I shall say, and what I shall speak. Between saying and speaking there is this difference. To say (*dicere*) is solemnly to assert anything, to teach, to preach. To speak (*loqui*) is to say anything in a more familiar manner, colloquially. (See Varro, *de Lingua Latina*, lib. v., Cicero, *de Oratore*, and Quintilian, lib. x. chap. 7.)

Ver. 50.—*And I know that His commandment is life everlasting.* The way which leads to eternal life. “If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments.” It is also formally eternal life because the commandment of God is that eternal Law which lives in the eternal reason of things, in the living mind of God. But Christ is not speaking of this. And therefore He asserts that the command is *eternal life*, causally, because it causes, merits, and brings about eternal life. Christ says this, says S. Chrysostom, to induce the Jews to believe Him in those things which He spake by the command of the Father, to induce them by the hope of the highest reward, and consequently by the fear of the heaviest punishment if they do not believe in Him. He tacitly threatens them with this by way of antithesis. And to keep them from doubting this He boldly asserts it. I maintain, says Christ, and assert of My own sure knowledge, that the command of God is the cause of eternal life. I have heard it from God Himself, and I therefore know fully and surely that it has been decreed by Him as an inviolable law. In like manner Christ says, “This is life eternal” (that is, the way to life eternal), “to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent” (John xvii. 3).

while none considered it to be the voice of a man. And this consequently proved that what they considered thunder was in truth the voice of God, for thunder is commonly spoken of as His voice.

Symbolically. This thunder signified that Jesus was the Son of God, who thunders from heaven, and consequently that He Himself was God. For the thunder’s voice refers us back to its source, and leads us to venerate Him, and announce Him to the Gentiles. Again, it signified that Jesus, even as man, not merely thundered Himself with His mouth and flashed forth from His heart, to move hard hearts to penitence and to warm cold hearts with love; but also that He caused the Apostles and His followers to thunder and lighten. In fact, He gave that name to James and John, calling them Sons of Thunder (*Mark iii. 17*). And S. Paul is called by S. Jerome (Epist. lxi.) “The trumpet of the Gospel, the roaring of our Lion, the thunder of the Gentiles,” adding, “for as often as I read him, I seem not to hear words only, but thunder.” Hear S. Chrysostom (*Hom. xxxii. in Rom.*), “Thunder is not so terrible, as was his voice to the devils. For if they dreaded his garments, much more did they dread his voice. For it led them bound and captive, it purified the world, it cured diseases, it expelled vice, it brought in truth; it had Christ dwelling within. For He accompanied him everywhere, and just as were the Cherubim, so also was the voice of Paul. For as God sat in the midst of these heavenly Powers, so sat He on the tongue of S. Paul.” And Nazianzen (Orat. xx.) says, “The words of S. Basil were as thunder, because his example shone as lightning.” Hence the voice of Christ is compared to the voice of many waters (Rev. i. 15) and to the voice of a multitude (Dan. x. 6).

Others said, an angel spake to Him. For this voice was more dignified than that of a man. It was therefore angelic, or rather divine. For an angel, assuming the Person of God the Father, had uttered it.

Ver. 30.—*Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes.* In order that ye may believe in Me, and be saved. I need not this voice for my own sake, for I am the Word of the Father, whom the Father and the Holy Spirit glorify with increate and boundless glory. But ye need it, because some of you object, that I am not the Son of God, nor sent by God; others have doubts on the matter. But this voice of the Father proclaims the contrary of both these statements, so as to remove all doubt. So SS. Augustine, Bede, Rupertus, &c.

