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WORKS OF LOVE

Søren Kierkegaard

Edited and Translated by

Howard V. Hong and

Edna H. Hong

with Introduction and Notes

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WORKS OF LOVE

KIERKEGAARD'S WRITINGS, XVI

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

Works of Love was published (September 29, 1847) about six months after the publication of *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits* (March 13, 1847), a volume Kierkegaard dedicated to "that single individual,"[1] "whom I with joy and gratitude call *my* reader."[2] Reflecting in his usual dialectical way upon the emphasis on individuality, the individual, and the single individual, Kierkegaard wrote a journal entry in which he anticipated the response to the discourses and formulated the title for his next book:

> Despite everything people ought to have learned about my maieutic carefulness, by proceeding slowly and continually letting it seem as if I knew nothing more, not the next thing—now on the occasion of my new upbuilding discourses they will probably bawl out that I do not know what comes next, that I know nothing about sociality. . . .
>
> Now I have my theme of the next book. It will be called:
>
> *Works of Love.*[3]

The writing of the First Series of *Works of Love* was finished in April 1847,[4] the Second Series on August 2,[5] and the manuscript was delivered to the printer on August 17.[6] In addition to writing a large, finely crafted, sharply deliberated book, Kierkegaard devoted considerable time to other reflection and writing. "I now would like to give a series of twelve lectures on the dialectic of

[1] *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits*, p. 4, *KW* XV (*SV* VIII 116).

[2] Ibid., pp. 5, 157 (117, 247).

[3] See Supplement, p. 409 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 4).

[4] See Supplement, p. 421 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 121) and pp. 417, 420–21 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 82, 120).

[5] See Supplement, p. 425 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 219).

[6] See *JP* V 6043 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 250).

communication. After that, twelve lectures on erotic love [*Elskov*], friendship, and love [*Kjerlighed*]."[7] "So I once again have put the lectures away and have taken up my interrupted work (the first part of which I have finished): Works of Love."[8] Obviously the substance of the contemplated lectures on love and friendship found a place throughout *Works of Love*; traces of reflections on communication and knowledge are also present there.[9]

Preparation, however, for writing *Works of Love* preceded the actual writing by many years. Kierkegaard's appraisal of Socrates in his dissertation (1841)[10] included the significance of his ugly appearance, a theme that reappears in *Works of Love*.[11] *Either/Or* (1843) as a complex whole covers the spectrum of arbitrary self-love, erotic love, and marital love,[12] and Judge William ends with a borrowed sermon on the love of God.[13] Two of *Three Upbuilding Discourses* (1843) are titled "Love Will Hide a Multitude of Sins."[14] The third discourse in *Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions* (1845) is "On the Occasion of a Wedding."[15] *Stages on Life's Way*, like *Either/Or*, presents various conceptions of love, from the various views of love in the speeches in " *'In Vino Veritas'*" to marital love in Judge William's "Some Reflections

[7] See Supplement, p. 417 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 82) and also pp. 420–21 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 120).

[9] See, for example, pp. 96, 128–29, 175, 232, 276–77, 371–73.

[8] See Supplement, p. 421 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 121).

[10] See *The Concept of Irony, with Continual Reference to Socrates*, esp. pp. 148, 212, *KW* II (*SV* XIII 233, 292).

[11] See pp. 371–72.

[12] Some of the sections are specifically on a kind of love or an aspect of love. See "The Immediate Erotic Stages or The Musical-Erotic," "The First Love," "Rotation of Crops," "The Seducer's Diary," "The Esthetic Validity of Marriage," and "The Balance between the Esthetic and the Ethical in the Development of the Personality," *Either/Or*, I, pp. 45–135, 231–79, 281–300, 301–445, *KW* III; II, pp. 3–154, 155–333, *KW* IV (*SV* I 29–113, 205–51, 253–72, 273–412; II 3–140, 141–299).

[13] *Either/Or*, II, pp. 339–54, esp. pp. 347–53, *KW* IV (*SV* II 306–18, 312–17).

[14] *Three Upbuilding Discourses* (1843), *Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses*, pp. 55–78, *KW* V (*SV* III 273–95).

[15] *Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions*, pp. 41–68, *KW* X (*SV* V 204–25).

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on Marriage in Answer to Objections," and ends with an account of an unhappy love, "'Guilty?'/'Not Guilty?'"[16]

Works of Love, then, is Kierkegaard's climactic consideration of erotic love and Christian love against the background of the multifarious characterizations of love in the earlier pseudonymous and signed works. The two Danish words for two kinds of love, *Elskov* and *Kjerlighed*,[17] lend themselves to the clarifying of contrast and definition in a way not available with the single ambiguous omnibus word in English.

Kierkegaard was of the opinion, however, that the availability of the two words in Danish did not guarantee an understanding of distinctions. Therefore *Works of Love* is called "deliberations" and not "discourses," because a deliberation "does not presuppose the definitions as given and understood." Therefore a deliberation must first fetch people "up out of the cellar, call to them, turn their comfortable way of thinking topsy-turvy with the dialectic of truth."[18]

Works of Love, then, aims to find a reader where he is, in the ambiguities of his understanding of the nature of love. The substance within which the reader comes to see himself is a positive love ethics, in complementary contrast to the ethical discourse on purity of heart,[19] which maintains a substantial openness in delineating the ethical integrity of the person, the ethical consciousness as qualitatively distinguished from the episodic immediacy of the esthetic life. In *Works of Love*, love in its works[20] (because it is a deed, not a volatile, lovely feeling) is the highest good of ethical vision. But we do not clearly know or we have

[16] *Stages on Life's Way*, pp. 7–86, 87–184, 185–397, *KW* XI (*SV* VI 13–83, 85–174, 175–370).

[17] See Supplement, pp. 424–25 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 196).

[18] See Supplement, pp. 469–70 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 293) and also p. 472 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 308). The English verb "deliberate" and the Danish *overveie* have the same elemental meaning, "to weigh." See also *Discourses in Various Spirits*, pp. 306–10, *KW* XV (*SV* VIII 385–88).

[19] "An Occasional Discourse," *Discourses in Various Spirits*, pp. 3–154, *KW* XV (*SV* VIII 115–242).

[20] See p. 3.

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forgotten what love is.[21] Christian love is not simply the same as erotic love and friendship or the heightening of the immediacy of these interests. Rather it is ethical-religious love, which dethrones and catches up immediacy's love, since one's beloved and friend are also neighbors.

The fundamental character of the love in Christian love ethics separates it from any sentimental ethics; furthermore, the implicit difference between imperative ethics (as in the discourse on purity of heart, *Either/Or*, II, and parts of *Fear and Trembling*) and indicative ethics distinguishes Christian love ethics from immanental philosophical ethics and exclusively imperative religious ethics and also from unprincipled "Christian pragmatism" (opportunism with furrowed brow). Christian ethics is characterized not only by the distinctions between love [*Elskov*] and love [*Kjerlighed*], inclination and "you shall love," ethical ideals and "the prototype," but also by its indicative responsiveness, rooted in and motivated by the redemptive love of God for the individual and all human beings, toward the neighbor.

> *Christianly* the emphasis does not fall so much upon to what extent or how far a person succeeds in meeting or fulfilling the requirement, if he actually is striving, as upon his getting an impression of the requirement in all its infinitude so that he rightly learns to be humbled and to rely upon grace.
>
> To scale down the requirement in order to be able to fulfill it better (as if this were earnestness, that now it can all the more easily *appear* that one is earnest about wanting to fulfill the requirement)—to this Christianity in its deepest essence is opposed.
>
> No, infinite humiliation and grace, and then a striving born of gratitude—this is Christianity.[22]

Since perhaps most individuals live in a diluted social morality and need the rigorous ethical imperative of vision and requirement, this aspect of *Works of Love* may appear dominant. Fundamental, however, is the primacy of God, in whose love and for-

[21] See Supplement, pp. 424–25 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 196).
[22] See Supplement, p. 486 (*Pap.* X[3] A 734).

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giveness the person humbled under the requirement is restored by grace and renewed and turned to the indicative expressive ethics of gratitude in life. "It is indeed God in heaven who through the apostle says, 'Be reconciled'; it is not human beings who say to God: 'Forgive us.' No, God loved us first; and again the second time, when it was a matter of Atonement, God was the one who came first—although in the sense of justice he was the one who had the furthest to come."[23] This is the mature, indicative, expressive Christian ethics of grace in the opening prayer and in the conclusion.[24]

While writing *Works of Love*, Kierkegaard was diverted not only by the lectures on communication but also by an urge to travel again to Berlin, but he resisted it and "instead . . . visited the king [Christian VIII]. . . . Now the point is to reduce productivity and to loaf a little here at home rather than to have these intense distractions that promptly make me productive again."[25] He remained in Copenhagen but became more productive than ever.[26] The varied writings in 1847–1848 included projected discourses on the Atonement under the title "Work of Love,"[27] a title that was eventually changed to *The Sickness unto Death*.

In one of the few journal entries about *Works of Love*, Kierkegaard states that the section "The Work of Love in Praising Love," which obviously pertains to what he was doing in the whole book, "contains nothing direct" about him.[28] Perhaps the statement has particular reference to the excluded section titled "A Self-Defense."[29] *Works of Love* does, however, illustrate his view of the entire authorship as his own education, his own upbringing.[30] With the stress on *works* of love and the critique of the

[23] See p. 336.
[24] See pp. 3–4, 384–86.
[25] See Supplement, p. 468 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 249).
[26] See *JP* VI 6356 (*Pap.* X[1] A 138).
[27] See Supplement, p. 477 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 472).
[28] See Supplement, p. 482 (*Pap.* X[1] A 161).
[29] See Supplement, pp. 455–61 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 73).
[30] See *JP* VI 6238 (*Pap.* IX A 227).

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poet, *Works of Love* is a decisive point in the entire authorship and indicates Kierkegaard's qualifying of inwardness with an emphasis also on action.

> This movement from "the poet" to religious existing is basically the movement in the entire work as an author regarded in its totality. See *Works of Love* (II A, B[31]) concerning the use again made there of "the poet" as the *terminus a quo* [point from which] for Christian religious existing.[32]

Given the emphasis on *works* of love, with the elimination of the distance of pseudonymity and with the movement from the poet to religious existing, one may ask whether *Works of Love* was itself a work of love. Kierkegaard himself regarded it as an act, as a work of love.[33] In self-denial to praise love is a work of love.[34] Parts of the writing were works of love to the neighbor, to the person one meets. Quite likely the chapter on "Mercifulness, a Work of Love Even If It Can Give Nothing and Is Able To Do Nothing" was written with his crippled nephew Hans Peter Kierkegaard in mind. And certainly the chapter on "The Work of Love in Recollecting One Who Is Dead" was an act of love in filial piety toward Kierkegaard's parents. Sending his own copy of *Works of Love*, accompanied by a remarkable, sensitive letter[35] to his sister-in-law, was a work of love. The entire book, in its polemical ideality, was a strong but difficult work of love toward Bishop Mynster, the Church in Denmark, and the nation. It is also possible that the *Corsair* affair[36] was in Kierkegaard's mind in the writing of the chapter on "The Victory of the Conciliatory Spirit in Love." In retrospect, and in the language and context of *Works of Love*, Kierkegaard wrote that "the step by me was indeed a fruit of deliberation but also a work of love."[37] "That the step I took was one of perhaps eminent sagacity and

[31] Pp. 17–60.

[32] *The Point of View for My Work as an Author*, *KW* XXII (*SV* XIII 606).

[33] See Supplement, p. 461 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 73).

[34] See pp. 359–74; Supplement, p. 454 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 59:23).

[35] See Supplement, pp. 474–75 (Letter 150).

[36] See *The* Corsair *Affair*, Historical Introduction, pp. xv-xviii, xxiii-xxiv, *KW* XIII.

[37] *Pap.* X[2] A 102.

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deliberation, in full knowledge of the circumstances, and also in the Christian sense a true work of love—of this not a word should be said."[38]

Works of Love was published, as were most of Kierkegaard's books, by Carl Reitzel, and according to a new honorarium arrangement. For the presumably ordinary edition of 500–525 copies, Kierkegaard received 270 rix-dollars (ca. $1,350 in 1973 money), the customary honorarium at that time. It turned out to be one of the few of Kierkegaard's thirty-eight titles that appeared in a second edition during his lifetime. With very few changes,[39] the second edition appeared in 1852.

The volume received scant attention by reviewers, a circumstance that suited Kierkegaard's interest in "that single individual" rather than in a large number of perhaps superficial readers. Although the two contemporary reviews were laudatory, Kierkegaard's journal notes indicate that he regarded the reviewers as inadequate readers.

The editor of *Berlingske Tidende*, Mendel Levin Nathanson, wrote that Kierkegaard represented a view opposite to that of those who, "viewing life from a historical point of view drawn from modern philosophy, pantheistically merge world spirit and God's Spirit and thus become proclaimers of a false peace." Among "the most talented representatives" of the opposite position "must be counted our most productive author of recent times. . . . He has here as always the merit of not fearing the consequences but states them in all their trenchancy." Nathanson also uses expressions such as "powerful gripping impression," "most beautiful and most profound," and "one will hardly withstand the persuasive power." The review ends with a request: "It is a natural wish that at some time we may hear this gifted proclaimer of the Law and the requirement preach the Gospel."[40]

The anonymous review in *Nyt Aftenbladet* was long (in three

[38] *Pap.* X^2 A 111.

[39] See Supplement, p. 487 (*Pap.* X^6 B 31).

[40] Mendel Levin Nathanson, *Berlingske Tidende*, 297, December 20, 1847. For Kierkegaard's private response to "this hasty review" and Nathan's wish, see Supplement, pp. 476–77 (*Pap.* $VIII^2$ B 74–78).

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issues), but *Works of Love* was primarily a point of departure for the reviewer's thoughts on philosophy and theology. Having used most of the space for his own cogitations, the reviewer says, "It could not be our intention to give even a remote conception of the riches this book holds and of all that one can truly learn from it . . .. With this we conclude our review, which has been unusually long, but which has been necessitated by the unusual riches of the work."[41] Kierkegaard's only journal comment was: "*Aftenbladet* apologizes because the review of my *Works of Love* is so disproportionately long. A few days later the same paper produces an article just about as long that is a police report on the trial of a thief. Here no apology is necessary, for it is enormously important."[42]

More important to Kierkegaard than any printed review was the reception of the book by its primary intended reader, Bishop Mynster:

> Today I looked in on Bishop Mynster. He said he was very busy—so I left at once. But he was also very cold toward me. Very likely he is offended by the latest book. That is how I interpreted it. Perhaps I am wrong. . . . I have always winced at writing anything I knew might offend him, yes, almost embitter him. Now I assume that it has happened. . . . I have never done the slightest thing to win his favor and support, but it would have made me indescribably happy to have him agree with me—for his sake as well, because that I am right I know best of all—from his sermons.[43]

Bishop Mynster's displeasure had been anticipated because, in its ideality of vision and stringency of thought, *Works of Love* was a polemical work.[44] To a reader many decades later, although the book is still polemical in its penetrating analysis and radical, uncompromising ideality, it is also empowering in its gracious theocentricity and upbuilding in its inclusive neighborliness.

[41] Anon., *Nyt Aftenbladet*, 291, 292, 294, December 14, 15, 17, 1847.
[42] See Supplement, p. 477 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 496).
[43] See Supplement, p. 473 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 390).
[44] See Supplement, pp. 477–78 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 559).

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WORKS OF LOVE

SOME CHRISTIAN DELIBERATIONS
IN THE FORM OF DISCOURSES

by Søren Kierkegaard

FIRST SERIES

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PREFACE[1]

These Christian deliberations, which are the fruit of much deliberation, will be understood slowly but then also easily, whereas they will surely become very difficult if someone by hasty and curious reading makes them very difficult for himself. *That single individual*[2] who first deliberates with himself whether or not he will read, if he then chooses to read, will lovingly deliberate whether the difficulty and the ease, when placed thoughtfully together on the scale, relate properly to each other so that what is essentially Christian is not presented with a false weight by making the difficulty or by making the ease too great.

[3]They are *Christian deliberations*, therefore not about *love* but about *works of love*.

They are about *works of love*, not as if hereby all its works were now added up and described, oh, far from it; not as if even the particular work described were described once and for all, far from it, God be praised! Something that in its total richness is *essentially* inexhaustible is also in its smallest work *essentially* indescribable just because essentially it is totally present everywhere and *essentially* cannot be described.

