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In the First Letter of John, the apostle twice said, *God is love* (1 Jn 4:8 and 16)—a statement that is quite astounding on its own. But in his *In Joannis epistulam* and elsewhere, Augustine was so bold as to say, *Love is God*, not once, but several times.¹ It is interesting to note that only one of the three English translations of Augustine's work follows his inversion, and in the NPNF translation the editors said that Augustine simply made a mistake and was unaware that the Greek does not permit such an inversion.² Hence, they corrected him.

Augustine, however, clearly knew what he was doing in saying, *Love is God*, and there is no reason for translating, "*Dilectio Deus est*," as if he had written, "*Deus dilectio est*." That Augustine knew what he was saying is clear from his early work, *De fi de et symbolo*, a sermon in which Augustine, while still a priest, addressed the bishops of Africa in 393. Using 1 Jn 4:16 to argue for the divinity of the Holy Spirit, Augustine said that John "does not say, 'Love is God,' but, *God is love* so that the deity itself is understood as love."³ But by the time of *In Joannis epistulam*, written in 407, he clearly inverts the word order and even attributes the inverted order to John:

How did he previously say, *Love is from God*, and now say, *Love is God*? For God is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is God from God; the Holy Spirit is God from God; and these three are one God, not three gods. If the Son is God and

the Holy Spirit is God, and it is he in whom the Holy Spirit dwells who loves; therefore, love is God, but love is God because it is from God. You have both in the Letter: both, *Love is from God*, and, *Love is God*.⁴

What on earth can that mean? T. J. Van Bavel says that the love of which Augustine is speaking here is "authentic human love."⁵ It is "unselfish love (*benevolentia*). God is that benevolence, and thus He becomes the ideal model of all human love."⁶ But even if God is the ideal model of human love, that hardly means that such ideal human love is God.

I. The Love that Is Said to Be God

Later in the same homily Augustine uttered a similarly amazing directive, "Love, and do what you will."⁷ The immediate context of this directive, which follows only two paragraphs after the one in which he said that love is God, shows that he is speaking of the intention and will with which a human being acts and not of the action that a human being does. He points out that the Father handed over his only Son for all of us, that Christ handed himself over for us, and that Judas handed over Christ to the Jews, where the same Latin verb (*tradidit*) expresses the action of handing over in each case.⁸

But what is it that distinguishes the Father's handing over the Son, the Son's handing over himself, and Judas the disciple's handing over his master? The Father and the Son did this in love, but Judas did this in betrayal. You see that one should consider not what someone does, but with what mind and will one does it. We find God the Father in the same action in which we find Judas; we bless the Father; we detest Judas. Why do we bless the Father and detest Judas? We bless love; we detest iniquity.⁹

The thoughts and the intentions of God and of Judas were different. "God thought of our salvation by which we were redeemed; Judas thought of the price for which he sold the Lord. . . . A different intention made the actions different."¹⁰ It is in this context then that Augustine said, "And so, once and for all, you are given a short commandment: Love, and do what you will. . . . [T]he root of love is within; only good can come from this root."¹¹

Clearly it is the interior act of love that Augustine tells us comes from God and is God. In order to see why he calls such love God, we need to examine other passages in which he makes his daring inversion of the Johannine statement.

II. Other Examples of the Inversion in Augustine

In *Sermo* 156, 5, Augustine tells his congregation that "faith can work in a good way only through love." Following James 2:19, he distinguishes the faith of believers from the faith of demons. The faith of believers is, therefore, praiseworthy faith; it is the true *faith* of grace *that works through love* (Gal 5:6). But we cannot, can we, give it to ourselves that we have love and can work in a good way because of it? For it is written, *The love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us* (Rom 5:5). Love is the gift of God to the point that it is called God, for John the apostle says, *God is love, and he who remains in love remains in God, and God in him* (1 Jn 4:16).¹²

Here the Latin text of has "*caritas*" instead of "*dilectio*," and Augustine seems to use the two nouns without any difference in meaning, although, to the best of my knowledge, he never uses "*amor*" in this context.