Ver. 31.—*Now is the judgment of this world, &c.* Judgment here signifies condemnation, the condemnation of the Jews for condemning Me to death. So SS. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Euthymius. But others understand it to mean judgment in favour of the innocent. It means, in this sense, the time is at hand for the deliverance of the world from the tyranny of Satan. For my death is at hand, by which this deliverance will be effected, and Satan will be cast out of the hearts of the faithful. Rupertus

acutely observes, “Two worlds are here spoken of, one the enemy of God, the other reconciled to Him —the one lost, the other saved.” He founds this distinction on the absence or the presence of the article [but this does not appear in the Greek]. But what then is the judgment of this world, and the casting out of the prince of this world? Surely the coming Passion of Him who is speaking: for that is the judgment of this world, its salvation indeed, as separating from the reprobate the whole body of the elect from the beginning of the world to the hour of His Passion: and the casting out of the prince of this world, holding sway over the lovers of the world, is the reconciliation of the elect Gentiles. “Christ therefore here signifies (1) that He would by His death free the world (that is the Gentiles who would believe in Him) from sin and the devil; (2) that He would drive out the devil from the hearts of the faithful, and also from the temples, that the true God might be worshipped therein; (3) that He would deprive the devil of the power he had heretofore exercised in tempting men, and would also bestow all-powerful grace, by which, if they willed, they would be able to resist temptation; (4) Christ cast out many devils from the bodies of men, and consigned them to hell. So Prosper (*in Dem. Temp.*); and see Luke viii. 31. S. Augustine writes, “He foresaw that after His Passion and glorification many people throughout the whole world would believe on Him, out of whose hearts the devil is cast when they renounce him by their faith. He was also cast out of the hearts of righteous men of old. But it is said here that he will be cast out, because that which then took place in a very few cases, would hereafter take place in many and great multitudes. He is cast out, but yet ceases not to tempt. But it is one thing to rule within, and another to assail from without.” S. Chrysostom in like manner says, “As if a man who assaults his debtors and casts them into prison, and with like madness throws another into prison, who owes him nothing at all, will have to pay the penalty for the wrongs he has done; so will the devil pay the penalty for the wrongs he has done us, by his bold, assaults against Christ.”

Just as He Himself says, Luke xi. 21.

Christ, therefore, knowing that the Gentiles longed to see Him, was grieved that the whole world was overwhelmed with heathenism, and therefore wishes His death to be hastened, in order that He might obtain for them faith and grace from God, and might send His apostles to convert them to God. And in like manner S. Gregory greatly desired the conversion of the Angles. [This Cornelius tells at length]:

Ver. 32.—*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all Things unto Me.* “Exalted by my resurrection and ascension,” says S. Chrysostom. But other commentators refer it to the Cross, as S. John himself explains it. “Christ,” says Maldonatus, “speaks of Himself as a soldier contending with the devil. For as a soldier has an advantage over his enemy if he is on higher ground, so would He, from His Cross, as from a very high and well-defended post, fight against the devil and overcome him. And therefore He called this kind of death an exaltation. When exalted He drew all to Himself, as an eagle carries his prey aloft with him.”

In like manner Mark, the Bishop of Arethusa in Syria, when lifted up on high, and besmeared with honey to attract the bees, laughed at his torturers, and said that they

for it penetrates through all things, and keeps them in memory, because it changelessly abides. And consequently, whenever we conceive in our minds an unworthy thought, we sin in the light. Because It is present to us, even when we are not present to It. And when we walk in crooked ways we stumble against that, from which we are in our deserts far away. But when we believe that we are not seen, we keep our eyes closed in the sunlight. That is, we hide Him from ourselves, but not ourselves from Him.

The same S. Gregory (*Epist.* vii. 32, *ad Dom.*) says, “The warmth of the shepherd is the light of the flock. For the priest of the Lord should shine forth in his conduct and life, in order that the people committed to his charge may be able in the mirror of his life to choose what to follow, and see what to correct.”

Ver. 47.—*And if any hear My words, and keep them not, I judge him not.* That is, does not retain them in his mind, “believes them not,” as in the Greek, though the Vulgate, agreeing with the Syriac and Arabic, reads “*Keep them not;*” as Christ explains in the next verse. By the words “*I judge him not,*” Christ means, I came not into the world to judge it but to save it. But a man who believes not on Me, is at once condemned and judged by his own wickedness and unbelief, and also by the eternal decree of the Father. This is plain from what follows. So S. Cyril, Theophylact, Leontius, and others. See notes on chap. iii. 18. This decree of the Father I will execute at the day of judgment, when I shall return to judge the world, as I have now come to redeem it. S. Chrysostom says, “I judge not,” that is, I am not the cause of his ruin, but he is himself its cause in despising My words.