Autumn 1847

S. K.

PRAYER

How could one speak properly about love if you were forgotten, you God of love, source of all love in heaven and on earth; you who spared nothing but in love gave everything; you who are love, so that one who loves is what he is only by being in you! How could one speak properly about love if you were forgotten, you who revealed what love is, you our Savior and Redeemer, who gave yourself in order to save all. How could one speak properly of love if you were forgotten, you Spirit of love, who take nothing of your own[4] but remind us of that love-sacrifice,[5]

remind the believer to love as he is loved and his neighbor as himself! O Eternal Love, you who are everywhere present and never without witness where you are called upon, be not without witness in what will be said here about love or about works of love. There are indeed only some works that human language specifically and narrowly calls works of love, but in heaven no work can be pleasing unless it is a work of love: sincere in self-renunciation, a need in love itself, and for that very reason without any claim of meritoriousness!

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I

IX 9

Love's Hidden Life and Its Recognizability by Its Fruits

> Luke 6:44. Every tree is known by its own fruit, for figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush.

If it were so, as conceited sagacity, proud of not being deceived, thinks, that we should believe nothing that we cannot see with our physical eyes, then we first and foremost ought to give up believing in love. If we were to do so and do it out of fear lest we be deceived, would we not then be deceived? We can, of course, be deceived in many ways. We can be deceived by believing what is untrue, but we certainly are also deceived by not believing what is true. We can be deceived by appearances, but we certainly are also deceived by the sagacious appearance, by the flattering conceit that considers itself absolutely secure against being deceived. Which deception is the more dangerous? Whose recovery is more doubtful, that of the one who does not see, or that of the person who sees and yet does not see? What is more difficult—to awaken someone who is sleeping or to awaken someone who, awake, is dreaming that he is awake? Which is sadder, the sight that promptly and unconditionally moves one to tears, the sight of someone unhappily deceived in love, or the IX 10
sight that in a certain sense could tempt laughter, the sight of the self-deceived, whose fatuous conceit of not being deceived is indeed ridiculous and laughable if the ridiculousness of it were not an even stronger expression for horror, since it shows that he is not worthy of tears.

To defraud oneself of [*bedrage for*] love [*Kjerlighed*] is the most

terrible, is an eternal loss, for which there is no compensation either in time or in eternity. Ordinarily, when it is a matter of being deceived [*bedrages*] in love, however different the case may be, the one deceived is still related to love, and the deception is only that the love was not where it was thought to be, but the self-deceived person has locked and is locking himself out of love. There is also talk about being deceived by life or in life, but the one who in his self-deception deceived himself out of living—his loss is irreparable. Even for someone who all his life has been deceived by life, eternity can have rich compensation in store, but the self-deceived person has prevented himself from winning the eternal. Indeed, what has the person actually lost who, because of his love, became a victim of human deception if it turns out in eternity that love remains, whereas the deception has ended! But the person who, very ingeniously, deceived himself by sagaciously walking into the trap of sagacity, ah, even if all his life he in his own conceit counted himself happy, what has he not lost when in eternity it turns out that he deceived himself! In temporality a person perhaps can succeed in being able to dispense with love; he perhaps can succeed in slipping through time without discovering the self-deception; he perhaps can succeed, how terrible, in becoming, in a delusion, proud of being in it—but in eternity he cannot dispense with love and cannot avoid discovering that he forfeited everything. How earnest existence is, how very terrible it is precisely when it in punishment permits the self-willful person to go his own way, so he is allowed to go on living, proud of—being deceived, until eventually he is allowed to verify that he deceived himself forever! Truly, eternity does not let itself be mocked; instead it is something that does not even need to use force but, omnipotent, uses a little mockery in order to punish the presumptuous person dreadfully. What is it, namely, that connects the temporal and eternity, what else but love, which for that very reason is before everything and remains after everything is gone. But precisely because love is eternity's bond in this way, and precisely because temporality and eternity
IX 11 are heterogeneous, love can seem a burden to temporality's earthly sagacity, and therefore in temporality it may seem to the sensate person an enormous relief to cast off this bond of eternity.

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To be sure, the self-deceived person thinks that he is able to console himself, indeed, that he has more than conquered; in his foolish conceit he is kept in the dark about how disconsolate his life is. That he "has ceased to sorrow"[6] we shall not deny, but of what benefit is that when it would be to his salvation to begin in earnest to sorrow over himself! The self-deceived person may even think he is able to console others who became victims of perfidious deception, but what insanity when someone who himself has lost the eternal wants to heal the person who is extremely sick unto death! By a strange self-contradiction, the self-deceived person may even think that he is being sympathetic with the unhappy one who has been deceived. But if you carefully take note of his consoling words and therapeutic wisdom, you will recognize love by its fruits: by the bitterness of the mockery, by the acridity of the sensibleness, by the poisonous spirit of distrust, by the biting cold of callousness—that is, it will be recognizable from the fruits that there is no love within.

By the fruits we know the tree. "Grapes are not gathered from thorns or figs from thistles" (Matthew 7:16). If you want to gather them there, you will not merely gather in vain, but the thorns will show you that you are gathering in vain. *Every tree is known by its* ***own*** *fruit*. It may so happen that there are two fruits that look very much alike: the one is healthful and delicious, the other tart and poisonous. Sometimes the poisonous fruit is also delicious and the healthful fruit bitter in taste. In the same way love also is known by its *own* fruit. If someone makes a mistake, it must be because he does not know the fruits or does not know how to judge properly in the particular case. For example, when a person makes the mistake of calling something love [*Kjerlighed*] that actually is self-love, when he loudly protests that he cannot live without the beloved but does not want to hear anything about the task and requirement of love to deny oneself and to give up this self-love of erotic love [*Elskov*]. Or when a person makes the mistake of giving the name of love [*Kjerlighed*] to what is weak compliance, to what is pernicious whining, or harmful alliance, or conceited behavior, or self-seeking connections, or the bribery of toadyism, or the appearances of the moment, or temporal relations. True, there is a flower called the flower of

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eternity [*Evighedens Blomst*], but strange to say there is also a so-called everlasting flower [*Evighedsblomst*][7] that like perishable
IX 12 flowers blooms only at a certain time of the year—what a mistake to call the latter a flower of eternity! Yet in the moment of blossoming it is very deceptive. But every tree is known by its own fruit; so also is love known by its own fruit, and the love that Christianity speaks of is known by its own fruit—that it has within itself eternity's truth. All other love, whether it finishes flowering early, humanly speaking, and is changed or lovingly lasts its temporal season, is still perishable and merely blossoms. This is its frailty and its sadness: whether it blossoms for an hour or for seventy years, it merely blossoms, but Christian love is eternal. Therefore no one, if he understands himself, would think of saying of Christian love that it blossoms. No poet, if he understands himself, would think of singing its praises. What the poet sings about must have the sadness, which is the riddle of his own life, that it must blossom—and, alas, must perish. But Christian love abides, and for that very reason it *is*. What perishes blossoms, and what blossoms perishes, but something that *is* cannot be sung about—it must be believed and it must be lived.

Yet when we say that love is known by its fruits, we are also saying that in a certain sense love itself is hidden and therefore is known only by its revealing fruits. This is exactly the case. Every life, love's life also, is as such hidden but is made manifest in something else. The life of the plant is hidden; the fruit is the manifestation. The life of thought is hidden; the expression of it is the manifestation. Therefore the sacred words above speak about two thoughts although they hiddenly speak about only one; the statement manifestly contains one thought but also hiddenly contains another.

Let us then bring out both thoughts for consideration as we now proceed to discuss:

love's hidden life and its recognizability by its fruits.

Where does love come from, where does it have its origin and its source, where is the place it has its abode from which it flows? Yes, this place is hidden or is secret. There is a place in a person's innermost being; from this place flows the life of love, for "from

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the heart flows life."[8] But you cannot see this place; however deeply you penetrate, the origin eludes you in remoteness and hiddenness. Even when you have penetrated furthest in, the origin is always still a bit further in, like the source of the spring that is further away just when you are closest to it. From this place flows love along many paths, but along none of these paths can you force your way into its hidden origin. Just as God dwells in a light[9] from which flows every ray that illuminates the world, yet no one can force his way along these paths in order to see God, since the paths of light turn into darkness when one turns toward the light—so love dwells in hiding or is hidden in the innermost being. Just as the gush of the spring lures by the murmuring persuasion of its rippling, indeed, almost pleads with a person to walk along *that* path and not inquisitively want to force his way in to find its source and disclose its secret; just as the sun's rays invite a person to behold the glory of the world by their help but warningly punish the presumptuous one with blindness when he wants to turn around in order, inquisitively and brazenly, to discover the origin of the light; just as faith, beckoning, offers to be a person's companion on life's way but petrifies the brazen one who turns around to grasp it brazenly[10]—in the same way it is love's desire and wish that its secret source and its hidden life in the innermost being may remain a secret, that no one inquisitively and brazenly will force his way in disturbingly in order to see that which he cannot see anyway without forfeiting, because of his curiosity, the joy and blessing of it. The suffering is always most painful when the physician is compelled to cut and penetrate into the more vital and therefore the hidden parts of the body; likewise suffering is also the most painful and also the most pernicious when someone, instead of being gladdened by love in its manifestations, wants to take delight in fathoming it, that is, in disturbing it. IX 13

Love's hidden life is in the innermost being, unfathomable, and then in turn is in an unfathomable connectedness with all existence. Just as the quiet lake originates deep down in hidden springs no eye has seen, so also does a person's love originate even more deeply in God's love. If there were no gushing spring at the bottom, if God were not love, then there would be neither

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the little lake nor a human being's love. Just as the quiet lake originates darkly in the deep spring, so a human being's love
IX 14 originates mysteriously in God's love. Just as the quiet lake invites you to contemplate it but by the reflected image of darkness prevents you from seeing through it, so also the mysterious origin of love in God's love prevents you from seeing its ground. When you think that you see it, you are deceived by a reflected image, as if that which only hides the deeper ground were the ground. Just as the lid of a clever secret compartment, for the very purpose of completely hiding the compartment, looks as if it were the bottom, so also that which only covers what is even deeper deceptively appears to be the depths of the ground.

In the same way the life of love is hidden, but its hidden life is in itself motion and has eternity within itself. Just as the quiet lake, however calm its surface, is actually flowing water, since there is the gushing spring at the bottom—so also love, however quiet it is in its concealment, is flowing nevertheless. But the quiet lake can dry up if the gushing spring ever stops; the life of love, however, has an eternal spring. This life is fresh and everlasting. No cold can freeze it—it has too much warmth within itself for that; and no heat can weaken it—it is too fresh in its coolness for that. But hidden it is, and when the Gospel speaks about the recognizability of this life by its fruits, this above all does not mean that we should alarm and disturb this hiding place, that we should devote ourselves to observation or to searching self-scrutiny, which only "grieve the spirit"[11] and hinder growth.

Yet this hidden life of love is *recognizable by its fruits*—indeed, to be able to be known by its fruits is a need in love. How beautiful it is that the same thing that signifies the utmost misery also signifies the greatest riches! Need, to have need, to be a needy person—how reluctant a person is to have this said about him! Yet we are saying the utmost when we say of the poet, "He has a need to write;" of the orator, "He has a need to speak;" and of the young woman, "She has a need to love." Ah, how rich was even the neediest person who has ever lived, but who still has had love, compared with him, the only real pauper, who went through life and never felt a need for anything! This is precisely the young woman's greatest riches, that she needs [*trænge til*] the

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beloved; and this is the devout man's greatest and his true riches, that he needs God. Ask them, ask the young woman whether she could feel just as happy if she could equally well get along without the beloved; ask the pious person whether he understands or wishes that he could equally well get along without God! It is the same with love's recognizability by its fruits, which for that very reason, when the relationship is right, are said to press forward [*trænge frem*], whereby the riches are again signified. Indeed, if there could actually be such a self-contradiction in love, it would have to be the greatest torment that love insisted on keeping love hidden, insisted on making love unrecognizable. Would that not be the same as if the plant, which sensed the exuberant life and blessing within it, did not dare let it become recognizable and were to keep it to itself as if the blessing were a curse, keep it, alas, as a secret in its inexplicable withering! Therefore it is not this way at all. Even if a particular, specific manifestation of love, even a main shoot, were out of love pressed back [*trænge tilbage*] into painful concealment, the same life of love will still find another expression for itself and still be recognizable by its fruits. O you quiet martyrs of an unhappy erotic love, what you suffered by having, out of love, to hide your love certainly remained a secret; it never became known, so great was your love that involved this sacrifice—yet your love became known by its fruits! And perhaps these very fruits, the ones matured by the quiet fire of a hidden pain, became the most precious. IX 15

The tree is known by its *fruits*. It is true that the tree is also known by its *leaves*, but the fruit is still the essential mark. Thus if you identified a tree by its leaves to be such and such a tree but in the fruit season discovered that it bore no fruit, you would then know that it was not the tree that according to the leaves it purported to be. It is exactly the same with the recognizability of love. The Apostle John says (I John 3:18), "Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and truth." To what can we better compare this love in words and platitudes than to the leaves of the tree; words and phrases and the inventions of language may be a mark of love, but that is uncertain. In one person's mouth the same words can be so full of substance, so trustworthy, and in another person's mouth they can be like the

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vague whispering of leaves. In one person's mouth the same words can be like the "blessed nourishing grain,"[12] in someone else's like the sterile beauty of the leaf. But you should not for that reason hold back your words any more than you should hide visible emotion if it is genuine, because this can be the unloving committing of a wrong, just like withholding from someone what you owe him. Your friend, your beloved, your child, or
IX 16 whoever is an object of your love has a claim upon an expression of it also in words if it actually moves you inwardly. The emotion is not your possession but belongs to the other; the expression is your debt to him, since in the emotion you indeed belong to him who moves you and you become aware that you belong to him. When the heart is full, you should not enviously and superiorly, shortchanging the other, insult him by silently buttoning your lips. You should let the mouth speak out of the abundance of the heart;[13] you should not be ashamed of your feelings and even less of honestly giving each one his due. But one should not love in words and platitudes, and neither should one recognize love by them. Instead, one should know by such fruits, or by the fact that there are only leaves, that love has not reached its full growth. Sirach says warningly (6:4[3]): "If you devour your leaves, you will destroy your fruit and you will be left standing like a withered tree." By words and platitudes as the sole fruit of love, it is known that a person has prematurely torn off the leaves and thus he gets no fruit, not to mention something more terrible, that sometimes the deceiver is known by his very words and platitudes. Thus immature and deceitful love is known by this, that words and platitudes are its only fruit.

[14]It is said of certain plants that they must form a heart. In like manner one may also say of a person's love: If it is actually to bear fruit and thus be known by its fruit, it must first of all *form a heart.* It is true that love proceeds from the heart, but let us not be hasty about this and forget the eternal truth that love *forms* the heart. No doubt everyone has experienced the fleeting feelings of an indeterminate heart, but in this sense to have a heart by nature is infinitely different from forming the heart in the eternal sense. How rarely does the eternal get so much control over a person that love in that person begins to establish itself eternally or to

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form the heart. Yet this is the essential condition for bearing love's *own* fruit by which it is known. In other words, just as love itself is invisible and therefore we have to believe in it, so also is it not unconditionally and directly to be known by any particular expression of it.

There is no word in human language, not one single one, not the most sacred one, about which we are able to say: If a person uses this word, it is unconditionally demonstrated that there is love in that person. On the contrary, it is even true that a word IX 17
from one person can convince us that there is love in him, and the opposite word from another can convince us that there is love in him also. It is true that one and the same word can convince us that love abides in the one who said it and does not in the other, who nevertheless said the same word.

There is no work, not one single one, not even the best, about which we unconditionally dare to say: The one who does this unconditionally demonstrates love by it. It depends on *how* the work is done. There are, of course, works that in a particular sense are called works of love. But even giving to charity, visiting the widow, and clothing the naked do not truly demonstrate or make known a person's love, inasmuch as one can do works of love in an unloving, yes, even in a self-loving way, and if this is so the work of love is no work of love at all. You surely have often seen this lamentable situation and perhaps even at times have caught yourself in it, as any honest person will confess about himself, simply because he is not so callous and unloving as to disregard the essential, so preoccupied with what he is doing as to forget *how* he is doing it. Alas, Luther is supposed to have declared that not one single time in his life did he pray completely undisturbed by any distracting thought.[15] In the same way the honest person surely admits that however often and however many times he willingly and gladly gave to charity, he has never done it except in weakness, perhaps disturbed by an incidental impression, perhaps with capricious partiality, perhaps to make amends for himself, perhaps with averted face (but not in the scriptural sense), perhaps without the left hand's knowing about it,[16] but thoughtlessly, perhaps thinking about his own cares instead of thinking about the cares of the poor, perhaps seeking

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alleviation by giving to charity instead of wanting to alleviate poverty—then the work of love really would not be a work of love in the highest sense.

