

Ordinatio III, distinction 30, the single question: "Must we love our enemies through charity?"

1 Concerning distinction 30, I ask whether we must love our enemies through charity.

2 For the negative:

In Luke 10, in reply to the Pharisee's question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus says, "A certain man," etc.¹ And afterward he commends the Pharisee's answer that "the one who showed mercy" was a neighbor to his wounded neighbor. So it appears that Jesus determined that only one who shows mercy is to be regarded as a neighbor. An enemy does not show mercy. Therefore, etc.

3 Furthermore, the Gloss on "Hiram made [the molten sea, ten cubits from brim to brim]" [1 Kings 7:23] says, "In the ten commandments in the Law, God sets forth all the things that we ought to do." Now there's no commandment in the Decalogue about loving one's enemies. Therefore, etc.

4 Furthermore, the Gloss on Luke 6:35, "Love your enemies," says, "This is for those who are perfect." And not everyone is obligated to works of perfection. Therefore, etc.

5 Look up the Gloss and Augustine's commentary on the Psalm, "Open my eyes."²

6 Furthermore, Matthew 5:44 says, "You have heard that it was said in ancient times, 'Hate your enemy.'" But moral precepts remain the same in the New Law as in the Old. Therefore, this precept remains in force in the New Law.

7 Also, according to *Topics* II [113b27–30], "In the case of contraries, direct sequence is

¹That is, Jesus replies by telling the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29–37).

²Psalm 118:18, "Open my eyes, and I will consider the wonders of your law." The Gloss includes authentically Augustinian words from his *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, "Nothing in the commandments is more wondrous than loving one's enemies, that is, giving good things in return for bad," followed by words from the pseudo-Augustinian *Sermon 225, On Martyrs*, "It is not given to everyone to perform virtues and wonders." Scotus apparently takes this argument from Bonaventure, *Sent.* III d. 30 a. un. q. 4 arg. 3 in opp.

valid.”³ So if a friend is to be loved, an enemy is to be hated. These are contraries of contraries. Therefore, etc.

8 On the contrary:

Matthew 5:44–45 says, “But I say to you, ‘Love your enemies,’” etc. And Jesus proves there that this is good and necessary, because “if you love those who love you, [what reward do you have?]” [Matthew 5:46].

9 Also, Matthew 6:12 says, “Forgive us our debts”; and Jesus adds a proof of this point.⁴ Therefore, everyone is necessarily required to do this.

10 Furthermore, Matthew 18:35 says, after the parable of the servant who demanded what was owed him, “So also will your Father do to you [if you do not forgive your brother from your heart].”⁵

I. Reply to the question

11 To this I say that an enemy can be considered either *per se*, *qua* enemy, or *per accidens*, *qua* this human being.

A. An enemy considered *per se*

12 Speaking in the first way, I say that an enemy is not bad merely in lacking some good but in having, positively, some degree of vice, in the same way that it is not someone who merely lacks the habit of justice who is called “unjust,” but someone who has a habit of injustice, contrary to the habit of justice, caused by acts, as Boethius maintains in his discussion

³Let A and B, and F and G, be contraries. Direct sequence is the inference from *A is F* to *B is G*.

⁴Matthew 6:14–15: “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

⁵The critical edition chooses a remarkably elliptical reading from A against the perfectly straightforward readings in other MSS. I have followed Q, with which PZNY are generally in agreement.

of the category of quality in his *Commentary on Aristotle's Categories*.⁶ In this way, because friendship is about the good of virtue in the one loved, a good that is suitable for an act of virtue in the one loving, enmity is about a vicious evil, incompatible with good, in the one who is an enemy. Therefore, an enemy as such is both bad and vicious, and consequently is as such in no way to be loved. [This is the sense in which the question is intended,]⁷ for it was in this way that the one who said the following hated his enemy: “May the sinful and wicked perish from the earth, so that they are not”⁸—not just so that they are not wicked, but so that they do not exist at all; for as Proverbs [12:7] says, “Overthrow the unrighteous, and they will be no more.”