For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. That is, the inhabitants of the world. “Now,” says S. Augustine, “is the time of mercy, hereafter the time of judgment.”

Ver. 48.—*He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him.* He that believeth not My words will have God as his judge, who will judge him by Me at the judgment day. For, as S. Augustine says (*de Trinit.* i. 28), Christ will not judge by His human power, but by the power of the Word of God.

The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day. S. Augustine (*in loc.*) understands by the “Word” Christ Himself, for He will be the judge. “He has sufficiently set forth that He will be the judge at the last day, for He spake of Himself. He announced Himself, He placed Himself as the Door by which He as Shepherd came in to the sheep.” Others more clearly, and with greater force, say, My word heard and not believed in by the Jews will accuse them at the day of judgment, and with mute voice will proclaim them worthy of hell. “That word,” says Rupertus, “which they heard, which they could not but know to be true, as approved by the wondrous testimony of His miracles, that word will judge, will reprove, will convict. But where will that judge be seated? What sentences of judgment will He give from His throne? He will be close at hand. He will hold His court within. He will proclaim full terribly in the conscience of each one His just sentence. There is a prosopopœia. The word of Christ is here introduced as a

who sent Me, that is, in the Father.”

It is, however, quite plain that the Son is God, consubstantial with God the Father. The Arians denied this, and objected: He who believeth in the Apostles who were sent by God, believeth in God, and yet does not believe that the Apostles are gods. I reply by denying the conclusion. We believe the Apostles, but not in the Apostles. But Christ here says, “He who believeth in Me, believeth in Him who sent Me.” But no one believes in any one, excepting in Him who is God. If, then, we believe in Christ, we believe that He is God: and since there is but one God, we believe that He is numerically the same God with God the Father. And therefore He says, “He that believeth in Me, believeth in Him that sent Me;” He who believes in Me as God the Son, believes also in God My Father, for we have both one nature and one majesty. So SS. Augustine, Cyril, Theophylact, Euthymius, and others. Whence Christ adds, to make it clearer still, —

Ver. 45.—*And he that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me.* Because the nature of us both is one only. And just as through My manhood he sees the Godhead which is latent therein, so does he also see the Godhead of My Father, since it is one and the same. And so S. Augustine says, “He shows that there is no difference whatever between Himself and the Father, insomuch that He who seeth Him seeth the Father.”

Hear S. Cyril in the Council of Ephesus (speaking in our Lord’s name): “Oh, my faithful hearers, do not think meanly and humbly of Me. But rather be most fully persuaded of this respecting Me, that if ye believe in Me, ye will believe in Him who is not merely one among many, but in the Father Himself through Me His Son, and that though I became man for your sakes, yet am I in every respect equal to the Father, and in no respect whatever severed or separated from Him, inasmuch as I am endowed with the same nature, power, and glory with Him.”

Ver. 46.—*I am come a Light into the world,* &c. Christ calls Himself again and again the Light of the world, which sets forth the true faith in God, His worship, devotion towards Him, virtue, and all things which tend to our salvation, and also dispels the darkness of unbelief, idolatry, and all errors and vices, so that what the sun is in the material world, is He in the spiritual. “The word light,” says S. Cyril, “indicates Godhead, for it is the property of God to be the Light of the world. For God in His Essence is spiritual, uncreate, boundless Light, from which every created light, whether spiritual or material, whether of angels or men, whether of the sun or stars or of the elements, is derived as a ray from the Sun.” But it is the peculiar property of the Son that He proceeds from God the Father after the manner of a ray, and of light, according to the Nicene Creed: “Light of Light, Very God of Very God.” For He proceedeth from the Father by understanding and knowledge, as the verbal expression of the mind, which, like the brightest mirror, represents all things. As the Book of Wisdom says (vii. 26), “It is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness.” And Heb. i. 3, “Who being the brightness of His glory, and the image of His substance.” And Ecclus. xxiv. 6 (*Vulg.*), “I made the never-failing Light to arise in the heavens.” These things are spoken of Christ as God. But as man He was sent by God the Father into the world, to enlighten it as the sun in the heavens, when overwhelmed with the darkness of ignorance, unbelief, and sin. See S. John, i. 6, 7.