How, then, the word is said and above all how it is meant, how, then, the work is done—this is decisive in determining and in recognizing love by its fruits. But here again it holds true that there is nothing, no "thus and so," that can unconditionally be said to demonstrate unconditionally the presence of love or to demonstrate unconditionally its absence.

IX 18 Yet it remains firm that love is to be known by its fruits. But those sacred words of that text are not said to encourage us to get busy judging one another; they are rather spoken admonishingly to the single individual, to you, my listener, and to me, to encourage him not to allow his love to become unfruitful but to work so that it *could* be known by its fruits, whether or not these come to be known by others. He certainly is not to work so that love will be known by the fruits but to work so that it could be known by the fruits. In this working he must watch himself so that this, that love is known, does not become more important to him than the one important thing, that it has fruits and therefore can be known. It is one thing to give a person sagacious counsel, to recommend caution against being deceived by others; another and much more important thing is the Gospel's summons to the single individual that he bear in mind that the tree is known by its fruits and that it is he or his love that in the Gospel is compared to the tree. It does not read in the Gospel, as sagacious talk would say, "You or we are to know the tree by its fruits," but it reads, "The tree is to be known by its fruits." The interpretation is that you who read these words of the Gospel, you are the tree. The Gospel does not need to add what the prophet Nathan added to his parable, "You are the man,"[17] since it is already contained in the form of the statement and in its being a word of the Gospel. The divine authority of the Gospel does not speak to one person about another, does not speak to you, my listener, about me, or to me about you—no, when the Gospel speaks, it speaks to the single individual. It does not speak *about* us human beings, you and me, but speaks *to* us human beings, to you and me, and what it speaks about is that love is to be known by its fruits.

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If therefore someone, quixotic and fanatical or hypocritical, wanted to teach that love is such a hidden feeling that it is too exalted to bear fruit, or such a hidden feeling that the fruits demonstrate neither for nor against—indeed, that not even the most poisonous fruits demonstrate anything—then we will recall the Gospel verse: "The tree is to be known by its fruits." We will recall, not in order to attack but in order to defend ourselves against such persons, that what holds true of every word of the Gospel holds true here, that "he who acts accordingly is like a man who builds upon a rock."[18] "When the heavy rains come" IX 19 and destroy the exalted frailty of that hypersensitive love, "when the winds blow and beat against" the web of hypocrisy—then the true love will be recognizable by its fruits. Truly, love is to be known by its fruits, but still it does not follow from this that you are to take it upon yourself to be the expert knower. Moreover, the tree is to be known by its fruits, but it does not follow from this that there is one tree that is to take it upon itself to judge the others—on the contrary, it is always the individual tree that shall bear the fruits. But a person should fear neither the one who can kill the body[19] nor the hypocrite. There is only one whom a person should fear, and that is God; and there is only one of whom a person should be afraid, and that is oneself. It is true that no hypocrite has ever deceived anyone who in fear and trembling before God was afraid of himself. But the one who is busily occupied tracking down hypocrites, whether he succeeds or not, had better see to it that this is not also a hypocrisy, inasmuch as such discoveries are hardly the fruits of love. But without willing it and without coveting it, the person whose love truly bears its *own* fruit will expose every hypocrite who comes near him, or at least shame such hypocrites; but the loving person will perhaps not even be aware of this. The most mediocre defense against hypocrisy is sagacity; indeed, it is hardly a defense, but rather a dangerous neighbor. The best defense against hypocrisy is love; indeed, it is not only a defense but a chasmic abyss; in all eternity it has nothing to do with hypocrisy. This also is a fruit by which love is known—it secures the loving one against falling into the snare of the hypocrite.

But now, even if it is true that love is recognizable by its fruits,

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let us not impatiently, suspiciously, or judgingly demand continually and incessantly to see the fruits in any relationship of love with one another. The first point developed in this discourse was that we must believe in love—otherwise we simply will not notice that it exists; but now the discourse returns to the first point and says, repeating: Believe in love! If we are to know love, this is the first and the last thing to say about it; but the first time it was said in opposition to the brazen sensibleness that wants to deny the existence of love; now, however, after its recognizability by its fruits has been developed, it is said in opposition to the morbid, anxious, niggardly narrow-mindedness that in petty, miserable mistrust insists on seeing the fruits. Do not forget that it would be a beautiful, a noble, and a sacred fruit by which the love in you would become known if in your relation to another person whose love perhaps bore poorer fruit you were loving enough to see it as more beautiful than it was. If mistrust can actually see something as less than it is, then love also can see something as greater than it is.

IX 20

Do not forget that even when you rejoice over the fruits of love, when by them you know that love dwells in this other person, do not forget that it still is even more blessed to believe in love. This is a new expression for the depth of love—that when one has learned to know love by its fruits one again returns to the first point, that is, to believe in love—and returns to it as the highest. The life of love is indeed recognizable by its fruits, which make it manifest, but the life itself is still more than the single fruit and more than all the fruits together that you could count at any moment. Therefore the last, the most blessed, the unconditionally convincing mark of love remains—love itself, the love that becomes known and recognized by the love in another. Like is known only by like; only someone who abides in love can know love, and in the same way his love is to be known.

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II A

IX
21

You *Shall* Love[20]

> Matthew 22:39. But the second commandment is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Every discourse, particularly a section of a discourse, usually presupposes something that is the starting point. Someone who wishes to deliberate on the discourse or statement therefore does well to find this presupposition first in order then to begin with it. Our quoted text also contains a presupposition that, although it comes last, is nevertheless the beginning. [21]When it is said, "You shall love your neighbor [*Næste*] as yourself," this contains what is presupposed, that every person loves himself. Thus, Christianity, which by no means begins, as do those high-flying thinkers, without presuppositions, nor with a flattering presupposition,[22] presupposes this. Dare we then deny that it is as Christianity presupposes? But on the other hand, is it possible for anyone to misunderstand Christianity, as if it were its intention to teach what worldly sagacity unanimously—alas, and yet contentiously—teaches, "that everyone is closest [*nærmest*] to himself." Is it possible for anyone to misunderstand this, as if it were Christianity's intention to proclaim self-love as a prescriptive right? Indeed, on the contrary, it is Christianity's intention to wrest self-love away from us human beings.

IX
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In other words, this is implied in loving oneself; but if one is to love the neighbor *as oneself*, then the commandment, as with a pick, wrenches [*vriste*] open the lock of self-love and wrests [*fravriste*] it away from a person. If the commandment about loving the neighbor were expressed in any other way than with this little phrase, *as yourself*, which simultaneously is so easy to handle and yet has the elasticity of eternity, the commandment would

be unable to cope with self-love in this way. This *as yourself* does not vacillate in its aim, and therefore, judging with the unshakableness of eternity, it penetrates into the innermost hiding place where a person loves himself; it does not leave self-love the slightest little excuse, the least little way of escape. How amazing! Long and discerning addresses could be delivered on how a person ought to love his neighbor, and when the addresses had been heard, self-love would still be able to hit upon excuses and find a way of escape, because the subject had not been entirely exhausted, all circumstances had not been taken into account, because something had continually been forgotten or something had not been accurately and bindingly enough expressed and described. But this *as yourself*—indeed, no wrestler [*Bryder*] can wrap himself around the one he wrestles as this commandment wraps itself around self-love, which cannot move from the spot. Truly, when self-love has struggled with this phrase, which is, however, so easy to understand that no one needs to rack [*bryde*] his brain over it, then it will perceive that it has struggled with one that is stronger. Just as Jacob limped after having struggled with God,[23] so will self-love be broken if it has struggled with this phrase that does not want to teach a person that he is not to love himself but rather wants to teach him proper self-love. How amazing! What struggle is as protracted and terrible and involved as self-love's battle to defend itself, and yet Christianity decides it all with one single blow. The whole thing is as quick as a turn of the hand; everything is decided, like the eternal decision of resurrection, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (I Corinthians 15:52). Christianity presupposes that a person loves himself and then adds to this only the phrase about the neighbor *as yourself.* And yet there is the change of eternity between the former and the latter.

But would this really be the highest; would it not be possible
IX 23 to love a person *more than oneself*? Indeed, this kind of poetic effusion is heard in the world. Would it perhaps then be so that it is Christianity that is unable to soar that high and therefore (probably also because it addresses itself to simple, everyday people) is left miserably holding to the requirement to love the neighbor *as oneself,* just as it sets the apparently very unpo-

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etic *neighbor* as the object of love instead of the celebrated objects of soaring love, *a beloved, a friend* (love for the neighbor has certainly not been celebrated by any poet, no more than this loving *as oneself*)—would this perhaps be so? Or would we, since we do make a concession to *celebrated* love in comparison with *commanded* love, meagerly praise Christianity's levelheadedness and understanding of life because it more soberly and more firmly holds itself down to earth, perhaps in the same sense as the saying "Love me little, love me long"? Far from it. Christianity certainly knows far better than any poet what love is and what it means to love. For this very reason it also knows what perhaps escapes the poets, that the love they celebrate is secretly self-love, and that precisely by this its intoxicated expression—to love another person more than oneself[24]—can be explained. Erotic love [*Elskov*] is still not the eternal; it is the beautiful dizziness of infinity; its highest expression is the foolhardiness of riddles. This explains its attempting an even dizzier expression, "to love a person more than God." This foolhardiness pleases the poet beyond measure; it is sweet music to his ears; it inspires him to song. Ah, but Christianity teaches that this is blasphemy.

The same holds true of friendship as of erotic love, inasmuch as this, too, is based on preference: to love this one person above all others, to love him in contrast to all others. Therefore the object of both erotic love and of friendship has preference's name, "the beloved," "the friend," who is loved in contrast to the whole world. The Christian doctrine, on the contrary, is to love the neighbor, to love the whole human race, all people, even the enemy, and not to make exceptions, neither of preference nor of aversion.[25]

There is only one whom a person can with the truth of eternity love more than himself—that is God. Therefore it does not say, "You shall love God as yourself" but says, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind."[26] A person should love God unconditionally *in obedience* and love him *in adoration.* It is ungodliness if any human being dares to love himself in this way, or dares to love another person in this way, or dares to allow another person to love him in this way. If your beloved or friend asks something of you that

IX 24

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you, precisely because you honestly loved, had in concern considered would be harmful to him, then you must bear a responsibility if you love by obeying instead of loving by refusing a fulfillment of the desire. But you shall love God in unconditional obedience, even if what he requires of you might seem to you to be to your own harm, indeed, harmful to his cause; for God's wisdom is beyond all comparison with yours, and God's governance has no obligation of responsibility in relation to your sagacity. All you have to do is to obey in love. A human being, however, you shall only—but, no, this is indeed the highest—a human being you shall love as yourself. If you can perceive what is best for him better than he can, you will not be excused because the harmful thing was his own desire, was what he himself asked for. If this were not the case, it would be quite proper to speak of loving another person more than oneself, because this would mean, despite one's insight that this would be harmful to him, doing it *in obedience* because he demanded it, or *in adoration* because he desired it. But you expressly have no right to do this; you have the responsibility if you do it, just as the other has the responsibility if he wants to misuse his relation to you in such a way.

Therefore—*as yourself.* If the most cunning deceiver who has ever lived (or we could make him even more cunning than he ever was), in order if possible to get the Law to be verbose and to become prolix (for then the deceiver would quickly conquer), would *temptingly* continue to question the *royal Law* [27] and ask, "How shall I love my neighbor?" then the commandment will invariably go on repeating the brief phrase "as yourself." And if any deceiver has deceived himself throughout his whole life by all sorts of prolixities on this subject, eternity will simply confront him with the Law's brief phrase, "as yourself." Veritably no one is going to be able to escape the commandment; if its "as yourself" presses as hard as possible upon self-love, then in its impertinence *the neighbor* is in turn a stipulation that is as perilous to self-love as possible. Self-love itself perceives the impossibility of wriggling out of it. The only escape is the one the Pharisee in his
IX 25 day tried in order to justify himself [28]: to cast doubt on who one's neighbor is—in order to get him out of one's life.

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Who, then, is one's neighbor [*Næste*]?[29] The word is obviously derived from "nearest [*Nærmeste*]"; thus the neighbor is the person who is nearer to you than anyone else, yet not in the sense of preferential love, since to love someone who in the sense of preferential love is nearer than anyone else is self-love—"do not the pagans also do the same?"[30] The neighbor, then, is nearer to you than anyone else. But is he also nearer to you than you are to yourself? No, that he is not, but he is just as near, or he ought to be just as near to you.[31] The concept "neighbor" is actually the redoubling of your own self; "the neighbor" is what thinkers call "the other,"[32] that by which the selfishness in self-love is to be tested. As far as thought is concerned, the neighbor does not even need to exist. If someone living on a desert island mentally conformed to this commandment, by renouncing self-love he could be said to love the neighbor. To be sure, "neighbor" in itself is a multiplicity, since "the neighbor" means "all people," and yet in another sense one person is enough in order for you to be able to practice the Law. In the selfish sense, in being a self it is impossible consciously to be two; self-love must be by itself. Nor does it take three, because if there are two, that is, if there is one other person whom you in the Christian sense love *as yourself* or in whom you love *the neighbor*, then you love all people.[33] But what self-love unconditionally cannot endure is redoubling, and the commandment's *as yourself* is a redoubling. The person aflame with erotic love, by reason or by virtue of this ardor, can by no means bear redoubling, which here would mean to give up the erotic love if the beloved required it. The lover therefore does not love the beloved *as himself*, because he is imposing requirements, but this *as yourself* expressly contains a requirement on him—alas, and yet the lover thinks that he loves the other person even more than himself.

In this way *the neighbor* comes as close to self-love as possible. If there are only two people, the other person is the neighbor; if there are millions, everyone of these is the neighbor, who in turn is closer than *the friend* and *the beloved*, inasmuch as they, as the objects of preference, more or less hold together with the self-love in one. Usually a person is aware of the existence of the neighbor and of his being so close when he thinks he has privi- IX 26

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leges in relation to him or is able to claim something from him. If someone with this view asks, "Who is my neighbor?" then that reply of Christ to the Pharisee will contain an answer only in a singular way, because in the answer the question is actually first turned around, whereby the meaning is: how is a person to ask the question. That is, after having told the parable of the merciful Samaritan, Christ says to the Pharisee (Luke 10:36), "Which of these three seems to you to have been the neighbor to the man who had fallen among robbers?" and the Pharisee answers *correctly*, "The one who showed mercy on him"—that is, by acknowledging your duty you easily discover who your neighbor is. The Pharisee's answer is contained in Christ's question, which by its form compelled the Pharisee to answer in that way. The one to whom I have a duty is my neighbor, and when I fulfill my duty I show that I am a neighbor. Christ does not speak about knowing the neighbor but about becoming a neighbor oneself, about showing oneself to be a neighbor just as the Samaritan showed it by his mercy. By this he did not show that the assaulted man was his neighbor but that he was a neighbor of the one assaulted. The Levite and the priest were in a stricter sense the victim's neighbor, but they wished to ignore it. The Samaritan, on the other hand, who because of prejudice was predisposed to misunderstanding, nevertheless correctly understood that he was a neighbor of the assaulted man. To choose a beloved, to find a friend, yes, this is a complicated business, but one's neighbor is easy to recognize, easy to find if only one will personally—acknowledge one's duty.

The commandment said, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," but if the commandment is properly understood it also says the opposite: *You shall love yourself in the right way*. Therefore, if anyone is unwilling to learn from Christianity to love himself in the right way, he cannot love the neighbor either. He can perhaps hold together with another or a few other persons, "through thick and thin," as it is called, but this is by no means loving the neighbor. To love yourself in the right way and to love the neighbor correspond perfectly to one another; fundamentally they are one and the same thing. When the Law's *as yourself* has wrested from you the self-love that Christianity sadly

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enough must presuppose to be in every human being, then you have actually learned to love yourself. The Law is therefore: You shall love yourself in the same way as you love your neighbor when you love him as yourself. Whoever has any knowledge of people will certainly admit that just as he has often wished to be able to move them to relinquish self-love, he has also had to wish IX 27
that it were possible to teach them to love themselves. When the bustler wastes his time and powers in the service of futile, inconsequential pursuits, is this not because he has not learned rightly to love himself? When the light-minded person throws himself almost like a nonentity into the folly of the moment and makes nothing of it, is this not because he does not know how to love himself rightly? When the depressed person desires to be rid of life, indeed, of himself, is this not because he is unwilling to learn earnestly and rigorously to love himself? When someone surrenders to despair because the world or another person has faithlessly left him betrayed, what then is his fault (his innocent suffering is not referred to here) except not loving himself in the right way? When someone self-tormentingly thinks to do God a service by torturing himself, what is his sin except not willing to love himself in the right way? And if, alas, a person presumptuously lays violent hands upon himself, is not his sin precisely this, that he does not rightly love himself in the sense in which a person *ought* to love himself?