In another text from *In Joannis epistulam* 9, 2, Augustine also uses "*caritas*" in the inversion, although without explicit reference to the wording of the Letter of John. There he argues that, "if love is God, and God neither increases nor decreases, love is said so to increase in you because you yourself increase in it."¹³ Because the love that is God is identical with God, it can neither increase nor decrease, but we can increase and decrease in it. Here it would seem that a metaphysics of participation lies behind Augustine's argument. In good Plotinian fashion a Platonic form is integrally present, that is, present as a whole, wherever it is present, and yet things participate in the form in different degrees.

In his *In Psalmum 98 enarratio*, possibly preached at Carthage in 411, Augustine again identifies "*caritas*" with God. Augustine is

commenting on verse 4 of the psalm: "The Lord is great in Sion and on high over all peoples." He explains:

It is, nonetheless, evident that Sion is the city of God. And what is the city of God but the holy Church? For human beings loving one another and loving their God, who dwells in them, make up a city for God. But a city is held together by a law, and their law is love, and love itself is God.¹⁴ For it is clearly written, *God is love* (1 Jn 4:8). A person, therefore, who is full of love is full of God, and many persons full of love make up a city for God. This city is Sion; therefore, the Church is Sion. God is great in it; be in it, and God will not be apart from you.¹⁵

Here the expression "love itself: *ipsa caritas*" connotes, I suspect, subsistent love, the love by participation in which we love God and one another.

Before turning to any further attempt to determine of what Augustine means by the identification of love with God, let us look at still another text in which the daring inversion is found. In *In Psalmum 99 enarratio*, Augustine is speaking about verse 2: "Shout with joy, all the earth: *jubilate omnis terra*." He is explaining to the congregation how one can praise in jubilation what one cannot express in words. Stressing God's integral omnipresence, he says:

And so God is present everywhere, whole everywhere. His wisdom *stretches from end to end with might, and arranges all things with gentleness* (Wis 8:1). But what God the Father is, that his Word and wisdom is, light from light, God from God. What then do you want to see? What you want to see is not far from you. The apostle of course says that he is not far from each of us, *for in him we live and move and have our being* (Acts 17:28). What a great misery it is to be far from him who is everywhere!¹⁶

We are, of course, as sinners, far from him not in distance, but in unlikeness. In *De trinitate* 7, 6, 12, Augustine explains, "For it is not by intervals of place, but by likeness that one draws near to God, and one withdraws from him by unlikeness."¹⁷ Twice in the *Confessions* Augustine borrows Plotinus' imagery and language from *Ennead* 1, 6, 8, 16–27 to speak about our distance from God, who is whole everywhere:

I was far from your face in a darksome love. For it is not by feet or by distance of place that one departs from you or returns to you. But that younger son of yours did not look for chariots or ships, nor did he fly off on a visible wing or journey on foot in order to live prodigally and dissipate in a distant land what you had given him as he departed.¹⁸

Similarly, in the famous garden scene of his conversion, Augustine again borrows the same imagery from Plotinus to speak of his inability to return to God, to enter into covenant with God: "And one did not go there by ships or chariots or on feet, not even so far as I had gone to this place where we were sitting. For not only to go, but also to arrive there was nothing other than to will to go, but to will strongly and wholeheartedly."¹⁹ Again, in book seven, where Augustine recounts the effect of his reading the books of the Platonists, he speaks of his distance from God in language that is both Christian and Plotinian:

And when I first knew you, you took me up so that I saw that what I saw existed and that I who saw it did not yet exist. And you beat back the weakness of my gaze, sending your strong rays upon me, and I trembled with love and horror, and I found that I was far from you in a region of unlikeness.²⁰

The phrase "in a region of unlikeness" comes from *Ennead* 1, 8, 13, 16–17: "ἐν τῷ τῆς ἀνομοιότητος τόπῳ." And the region of unlikeness also recalls the Prodigal's departing *in regionem longinquam* (Lk 15:13).²¹ In *De civitate Dei* 9, 17, Augustine chides certain learned men who still speak of bodily contact when discussing the happy life. He quotes from Plotinus, when he asks:

What has happened to that saying of Plotinus where he says: "We must therefore flee to the fatherland, and there the father is, and there is everything. What," he asks, "will be our ship or what our flight? Becoming like God." If then one becomes nearer to God the more one is like God, there is no other distance from him than unlikeness to him.²²

Thus, in order to overcome the misery of their spiritual separation from God, Augustine teaches his congregation:

Be therefore like him in piety and loving in thought, because his *invisible reality is seen, having been understood through the things that have been created* (Rom 1:20). Gaze upon the things that have been created. Wonder at them; seek their author. If you are unlike him, you will be rebuffed; if you are like him, you will exult. And when, like him, you begin to draw near and to be deeply aware of God, as that love grows in you—for love is also God—you will certainly become aware of what you said, but did not say. For before you were aware, you thought that you spoke of God. You begin to be aware, and you are aware that what you are aware of cannot be said.²³

Thus, unable to speak of the ineffable God, we shout in jubilation, by which Augustine means: in non-verbal sounds of joy. "What is jubilation? To be unable to express joy in words and yet to bear witness vocally to that which is grasped within and cannot be explained in words—that is jubilation."²⁴

Van Bavel says that the inversion occurs at least ten times in the works of Augustine.²⁵ It is interesting that the inversion and its ascription to scripture is also found in Ambrose's *Expositio in Psalmum 118*, 20 and 39 and in his *Commentarius in Cantica Canticorum 2*, 28.²⁶ It is also found in Ambrosiaster, *In epistolam beati Paul ad Corinthios primam* 13, vv. 4–8.²⁷ and in the *Hypomnesticon* 5, 3, 5.²⁸ Hence, it is certainly not simply a mistake on the part of Augustine. It is also found three times in Caesarius of Arles, once in Leo the Great, and occasionally in various later writers.²⁹

III. What Did Augustine Mean?

But what can Augustine have meant by his daring inversion of the text of John? In his classic study of Augustine's philosophy E. Gilson recognizes the inversion in Augustine, but avoids the crux of the matter by distinguishing "two meanings of the word 'charity': substantial and subsistent charity, which is God, and charity which is the love of God in the soul."³⁰ That move ignores Augustine's claim that love, our love, it seems, is God. R. Canning also recognizes the inversion, but seems to attribute it to "a spirit of enthusiasm for 1 Jn 4.8."³¹ Van Bavel, on the other hand, clearly recognizes the problem. He says that at first glance "it is tempting to think that" Augustine said that love is God "under the influence of Neoplatonism," because

"according to Neoplatonism the eternal ideas like truth, goodness, and so on, are substances."³² He, however, finds a major difference between Neoplatonism and Saint John to lie in the fact that "in John, love is not conceived as an abstract substance as in Neoplatonism, but as the personal God."³³ On the other hand, Augustine's use of "*ipsa caritas*: love itself," does sound as though he is speaking of a subsisting love. Furthermore, as we have seen, Augustine appeals to the inversion of Saint John in contexts where Plotinian participation lies in the background.

Augustine, furthermore, held that divine simplicity meant that "God is what he has"—except, of course, for the relations between the persons, for the Father has a Son, but is not the Son.³⁴ That is, when we say that God is good, or wise, or just, we are not predicating qualities that are added to his substance; rather, we have to understand that God is goodness, wisdom, and justice so that the propositions are convertible. Goodness itself, wisdom itself, justice itself—and love itself—are God.

Such a move, however, holds only if we are speaking of the absolute divine attributes, that is, of what is said of God non-relatively, not of what the three persons are said to be in relation to one another nor of what God is said to be in relation to creatures.³⁵ That move might also seem not to hold for our love or for any other attribute of ours. Augustine, however, seems clearly to say that our love, the love of human beings for one another and for their God, is God. Such love is, of course, not merely ours since it is a gift of God, just as Augustine insists over and over again during the controversy with the Pelagians that we are righteous, not with a righteousness of our own, but with the righteousness of God.³⁶ So too, the love of God poured out in our hearts is a gift of God, but it "is a gift," as Augustine says, "to the point that it is called God" (*Charitas usque adeo est donum Dei, ut Deus vocetur*).³⁷

There are two more texts from books eight and fifteen of *On the Trinity* (*De trinitate*) in which Augustine says that love—indeed brotherly love—is God, and they throw further light on the question of what this inversion might mean. In book eight Augustine is arguing for

the inseparability of the commandments to love God and one's neighbor and again clearly claims that brotherly love is God.