Symbolically, S. Gregory (*Moral.* xxv. 4) says that eternal Light, which is God, the more changelessly it shines the more piercingly does it see. Even things which are hid it knows well,

were grovelling on the earth, while he was lifted up above them. (See *Theodore*, *Hist.* iii. 7, *Soz.* v. 10.) But Christ alludes to the lifting up of the brazen serpent (see *chap.* iii. 14), and thus teaches us that the Cross is not to be dreaded, but desired, for it alone exalts.

All things. (1) “Soul and body,” say S. Augustine and Bede. (2) But Rupertus says: “Heaven and earth, men, angels, and devils. Because I will cause ‘every knee to bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth’” (Phil. ii. 10). (3) All men who will believe in Me, all nations of men. The Greek Fathers read *πάντας*. But Cornelius prefers the Vulgate “*omnia*” as more expressive, signifying all the choicest things of the world, all the spoils of the devil. The Arabic version has “*each one*,” the Syriac “*all*.”

Draw. Will withdraw from the devil against his will, and not against their own will. For I will sweetly allure, and effectually draw them to Myself, and make them My brethren; nay more, My children, that as I am the Son of God by nature, so they may be the sons of God by adoption. The Greek word *ἐλκύσω* means, I will draw them by force, snatch them out of the power of the devil against his will, and strengthen men, moreover, to withstand their several temptations. See Matt. xi. 12.

Hear S. Leontius (*Serm.* viii. *de Pass.*), treating this whole passage with grace and tenderness. “O wondrous power of the Cross! O ineffable glory of the Passion, wherein is seen the tribunal of Christ, the judgment of the world and the power of the Crucified! For Thou didst draw, O Lord, all things unto Thee. And when Thou didst stretch forth Thine hands all the day to a disobedient and gainsaying people, the whole world felt the force of Thine acknowledged Majesty. Thou didst draw all things to thyself, O Lord, when in execration of the sin of the Jews all the elements pronounced one and the same sentence, when the luminaries of heaven were obscured, and night was turned into day, the earth also was shaken with unwonted quakings, and the whole creation refused its aid to the service of the wicked.” He afterwards follows up the subject, and urges it still more forcibly. “Thou hast drawn all things to Thee, O Lord. When the veil of the temple was rent, and the holy of holies withdrawn from the unworthy priesthood, in order that the figure might be changed into Truth, prophecy into manifestation, and the Law into the Gospel. Thou didst draw all things to Thee, in order that that which was kept hid in the Jewish temple, by shadows and outward signs, the devotion of all nations might everywhere set forth in its full sacramental force before the eyes of all. For now there is a more illustrious order of Levites, a higher dignity of elders, and a more sacred unction of priests. Because thy Cross is the Fount of all blessings, the Source of all graces, and by it believers obtain strength out of weakness, glory out of shame, and life out of death.”

Moreover, Christ, when exalted on the Cross, between heaven and earth,

drew all things to Himself. (1) Because He reconciled heaven and earth, Angels to the Gentiles, Gentiles to Jews, and God to men. For He is our peace, &c., Eph. ii. 14. (2) Because He drew all nations of the world to the faith and love of Himself. He drew them from the earth to the Cross; to penitence, that is, to continual mortification and martyrdom; and from the Cross to heaven. He drew them by the merits and price of His Blood; by His example, and by His Blood. For if Christ, of His own accord, died for us on the Cross, who would not love Him in return? Who would not say with S. Ignatius among the lions, "My love is crucified?" See Zech. xiii. 6 on the words, "I was wounded in the house of my friends." (3) Christ on the Cross drew all things to Himself, *i.e.* the Creator and His creatures. For God by this sacrifice was propitiated towards men, the sun and the heavens were astonished, and as though bewailing the death of their Creator, withdrew their rays from the earth, the air was involved in the thickest darkness, the whole earth, convulsed and shaken, trembled from its very centre; the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened, that both the dead as well as the living might bewail the death of Christ. All creatures therefore looked up towards Christ crucified, as if in amazement, and as offering themselves to fight in His behalf against His murderers and to scatter them abroad.