Oh, there is a lot of talk in the world about treachery and faithlessness, and, God help us, it is unfortunately all too true, but still let us never because of this forget that the most dangerous traitor of all is the one every person has within himself. This treachery, whether it consists in selfishly loving oneself or consists in selfishly not willing to love oneself in the right way—this treachery is admittedly a secret. No cry is raised as it usually is in the case of treachery and faithlessness. But is it not therefore all the more important that Christianity's doctrine should be brought to mind again and again, that a person shall love his neighbor as himself, that is, as he ought to love himself?

[34]The commandment about love for the neighbor therefore speaks in one and the same phrase, *as yourself*, about this love and about love of oneself. And now the introduction to the discourse

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ends with what it wishes to make the object of consideration: that is, the commandment about love for the neighbor and about love of oneself becomes synonymous not only through this phrase "as yourself" but even more through the phrase *you shall.* We will now speak about:

You ***shall*** *love,*

because this is the very mark of Christian love and is its distinctive characteristic—that it contains this apparent contradiction: to love is a duty.[35]

IX 28 You *shall* love—this, then, is the word of the *royal Law.*[36] And truly, my listener, if you are capable of forming a conception of the state of the world before this word was spoken, or if you are trying to understand yourself and are paying attention to the lives and minds of those who, although they call themselves Christians, actually live within pagan conceptions, then in relation to this Christian imperative, as in relation to everything Christian, you will humbly confess with the wonder of faith that such a thing did not arise in any human being's heart.[37] Now after it has been commanded throughout Christianity's eighteen centuries and previously in Judaism, now when everyone is instructed in this and, in a spiritual sense, like someone brought up in his prosperous parents' house, is almost made to forget that daily bread is a gift; now when Christianity is often disdained by those brought up in it in favor of all kinds of novelties, just as when healthful food is disdained in favor of confections by someone who has never been hungry; now when Christianity is presupposed, presupposed as known, as given, and is implied—in order to go further[38]—now this Law of love is repeated by everyone as a matter of course, and yet how seldom, perhaps, is it observed, how seldom, perhaps, does a Christian earnestly and gratefully ponder a conception of what his condition might be if Christianity had not come into the world! What courage it takes to say for the first time, "You *shall* love," or, more correctly, what divine authority it takes to turn the natural man's conceptions and ideas upside down with this phrase! There at the boundary where human language halts and courage fails, there revelation breaks forth with divine origination and proclaims

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what is not difficult to understand in the sense of profundity or human parallels but which did not arise in any human being's heart. It actually is not difficult to understand once it has been expressed; indeed, it wants only to be understood in order to be practiced, but it did not arise in any human being's heart. Take a pagan who is not spoiled by having learned thoughtlessly to patter Christianity by rote or has not been spoiled by the delusion of being a Christian—and this commandment, "You *shall* love," will not only surprise him but will disturb him, will be an offense to him. For this very reason that which is the mark of Christianity—"Everything has become new"[39]—again fits the commandment of love. The commandment is not something new in an accidental sense, nor a novelty in the sense of something curious, nor something new in a temporal sense. Love had existed also in paganism, but this obligation to love is a change of eternity—and everything has become new. What a difference there is between the play of feelings, drives, inclinations, and passions, in short, that play of the powers of immediacy, that celebrated glory of poetry in smiles or in tears, in desire or in want—what a difference between this and the earnestness of eternity, the earnestness of the commandment in spirit and truth, in honesty and self-denial! IX 29

But human ingratitude—oh, what a short memory it has! Because the highest is now offered to everyone, people take it as if it were nothing, discern nothing in it, least of all become aware of its precious nature, just as if the highest lost something because everyone has or could have the same thing. If a family possesses some costly treasure that is connected with a specific event, then generation after generation the parents tell their children and the children in turn tell their children how it all happened. But because Christianity for so many centuries now has become the possession of the whole human race, is all mention of eternity's change that takes place in the world with Christianity therefore to cease? Is not every generation equally close—that is, equally duty-bound to make this perfectly clear to itself? Is the change less significant because it is now eighteen centuries later? Has it now also become less significant that there is a God because for many centuries there have lived generations who believed in

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him, has it therefore become less significant for me—that is, if I believe it? And for the person who lives in our day, eighteen centuries later, is it less significant that he became a Christian because it is eighteen centuries since Christianity entered the world? And if it is not so very long since he became a Christian, he must certainly be able to remember what he was like before he became a Christian and consequently must know what change took place in him—if the change of becoming a Christian has taken place in him. Therefore world-historical expositions of paganism are not needed, as if it were eighteen centuries since the fall of paganism, for it is indeed not so very long since both you and I, my listener, were pagans—that is, if we have become Christians.

And just this is the most lamentable and the most ungodly kind of deception, through ingratitude to allow oneself to be defrauded out of the highest, which one thinks one possesses but,
IX 30 alas, does not possess at all. Indeed, what is the highest possession, what is the possession of everything if I never receive the proper impression of my possessing it and of what it is that I possess! Since, according to the Bible, the one who has earthly goods is supposed to be as one who does not have them,[40] is this also true in relation to the highest: to have it and still be as one who does not have it? Is it true—but, no, let us not deceive anyone with this question, as if it were *possible* to have the highest in that way; let us rightly consider that this is an impossibility. Worldly goods are unimportant things, and therefore Scripture teaches that they, when they are possessed, should be possessed as unimportant things; but the highest neither *can* nor should be possessed as something unimportant. Worldly goods are in an external sense *an actuality*, and therefore a person can possess them although at the same time he is as one who does not possess them. But the goods of the spirit are only in the inner being, are only *in the possession*, and therefore a person cannot, if he actually possesses them, be as one who does not possess them; on the contrary, if one is such a person, one simply does not possess them at all. If anyone thinks he has faith and yet is indifferent toward this possession, is neither cold nor hot,[41] he can be certain that he does not have faith. If anyone thinks he is a Christian and yet is indif-

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ferent toward being that, then he really is not one at all. Indeed, what would we think of a person who gave assurances that he was in love and also that it was a matter of indifference to him?

Therefore, when we speak about Christianity, let us not, now or on any other occasion, forget its originality—that it did not arise in any human being's heart. Let us not forget to speak about it with the originality of faith, which always, when one has it, does not believe because others have believed but because this one also has been gripped by that which has gripped countless persons before him, but yet not in a less original way because of that. A tool that a craftsman uses becomes dull over the years, and a spring loses its tension and becomes weak, but that which has the tension of eternity retains it totally unchanged through all ages. When a strength-tester has been used for a long time, eventually even the weak can meet the test, but eternity's standard of strength by which every person is to be tested—whether he will have faith or not—remains totally unchanged through all ages. IX 31

[42]When Christ says (Matthew 10:17), "Beware of people," I wonder if by this is not also meant: Beware of being tricked out of the highest by people, that is, by continual comparison with other people, by habit, and by externals? The shadiness of a deceiver is not so dangerous—in fact, one becomes more readily aware of it; but this, to have the highest in a kind of indifferent fellowship, in the indolence of a habit, indeed, in the indolence of a habit that even wants to set the generation in place of the single individuals, wants to make the generation the recipient and the single individuals automatically sharers by virtue of that—this is a terrible thing. Of course, the highest is not to be booty, you are not to have it selfishly for yourself, since what you can have only for yourself alone is never the highest. But even if in the deepest sense you have the highest in common with all others (and this is precisely the highest, what you can have in common with everyone), you are, believing, nevertheless to have it for yourself in such a way that you keep it while everyone else perhaps also keeps it; but, in addition, even if everyone else gives it up.

Beware of people also in this regard: "Be wise as serpents"[43]—in order, namely, to keep the secret of faith[44] for yourself, even

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though you hope and desire and work so that in this regard everyone may do as you do. "Be innocent as doves," because faith is this very simplicity. You are not to use the wisdom of serpents in order to make faith into something else, but, wise toward people, you are to use the wisdom of serpents to shield the secret of faith within you and be on your guard against people. Is a password no secret because everyone knows it individually when it is confided to everyone and is kept as a secret by everyone? The secret of the password, however, is one thing today and another tomorrow, but it is the essence of faith to be a secret, to be for the single individual; if it is not kept as a secret by every single individual, even when he confesses it, then he does not believe. Is there perhaps something lacking in faith since in this way it is and remains and ought to be a secret? Is this also the case with erotic love, or is it not just the transient emotions that become manifest immediately and therefore in turn immediately vanish, while the deep impression always keeps the secret, so that we even say, and rightly so, that the falling in love that does not
IX 32 make a person secretive is not a real falling in love. Secret falling in love can be an image of faith, but the hidden person's incorruptible inwardness[45] in faith is life itself.

The one who, wise as the serpent, guards against people in order that he, innocent as the dove, can "keep the secret of faith" also has, as Scripture says (Mark 9:50), "salt in himself"; but if he does not guard against people, then the salt loses its strength, and with what is it then to be salted? Even if it does happen that the secrecy of a love affair becomes a person's downfall, faith is eternally and always the saving secret. Consider the woman with hemorrhages[46]; she did not press herself forward in order to touch Christ's robe; she told no one what she had in mind and what she believed—she said very softly to herself, "If I only touch the hem of his robe, I shall be healed." The secret she kept to herself; it was the secret of faith that saved her both temporally and eternally. You can keep this secret to yourself also when you profess your faith with bold confidence, and when you lie weak on your sickbed and cannot move a limb; when you cannot even move your tongue, you can still have this secret within you.

But the originality of faith is related in turn to the originality

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of Christianity. Lengthy descriptions of paganism, its errors, its distinctive characteristics are not at all necessary; the marks of the essentially Christian are contained in Christianity itself. Make the test here: forget Christianity for a moment and think of what you ordinarily know as love; call to mind what you read in the poets, what you yourself can find out, and then say whether it ever occurred to you to think this: You *shall* love? Be honest, or, lest this disturb you, I will honestly admit that many, many times in my own life it has utterly amazed me, that at times it has seemed to me as if love lost everything thereby, even though it gains everything. Be honest, admit that with most people, when they read the poets' glowing description of erotic love or friendship, it is perhaps the case that this seems to be something far higher than this poor: "You *shall* love."

"You shall love." **Only when it is a duty to love, only then is love eternally secured against every change, eternally made free in blessed independence, eternally and happily secured against despair.**

However joyous, however happy, however indescribably confident instinctive and inclinational love, spontaneous love, can be itself, precisely in its most beautiful moment it still feels a need to bind itself, if possible, even more securely. Therefore the two swear an oath, swear fidelity or friendship to each other. When we speak most solemnly, we do not say of the two, "They love each other"; we say, "They swore fidelity to each other" or "They swore friendship to each other." But by what does this love swear? We do not wish now to divert attention and distract by calling to mind the great variety of things the spokesmen of this love, *the poets*, know through initiation—for when it comes to this love it is the poet who receives the promise of the two, the poet who unites the two, the poet who dictates the oath to the two and has them swear—in short, it is the poet who is the priest. IX 33

Does this love then swear by something that is higher than itself? No, that it does not do. This is the beautiful, the touching, the enigmatic, the poetic misunderstanding—that the two do not themselves discover this; and the poet is their one and only,

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their beloved confidant precisely because he does not discover it either. When this love swears, it actually gives itself the significance by which it swears; it is the love itself that gives the luster to that by which it swears. Therefore it not only does not swear by something higher but actually swears by something that is lower than itself. This love is indescribably rich in its lovable misunderstanding; just because it is itself an infinite richness, an unlimited trustworthiness, when it wants to swear it will swear by something lower—but does not discover this itself. The result, in turn, is that this swearing, which indeed should be and also honestly thinks itself to be the highest earnestness, is actually the most enchanting jest. Moreover, the enigmatic friend, the poet, whose perfect confidence is this love's highest understanding—he does not understand it either. Yet it is surely easy to understand that if one is truly to swear, one must swear by something higher; then God in heaven is the only one who is truly in the position of being able to swear by himself alone. But the poet cannot understand this; that is, the single individual who is a poet may be able to understand it, but he cannot understand it insofar as he is a poet, since the *poet* cannot understand it. The poet can understand everything, in riddles, and wonderfully explain everything, in riddles, but he cannot understand himself or understand that he himself is a riddle. If he were compelled to understand this, he would, if he did not become indignant and
IX 34 embittered, sadly say: Would that this understanding had not been forced upon me—it disturbs what is most beautiful to me, disturbs my life, and in the meantime I have no use for it. In a way the poet is right about that, because the true understanding is the decisive settlement of questions vital to his existence. There are, then, two riddles: the first is the love the two have for each other; the second is the poet's explanation of it, or that the poet's explanation is also a riddle.

In such a way this love swears, and then the two add to the oath that they will love each other "forever." If this is not added, the poet does not join the two. He turns away, indifferent, from such a temporal love, or, mocking, he turns against it, while he belongs forever to that eternal love. There are, then, actually two unions—first the two who will love each other forever, and then

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the poet, who will belong to these two forever. And the poet is right in this, that if two people will not love each other eternally, then their love is not worth talking about, even less worth singing praises about. The poet, however, does not detect the misunderstanding that the two swear *by their love* to love each other forever, instead of swearing love to each other *by eternity*. Eternity is the higher. If one is to swear, then one must swear by the higher; but if one is to swear by eternity, then one swears by the duty that one "*shall* love." Alas, but that favorite of the lovers, the poet, he who himself is even more rare than the two lovers whom his longing seeks, he who himself is a marvel of lovableness, he is also like a coddled child—he cannot bear this *shall*; as soon as it is expressed, he either becomes impatient or he begins to cry.

Therefore this spontaneous love has, in the sense of the beautiful imagination, the eternal in itself, but it is not consciously grounded upon the eternal and thus it can be ***changed***. Even if it was not changed, it still can be changed, because it is indeed good fortune, but what is true of happiness is true of good fortune, which, when one thinks of the eternal, cannot be thought of without sadness, just as "Happiness *is* when it *has been*" is said with a shudder. That is to say, as long as it lasted or existed a change was possible; not until it is past can we say that it lasted. "Count no man happy as long as he is living."[47] As long as he is IX
living, his fortune can change; not until he is dead and fortune 35
has not left him while he lived, not until then is it manifest that he—has been happy. That which merely exists, which has undergone no change, continually has change outside itself; it can continually supervene, even in the last moment it can happen, and not until life has come to an end can we say: Change did not take place—or perhaps it did.

Whatever has undergone no change certainly has *existence*, but it does not have *enduring continuance*; insofar as it has existence, it is; but insofar as it has not gained enduring continuance amid change it cannot become contemporary with itself[48] and in that case is either happily ignorant of this misrelation or is disposed to sadness. Only the eternal can be and become and remain contemporary with every age; in contrast, temporality divides within

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itself, and the present cannot become contemporary with the future, or the future with the past, or the past with the present. Of that which has gained enduring continuance by undergoing change, we can say, when it has existed, not only "It did exist," but we can say, "It has gained enduring continuance while it existed." This is the safeguard and is a relation entirely different from that of good fortune. When love has undergone the change of eternity by having become a duty, it has gained enduring continuance, and it is self-evident that it exists. In other words, it is not self-evident that what exists at this moment will also exist at the next moment, but it is self-evident that the enduring exists [*bestaa*]. We say that something stands [*bestaa*] the test and praise it when it has stood the test. But this is said of something imperfect, because the enduring continuance of the enduring will not and *cannot* manifest itself in standing a test—it is, after all, the enduring; and only the transient can give itself the appearance of enduring continuance by standing a test.

No one would think of saying that sterling silver [*Prøve-Sølv*] must stand the test [*Prøve*] of time, since it is, after all, sterling silver. So it is also with love. The love that simply has existence, however happy, however blissful, however confident, however poetic it is, still must stand the test of the years. But the love that has undergone the change of eternity by becoming duty has gained enduring continuance—it is sterling silver. Is it therefore perhaps less applicable, less useful in life? Is, then, sterling silver less useful? Indeed not, but language, involuntarily, and thought, consciously, honor sterling silver in a distinctive way merely by
IX 36 saying "One uses it." There is no talk at all about testing, one does not insult it by wanting to test it—after all, one knows in advance that sterling silver endures. Therefore, when one uses a less reliable alloy, one is compelled to be more scrupulous and to speak less simply; one is compelled almost ambiguously to say it in two ways, "One uses it, and while one uses it one is also testing it," because it is, of course, always possible that it could change.