B. An enemy considered per accidens

13 By contrast, if we speak of an enemy per accidens—i.e., of this human being who, as it happens, is an enemy—the question presents a difficulty. Taking enemy in this sense, we can speak of love either positively, as eliciting an act, or quasi-prohibitively, as preventing the contrary act. Now the second is more necessary, because affirmative precepts establish a stronger obligation not to act contrary to them.⁹

⁶Boethius, *In Categ. Aristot.* III c. ‘De qualitate.’

⁷The words in brackets translate the edition’s *Et isto modo est quaestio*, words omitted by YQ. The sense is better without them.

⁸Psalm 103:35

⁹An interpolated text elucidates this by adding “than to elicit positive acts in accordance with them; for we are obligated to the former [not acting contrary to the precepts] always and under all circumstances, whereas we are obligated to the latter [eliciting positive acts] only at an opportune time.” That is, Scotus is not saying that affirmative precepts establish a stronger obligation than negative precepts, but that affirmative precepts taken quasi-prohibitively establish a stronger obligation than affirmative precepts taken positively.

1. Preventing acts contrary to love

14 Concerning the latter understanding of loving, that is, not-hating, I make a distinction. There are two sorts of goods that I can not-hate for an enemy: the spiritual good by which he attains, or is disposed to attain, God; or some other, indifferent, good that can be ordered to the attaining of God and can also be ordered to the opposite. Examples of the first: my enemy's loving God through friendship-love as an intrinsically worthy good; his desiring God for himself as an advantageous good; his listening to preaching, correction, and instruction, through which he is turned toward loving God. Examples of the second: his living in the life of the body, his being healthy, rich, strong, etc.

a. Concerning spiritual goods

15 As for the first goods, it does not seem that I can hate or will-against those goods for an enemy, because it is not compatible with loving God perfectly that one will against his being loved also by another whose friendship one does not know to be displeasing to God. And that includes God's being loved by that other both as an intrinsically worthy good, for his own sake, and as a good advantageous for that other. And by parity of reasoning it is also not compatible with loving God perfectly that one will-against the other's having those other goods by which he might be brought to share in love for God.

b. Concerning indifferent goods

16 But as for other, indifferent, goods, it seems that I could hate them for my neighbor: both because I can ordinally hate them or will-against them for myself and because my neighbor can ordinally will-against them for himself—and whatever he can ordinally will-against for himself, or I [could ordinally will-against] for myself if I were such a person as he is, I can

ordinately will-against for him.¹⁰

17 The assumed premise is clearly true: after all, I can will-against riches or health for myself, or any of the things that are necessary for bodily life. And there are two ways in which I can do so ordinately: either by spurning them (for example, if I voluntarily embrace poverty) or by willing that God inflict them¹¹ on me because of my sins—either by an antecedent will, or by a consequent will, so that if in fact they are inflicted on me, I accept and rejoice in them once they have been inflicted on me.¹²

18 Therefore, in just the same variety of ways I can will these things for another: for example, I can will voluntary poverty (and thus a lack of wealth) for him. I can even will that God inflict certain evils on him (temporal evils, I mean) for his reform and correction; and if such things are in fact inflicted on him, I can will them by approving the divine judgment and rejoicing in them with him. And these are not the only ways in which I can will such external disadvantages for him: if I believed that he would always use advantageous things to add to his sins, I could also will for him the opposite of those advantageous things. And on this point the same thing should be said about both goods of fortune and goods of the body.

c. An uncertainty concerning bodily life

19 But it's uncertain whether one can hate or will-against bodily life for an enemy.

20 It seems that one can:

A judge in a criminal case can justly sentence someone to death, and a lawyer in the

¹⁰Reading with Q against the edition's gibberish.

¹¹A mistake on Scotus's part: for 'them' read 'their opposites'.