The Origenists wrongly inferred from this passage, that Christ brought the lost out of hell, and saved them. But as S. Gregory explains (*Epist. lib. vi. 15*), Christ drew all, that is, the elect. "For a man cannot be drawn to God after death who has separated himself from God by his evil life."

Symbolically. S. Bernard (*Serm. xxi. in Cant.*) applies Christ's words to himself, and all "Religious." For they, by contempt of earthly and love of heavenly things, are lifted up from the earth, and therefore draw all things to them. For all things, whether adverse or prosperous, work together for their good: and they themselves possess a source of wealth by trampling it as it were under foot. "For to a faithful man the whole world is full of riches."

Ver. 33.—*But this He said,* &c. The death of the Cross. These are the words of S. John inserted parenthetically.

Ver. 34.—*The people answered Him, We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth ever, and how sayest Thou, the Son of Man must be lifted up?* The Jews understood that Christ spake of His death on the Cross. How then does He say that He would die, when the Law says that He would not die? S. Augustine says, "They understood Him to mean the very thing which they were contemplating. It was not inspired wisdom, but the sting of their conscience which disclosed to them the meaning of these obscure words."

Out of the Law. By the Law is meant the whole of the Old Testament. They understood this from the following passages, Micah, v. 2; PS. cx. 14, lxxxix. 30, 38, lxxii. 5; Is. ix. 7, xl. 8; Ezek. xxxvii. 27; Dan. ix. 26. But these passages speak of the kingdom of Christ after His ascension. This kingdom will be eternal. But Christ elsewhere foretold His death. See Is. liii. 3; Ps. xxii. 12, 17; Dan. ix. 26; Jer. xi. 19.

Ver. 43.—*For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.* "Glory" may here be taken in an active sense. They loved to give glory to men—to the Jews, *e.g.*, and the Pharisees—by saying that they were wise and sound teachers of the Law, rather than to Jesus Christ, by acknowledging Him to be the Messiah.

Secondly, in the passive sense (and this is the best meaning), they preferred to be glorified by men rather than by God, to hear the Pharisees say, "Ye are the true Israelites, who abide in the faith of your fathers, and prefer Moses to this innovator Jesus, and the ancient religion of the Israelites to the novelties of this sect of Christians." So Augustine, Cyril, Bede, Chrysostom, Theophylact, and others. They therefore had the faith of Christ, but not charity. For if they had had it they would have loved the glory of God, rather than that of men, and would have professed with their lips the faith of Christ which they held in their heart. See Rom. x. 10.

Many such are found at the present time in England, Germany, and Poland, who cherish in their minds faith and piety, but who dare not profess them outwardly, for fear of incurring the derision and scoffs of worldlings or heretics. Against these Christ thunders forth, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of my words," &c. (Luke ix. 26.)

The Gloss says wisely (quoting S. Augustine *in loc.*) The Cross is marked on the forehead, which is the seat of shame, to keep us from blushing at the Name of Christ, and seeking the praise of men rather than the praise of God."