Consequently, *only when it is a duty to love, only then is love eternally secured.* This security of eternity casts out all anxiety[49] and makes love perfect, perfectly secured. In that love which has only existence, however confident it is, there is still an anxiety, an

anxiety about the possibility of change. Such love does not understand that this is anxiety any more than the poet does, because the anxiety is hidden, and the only expression is the flaming craving, whereby it is known that the anxiety is hidden underneath. Otherwise why is it that spontaneous love is so inclined to, indeed, so infatuated with, making a test of the love? This is simply because love has not, by becoming duty, undergone *the test* in the deepest sense. This accounts for what the poet would call sweet restlessness, which more and more foolhardily wants to make the test. The lover wants to test the beloved. The friend wants to test the friend. The testing undoubtedly has its basis in love, but this violently flaming desire to test, this craving desire to be put to the test, denotes that the love itself is unconsciously uncertain. Here again there is an enigmatic misunderstanding in spontaneous love and in the poet's explanations. The lover and the poet think that this urge to test love is precisely an expression of how certain it is. But is this really so? It is quite correct that one does not wish to test what is unimportant, but from this it surely does not follow that wanting to test the beloved is an expression of certainty. The two love each other; they love each other forever; they are so certain of it that they—put it to a test. Is this the highest certainty? Is not this relationship just like that of love's swearing and yet swearing by what is lower than love? In this way the lovers' highest expression for the enduring continuance of their love expresses that it merely has existence, because one tests, one puts to a test, that which merely has existence. But when it is a duty to love, then no test is needed and no insulting foolhardiness of wanting to test, then love is higher than any test; it has already more than stood the test in the same sense as faith "more than conquers."[50] Testing is always related to possibility; it is always possible that what is being tested would not stand the test. Therefore, if someone wanted to test whether he has faith, or try to attain faith, this really means he will prevent himself from attaining faith; he will bring himself into the restlessness of craving where faith is never won, for "You *shall* believe." If a believer were to ask God to put his faith to the test, this would not be an expression of the believer's having faith to an extraordinarily high degree (to think this is a poetic misunderstanding, just as it

IX 37

is also a misunderstanding to have faith to an "extraordinary" degree, since the ordinary degree is the highest), but it would be an expression of his not entirely having faith, for "You *shall* believe." Never has any greater security been found, and never will the peace of eternity be found in anything other than in this *shall.* The idea of "testing," however congenial it is, is an unquiet thought, and it is the disquietude that will make one fancy that this is a higher assurance, because testing is in itself inventive and will not be exhausted any more than sagacity has ever been able to calculate all the contingencies, but on the other hand, as the earnest person puts it so well, "Faith has calculated all contingencies."[51] When one *shall,* it is eternally decided; and when you will understand that you *shall* love, your love is eternally secured.

By this *shall* love is also eternally secured *against every change.* The love that has only existence can be changed; it can be changed *within itself* and it can be changed *from itself.*

Spontaneous love can be changed within itself; it can be changed into its opposite, into *hate.* Hate is a love that has become its opposite, a love that has perished [*gaae til Grunde*]. Down in the ground [*i Grunden*] the love is continually aflame, but it is the flame of hate; not until the love has burned out is the flame of hate also put out. Just as it is said of the tongue that "it is the same tongue with which we bless and curse,"[52] so it may also be said that it is the same love that loves and hates. But just because it is the same love, for that very reason it is not in the eternal sense the true love, which remains, *unchanged, the same,*
IX 38 whereas that spontaneous love, when it *is changed,* is still basically *the same.* True love, which has undergone the change of eternity by becoming duty, is never changed; it is simple, it loves and never hates, never hates—the beloved. It might seem as if that spontaneous love were the stronger because it can do two things, because it can *both* love and hate. It might seem as if it had an entirely different power over its object when it says, "If you will not love me, then I will hate you"—but this is only an illusion. Is changingness indeed a stronger power than changelessness, and who is the stronger, the one who says, "If you will not love me, then I will hate you," or the one who says, "If you hate me, I will still continue to love you"? Certainly it is terrifying and terrible

when love is changed into hate, but for whom is it actually terrible? I wonder if it is not for the one involved, the person to whom it happened that his love changed into hate!

Spontaneous love can be changed within itself; by spontaneous combustion it can become the sickness of *jealousy*; from the greatest happiness it can become the greatest torment. The heat of spontaneous love is so dangerous, no matter how great its desire is, that this heat can easily become a sickness. Spontaneity is like fermentation, which is called that simply because it has not yet undergone a change and therefore has not expelled the poison that is the heating element in fermentation. If love kindles itself with this poison instead of expelling it, then the sickness of jealousy [*Iversyge*, zeal-sickness] sets in. As the word itself suggests, it is a zeal for becoming sick, a sickness from zeal. The jealous person does not hate the object of love—far from it, but he tortures himself with the flame of reciprocal love that, purifying, should cleanse his love. The jealous person catches, almost imploringly, every beam from the love in the beloved, but through the burning glass of jealousy he focuses all these beams on his own love, and he slowly burns up. But the love that has undergone the change of eternity by becoming duty does not know jealousy; it does not love only as it is loved, but it loves. Jealousy loves as it is loved. Anxious and tortured by the thought of whether it is loved, it is just as jealous of its own love, whether it is not disproportionate in relation to the other's indifference, as it is jealous of the manifestation of the other's love. Anxious and tortured by preoccupation with itself, it dares neither to believe the beloved absolutely nor to give itself wholeheartedly, lest it give too much and therefore continually burn itself as one burns IX 39
oneself on something that is not burning—except to the anxious touch. It is comparable to spontaneous combustion. It might seem as if there were an entirely different kind of fire in spontaneous love since it can become jealousy. Alas, but it is just this fire that is the terrible thing. It might seem as if jealousy held its object firmly in an entirely different way when it watches it with a hundred eyes, whereas the simple love has only one eye, as it were, for its love. But is fragmentation stronger than unity; is a heart torn asunder stronger than a whole and undivided heart;

does a perpetually anxious grasp hold its object more firmly than the unified powers of simplicity! How, then, is that simple love secured against the sickness of jealousy? Is it not in this way, that it does not love by way of comparison? It does not begin with spontaneously loving according to preference—it loves. Therefore it can never reach the point of sickly loving by way of comparison—it loves.

Spontaneous love can be changed *from itself*, it can be changed over the years, as is frequently enough seen. Then love loses its ardor, its joy, its desire, its originality, its freshness. Just as the river that sprang out of the rocks is dissipated further down in the sluggishness of the dead waters, so also love is dissipated in the lukewarmness and indifference of habit. Alas, of all enemies, habit is perhaps the most cunning, and above all it is cunning enough never to let itself be seen, because the person who sees the habit is saved from the habit. Habit is not like other enemies that one sees and against which one aggressively defends oneself; the struggle is actually with oneself in getting to see it. There is a predatory creature,[53] known for its cunning, that slyly attacks the sleeping; while it is sucking blood from the sleeper, it fans and cools him and makes his sleep even more pleasant. Such is habit—or it is even worse; that creature seeks its prey among the sleeping, but it has no means to lull to sleep those who are awake. Habit, however, has this; it sneaks, sleep-lulling, upon a person, and when this has happened it sucks the blood of the sleeper while it fans and cools him and makes his sleep even more pleasant.

In the same way spontaneous love can be changed from itself and become unrecognizable, since hate and jealousy are still recognized as signs of love. Sometimes a person becomes aware, as
IX 40 when a dream flashes by and is forgotten, that habit has changed him; he wants to make amends but does not know where he should go and buy new oil[54] to rekindle his love. Then he becomes despondent, annoyed, weary of himself, weary of his love, weary of its being as paltry as it is, weary of not being able to get it changed, because unfortunately he had not in good time paid attention to eternity's change and now has even lost the capacity to endure the cure. It is sad to see occasionally a person who once

lived in prosperity but now is poverty-stricken, and yet how much sadder that change when one sees a love changed to something almost loathsome!

If, however, love has undergone eternity's change by becoming duty, it does not know habit and habit can never gain power over it. Just as eternal life is said to have no sighing and no tears, so one could add: and no habit either, and truly by this we do not say anything less glorious. If you want to save your soul or your love from habit's cunning—yes, people believe there are many ways to keep oneself awake and secure, but there really is only one: eternity's *shall*. Let the thunder of a hundred cannons remind you three times a day to resist the force of habit. Like that mighty Eastern emperor,[55] keep a slave who reminds you daily, keep hundreds. Have a friend who reminds you every time he sees you. Have a wife who, in love, reminds you early and late—but take care that this does not also become a habit! You can become so habituated to hearing the thunder of a hundred cannons that you can sit at the table and hear the slightest triviality much more clearly than the thunder of the hundred cannons—which you have become habituated to hearing. You can become so habituated to having hundreds of slaves remind you every day that you no longer hear them, because through habit you have acquired ears that hear and yet do not hear. No, only eternity's *you shall*—and the listening ear that wants to hear this *shall*—can save you from habit. Habit is the most lamentable change, but on the other hand one can become habituated to any change. Only the eternal, and therefore that which has undergone the change of eternity by becoming duty, is the unchanging—but the unchanging that specifically cannot become habit. However firmly a habit fixes itself, it never becomes the unchanging, even if a person becomes incorrigible, since habit is continually something that *ought to be changed*; the unchanging, however, is something that neither *can* nor *ought* to be changed. But the eternal never becomes old and never a habit. IX 41

Only when it is a duty to love, only then is love eternally made free in blessed independence. But, then, is spontaneous love not free? Has the lover no freedom at all in his love? On the other hand, should it be the intention of the discourse to praise the disconso-

late independence of self-love that became independent because it did not have the courage to bind itself, that is, because it became dependent upon its cowardliness—the disconsolate independence that floats because it found no abode and is like "someone who wanders here and there, an armed highwayman who puts up wherever night finds him,"[56] the disconsolate independence that independently bears no chains—at least not visibly? Far from it. On the contrary, we have pointed out above[57] that the expression of the greatest riches is to have a need; therefore, that it is a need in the free person is indeed the true expression of freedom. The one in whom love is a need certainly feels free in his love, and the very one who feels totally dependent, so that he would lose everything by losing the beloved, that very one is independent. Yet on one condition, that he does not confuse love with possessing the beloved. If someone were to say "Either love or die" and thereby mean that a life without loving is not worth living, we would completely agree. But if by the first he understood possessing the beloved and thus meant either to possess the beloved or die, either win this friend or die, then we must say that such a misconceived love is dependent. As soon as love, in its relation to its object, does not in that relation relate itself just as much to itself, although it still is entirely dependent, it is dependent in a false sense, it has the law of its existence outside itself and is dependent in a corruptible, in an earthly, in a temporal sense. But the love that has undergone the change of eternity by becoming duty and loves because it *shall* love—that love is independent and has the law for its existence in the relation of love itself to the eternal. This love can never become dependent in a false sense, because the only thing it is dependent upon is duty, and only duty is liberating. Spontaneous love makes a person free and at the next moment dependent. It is just as with a person's coming into existence; by coming into existence, by
IX 42 becoming a self,[58] he becomes free, but at the next moment he is dependent on this self. Duty, however, makes a person dependent and at the same moment eternally independent. "Only law can give freedom."[59] Alas, we very often think that freedom exists and that it is law that binds freedom. Yet it is just the opposite; without law, freedom does not exist at all, and it is law that gives

freedom. We also believe that it is law that makes distinctions, because when there is no law there are no distinctions at all. Yet it is the opposite; when it is law that makes distinctions, it is precisely law that makes all equal before the law.

This *shall*, then, makes love free in blessed independence. Such a love stands and does not fall with the contingency of its object but stands and falls with the Law of eternity—but then, of course, it never falls. Such love is not dependent on this or that; it is dependent only on that alone which liberates—therefore it is eternally independent. No independence can be compared to this independence. Sometimes the world praises the proud independence that thinks it has no need to feel loved, even though it also thinks it "needs other people—not in order to be loved by them but in order to love them, in order to have someone to love." How false this independence is! It feels no *need* to be loved and yet *needs* someone to love; therefore it needs another person—in order to gratify its proud self-esteem. Is this not like the vanity that thinks it can do without the world and still needs the world—that is, needs the world to find out that vanity does not need the world! But the love that has undergone the change of eternity by becoming duty certainly feels a need to be loved, and therefore this need is eternally in harmonizing agreement with this *shall*; but it can do without, if so it *shall* be, while it still continues to love—is this not independence? This independence depends only on love itself through eternity's *shall*; it does not depend on something else and therefore does not depend on the object of love as soon as this appears to be something else. Yet this does not mean that the independent love has then ceased, has changed into proud self-satisfaction—this is dependence. No, love abides; this is independence. Unchangingness is the true independence. Every change—be it the swooning of weakness or the strutting of pride, be it sighing or self-satisfied—is dependence. If when another person says, "I cannot love you any longer," one proudly answers, "Then I can also stop loving you"—is this independence? Alas, it is dependence, because whether he will continue to love or not depends upon whether the other will love. But the person who answers, "In that case I *shall* still continue to love you"—that person's love

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is made eternally free in blessed independence. He does not say it proudly—dependent upon his pride—no, he says it humbly, humbling himself under eternity's *shall*, and for that very reason he is independent.

Only when it is a duty to love, only then is love eternally and happily secured against despair. Spontaneous love can become unhappy, can reach the point of despair. Again it might seem to be an expression of the strength of this love that it has the power of despair, but this is mere appearance, since the power of despair, however much it is praised, is actually powerlessness; its peak is precisely its downfall. Yet this, that spontaneous love can reach the point of despair, shows that it is in despair, that even when it is happy it loves with the power of despair—loves another person "more than itself, more than God." Of despair it must be said: Only that person can despair who is in despair. When spontaneous love despairs over misfortune, it only becomes manifest that it was in despair, that in its happiness it had also been in despair.

The despair is due to relating oneself with infinite passion to a particular something, for one can relate oneself with infinite passion—unless one is in despair—only to the eternal. Spontaneous love *is* in despair in this way, but when it becomes happy, as it is called, its being in despair is hidden from it; when it becomes unhappy, it becomes manifest that it was in despair. In contrast, the love that has undergone the change of eternity by becoming duty can never despair, simply because it *is* not in despair. That is to say, despair is not something that can happen to a person, an event such as good fortune and misfortune. Despair is a misrelation in a person's innermost being—no fate or event can penetrate so far and so deep; it can only make manifest that the misrelation—was there. For this reason there is only one security against despair: to undergo the change of eternity through duty's *shall*. Anyone who has not undergone this change *is* in despair. Good fortune and prosperity can hide it, but misfortune and adversity do not, as he thinks, make him despair but make it manifest that he—was in despair. If one speaks differently, it is because one frivolously confuses the highest concepts. In other words, what makes a person despair is not misfortune but his lack of the
IX 44 eternal. Despair is to lack the eternal; despair is not to have un-

dergone the change of eternity through duty's *shall*. Despair is not, therefore, the loss of the beloved—that is unhappiness, pain, suffering—but despair is the lack of the eternal.[60]

How, then, is the commandment's love secured against despair? Very simply, by the commandment, by this "You shall love." This implies first and foremost that you must not love in such a way that the loss of the beloved would make it manifest that you were in despair—that is, you must not love in despair. Is loving thereby forbidden? By no means. It would be indeed strange if the commandment that says "You shall love" were by its own command to forbid loving. Thus the commandment only forbids loving in a way that is not commanded. Essentially the commandment is not forbidding but commanding, that you shall love. Therefore love's commandment does not secure against despair by means of feeble, lukewarm grounds of comfort—that one must not take something too hard, etc. Indeed, is such a wretched sagacity, which "has ceased to sorrow," any less despair than the lover's despair; is it not rather an even worse kind of despair! No, love's commandment forbids despair—by commanding one to love.