¹²This reading pieces together several MSS in order to get a full statement of what Scotus appears to have in mind. The two possibilities are (1) I spurn those goods and (2) I will to be deprived of them as punishment, either (2a) by an antecedent will (I am still in possession of those goods, recognize my sin, and want God to punish me by taking them away) or (2b) by a consequent will (I am deprived of those goods, and, recognizing that deprivation as just punishment for my sin, I accept and rejoice in it).

same case can licitly aim at securing such a sentence. So both of them can will the effect of that sentence, namely, the killing of the guilty party.

21 Similarly, suppose someone hinders the Church and fights against her. Such a person is hindering the common good to the extent that he is capable of doing so, because he is hindering the peace of the Church. And the common good should be loved more than the private good of any one person; and consequently, if the common good is not compatible with that private good, one ought to will that the private good not exist in order that the common good might be preserved. Accordingly, it seems that in such a case someone could ordinally will bodily death for such a persecutor of the Church, for the sake of the good that he is hindering, namely, the peace of the Church.

22 The right thing to say on this point is that one cannot will bodily death for one's neighbor *absolutely*, nor can one will-against his life, because after death there is no opportunity for someone to repent or turn to loving God, as there is after the loss of wealth or strength or something of that sort—indeed, the loss of those things can be an occasion of repentance, which the loss of bodily life can never be. Now it does not seem to be the case that I can ordinally will for my neighbor something that would totally cut him off from the possibility of loving God, and death is that sort of thing.

23 One can, however, ordinally will bodily death for someone else *conditionally*: for example, if one believes that he will remain wicked to the end. In such a case one can wish for his death, either so that he will cease to harass the saints whom he is hindering or so that he will not continue heaping up sins for which he will be punished more harshly after his death. These two reasons are found in what St Anastasia wrote to Chrysognus about her husband Publius, that if "God foresaw that he would persevere in faithlessness to the end, he would command that he cease to harass the saints." That states the first point, and what follows states the second: "for it is better for him to give up the ghost than to blaspheme the Son of God."

24 And yet neither in this case nor in the two previous cases (those of the judge [n. 23] and the tyrant [n. 20]) can one will the death of one's neighbor absolutely. On the contrary, one ought to will-against it with all the intensity one can muster.

25 In this connection it is important to realize that, as I discussed in distinction 15 and in several other places,¹³ when someone's willing something results from the positing of a condition that is willed-against unqualifiedly, he does not will that thing unqualifiedly, but rather rejects it. This is clear, for example, in the case of someone who throws cargo overboard: he voluntarily jettisons the cargo because of the storm that has come up, and the storm is something he wills-against unqualifiedly. This voluntary action is not voluntary pure and simple, for it is willed only because something else that is willed-against is presupposed. Now what is possible only because something impossible is presupposed is not possible unqualifiedly.

26 So in all these cases the thing on account of which the death of one's neighbor is in some way willed is something that is unqualifiedly willed-against. For the lawyer and the judge in the criminal case are obligated to will-against his being guilty of the crime of which he is accused, and one who is undergoing the tyrant's persecution is obligated to will-against the tyrant's tyrannizing over the Church. In this third case one is also obligated to will-against his being unqualifiedly reprobate, and to will this with all the intensity one can muster. And so if the opposite of what is willed-against in each of these cases obtains, one can will death for him given the fact that those things obtain—but with a certain sadness, which does not hold in a case of unqualified willing. For as I have said several times,¹⁴ a conditional will is sufficient to cause sadness if the opposite comes about.

27 From these remarks the reply to the first argument, the one about the judge and the lawyer [n. 25–26], is already clear.

28 One can reply on the same basis to the second argument, the one about the tyrant [n. 21]. But a different sort of reply is also available for that case, namely that a tyrant can only persecute outwardly, as the Savior said in Matthew [10:28; cf. Luke 12:4]: "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul," because after they have killed the body there is

¹³*Ord.* III d. 15 n. 58, d. 16 n. 56, d. 26 n. 116.