Ver. 44.—*Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me* ("only" as adds the Arabic version) *but* (also) *on Him that sent Me.* It is uncertain whether Jesus said these words at the same time as those which precede them (ver. 35), as Maldonatus thinks, *i.e.*, before he hid Himself and withdrew (as I said, ver. 36), being there mentioned by anticipation, when in the regular order it should be placed at the end of the chapter; or at another time, as Theophylact supposes. It is in fact a question to be solved. For Christ in these last three days of His life, came back in the morning to the Temple. But when He saw that some believed not, and that others believed but did not dare to profess their faith, for shame, and for fear of the Pharisees, He cried with a loud voice, to drive away this shame and fear: "He that believeth in Me" believeth not in a mere poor and wretched man, but in a man who is also God, and he therefore "believes in God who sent Me," in God the Father with Whom I am consubstantial. Be not ashamed of my poverty and humility, for though I am outwardly poor and humble, yet in my inward nature I am rich and highly exalted. For I am God of God. And therefore he that believeth in Me believeth in God. But what is more noble and glorious than to believe in God? What can he fear or be ashamed of who believes in God? S. Cyril adds, "Jesus cried out to signify that He did not wish to be worshipped in a cowardly and stealthy way, but that He wished us boldly and clearly to profess and proclaim the faith." "Again He cried out," says Rupertus, "because He had but little time left Him to preach in. He then who wishes to hear Me, to believe and be saved, should do so at once, for after three days no one will be able to hear Me." And so S. Chrysostom says, "Why do ye fear to believe in Me? Faith in God comes through Me. just as he who drinks the water of the river, drinks he not of the source?" And S. Augustine, "Because the manhood only appeared to men, and the Godhead was latent, lest they should think Him to be only that which they saw (a man), and He wished Himself to be believed in (as God) the same and as great as the Father; He saith, 'He that believeth in Me, believeth not in Me,' that is, in that which He seeth, 'but in Him

That is to say, the Jews could not believe in Christ, supposing they continued to hold fast to their sins, darkness, and ignorance; and therefore blinded and hardened themselves by their own wickedness. For otherwise, though they were blinded and hardened, yet as having free will, and sufficient grace to enable them, they could (speaking abstractedly) give up their hardness of heart and turn to God.

He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts. Christ quotes Is. vi. 9, 10. Having fully explained this passage before, I will here briefly repeat what I there said. Observe then (1) that properly speaking the intellect is said to be blinded, but the affections and will to be hardened; (2) that the direct and proper cause of a man's blindness and hardening, is his own free will and wickedness. See Wisdom ii. 21. The Arabic and Syriac versions understand it in this way, "their eyes are blinded, and their heart is hardened." But yet God is said indirectly and in a less strict sense (*improprie*) to harden a man, because He gradually withdraws from Him the light of truth and grace, and allows opportunities of error and sin to be presented to him by the world, the flesh, and the devil, in punishment for his former sins.

Moreover, in Isaiah we read "blind thou the heart of this people," these being the words of God to Isaiah. But it comes to the same meaning. For "blind thou," is the same as "foretell that a man will, indirectly, be blinded by Me." "He blinded" is then the same as "He will blind." The past is put for the future, to signify the certainty of the thing, that it will as surely come to pass as though it had already happened; that the Jews will be as surely blinded, as though they had been blinded already.

Ver. 41.—*These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him.* The glory of Christ the Incarnate Son of God, who is spoken of in what preceded, and what follows. So SS. Augustine, Cyril, and all the Fathers, as against the Arians. It is therefore quite clear that Christ the Son of God is "of one substance" with the Father, having the same substance, majesty, and glory with Him. For the Jews deny not that these words and that Divine glory pertain to God the Father, nor can there be any doubt on the matter. But here it is said that the same glory belongs to the Son. And it is plain that the same is the glory of the Holy Ghost (Acts xxviii. 25). And therefore when the Holy Trinity thus appeared to Isaiah, the Seraphim thrice exclaimed, Holy, Holy, Holy, &c.

This glory then which Isaiah saw, was that glorious vision in which the Essential Nature of the Holy Trinity and the Three Persons severally were represented in some ineffable manner by some outward symbol addressed to the imagination. But yet it was a kind of human appearance; for God appeared to Isaiah as a king seated on a lofty throne, and the prophet describes His countenance and His feet. And this appearance was most glorious, bright, and majestic. And accordingly, S. John terms it "glory." Therefore Ribera, Maldonatus, Toletus, and others say that Isaiah in that vision most clearly discerned (as far as man can discern in this mortal state) the Three Persons in Unity of Essence. And this too both from the words of the Seraphim, as also from that most exalted revelation which was made to him. And therefore he says, "When he saw His glory," when there was shown to him by revelation the Person of the Son as co-equal and consubstantial with the Father and the Holy Ghost. (*See more on Is. vi. z.*)

Ver. 42.—*Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him, &c.* By the chief rulers are not meant the chief priests and the magistrates, for they shortly afterwards took Jesus and put Him to death. But the chief persons, those who were pre-eminent for their wisdom, their authority, and their means, both among the priests and the common people. S. Rupertus. They therefore were convinced by the truth of Christ's doctrine, by His holiness and miracles, but yet did not dare to confess Him openly, for the reason mentioned above, chap. ix. 22.