Who would have this courage except eternity; who has the right to say this *shall* except eternity, which at the very moment love wants to despair over its unhappiness commands it to love; where can this command have its home except in eternity? When it is made impossible to possess the beloved in time, eternity says, "You shall love"—that is, eternity then saves love from despair by making it eternal. Suppose it is death that separates the two—then what will be of help when the survivor would sink in despair? Temporal help is an even more lamentable kind of despair; but then eternity helps. When it says, "You shall love," it is saying, "Your love has an eternal worth." But it does not say it comfortingly, since that would not help; it says it commandingly precisely because there is imminent danger. And when eternity says, "You shall love," it is responsible for making sure that this can be done. What is all other comfort compared with that of eternity! What is all other spiritual care compared with that of eternity! If it were to speak more gently and say, "Console yourself," the sorrowing one would certainly have ob-

jections ready; but—indeed, it is not because eternity will proudly tolerate no objections—out of solicitude for the sorrowing one, eternity commands, "You shall love."

Marvelous words of comfort, marvelous compassion, because, humanly speaking, it is indeed most strange, almost like mockery, to say to the despairing person that he *shall* do that which was his sole desire but the impossibility of which brings him to despair. Is any other evidence needed that the love commandment is of divine origin! If you have tested it, or if you do test it, go to such a sorrowing one in the moment when the loss of the beloved is about to overwhelm him and then see what you can find to say. Admit it, you want to comfort him, and the only thing you will not think of is to say, "You shall love." On the other hand, test whether it does not almost embitter the sorrowing one the very moment it is said because it seems the most unsuitable thing to say on this occasion. Ah, but you who have had this earnest experience, you who in the dark moment found emptiness and loathsomeness in human grounds of comfort, but no consolation, you who appallingly discovered that not even eternity's admonition could keep you from sinking—you learned to love this *shall* that saves from despair! What you perhaps frequently had verified in lesser instances, that true upbuilding consists in being spoken to rigorously, you learned here in the deepest sense: that only this *shall* eternally and happily saves from despair. Eternally and happily—yes, because only that person is saved from despair who is *eternally* saved from despair. The love that has undergone eternity's change by becoming duty is not exempted from misfortune, but it is saved from despair, in fortune and misfortune equally saved from despair.

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See, passion inflames, worldly sagacity cools, but neither this heat nor this cold nor the combination of this heat and this cold is the pure air of the eternal. There is something inciting in this heat, and there is something sharp in this cold, and in the combination there is something indefinite, or an unconscious treachery, as in the dangerous time of spring. But this "You *shall* love" removes all the unhealthiness and preserves the healthiness for eternity. So it is everywhere, this *shall* of eternity is the saving, the purifying, the ennobling element. Sit with someone who

deeply mourns. If you have the ability to give to passion the expression of despair as not even the sorrowing one can do, it may soothe for a moment—but it is still false. If you have the sagacity and experience to provide a temporary prospect where the sorrowing one sees none, it can be refreshingly tempting for a moment—but it is still false. But this "You shall sorrow" is both true and beautiful. I do not have the right to become insensitive to life's pain, because I *shall* sorrow; but neither do I have the right to despair, because I shall sorrow; and neither do I have the right to stop sorrowing, because I *shall* sorrow. So it is with love. You do not have the right to become insensitive to this feeling, IX 46
because you *shall* love; but neither do you have the right to love despairingly, because you *shall* love; and just as little do you have the right to warp this feeling in you, because you *shall* love. You shall preserve love, and you shall preserve yourself and by and in preserving yourself preserve love. Wherever the purely human wants to storm forth, the commandment constrains; wherever the purely human loses courage, the commandment strengthens; wherever the purely human becomes tired and sagacious, the commandment inflames and gives wisdom. The commandment consumes and burns out the unhealthiness in your love, but through the commandment you will in turn be able to rekindle it when it, humanly speaking, would cease. Where you think you can easily go your own way, there take the commandment as counsel; where you despairingly want to go your own way, there take the commandment as counsel; but where you do not know what to do, there the commandment will counsel so that all turns out well nevertheless.

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II B

You Shall Love *the Neighbor*[61]

It is in fact Christian love that discovers and knows that the neighbor exists and, what is the same thing, that everyone is the neighbor. If it were not a duty to love, the concept "neighbor" would not exist either; but only when one loves the neighbor, only then is the selfishness in preferential love rooted out and the equality of the eternal preserved.

Frequently, although in different ways, in different moods, and with different passions and purposes, the objection is made against Christianity that it displaces erotic love [*Elskov*] and friendship.[62] Then in turn people have wanted to defend Christianity and to that end have appealed to its doctrine that one is to love God with one's whole heart and the neighbor as oneself. When the argument is carried on in this way, it makes no difference whether one agrees or disagrees, since shadowboxing [*Fægten i Luften*] and making an empty agreement [*Overeenkomst i Luften*] are equally meaningless. One must rather take care to make the issue very clear in order calmly to admit in the defense that Christianity has thrust erotic love and friendship from the throne, the love based on drives and inclination, preferential love, in order to place the spirit's love [*Kjerlighed*] in its stead, love for the neighbor, a love that in earnestness and truth is more tender in inwardness than erotic love in the union and more faithful in sincerity than the most celebrated friendship in the alliance. One must rather take care to make it very clear that the praise of erotic love and friendship belongs to paganism, that
IX 48 the *poet* actually belongs to paganism since his task belongs to it—so that with the sure spirit of conviction we can give to Christianity what is Christianity's, love for the neighbor, of which love no intimation is to be found in paganism. One must rather take care to divide and apportion rightly in order, if possible, to prompt the single individual to choose, instead of confus-

ing and confounding and thereby preventing the single individual from getting a definite impression of which is which. We must above all refrain from defending Christianity rather than consciously or unconsciously wanting to attribute everything to it—also what is non-Christian.

[63]Anyone who insightfully and earnestly reflects on this matter will readily see that the issue must be posed in this way: shall erotic love [*Elskov*] and friendship be the highest love [*Kjerlighed*] or shall this love be dethroned? Erotic love and friendship are related to passion, but all passion, whether it attacks or defends itself, fights in one way only, either/or: "Either I exist and am the highest, or I do not exist at all, either all or nothing." The bungling and the confusing (to which paganism and the poet are just as opposed as Christianity is) result when the defense proceeds on the basis that Christianity does indeed teach a higher love but *in addition* praises erotic love and friendship. To speak in this way betrays two things: that the speaker has neither the spirit of a poet nor the spirit of Christianity. Concerning spiritual matters, one cannot, if one wishes to avoid speaking foolishly, talk like a shopkeeper who carries the best grade of goods but in addition has a medium grade, which he can *also* very well recommend as almost as good. No, if it is certain that Christianity teaches that love for God and the neighbor is the true love, then it is also certain that what has thrust down "every high thing that elevates itself against the knowledge of God and takes every thought captive in obedience"[64] has likewise also thrust down erotic love and friendship.

Is it not indeed remarkable, if Christianity were such muddled and confused talk as many a defense of it, often worse than any attack, makes it out to be, is it not remarkable that in the whole New Testament there is not a single word about erotic love in the sense in which the poet celebrates it and paganism idolized it? Is it not remarkable that in the whole New Testament there is not a single verse about friendship in the sense in which the poet celebrates it and paganism cultivated it? Or let a poet who is IX 49
conscious of being a poet go through what the New Testament teaches about erotic love, and he will be brought to despair because he will not find a single word that could inspire him—and if any so-called poet nevertheless did happen to find a word that

he used, it would be a mendacious use, an offense, because instead of respecting Christianity he steals a precious word and distorts it in his use of it. Let the poet search the New Testament for a word about friendship that could please him, and he will vainly seek to the point of despair. But let a Christian seek, one who wants to love the neighbor, and he certainly will not seek in vain; he will find each word stronger and more authoritative than the other, serviceable for kindling this love in him and for keeping him in this love.

The poet will seek in vain. But is the poet, then, no Christian? We have indeed not said this, neither do we say it but say only that *qua* poet he is not a Christian. Yet a distinction must be made, for there certainly are religious poets. But these do not sing about erotic love [*Elskov*] and friendship; their songs are to the glory of God, about faith, hope, and love [*Kjerlighed*]. Nor do these poets sing about love in the sense in which the poet sings about erotic love, since love for the neighbor does not want to be sung about—it wants to be accomplished. Even if there were nothing else to prevent the poet from singing about love for the neighbor, it is already enough that beside every word in Holy Scripture a disturbing notice in invisible writing confronts him that says: Go and do likewise.[65] Does this sound like a poet-summons that calls upon him to sing?

Thus, the religious poet is a special case,[66] but the secular poet, *qua* poet, is not a Christian. Yet it is the secular poet we think of when we ordinarily speak of the poet. That the poet lives within Christendom does not alter the matter. Whether *he* is a Christian is not for us to decide, but *qua* poet he is not a Christian. Now that Christianity has lasted so long, it might well seem that it certainly must have permeated everything and—everyone of us. But this is an illusion. Because Christianity has lasted so long, it still does not mean that we have lived that long or have been Christians that long. The poet's very existence in Christendom and the place that is accorded him are an earnest reminder (rudeness and envious attacks upon him are certainly not *Christian* objections to or misgivings about his existence) of how much is
IX 50 taken in advance and how easily we are tempted to fancy ourselves far in advance of ourselves. Whereas, alas, the Christian

proclamation at times is scarcely heard, all listen to the poet, admire him, learn from him, are enchanted by him. Whereas, alas, people quickly forget what the pastor has said, how accurately and how long they do remember what the poet has said, especially what he has said with the help of the actor! This certainly does not mean that efforts, perhaps by force, should be made to get rid of the poet, for that would result only in a new illusion. Indeed, what good would it be if there were no poets, if in Christendom there were still so many who are contented with the understanding of existence that the poet has, so many who would long for the poet! Neither is it required of the Christian that he, in blind and unwise zeal, would go so far that he could no longer bear to read a poet—any more than it is required of the Christian that he must not eat ordinary food with others or that he should live apart from other people in the inclosure of separateness. No, but the Christian must understand everything differently than the non-Christian does, must be conscious that he knows how to make distinctions. A person would not be able to live exclusively at all times within the highest Christian conceptions any more than he could live only on the food at the Communion table. Therefore just let the poet be, let the individual poet be admired as he deserves to be if he actually is a poet, but also let the single individual in Christendom test his Christian conviction by means of this test: how does he relate himself to the poet, what does he think of him, how does he read him, how does he admire him.

Such things are hardly ever discussed these days. Alas, to many people these thoughts will perhaps seem to be neither Christian nor earnest enough, simply because they have to do with such things that, note well, occupy people so much six days of the week, and on the seventh day probably even more hours than religion does. Yet we are confident that we are well informed about how we must speak, and especially about what should be said in these times—both because from childhood we have been well instructed and brought up in Christianity and because in these more mature years we have devoted our days and our best powers to this service, even though we always repeat that we speak *without authority*. We are indeed all baptized and instructed

in Christianity; consequently there can be no question of propagating Christianity. On the other hand, far be it from us to judge that someone who claims to be a Christian is not a Christian; therefore, professing Christ in contrast to the non-Christian is not the point. It is, however, beneficial and necessary that the single individual carefully and consciously pay attention to himself and, if possible, help others (in such a way as one person can help another, since God is the true helper) to become Christians in an even deeper sense.

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The word "Christendom" as a general designation for a whole nation is a caption that easily says too much and thus in turn prompts the single individual to believe too much about himself. It is a custom, at least in other places, that signs stand along the highway that indicate where the road leads. Perhaps at the very moment one sets out on a journey one may already see a sign that this road leads to the distant place that is the destination of the journey—has one therefore arrived at that place? So also with the road sign "Christendom." It designates the direction, but has one therefore arrived at the goal, or is one always only—on the way? Or is it going forward along that way if once a week for one hour a person goes along that road, so to speak, while on the other six days one lives in totally different categories and makes no attempt to be conscious of how this hangs together? Is this indeed really earnest: to be silent about the true connectedness of the matter and the relations in order to speak most earnestly about the most earnest matter, a matter that certainly should be taken along into the confusion, the connection of which to this earnest matter one does not—out of sheer earnestness—illuminate? Who then has the more difficult task: the teacher who lectures on the earnest matter as if at the distance of a mirage from the everyday, or the apprentice who should make use of it? Is only this a deception, to be silent about the earnest matter? Is it not also just as dangerous a deception to speak of it, but under circumstances—and to present it, but in a light—altogether different from the daily life of actuality? [67]If, however, it is true that all worldly life, its pomp, its diversions, and its charms, is able in so many ways to captivate and ensnare a person, which then is the earnest thing to do—either out of sheer earnestness to be silent about worldly matters

in the church, or to speak earnestly about them there in order, if possible, to fortify people against the dangers of the worldly? Would it actually be impossible to speak in a solemn and truly earnest way about worldly things? If it were impossible, does it follow that it should be suppressed in religious discourse? Ah, no, for that would mean only that in the most solemn sense it should be prohibited in religious discourse.

Therefore we will test the Christian conviction on the poet. What does the poet teach about erotic love and friendship? The question here is not about this or that particular poet, but only about the poet, that is, only about him insofar as he is true to himself and to his task as a poet. If a so-called poet has lost faith in the poetic worth of erotic love and friendship, in the poetic view of them, and has something else put in its place, he is not a poet, and perhaps *this* something else he puts in its place is not Christian either, but the whole thing is bungling. Erotic love is based on a drive that, transfigured into an inclination, has its highest, its unconditional, its only poetically unconditioned expression in this—there is but one and only one beloved in the whole world, and this one and only one time of erotic love is love, is everything; the second time is nothing. Ordinarily one says proverbially that just one time does not count. Here, in contrast, one time is unconditionally everything and the second time is unconditionally the ruin of everything. This is poetry, and the emphasis lies unconditionally upon the ultimate of passionateness: to be or not to be. To love a second time is not also to love but, to poetry, is an abomination. If a so-called poet wants to dupe us into thinking that erotic love can be repeated in the same person, if a so-called poet wants to occupy himself in clever fatuousness that presumably would exhaust passion's mysteriousness in the *why* of cleverness, then he is not a poet. What he puts in place of the poetic is not Christian either. Christian love teaches us to love all people, unconditionally all. Just as unconditionally and powerfully as erotic love intensifies in the direction that there is but one and only one beloved, just as unconditionally and powerfully does Christian love intensify in the opposite direction. If in connection with Christian love one wants to make an exception of a single person whom one does not wish to love,

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then such a love is not "also Christian love" but is unconditionally not Christian love. Yet this is much like the confusion in so-called Christendom—the poets have given up the passion of erotic love, they yield, they slacken the tension of passion; they scale down (by adding on) and are of the opinion that a person can, in the sense of erotic love, love many times, so that there will be more beloveds. Christian love yields, slackens the tension of eternity, scales down, and is of the opinion that when a great many are loved, then it is Christian love. Thus *both* poetic *and* Christian love have become confused, and what has stepped in as a replacement is *neither* poetic *nor* Christian love. Passion always has this unconditional characteristic—that it excludes the third—that is, the third means confusion. To love without passion is an impossibility. But therefore the difference between erotic love and Christian love is also the only possible eternal difference in passion. Another difference between erotic love and Christian
IX 53 love is unthinkable. If, therefore, a person presumes that he is simultaneously able to understand his life with the help of the poet and with the help of Christianity's explanation, believes he is able to understand these two explanations together, and in such a way that there would be meaning in his life—then he is in error. The poet and Christianity are diametrically opposite in their explanations. The poet idolizes inclination and therefore is quite right, since he always has only erotic love in mind, in saying that to command love is the greatest fatuousness and the most preposterous talk; Christianity, which always has only Christian love in mind, is also quite right when it dethrones inclination and sets this *shall* in its place.

The poet and Christianity explain diametrically opposite things, or, more accurately expressed, the poet really explains nothing, because he explains erotic love and friendship—in riddles. He explains erotic love and friendship as riddles, but Christianity explains love eternally. From this, one again sees that it is an impossibility to live according to both explanations simultaneously, since the greatest possible contrast between the two explanations is surely this, that the one is no explanation and the other is the explanation.

Erotic love and friendship, as the poet understands them, con-

tain no moral task. Erotic love and friendship are good fortune. In the poetic sense, it is a stroke of good fortune (and certainly the poet is an excellent judge of good fortune), the best of good fortune, to fall in love, to find this one and only beloved. It is a stroke of good fortune, almost as great, to find this one and only friend. At most, then, the task is to be properly grateful for one's good fortune. But the task can never be to *be obliged* to find the beloved or to find this friend; this is out of the question, which the poet again understands very well. Therefore, the task depends upon whether fortune will give one the task, but in the moral sense this simply expresses that there is no task. On the other hand, when one *shall* love the neighbor, then the task *is*, the moral task, which in turn is the origin of all tasks. Precisely because Christianity is the true morality, it knows how to shorten deliberations and cut short prolix introductions, how to eliminate all provisional waiting and preclude all wasting of time; Christianity is immediately involved in the task because it has the task within itself.