¹⁴See the previous note.

nothing more they can do. Now an outward persecution of this sort is often a means by which the elect make progress in the virtues, and especially in patience. For according to James [1:4], patience “has a perfect work”; from the beginning the Church has made progress by this means. And so in this case it does not seem that one ought even to hope for any tyrant’s temporal death, unless perhaps there were someone by whom such death could be justly inflicted on account of the tyrant’s sins, and then in that case one could hope for justice to be done by such a judge¹⁵—though with sadness, because one ought always to will-against his being worthy of such a penalty.

2. Concerning positive acts of love

29 If we are talking about another way of understanding the commandment—namely, as concerning positive acts of loving one’s enemy [n. 13]—it could be said that one is not obligated to elicit at some time an act of loving one’s neighbor, since one is not obligated even to think of him. For example, suppose someone were so absorbed in contemplating God that he never thought with full deliberation about his neighbor. And if he did happen to think about him, it would not be necessary for him to elicit an act of love toward him, because he can have ordinate acts concerning the end, and concerning things that are necessary for attaining the end, without any positive act of love toward his neighbor. And given that, he is *a fortiori* not obligated to elicit an act of love toward his enemy, since he is not obligated even to think of his enemy.

30 But to soften this position a bit, it can be said that if some evident necessity on the part of one’s neighbor or enemy should become apparent to one—something, I mean, without which he could not have things that are necessary for him to attain love for God (for example, he is an unbeliever, and unless someone teaches him he can’t be turned to the truth; or he is wicked, and unless someone reforms him he cannot be turned to what is good, though that might never

¹⁵“and then in that case . . . by such a judge” follows Q. The edition reads *sicut si Deus posset optari quod a tali iudice fieret iustitia*, which is well-nigh untranslatable but roughly means “for example, one could implore God that justice be done by such a judge.”

happen)—then in that case one is obligated to will for one’s neighbor not only the final good but also those goods that are necessary for him to reach the final good, and not only to will them,¹⁶ but also to act so as to help him attain them, if one has the wherewithal to do so.

31 As for riches or health, one can will the opposites of these for him, as I said earlier [n. 17]; under no circumstances is one bound to will these positively for him.

32 As for spiritual goods, one is obligated to will them not only inwardly but also outwardly, in such a way as to issue in effective action, especially insofar as everyone is obligated to pray to and worship his God on his own behalf and on behalf of the whole Church. In praying thus one is obligated to will that the Church benefit all, both good and bad, for their spiritual good. For just as it would be a bad stomach that did not want its own nourishment to benefit the hand by providing nourishment for it, it would be a bad member of the Church who did not want his good act (assuming he has such an act) to benefit every member of the Church for whose sake¹⁷ God accepts it and to the extent that it can benefit himself and others.

Now one is never obligated to will unqualifiedly something whose opposite one can [licitly] will.¹⁸

33 But as for bodily life, perhaps one is obligated to will it, both as to the interior act and as to the exterior act. That is the case when one can save the person’s bodily life and there is no other neighbor present who can help. For example, suppose someone is about to die from hunger or by drowning, and there is only one person present who can relieve his hunger or rescue him from the water. Then perhaps that person would be obligated not merely to will life for him but also to put forth some effort so that he can have life.

34 But how will one go about proving this obligation? For it does not seem evident from either Scripture or reason, since if he should succumb to the danger, he would, if he is good,

¹⁶The edition here adds “with an exterior will.”

¹⁷Reading *pro quibus* with Q for the edition’s *pro quanto*.

¹⁸Most MSS have “will-against” rather than “will.” Whichever reading is correct, the sentence seems out of place here. It fits better at the end of n. 31, but only one MS places it there; the rest have it here.

attain perfect love for God in heaven—and if his bodily life were saved, he might fall into sin thereafter and be wicked in the end. But the pious thing is to think piously about saving the life of one’s neighbor: one should suppose that if he is good, he could be better, and that he will benefit himself and others through his goodness; and one should suppose that if he is bad, he will be reformed. For that is what it means to judge piously: always to put a more favorable interpretation on things, unless there is decisive evidence for a less favorable interpretation.