Who is this Son of Man? Meaning thereby, "If Thou art that Son of Man, as Thou art wont to call Thyself, how dost Thou wish to be regarded as the Christ? For Christ according to the Scriptures, as has just been said, is eternal, and cannot die. Whereas Thou sayest, on the contrary, that the Son of Man must die and be raised up on the Cross. If there be any other Son of Man, tell us plainly who he is." So Toletus and Jansen. Maldonatus somewhat differently; he thinks that the Jews insulted Christ as if they had refuted His claims, and taunted Him, as a conqueror would taunt a king whom he had taken captive. As the Jews afterwards said (tauntingly) to Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Ver. 35.—*Jesus therefore said unto them, Yet a little while is the Light with you, &c.* "Christ would not answer their objections directly, as knowing that they deserved not a reply" says S. Cyril. He therefore answers indirectly, that they should use Him as a light; for that that light would be soon extinguished by death, when they would have to seek for Him in vain. But if they desired to use that light they would be enlightened by it, so as to find an answer to their objection, and know other things which were necessary for their salvation. The Latin commentators take the word "*modicum*" as referring to the light, thus, "*a little light.*" Ye have but *little light* in thinking that Christ will abide for ever. But ye know not that He will also die and rise again. Walk therefore while ye have the light. Go on to investigate the truth. Ye will then learn how Christ will die, and yet rise again, and abide for ever. (So S. Augustine, S. Bernard, Sermon. xlix. in Cant. Lyra, and others). But the word "*modicum*" does not refer to the light, but to the word "time" as is plain in the Greek. He calls Himself the light of the world, for the reasons which are mentioned in notes to chap. i., and also 1 John i. 5.

(1.) S. Chrysostom and Theophylact think that Christ here likened Himself to the Light, or Sun, because as the light of the sun is not extinguished by night, but is only hid for awhile, and rises again in the morning, and shines throughout the day, so He would die and rise again, and reign for ever, which was the very thing the Jews were inquiring about.

(2.) It may be explained more clearly and to the point in this way,—I, Christ, the Light of the world, enlightening it with the doctrine and knowledge of God, of salvation and of things eternal, shall be but a short time (only three days) with you in the body. And, therefore, if ye are wise, as long as you have Me with you, embrace and follow this light, believe in Me, hearken unto Me, question Me, I will resolve all your doubts, especially how Christ will die, and yet abide for ever. But if ye do it not now, the light will shortly be taken from you. I shall soon die, and then the darkness of error will overwhelm you. For though I shall leave the Apostles after Me, to carry on the light of the Gospel which I brought: yet ye will not value them, and will persecute them, and then ye will in vain seek for Me, who am the very source of light. Just as He spake to the same Jews, John vii. 33.

Christ calls Himself the Light. Wherefore S. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and

Rupertus less appropriately understand by the light, the life of each faithful Christian, which is as it were to each one his own day. Believe in Me while the light of life lasts, for after it comes the darkness of death, when ye will not be able to believe, and do what is right.

Symbolically. Leontius by darkness understands sins; Rupertus, the sufferings of the lost in outer darkness.

Ver. 36.—*While ye have the light, walk as children of the light.* Believe in Me, who am the light of the world; believe that I am the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world; believe in Me and my Gospel (so S. Cyril and Theophylact), that ye may be my children, and consequently the children of grace, charity, virtue, and sanctity in this life, and the children of the Resurrection, of happiness, and glory in the next life (see notes on 1 John i. 5, John i. 4., Eph. v. 8).