There is indeed a big dispute going on in the world about what should be called the highest. But whatever it is called now, whatever variations there are, it is unbelievable how much prolixity is involved in taking hold of it. [68]Christianity, however, immediately teaches a person the shortest way to find the highest: Shut your door and pray to God—because God is surely the IX
highest. If someone goes out into the world to try to find the 54
beloved or the friend, he can go a long way—and go in vain, can wander the world around—and in vain. But Christianity is never responsible for having a person go even a single step in vain, because when you open the door that you shut in order to pray to God and go out the very first person you meet is the neighbor, whom you *shall* love. Wonderful! Perhaps a young girl inquisitively and superstitiously tries to find out her impending fate, to catch a glimpse of her husband to be, and deceptive cleverness makes her believe that when she has done this and this she will recognize him by his being the first one she sees on such and such a day. [69]Would it also be as difficult to get to see the neighbor—if one does not prevent oneself from seeing him—since Christianity has made it eternally impossible to mistake him? There is not

a single person in the whole world who is as surely and as easily recognized as the neighbor. You can never confuse him with anyone else, since the neighbor, to be sure, is all people. If you confuse another person with the neighbor, then the mistake is not due to the latter, since the other person is also the neighbor; the mistake is due to you, that you will not understand who the neighbor is. If you save a person's life in the dark, thinking that it is your friend—but it was the neighbor—this is no mistake. However, it is indeed a mistake if you want to save only your friend. If your friend complains that you, in his opinion, mistakenly do for the neighbor what he believed you would do only for him, rest assured—it is your friend who is mistaken.

The issue between the poet and Christianity can be defined very precisely as follows: *Erotic love and friendship are preferential love [Forkjerlighed] and the passion of preferential love*; Christian love [*Kjerlighed*] is self-denial's love, for which this *shall* vouches. To deprive these passions of their strength is the confusion. But preferential love's most passionate boundlessness in excluding means to love only one single person; self-denial's boundlessness in giving itself means not to exclude a single one.

In other times, when people carried out in life their understanding of Christianity, it was thought that Christianity had something against erotic love because it was based upon a drive; it was thought that Christianity, which, as spirit, has posited a cleft between flesh and spirit, hated erotic love as the sensuous. But this was a misunderstanding, an exaggeration of spirituality.
IX 55 Moreover, it can easily be shown that Christianity is very far from unreasonably wanting to incite the sensuous against a person himself by teaching him exaggeration. Does not Paul say that it is better to marry than to burn![70] No, just because Christianity is truly spirit, it understands by the sensuous something quite different from what is simply called the sensuous nature, and it has been no more scandalized by a drive human beings have indeed not given to themselves than it has wanted to forbid people to eat and drink. By the sensuous, the flesh, Christianity understands selfishness. A conflict between spirit and flesh is inconceivable unless there is a rebellious spirit on the side of flesh, with which the spirit then contends; similarly, a conflict between spirit

and a stone or between spirit and a tree is inconceivable. Therefore, self-love is sensuousness. [71]Christianity has misgivings about erotic love and friendship simply because preferential love in passion or passionate preference is actually another form of self-love.

Paganism has never dreamed of this. Because paganism has never had an inkling of self-denial's love for the neighbor, whom one *shall* love, it divided love this way: self-love is abhorrent because it is love of self, but erotic love and friendship, which are passionate preferential love, are love. But Christianity, which has made manifest what love is, divides otherwise: self-love and passionate preferential love are essentially the same, but love for the neighbor—that is love. To love the beloved, asks Christianity, is that loving? —and adds, "Do not the pagans also do the same?" To love the friend, is that loving? asks Christianity—"Do not the pagans also do the same?"[72] Therefore if someone thinks that the difference between paganism and Christianity is that in Christianity the beloved and the friend are loved faithfully and tenderly in a quite different way than in paganism, this is a misunderstanding. Does not paganism offer examples of erotic love and friendship so perfect that the poet looks back to them for instruction? But no one in paganism loved the neighbor; no one suspected that he existed. Therefore what paganism called love, as distinguished from self-love, was preference. But if passionate preference is essentially another form of self-love, then one sees here again the truth in the saying of the venerable fathers: "that the virtues of paganism are glittering vices."[73] IX 56

It will now be shown that passionate preferential love is another form of self-love, also that self-denial's love, in contrast, loves the neighbor, whom one *shall* love. Just as self-love selfishly embraces this one and only *self* that makes it self-love, so also erotic love's passionate preference selfishly encircles this one and only beloved, and friendship's passionate preference encircles this one and only friend. For this reason the beloved and the friend are called, remarkably and profoundly, to be sure, the *other self*, the *other I*—since the neighbor is the *other you*, or, quite precisely, the *third party* of equality. The *other self*, the *other I*. But where does self-love reside? It resides in the *I*, in the *self*. Would not self-love then also start loving the *other I*, the *other self*? One

really does not need to be any great judge of human nature in order with the help of this clue to make discoveries about erotic love and friendship that are alarming to others and humiliating to oneself. The fire that is in self-love is spontaneous combustion; the *I* ignites itself by itself. But in erotic love and friendship, in the poetic sense, there is also spontaneous combustion. True enough, we do say that jealousy *shows* itself very rarely, and then only as sick, but from this it does not follow that it *is* not always fundamentally *present* in erotic love and friendship. Test it, place as the middle term between the lover and the beloved the neighbor, whom one shall love, place as a middle term between two friends the neighbor, whom one shall love, and you will immediately see jealousy. Yet the neighbor is self-denial's middle term that steps in between self-love's *I* and *I*, but also between erotic love's and friendship's *I* and the *other I*. That it is self-love when an unfaithful person wants to jilt the beloved, wants to leave the friend in the lurch, paganism also saw, and the poet sees it. But that the devotion with which the lover gives himself to this one and only, indeed, clutches the beloved, is self-love—this only Christianity sees. But how can *devotion* and *unlimited giving of oneself* be *self-love*? Indeed, when it is devotion to the *other I*, the *other self*.

IX 57 Have a poet describe how love must be in a person if he is to call it erotic love; he will mention much that we will not dwell on here, but then he will add: "and then there must be admiration; the lover must admire the beloved." The neighbor, however, has never been presented as an object of admiration; Christianity has never taught that one shall admire the neighbor—one shall love him. So there must be admiration in the relationship of erotic love, and the stronger, the more intense the admiration is, the better, says the poet. Well, now, to admire another person is certainly not self-love; but to be loved by the one and only admired one, would not this relation turn back in a selfish way into the *I* who loves—his other *I*? And so it is also with friendship. To admire another person is certainly not self-love, but to be the one and only friend of this one and only admired person—would not this relation turn back in an alarming way into the *I* from which we proceeded? Is not this plainly self-love's danger—to have one

single object for its admiration when this one and only admired person in turn makes one oneself the sole object of his erotic love or his friendship?

[74]To love the neighbor, however, is self-denial's love, and self-denial simply drives out all preferential love just as it drives out all self-love—otherwise self-denial would also make distinctions and would nourish a preference for preferential love. Even if passionate preference had no other selfishness in it, it would still have this, that consciously or unconsciously there is self-willfulness in it—unconsciously insofar as it is in the power of natural predispositions, consciously insofar as it utterly gives itself to this power and assents to it. However hidden, however unconscious the self-willfulness is in this passionate giving of oneself to its "one and only object," the arbitrariness is still there. The one and only object was certainly not found by obedience to the royal Law "You shall love," but by choosing, yes, by unconditionally selecting one single individual—because Christian love also has only one single object, the neighbor, but the neighbor is as far as possible from being a one and only person, infinitely far from it, because the neighbor is all people. When the lover or friend is able to love only this one single person in the whole world (which is a delight to the poet's ears), there is an enormous self-willfulness in this enormous devotion, and in his impetuous, unlimited devotion the lover is actually relating himself to himself in self-love. Self-denial wants to root out this self-love, this self-willfulness, by means of eternity's *you shall*. Self-denial, which presses in, judging, to test the self-love, is also two-edged in such a way that it cuts off both sides equally. It is well aware that there is a self-love that one must call unfaithful self-love, but it is also IX 58
just as aware that there is a self-love that must be called devoted self-love. Thus, in connection with the difference between these two dissimilarities, self-denial has a double task. For the unfaithful self-love that wants to shirk, the task is: devote [*hengive*] yourself; for the devoted self-love the task [*Opgave*] is: give up [*opgive*] this devotion [*Hengivenhed*]. What pleases the poet indescribably, that the lover says, "I cannot love anyone else, I cannot stop loving, I cannot give up this love, it would be the death of me, I am dying of love," does not please self-denial at all, and it in no

way tolerates that such a devotion be honored by the name of love, since it is self-love. Thus self-denial first pronounces judgment and then sets the task: love the neighbor; him *shall* you love.

Wherever the essentially Christian is, there also is self-denial, which is Christianity's essential form. In order to relate oneself to the essentially Christian, one must first and foremost become sober; but self-denial is the very transformation by which a person becomes sober in the sense of eternity. On the other hand, wherever the essentially Christian is absent, the intoxication of self-esteem is at its peak, and this peak of intoxication is the admired. [75]But erotic love and friendship are the very peak of self-esteem, the *I* intoxicated in the *other I*. The more securely one *I* and another *I* join to become one *I*, the more this united *I* selfishly cuts itself off from everyone else. At the peak of erotic love and friendship, the two actually do become one self, one *I*. This is explainable only because in preferential love there is a natural determinant (drive, inclination) and self-love, which selfishly can unite the two in a new selfish self. The spirit's love, in contrast, takes away from myself all natural determinants and all self-love. Therefore love for the neighbor cannot make me one with the neighbor in a united self. Love for the neighbor is love between two beings eternally and independently determined as spirit; love for the neighbor is spirit's love, but two spirits are never able to become one self in a selfish sense. In erotic love and friendship, the two love each other by virtue of the dissimilarity or by virtue of the similarity that is based on dissimilarity (as when two friends love each other by virtue of similar customs, characters, occupations, education, etc., that is, on the basis of the similarity by which they are different from other people, or in which they are like each other as different from other people).
IX 59 Therefore the two can become one self in a selfish sense. As yet neither one is the spirit's definition of *self*. As[76] yet neither one has learned to love himself Christianly.

In erotic love the *I* is defined as sensate-psychical-spiritual; the beloved is a sensate-psychical-spiritual specification. In friendship the *I* is defined as psychical-spiritual; the friend is a psychical-spiritual specification. It is only in love for the neighbor that

the self, who loves, is defined as spirit purely spiritually and the neighbor is a purely spiritual specification. Therefore what was said at the beginning of this discourse does not hold true at all for erotic love and friendship—namely, that only one human being acknowledged as the neighbor is needed in order to cure one of self-love, if in that person one loves the neighbor. In the beloved and the friend, it of course is not the neighbor who is loved, but the *other I*, or the first *I* once again, but more intensely. Even though self-love is reprehensible, it frequently seems as if a person does not have the strength to be alone in his self-love; thus it does not really manifest itself until the other *I* is found and the one *I* and the *other I* in this alliance find the strength for the self-esteem of self-love.

If anyone thinks that by falling in love or by finding a friend a person has learned Christian love, he is in profound error. No, if someone is in love and in such a way that the poet would say of him, "He is really in love," well, then the love commandment, when it is said to him, can be changed a bit and yet say the same thing. The love commandment can say to him: Love your neighbor as you love the beloved. But does he not love the beloved *as himself*, as the commandment that speaks of the neighbor commands? Certainly he does, but the beloved he loves *as himself* is not the neighbor; the beloved is the *other I*. Whether we speak of the *first I* or of the *other I*, we do not come a step closer to the neighbor, because the neighbor is the *first you*. The one whom self-love, in the strictest sense, loves is basically the *other I*, because the *other I* is he himself. Yet this certainly is still self-love. But in the same sense it is self-love to love the *other I*, who is the beloved or the friend.

Moreover, just as self-love in the strictest sense has been designated as self-deification, so also erotic love and friendship (as the poet understands it, and with his understanding this love stands or falls) are idol-worship. [77]Ultimately, love for God is the decisive factor; from this originates love for the neighbor—but paganism had no inkling of this. It left out God, made erotic love [*Elskov*] and friendship into love [*Kjerlighed*], and abhorred self- IX
love. But the Christian love commandment commands loving 60
God above all else, and then loving the neighbor. In erotic love

and friendship, preferential love is the middle term; in love for the neighbor, God is the middle term. Love God above all else; then you also love the neighbor and in the neighbor every human being. Only by loving God above all else can one love the neighbor in the other human being. The other human being, this is the neighbor who is the other human being in the sense that the other human being is every other human being. Understood in that way, the discourse was therefore right when it stated at the beginning that if a person loves the neighbor in one single other human being, he then loves all people.

Love for the neighbor is therefore the eternal equality in loving, but the eternal equality is the opposite of preference. This needs no elaborate development. Equality is simply not to make distinctions, and eternal equality is unconditionally not to make the slightest distinction, unqualifiedly not to make the slightest distinction. Preference, on the other hand, is to make distinctions; passionate preference is unqualifiedly to make distinctions.

But then has not Christianity, since by its "You shall love" it thrust erotic love and friendship from the throne, set something far higher in their place? Something far higher—yet let us speak with caution, with the caution of orthodoxy. People have confused Christianity in many ways, but among them is also this way of calling it the highest and the deepest, and thereby it is made to appear as if the purely human were related to the essentially Christian as the high or the higher to the highest or the supremely highest. Ah, but this is a deceptive way of speaking that untruthfully and improperly allows Christianity to try in a meddlesome way to ingratiate itself with the human craving for knowledge or curiosity. Indeed, is there anything for which the human being as such, anything for which the natural man is more desirous than for the highest! When only a newsmonger trumpets abroad that his newest news is the highest, then the gathering of adherents proceeds merrily in the world that from time immemorial has had an indescribable preference for and felt a deep need of—being deceived. No, the essentially Christian is certainly the highest and the supremely highest, but, mark well, in such a way that to the natural man it is an offense.[78] Anyone who, in defining the essentially Christian as the highest, omits

the middle term of offense sins against it, is guilty of presumptuousness more abominable than if a good, decent housewife were to dress like a danseuse, even more appalling than if John,[79] the rigorous judge, were to dress like a Beau Brummel. The essentially Christian is itself too weighty, in its movements too earnest to scurry about, dancing, in the frivolity of such facile talk about the higher, highest, and the supremely highest. The way to the essentially Christian goes through offense. This does not mean that the approach to the essentially Christian should be to be offended by it—this would indeed be another way of preventing oneself from grasping the essentially Christian—but the offense guards the approach to the essentially Christian. Blessed is he who is not offended at it.[80] IX 61

So it is also with this commandment to love the neighbor. Only confess it, or if it is disturbing to you to have it put this way, well, I myself will confess that many times this has thrust me back and that I am yet very far from the delusion that I fulfill this commandment, which to flesh and blood is an offense and to wisdom foolishness. Are you, my listener, perhaps what is called a cultured person? Well, I, too, am cultured. But if you think that you will come closer to this highest with the help of "culture," you make a great mistake. At this very point the error is rooted, for we all desire culture, and culture is incessantly talking about the highest. Indeed, no bird that has learned only one single word cries out this word more unceasingly, and no crow its own name more unceasingly, than culture is always crying out *the highest*. But the essentially Christian is by no means culture's *highest*, and the essentially Christian disciplines precisely by the repulsion of offense. This you will immediately see here very easily. Indeed, has your culture or in your opinion has anyone's zeal for becoming cultured taught him to love the neighbor? Alas, have not this culture and the zeal with which it is coveted rather developed a new kind of distinction, the distinction between the cultured and the uncultured? Just pay attention to what is said among the cultured about erotic love and friendship, what similarity in culture the friend must have, and how cultured the girl must be, and cultured in a particular way. Read the poets, who scarcely know how to preserve their bold confidence in the

face of the mighty domination of culture, who themselves scarcely dare to believe in the power of erotic love to break all the bonds of dissimilarities—does it seem to you that this talk and this poetry, or a life in harmony with this talk and this poetry, bring one closer to loving the neighbor? Here again the marks of offense stand out. Think of the most cultured person, one of whom we all admiringly say, "He is so cultured!" Then think of
IX 62 Christianity, which says to him, "You shall love the neighbor!" Of course, a certain social courtesy, a politeness toward all people, a friendly condescension toward inferiors, a boldly confident attitude before the mighty, a beautifully controlled freedom of spirit, yes, this is culture—do you believe that it is also loving the neighbor?