Let us note how much John the apostle commends brotherly love. He says: *One who loves his brother remains in the light, and there is no scandal in him* (1 Jn 2:10). It is clear that he puts the perfection of righteousness in love of one's brother. For one in whom there is no scandal is surely perfect. And yet he seems to have been silent about the love of God, something he would never do save because he wanted God to be understood in brotherly love. For in the same letter he says quite openly a little later: *Beloved, let us love one another because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. One who does not love has not known God because God is love* (1 Jn 4:7). This context shows quite clearly how this same brotherly love—for it is brotherly love by which we love one another—is proclaimed with such great authority not only to be from God, but to be God. When, therefore, we love our brother out of love, we love him out of God, and it is impossible that we do not especially love the love by which we love our brother. Hence, we infer that those two commandments cannot exist apart from each other.³⁸

Augustine returns to the identification of love with God in the final book of *On the Trinity* where he argues that the Holy Spirit is properly referred to as love. He argues that, although the Father and the Son are said to be love, the Holy Spirit is to be properly named by the term "love." He says:

If we carefully examine the words of John the apostle, we find where the Holy Spirit is said to be love. When he said, *Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God*, he went on to say, *And everyone who loves is born of God; one who does not love, has not known God, because God is love*. Here he showed that he called that love God, which he said was from God. Love, therefore, is God from God. But because the Son too is from God the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father, it is rightly asked of which of them we ought here to understand that it was said that love is God.³⁹

In the following Augustine says,

when [John] mentioned the love of God, not by which we love him, but by which he loved us and sent his Son as propitiation for our sins, he exhorted us by this that we might also love one another and that God might remain in us, for he had certainly said that love is God. Immediately wanting to say something clearer on this matter, he said: *In this we know that we remain in him and he in us, because he has given to us of his Spirit* (1 Jn 4:13). The Holy Spirit, therefore, of which he has given us, makes us remain in God and him in us. But this is what love does. He, therefore, is God Love.⁴⁰

The final short sentence has presented a challenge to translators. The BA version says, "C'est donc le Saint-Esprit qui est le Dieu amour." The NBA version has, "È dunque lo Spirito Santo il Dio amore." The WSA version says, "He then who is the gift of God is love," while the older McKenna translation says, "He, therefore, is the God who is love (*Deus dilectio*)."

Although, as we have seen, Augustine clearly has said at least ten times that love, that is, the love by which we love God and by which we love one another, is God, he was also absolutely clear that we are not God, as our mutability clearly proves. What then can he have meant by his daring inversion of Saint John?

IV. Concluding Reflections

I have already suggested that a metaphysics of participation may well lie behind the inversion. For Augustine learned from Plotinus's twin treatises on omnipresence, *Ennead VI*, 4–5 to think of God as integrally present wherever he is, and he is of course present everywhere, but dwells only in the faithful.⁴¹ Hence, if our love is a participation in the love that is God, we do not have a part of God, since he has no parts. Rather, if *the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit*, as Saint Paul teaches in Rom 5:5, that love is going to be God. It is often said that the theme of our divinization plays a relatively minor role in Augustine's thought compared to the Fathers of the Eastern Church, and yet in his early correspondence with Nebridius Augustine could speak of his and his friend's desire to become divine or god-like in leisure, where the verb "*deificari*" may have a stronger sense than one initially suspects.⁴² And in his *In*

Joannis epistulam Augustine also spoke of our becoming gods. He urges his hearers to "hold onto the love of God in order that, as God is eternal, so you may remain eternally." And then he adds a general principle that one becomes what one loves:

For each person is such as his love is. Do you love the earth? You will be earth. Do you love God? What shall I say: that you will be God? I do not dare to say so of myself. Let us listen to the scriptures: "I said: *You are all gods and children of the most high.*" (Ps 81:6)⁴³

If one loves God, one becomes God, not an alien god, and not a part of God, but God.

However, such love by which we love God is not simply something of our doing for it is a gift of God poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit and is the result of God's dwelling in us. If such love is God, as Augustine has said at least ten times, it certainly shatters Nygren's dichotomy between *eros* and *agape*, between an ascending and a descending love, for it is the gift of God, the love poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit through the redeeming work of Christ, by which we rise up to the God, whose vision we desire as our abode.