II. Replies to the initial arguments

35 To the first argument [n. 2] I say that Christ’s response to the question “Who is my neighbor?” should be understood as follows: ‘neighbor’ implies a reciprocal relationship, like ‘friend’ or ‘brother’; so if the one who shows mercy is a neighbor (which is what the Pharisee’s response indicates), it follows that he regards the one to whom he shows mercy as his neighbor. For according to the parable the one to whom he showed mercy was not one of his own people or connected to him by nationality, but a stranger. Therefore, anyone, however much a stranger, to whom I can be of service when he is in need should be regarded as my neighbor. This is what the Savior goes on to say: “Go and do likewise” [Luke 10:37]—that is, treat as your neighbor everyone to whom you can do good, even if that person is a stranger to you. So it is not only one who does good to another who is a neighbor, but everyone for whom we can do good, whether they receive this good by way of a good exterior passion or by way of a good interior passive love,¹⁹ which is an interior motion. And in this latter way the blessed, whom we cannot benefit in any way, can be loved well and are thus our neighbors. By contrast, although God can of course be loved well, no additional good accrues to him as a result of anyone else’s love, and so he is not included in the extension of ‘neighbor.’

36 To the second argument [n. 3] I say that all the commandments of the second table

¹⁹That is, whether their being on the receiving end of our well-doing is a matter of their actually being improved in some way (exterior passion) or simply of their being loved (interior passive love).

elucidate the commandment “You shall love your neighbor,” in that they set forth specific ways in which we ought not to hate our neighbor. “Do not kill” includes not unjustly hating his bodily life; “Do not steal” and “Do not commit adultery” include not hating his good of fortune or of family; and so for the rest of them.²⁰

37 Look up the reply to the argument based on the authoritative passage from Augustine.²¹

38 In reply to the argument from Matthew 5, “It was said in ancient times,” it is significant that the Savior says “it was said” rather than “it was written.” For even if it had been written that “You shall love your friend,” it would not have been written that “You shall hate your enemy”; but the Jews, perverting Scripture, argue for this using the topic from the contrary, and it was according to this interpretation that they obeyed the commandment. But in this passage the Savior proves that they misinterpreted Scripture, for “if you love only your friends who love you, what reward will you have?”²² And the Pharisees misinterpreted other commandments in the same way, as is evident in the case of the commandment “Honor your father and mother,” about which the Savior confuted them. On the Pharisees’ interpretation, someone who offered his means to the Temple rather than giving it to a needy parent was obeying the commandment, because God is one’s spiritual Father; but Christ condemns this: “You make the commandment of God a nullity for the sake of your tradition.”²³

39 From this it is clear how to reply to the argument from *Topics* II [n. 7]: that rule holds only for precise causes,²⁴ that is, in cases in which both contraries are not in one respect subsumed under a single extreme of another contrariety. For if color had a contrary — say,

²⁰Scotus does not respond to the argument of n. 4.

²¹For Bonaventure’s reply to the argument, see *Sent* III d. 30 a. un. q. 4 ad 3 in opp.

²²Matthew 5:46

²³Matthew 15:6

²⁴On precise causes, see *Ordinatio* I d. 43 n. 10, II d. 34–37 n. 94, *Lectura* I d. 43 n. 13, d. 3 n. 360–368. Q reads “precise contraries.”

a—this would not follow: “White is colored; therefore, black is *a*.”²⁵ And that’s how things are in the present case, since both a friend and an enemy per accidens fall under the concept *to-be-loved*. It’s clear that this is true of an enemy because there is the same basis for worthiness-of-love in both, namely, the possibility of their loving the first object of charity, a possibility that characterizes them insofar as they are an image of God.

²⁵Reading with Q. The edition has the manifestly nonsensical reading “therefore, black is colored, say, *a*.”