Tropologically. When thou feelest the enlightenment, the emotions, the breath of the Holy Spirit, act on them at once, for they come and go like lightning. As S. Francis, when he heard the voice of God, stopped short even on a journey, that he might listen to it, and at once put it into practice.

These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them. Because He knew that they wished to take Him before the time appointed of the Father. So S. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and others. He hid Himself, probably at night, for by day He taught in the temple, and at night He withdrew to Mount Olivet, and thence to Bethany (see Luke xxi. 37).

“He withdrew Himself not,” says S. Augustine and Bede, “from those who began to believe in Him and to love Him. Not from those who came out with palm branches and praises to meet Him. But from those who saw Him indeed, but with an evil eye; because in truth they saw Him not, but in their blindness stumbled at that stone of offence.”

Symbolically. Rupertus says, “He hid Himself from them not in place but in grace; because He left them in their unbelief, He blinded and hardened them.”

Ver. 37.—*But though He had done so many (ποσαῦτα, so great) miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him.* S. Chrysostom and Euthymius think that He wrought many miracles at this special time to lead the Jews to believe in Him, which S. John omitted for the sake of brevity. But others consider, more correctly, that S. John spoke of the many miracles Christ had wrought during the whole course of His ministry. As if Christ said, I have proved by so many miracles that I am the Messiah, why have ye not believed in Me? Ye cannot expect more. I am about to die: believe on Me at once, before I go hence.

The reason why so few believed on Jesus, and the many did not was partly their animal life, by which they were tied down to earthly desires, and did not understand the heavenly blessings and that contempt for worldly things which Christ taught: and

partly their fear of the Scribes and Chief Priests, whom they knew to be opposed to Christ, for the people follow the belief of those above them: and, partly the poverty, lowliness, and humility of Christ, which they themselves despised. For they hoped, and even now hope, that their Messiah would come with great pomp and wealth, as a second Solomon.

Ver. 38.—*That the saying of Esaias, &c.* The word “that” does not signify the end and purpose intended by God, but simply the result. The fulfilment of the prophecy resulted from the unbelief of the Jews. So S. Chrysostom, Cyril, and others.

The passage quoted is Is. liii. 1, on which see a full comment.

Our report. Our hearing, the Hebrew word *scemaa*, hearing, being put for that which was heard by an ordinary Hebraism.

The arm of the Lord. That is Christ. (1.) So called as being “of one Substance with the Father,” as the arm is of the same substance as the body. (2.) Because Christ, as God, is the “arm” of the Father, His virtue and strength, whereby He works all things mightily. (3.) Because as man He performed, in the flesh, the mighty and powerful works of God. (So S. Augustine, Maldonatus, and others, on this passage; and S. Jerome on Is. liii. and S. Athanasius, “*De communi essentia Patris et Filii et S. Sancti opus dubium.*”) But it may be more simply understood of the Divine power which manifested itself in Christ’s miracles. The meaning being, How few Jews recognised the power of God, working as it did in Christ’s Person so many and great miracles. So Jansenius and Maldonatus.

Ver. 39.—*Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, &c.* The words “therefore” and “because” signify not the cause of their unbelief, as Calvin supposes, but marking the necessary consequence. It could not but be so, because it had been foretold, and Scripture cannot lie. But God foretold it, because He foresaw that through their freedom of will, their obstinacy and malice, they would not believe in Christ. God therefore saw that they would not believe, because they, of their own free will, would not do so. But they did not refuse to believe, *because* God foresaw that they would not believe. For their unbelief was prior to God’s foreseeing. God foresees the future, because it will surely come to pass. For God cannot foresee anything, unless it is presupposed that it will really take place. For the object which is seen is prior to the act of seeing it. For nothing can be seen but that which either now is, or hereafter will be. So S. Chrysostom, Jansenius, Maldonatus, and others.

But S. Augustine, and after him Toletus, explain it thus: the Jews could not believe in Christ, because they were hardened and blinded, as Isaiah foretold. But then the words “could not” do not signify absolute necessity, but either a moral, that is a great, difficulty, or else a conditional difficulty.