As a final confirmation of this interpretation, I appeal to the words of a close disciple of Augustine, Prosper of Aquitaine, who in his *De vocatione omnium gentium* universalized the Johannine inversion, saying of God that he "is eternal wisdom, eternal truth, eternal goodness, eternal justice, finally, the eternal light of all the virtues, and all that is virtue is God."⁴⁴

Notes

1. I have borrowed the phrase "daring inversion" from T. J. van Bavel, O.S.A., "The Double Face of Love," *Louvain Studies* 12 (1987): 116–130. Although the Vulgate has "*caritas*," Augustine's version at times uses "*dilectio*." I have translated both as "love."
2. "If now and then he seems to mistake in interpretation (as in Homily VII.), not considering that in the Greek such propositions as 'God is love,' are not convertible, the subject ὁ θεός being marked by the article, and the predicate indicated by not having the article, let it be remembered that some exegetical canons of the kind were unknown in

his time" (NPNF 7, trans. H. Browne with additional notes by J. H. Myers, 594). See also *Tractates on the First Epistle of John*, trans. John W. Rettig. Fathers of the Church 92 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), and "Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of St. John," *Augustine: Later Works*, ed. John Burnaby (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1995). The Italian translation by G. Madurini in *Nuova biblioteca agostiniana* Pt. 3, vol. 24 (Rome: Città nuova, 1968) does correctly translate the inversion: "L'Epistola ha le due espressioni: L'amore proviene da Dio e l'amore è Dio." But the French translation by P. Agaësse does not acknowledge the inversion, but reads, "Mais comment concilier ce qui est dit plus haut 'La dilection est de Dieu,' avec ce qui est dit maintenant: 'Dieu est la dilection,'" *Commentaire de la première épître de s. Jean*, Sources chrétiennes 75 (Paris: Editions du cerf, 1961), 323.

3. *De fi de et symbolo* 9, 19, PL 40:194 "Etiam hic enim non ait, Dilectio Deus est; sed, *Deus dilectio est*; ut ipsa deitas dilectio intelligatur."
4. *In Joannis epistulam* 7, 6, PL 35: 2031–2032: "Quomodo ergo jamdudum, *Dilectio ex Deo est*; et modo, *Dilectio Deus est*? Est enim Deus Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus: Filius, Deus ex Deo; Spiritus sanctus, Deus ex Deo; et hi tres unus Deus, non tres dii. Si Filius Deus, et Spiritus sanctus Deus, et ille diligit in quo habitat Spiritus sanctus: ergo dilectio Deus est; sed Deus quia ex Deo. Utrumque enim habes in Epistola; et, *Dilectio ex Deo est*, et, *Dilectio Deus est*."
5. Van Bavel, "The Two Faces of Love," 120.
6. *Ibid.*, 124.
7. *In Joannis epistulam* 7, 8, PL 35: 2033: "Dilige, et quod vis fac."
8. *Ibid.* 7, 7, PL 35: 2032, where he cites Rom 8:32 and Gal 2:20. See also Mt 26:25 for Judas.
9. *Ibid.*, PL 35: 2032–2033: "sed quae res discernit Patrem tradentem Filium, seipsum Filium tradentem, et Judam discipulum tradentem magistrum suum? Quia hoc fecit Pater et Filius in charitate; fecit autem hoc Judas in proditione. Videtis quia non quid faciat homo, considerandum est; sed quo animo et voluntate faciat. In eodem facto invenimus Deum Patrem, in quo invenimus Judam; Patrem benedicimus, Judam detestamur. Quare Patrem benedicimus, Judam detestamur? Benedicimus charitatem, detestamur iniquitatem."
10. *Ibid.*, PL 35: 2033: "Deus cogitavit salutem nostram qua redempti sumus; Judas cogitavit pretium quo vendidit Dominum. . . . Diversa ergo intentio diversa facta fecit."
11. *Ibid.* 7, 8, PL 35: 2033: "Semel ergo breve praeceptum tibi praecipitur, Dilige, et quod vis fac . . . radix sit intus dilectionis, non potest de ista radice nisi bonum existere."

12. *Sermo* 156, 5, 5, PL 38:852–853: “Quia fides bene operari non potest, nisi per dilectionem. Ipsa est enim fidelium fides. . . . Illa est ergo laudabilis fides, ipsa est vera gratiae *fides, quae per dilectionem operatur* (Gal 5:6). Ut autem habeamus dilectionem, et ex ea possimus habere bonam operationem, numquid eam nobis dare nos possumus, cum scriptum sit, *Charitas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum sanctum qui datus est nobis* (Rom 5:5). *Charitas usque adeo est donum Dei, ut Deus vocetur, apostolo Joanne dicente, Deus charitas est, et qui manet in charitate, in Deo manet, et Deus in eo* (1 Jn 4:16).”
13. In *Joannis epistulam* 9, 2, PL 35, 2045: “Nam si charitas Deus est, nec proficit nec deficit Deus: sic dicitur proficere in te charitas, quia tu in ea proficis.”
14. In WSA 2/18, Sr. Maria Boulding translates “lex ipsa eorum, charitas est; et ipsa charitas, Deus est” as “And the law of this city is charity. But God himself is charity.” That misses Augustine’s daring inversion and undermines the conclusion that one who is full of love is full of God.
15. In *Psalmum 98 enarratio* 4, PL 37: 1261: “Quia tamen manifestum est Sion civitatem Dei esse; quae est civitas Dei, nisi sancta Ecclesia? Homines enim amantes se invicem, et amantes Deum suum qui in illis habitat, faciunt civitatem Deo. Quia lege quadam civitas continetur; lex ipsa eorum, charitas est; et ipsa charitas, Deus est: aperte enim scriptum est, *Deus charitas est* (1 Jn 4:8). Qui ergo plenus est charitate, plenus est Deo; et multi pleni charitate, civitatem faciunt Deo. Ista civitas Dei vocatur Sion: ergo Ecclesia est Sion. In illa est magnus Deus. In illa esto, et non erit praeter te Deus.”
16. In *Psalmum 99 enarratio*, 5, PL 37: 1274: “Sic et Deus ubique praesens est, ubique totus. Sapientia ejus *attingit a fine usque ad finem fortiter et disponit omnia suaviter* (Wis 8:1). Quod autem Deus Pater, hoc Verbum ejus et Sapientia ejus, lux de luce, Deus de Deo. Quid ergo optas videre? Non est a te longe quod vis videre. Apostolus dicit equidem non longe positum ab unoquoque nostrum: *in ipso enim vivimus et movemur et sumus* (Acts 17:28). Quanta ergo miseria est; longe esse ab eo qui ubique est?”
17. *De trinitate* 7, 6, 12, PL 42: 946: “Non enim locorum intervallis, sed similitudine acceditur ad Deum, et dissimilitudine receditur ab eo.”
18. *Confessiones* 1, 18, 28, PL 32: 674: “Nam longe a vultu tuo, in affectu tenebroso. Non enim pedibus aut spatiis locorum itur abs te, aut reditur ad te. Aut vero filius ille tuus minor equos, aut currus, vel naves quaesivit, aut avolvit penna visibili, aut moto poplite iter egit, ut in longinqua regione vivens prodige dissiparet quod dederas proficiscenti.”

19. Ibid. 8, 8, 19, PL 32: 758: "et non illuc ibatur navibus aut quadrigis, aut pedibus, quantum saltem de domo in eum locum ieram, ubi sedebamus. Nam non solum ire, verum etiam pervenire illuc, nihil erat aliud quam velle ire, sed velle fortiter et integre."
20. Ibid. 7, 10, 16, PL 32: 742: "Et cum te primum cognovi, tu assumpsisti me, ut viderem esse quod viderem, et nondum me esse qui viderem. Et reverberasti infirmitatem aspectus mei, radians in me vehementer, et contremui amore et horrore; et inveni longe me esse a te in regione dissimilitudinis."
21. See James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine's Confessions*. 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992, here vol. 3, 443–444.
22. *De civitate Dei* 9, 17, PL 41: 271: "Ubi est illud Plotini, ubi ait, 'Fugiendum est igitur ad charissimam patriam, et ibi pater, et ibi omnia? Quae igitur, inquit, classis aut fuga? Similem deo fieri.' Si ergo deo quanto similior, tanto fit quisque propinquior; nulla est ab illo alia longinquitas quam ejus dissimilitudo."
23. *In Psalmum 99 enarratio*, 6, PL 37: 1275: "Esto ergo similis pietate, et diligens cogitatione: quoniam *invisibilia ejus per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur* (Rom 1:20); ea quae facta sunt intueri, mirare, quaere auctorem. Si dissimilis sis, repelleris; si similis, exultabis. Et cum accedere coeperis similis, et persentiscere Deum, quantum in te charitas crescit, quia et charitas Deus est, senties quiddam quod dicebas, et non dicebas. Ante enim quam sentires, dicere te putabas Deum: incipis sentire, et ibi sentis dici non posse quod sentis."
24. *In Psalmum 94 enarratio* 94, 3, PL 37: 1218: "Quid est jubulare? Gaudium verbis non posse explicare, et tamen voce testari quod intus conceptum est et verbis explicari non potest: hoc est jubulare."
25. I find the reading "*dilectio deus est*" five times in *In Joannis epistulam* 7—only four times in the version in PL, but five times in the version that the late William Mountain was preparing for CCL and that is found on CETEDOC. I discount the reading in *De fi de et symbolo*. I find the reading "*caritas deus est*" once in *In Joannis epistulam* and twice in the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. With the passage in *Sermo* 156, 5, 5 that makes nine occurrences of the inversion. There are two passages in *De trinitate* 8 and 15 where love is said to be God. The inversion also occurs in two sermons that PL and other sources list as being of an uncertain author or inauthentic, namely, *Sermones* 133 and 269.
26. See Ambrose, *Expositio in Psalmum 118*, 20, CSEL 62: 92: "*caritas deus est, ut legimus,*" and 29, CSEL 62:351: "*caritas deus est, caritas dei verbum est,*" and *Commentarius in Cantica Canticorum* 2, 28; PL 15:1878,

27. See Amrosiaster, In epistolam beati Paul ad Corinthios primam 13, 4–8, PL 17: 252.
28. Uncertain author, *Hypomnesticon* 5, 3, 5, PL 45: 1651.
29. Caesarius Arelatensis, *Sermo* 23, 4: CCL 103: 106–107, *Regula ad monachos* 1, 13: PL 67: 1100, and *Exhortatio ad tenendam vel custodiendam charitatem* PL 67: 1154. See Leo the Great, *Tractatus septem et nonaginta*, trans. 38, 4, CCL 138: 208 and *Sermones* 98, 3, PL 53: 299 and 38, 4, PL 54: 262. The inversion also appears in John Cassian, *Collatio* XVI, 13; PL 49: 1027.
30. E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1961, 313, n. 55).
31. R. Canning, *The Unity of Love for God and Neighbor in St. Augustine* (Heverlee-Leuven: Augustinian Historical Institute, 1993), 310.
32. Van Bavel, "The Double Face of Love," 124. Van Bavel also deals with Augustine's inversion in two other, slightly different articles: "The Double Face of Love in Augustine," *Augustinian Studies* 17 (1986): 169–181, and "The Double Face of Love in St. Augustine. The Daring Inversion: Love is God," *Congresso Internazionale su S. Agostino nel XVI Centenario della Conversione, Roma, 15–20 settembre. Atti* (Rome: 1987): 69–80.
33. *Ibid.*, 125. Here, as elsewhere, it is important, I believe, to distinguish what the real Plotinus said and held from what the Plotinus Augustine knew said and held.
34. *De civitate Dei* 11, 10, 1, PL 41: 325: "sed ideo simplex dicitur, quoniam quod habet, hoc est, excepto quod relative quaeque persona ad alteram dicitur. Nam utique Pater habet Filium, nec tamen ipse est Filius; et Filius habet Patrem, nec tamen ipse est Pater. In quo ergo ad se ipsum dicitur, non ad alterum, hoc est quod habet: sicut ad se ipsum dicitur vivens, habendo utique vitam, et eadem vita ipse est."
35. See Augustine, *De trinitate* 5, 16, 17, PL 42: 924. See my "Properties of God and the Predicaments in *De Trinitate* V," *The Modern Schoolman* LIX (1981), 1–19.
36. See, for example, *De gratia novi testamenti* 30, 73, PL 33: 570: "Ut nos simus justitia Dei in ipso (2 Cor. 5:20.21): id est, in ejus corpore quod est Ecclesia, cui caput est, nos simus justitia Dei; quam ignorantes illi, et suam volentes constituere, id est tanquam de suis operibus gloriantes, justitiae Dei non sunt subjecti."
37. *Sermo* 156, 5, 5, quoted above in note 12.
38. *De trinitate* 8, 8, 12, PL 42: 958: "Dilectionem autem fraternam quantum commendet Joannes apostolus, attendamus: *Qui diligit, inquit, fratrem suum, in lumine manet, et scandalum in eo non est* (1 Jn 2:10). Manifestum est quod justitiae perfectionem in fratris dilectione posuerit: nam in quo scandalum non est, utique perfectus est. Et

tamen videtur dilectionem Dei tacuisse: quod nunquam faceret, nisi quia in ipsa fraterna dilectione vult intelligi Deum. Apertissime enim in eadem Epistola paulo post ita dicit: *Dilectissimi, diligamus invicem, quia dilectio ex Deo est; et omnis qui diligit, ex Deo natus est, et cognoscit Deum. Qui non diligit, non cognovit Deum; quia Deus dilectio est* (1 Jn 4:7). Ista contextio satis aperteque declarat, eandem ipsam fraternam dilectionem (nam fraterna dilectio est, qua diligimus invicem) non solum ex Deo, sed etiam Deum esse tanta auctoritate praedicari. Cum ergo de dilectione diligimus fratrem, de Deo diligimus fratrem: nec fieri potest ut eandem dilectionem non praecipue diligamus, qua fratrem diligimus. Unde colligitur, duo illa praecepta non posse esse sine invicem."

39. *De trinitate* 15, 17, 31, PL 42: 1082: "Spiritus autem sanctus ubi sit dictus charitas invenimus, si diligenter Joannis apostoli scrutemur eloquium; qui cum dixisset, *Dilectissimi, diligamus invicem, quia dilectio ex Deo est; secutus adjunxit, Et omnis qui diligit, ex Deo natus est: qui non diligit, non cognovit Deum, quia Deus dilectio est.* Hic manifestavit eam se dixisse dilectionem Deum, quam dixit ex Deo. Deus ergo ex Deo est dilectio. Sed quia et Filius ex Deo Patre natus est, et Spiritus sanctus ex Deo Patre procedit, quem potius eorum hic debeamus accipere dictum esse dilectionem Deum, merito quaeritur."
40. *Ibid.*: "cum Dei dilectionem commemorasset, non qua nos eum, sed qua Ipse dilexit nos, et misit Filium suum litatorem pro peccatis nostris; et hinc exhortatus esset ut et nos invicem diligamus, atque ita Deus in nobis maneat, quia utique dilectionem Deum dixerat, statim volens de hac re apertius aliquid eloqui, *In hoc, inquit, cognoscimus quia in ipso manemus, et ipse in nobis, quia de Spiritu suo dedit nobis.* Spiritus itaque sanctus de quo dedit nobis, facit nos in Deo manere, et ipsum in nobis: hoc autem facit dilectio. Ipse est igitur Deus dilectio." 41. On the doctrine of integral omnipresence in Augustine and Plotinus, see Robert J. O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 386–391* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1968), 33 and 39–40.
42. See Augustine, *Epistula* 10, 2, PL 33: 74, where Augustine says to his friend, "deifi cari enim utrisque in otio licebat." See my "St. Augustine's Epistula X: Another Look at 'Deifi cari in otio,'" *Augustinianum* 32 (1992), 289–299.
43. Augustine, *In Joannis epistulam* 2, 14, PL 35: 1997: "Tenete potius dilectionem Dei, ut quomodo Deus est aeternus, sic et vos maneatis in aeternum: quia talis est quisque, qualis ejus dilectio est. Terram diligis? terra eris. Deum diligis? quid dicam? deus eris? Non audeo dicere ex me, Scripturas audiamus: *Ego dixi, Dii estis, et filii Altissimi omnes* (Ps 81:6)."

44. Prosper, *De vocatione omnium gentium* 1, 8; PL 51: 654–655: "Aeterna est enim sapientia, aeterna veritas, aeterna bonitas, aeterna justitia, omnium denique virtutum lumen aeternum est, totumque quod virtus est Deus est."