The neighbor is one who is equal. The neighbor is neither the beloved, for whom you have passion's preference, nor your friend, for whom you have passion's preference. Nor is your neighbor, if you are a cultured person, the cultured individual with whom you have a similarity of culture—since with your neighbor you have the equality of a human being before God. Nor is your neighbor someone who is more distinguished than you—that is, he is not the neighbor insofar as he is more distinguished than you, since to love him because he is more distinguished can very easily be preferential love and to that extent self-love. Nor is the neighbor someone who is more lowly than you, that is, insofar as he is more lowly than you he is not the neighbor, since to love someone because he is more lowly than you can so easily be the condescension of preferential love and to that extent self-love. No, to love the neighbor is equality. In your relation to the person of distinction, it is encouraging that in him you *shall* love your neighbor. In relation to the more lowly person, it is humbling that in him you are not to love the more lowly person but *shall* love the neighbor. It is redeeming if you do this, because you *shall* do it. The neighbor is every person, since on the basis of dissimilarity he is not your neighbor, nor on the basis of similarity to you in your dissimilarity from other people. He is your neighbor on the basis of equality with you before God, but unconditionally every person has this equality and has it unconditionally.

II C

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You Shall Love the Neighbor

Go, then, and do this, take away dissimilarity and its similarity so that you can love the neighbor. Take away the distinction of preferential love so that you can love the neighbor. But you are not to cease loving the beloved because of this—far from it. If in order to love the neighbor you would have to begin by giving up loving those for whom you have preference, the word "neighbor" would be the greatest deception ever contrived. Moreover, it would even be a contradiction, since inasmuch as the neighbor is all people surely no one can be excluded—should we now say, least of all the beloved? No, because this is the language of preference. Thus, it is only the preferential love that should be taken away—and yet it is not to be introduced in turn into the relation to the neighbor so that with twisted preference you would love the neighbor in contrast to the beloved. No, just as we say to the solitary person: Take care that you are not led into the snare of self-love, so it must be said to the two lovers: Take care that you are not led by erotic love itself into the snare of self-love. The more decisively and exclusively preferential love embraces one single person, the further it is from loving the neighbor. You, husband, do not lead your wife into the temptation of forgetting to love the neighbor because of you; you, wife, do not lead your husband into this temptation! The lovers no doubt think that in erotic love they have the highest, but this is not so, because in it they still do not have the eternal secured by the eternal. To be sure, the poet promises the lovers immortality if they are true lovers; but who then is the poet, what good is his vouching, he who cannot vouch for himself? In contrast, the *royal Law*, the love commandment, promises life, eternal life, and this commandment simply says, "You shall love your neighbor." Just as this commandment will teach everyone how to love oneself, so

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it also will teach erotic love and friendship genuine love: in loving yourself, preserve love for the neighbor; in erotic love and friendship, preserve love for the neighbor. This will perhaps shock you—well, you do indeed know that the essentially Christian is always attended by signs of offense. Nevertheless, believe it. Do not believe that the teacher who did not extinguish any smoking wick[81] would extinguish any noble fire within a person. Believe that he who was love will expressly teach every person to love. Believe that if all the poets joined in one song of praise to erotic love and friendship, what they would have to say would be nothing in comparison with the commandment: "You *shall* love, you shall love your neighbor as yourself!" Do not cease to believe because the commandment almost offends you, because the discourse does not sound flattering like that of the poet, who with his songs insinuates himself into your happiness, but sounds repelling and terrifying, as if it would frighten you out of the beloved haunts of preferential love—do not for that reason cease to believe it. Bear in mind that just because the commandment and the discourse are like this, for that very reason the object can be the object of faith!

Do not delude yourself into thinking that you could bargain, that by loving some people, relatives and friends, you would be loving the neighbor—because this is giving up the poet without grasping the essentially Christian, and it was to prevent this bargaining that the discourse sought to place you between the poet's pride, which scorns all bargaining, and the divine majesty of the royal Law, which makes all bargaining into guilt. No, love the beloved faithfully and tenderly, but let love for the neighbor be the sanctifying element in your union's covenant with God. Love your friend honestly and devotedly, but let love for the neighbor be what you learn from each other in your friendship's confidential relationship with God! Death, you see, abolishes all dissimilarities, but preference is always related to dissimilarities; yet the way to life and to the eternal goes through death and through the abolition of dissimilarities—therefore only love for the neighbor truly leads to life. Just as Christianity's joyful message is contained in the doctrine of humanity's inherent kinship with God, so is Christianity's task humanity's likeness to God. But God is Love,[82]

and therefore we can be like God only in loving, just as we also, IX 65
according to the words of the apostle, can only be *God's co-workers*[83]*—in love.* Insofar as you love the beloved, you are not like God, because for God there is no preference, something you have reflected on many times to your humiliation, but also many times to your rehabilitation. Insofar as you love your friend, you are not like God, because for God there is no distinction. But when you love the neighbor, then you are like God.[84]

Therefore, go and do likewise.[85] Forsake the dissimilarities so that you can love the neighbor. Alas, perhaps it is not even necessary to say this to you; perhaps you found no beloved in this world, no friend along the way, so that you are walking alone. Or perhaps God took from your side[86] and gave you the beloved, but death took and took her from your side; it took again and took your friend but gave you none in return, so that now you walk alone, have no beloved to cover your weak side and no friend on your right side. Or perhaps life separated the two of you, even if you both remained unchanged—in the solitariness of separation. Alas, perhaps change separated the two of you, so that you walk sorrowfully alone because you did find but in turn found what you found—changed! How disconsolate! Indeed, just ask the poet how disconsolate it is to live alone, to have lived alone, without being loved and without having any beloved. Yes, just ask the poet if he knows anything else but that it is disconsolate when death comes between the lovers, or when life separates friend from friend, or when change separates them as enemies from each other. The poet does indeed love solitude, loves it—in order to discover in solitude the missing happiness of erotic love and friendship, just as one who in wonder wants to observe the stars seeks a dark place. And yet, if it was through no fault of his own that a person found no beloved, and if he sought a friend but, through no fault of his own, in vain, and if the loss, the separation, the change were not his fault—in that case does the poet know anything else but that it is disconsolate? But then the poet himself is surely subject to change if he, the prophet of joy, does not know anything else on the day of distress but the mournful lament of disconsolateness. Or would you not call it change, would you call it faithfulness on the part of the poet that

he disconsolately sorrows with the disconsolate sorrowing—well, we will not quarrel about that. But if you will compare this human faithfulness with heaven's and eternity's, you yourself will
IX 66 certainly admit that it is a change. Heaven not only rejoices, more than any poet, with the joyful;[87] heaven not only sorrows with the sorrowing—no, heaven has a new, has a more blessed, joy in readiness for the sorrowing.

Thus Christianity always has consolation, and its consolation is different from all human consolation in that the latter is aware only of being a compensation for the loss of joy—Christian consolation *is joy*. Humanly speaking, consolation is a later invention. First came suffering and pain and the loss of joy, and then afterward, alas, long, long afterward, humanity picked up the track of consolation. The same is true of the individual's life: first comes suffering and pain and the loss of joy, and then, afterward, alas, sometimes long, long afterward, comes the consolation. But Christian consolation can never be said to come afterward, because, since it is eternity's consolation, it is older than all temporal joy. As soon as this consolation comes, it comes with the head start of eternity and swallows up the pain, as it were, since the pain and the loss of joy are the momentary—even if the moment were years—are the momentary that is drowned in the eternal. Neither is Christian consolation a compensation for the loss of joy, since it is joy. In comparison with Christianity's consolation, all other joy is ultimately only disconsolate. Alas, a human being's life was not and is not so perfect on this earth that eternity's joy could be proclaimed to him as joy; he himself had and has forfeited it; that is why eternity's joy can be proclaimed to him only as consolation. Just as the human eye cannot bear to look at the light of the sun except through a dark glass, so also the human being cannot bear eternity's joy except through the obscurity of its being proclaimed as consolation.

Thus, whatever your fate was in erotic love and friendship, whatever your lack, whatever your loss was, whatever the personal disconsolateness of your life that you confide to the poet—the highest still remains: love the neighbor! As already shown, him you can easily find; him, as already shown, you can unconditionally always find; him you can never lose. The beloved can

treat you in such a way that he is lost, and you can lose a friend; but whatever the neighbor does to you, you can never lose him. To be sure, you can also continue to love the beloved and the friend no matter how they treat you, but you cannot truly continue to call them the beloved and friend if they, sorry to say, have really changed. No change, however, can take the neighbor from you, because it is not the neighbor who holds you fast, but it is your love that holds the neighbor fast. If your love for the neighbor remains unchanged, then the neighbor also remains unchanged by existing. Death cannot deprive you of the neighbor, for if it takes one, life immediately gives you another. Death can deprive you of a friend, because in loving a friend you actually hold together with the friend, but in loving the neighbor you hold together with God; therefore death cannot deprive you of the neighbor. —If, therefore, you have lost everything in erotic love and friendship, if you have never had any of this happiness—you still retain the best in loving the neighbor. IX 67

Love for the neighbor has, namely, the perfections of eternity. Is it really a perfection in the love that its object is the excellent, the distinguished, the unique? I should think that this would be a perfection in the object and that this perfection of the object would be a subtle misgiving about the perfection of the love. Is it an excellent quality in your love if it can love *only* the extraordinary, the rare? I should think it to be an excellence in the extraordinary and the rare that it is the extraordinary and the rare, but not in the love. Are you not of the same opinion? Have you never thought about God's love? If it were love's excellence to love the extraordinary, then God would be, if I dare say so, in an awkward position, since for him the extraordinary does not exist at all. The excellence of being able to love *only* the extraordinary is therefore more like an accusation, not against the extraordinary nor against the love, but against the love that is able to love only the extraordinary.

Or is it an excellence in a person's delicate health that he can feel well in *only* one place in the world, surrounded by every favorable condition? When you see a person who has arranged his life this way, what is it you praise? No doubt the comfortableness of the arrangement. But have you not noticed that it actually

is true that every word in your eulogy of this magnificence really sounds like mockery of the poor fellow who can live *only* in these magnificent surroundings? Thus, the perfection of the object is not the perfection of the love. Because the neighbor has none of the perfections that the beloved, the friend, the admired one, the cultured person, the rare, the extraordinary person have to such a high degree, for that very reason love for the neighbor has all the perfections that the love for the beloved, the friend, the cultured person, the admired one, the rare, the extraordinary person does not have. Let the world dispute as much as it wishes about which object of love is the most perfect—there can never be any dispute about this, that love for the neighbor is the most perfect love. Therefore, all other love has the imperfection that there are
IX 68 two questions and for that matter also a certain duplicity: first there is a question about the object and then a question about the love, or there is a question about both the object and the love. But concerning love for the neighbor there is only one question, the question about love; and there is only one answer of eternity: This is love, since this love for the neighbor is not related as a type to other types of love. Erotic love [*Elskov*] is defined by the object; friendship is defined by the object; only love for the neighbor is defined by love [*Kjerlighed*]. In other words, since the neighbor is every human being, unconditionally every human being, all dissimilarities are indeed removed from the object, and therefore this love is recognizable precisely by this, that its object is without any of the more precise specifications of dissimilarity, which means that this love is recognizable only by love. Is this not the highest perfection? Insofar as love can be known and must be known by something else, then this something else in the relationship itself is like a misgiving about the love, that it is not comprehensive enough and for that matter is not in an eternal sense infinite. This something else is, without the awareness of the love itself, a predisposition to morbidity. In this misgiving, therefore, lies hidden the anxiety that makes erotic love and friendship dependent upon their objects, the anxiety that can kindle jealousy, the anxiety that can bring one to despair. But love for the neighbor does not have misgivings about the relationship and therefore cannot become mistrust in the one who

loves. Yet this love is not proudly independent of its object. Its equality [*Ligelighed*] does not appear in love's proudly turning back into itself through indifference [*Ligegyldighed*] to the object—no, the equality appears in love's humbly turning outward, embracing everyone, and yet loving each one individually but no one exceptionally.

Let us consider what was developed in the preceding[88] discussion that love in a human being is a need, is the expression of riches. Thus the deeper this need is, the greater the riches; if the need is infinite, then the riches are also. If someone's love-need is to love one single person, it must be said—even if one admits that this need is a wealth—that he actually needs this person. In contrast, if someone's love-need is to love all, then it is a need and it is so great that it seems as if it itself might almost be able to produce its object. In the first case the emphasis is on the exceptionality of the object, in the second case on the essentiality of the need, and only in this latter sense is need an expression of riches, and only in the latter case are the need and the object related IX 69
equally to each other in the infinite sense, because every human being is the neighbor, the first at hand the best, or because in the sense of *exceptionality* there is no object, although in the infinite sense every human being is the object. When someone feels the need to speak with one single particular person, he actually needs this person; but when the need in him to speak is so great that he must speak even if he were transported to an uninhabited desert or put in solitary confinement, when the need is so great that every human being is for him the one he wishes to speak to—then the need is a wealth. Love is a need, the deepest need, in the person in whom there is love for the neighbor; he does not need people just to have someone to love, but he needs to love people. Yet there is no pride or haughtiness in this wealth, because God is the middle term, and eternity's *shall* binds and guides this great need so that it does not go astray and turn into pride. But there are no limits to the objects, because the neighbor is all human beings, unconditionally every human being.

[89]Therefore the one who truly loves the neighbor loves also his enemy. The distinction *friend* or *enemy* is a difference in the object of love, but love for the neighbor has the object that is with-

out difference. The neighbor is the utterly unrecognizable dissimilarity between persons or is the eternal equality before God—the enemy, too, has this equality. People think that it is impossible for a human being to love his enemy, because, alas, enemies are hardly able to endure the sight of one another. Well, then, shut your eyes—then the enemy looks just like the neighbor. Shut your eyes and remember the commandment that *you* shall love; then you love—your enemy—no, then you love the neighbor, because you do not see that he is your enemy. In other words, when you shut your eyes, you do not see the dissimilarities of earthly life, but enmity is also one of the dissimilarities of earthly life. Moreover, when you shut your eyes, your mind is not distracted and confused just when you are supposed to listen to the words of the commandment. When your mind is not confused and distracted by looking at the object of your love and the dissimilarity of the object, you become all ears for the words of the commandment, as if it spoke only to you, that *you* shall love the neighbor. See, when your eyes are closed and you have become all ears to the commandment, then you are on the way of perfection to loving the neighbor.

It is indeed true (as pointed out earlier, where it was shown that the neighbor is the pure category of spirit[90]) that one sees the
IX 70 neighbor only with closed eyes, or by looking *away from* the dissimilarities. The sensate eyes always see the dissimilarities and look *at* the dissimilarities. Therefore worldly sagacity shouts early and late, "Take a careful look at whom you love." Ah, if one is to love the neighbor truly, then to take a careful look is above all not the thing to do, since this sagacity in examining the object will result in your never getting to see the neighbor, because he is indeed every human being, the first the best, taken quite blindly. [91]The poet scorns the sighted blindness of sagacity that teaches that one should take a careful look at whom one loves. He teaches that love makes one blind. In a mysterious, inexplicable manner, according to the poet's view, the lover should find his object or fall in love and then become—blind from love, blind to every defect, to every imperfection in the beloved, blind to everything else but this beloved—yet not blind to this one's being the one and only in the whole world. When this is the case,

erotic love certainly does make a person blind, but it also makes him sharp-eyed about not confusing any other person with this one and only. Therefore, with regard to this beloved, it makes him blind by teaching him to make an enormous distinction between this one and only and all other people. But love for the neighbor makes a person blind in the deepest and noblest and most blessed sense of the word, so that he blindly loves every human being as the lover loves the beloved.

Love for the neighbor has the perfections of eternity—*this perhaps is why at times it seems to fit in so little with the relationships of earthly life and with the temporal dissimilarities of the worldly, why it is easily misjudged and exposed to hate, why in any case it is very unrewarding to love the neighbor.*

Even the one who ordinarily is not inclined to praise God and Christianity does so when with a shudder he considers that depravity, how in paganism people are inhumanly separated one from another by the dissimilarities of earthly life or by the caste system, how this ungodliness inhumanly teaches one human being to disclaim kinship with another, teaches him presumptuously and insanely to say of another human being that he does not exist, is "not born."[92] Then even he praises Christianity, which has saved human beings from this evil by deeply and forever memorably imprinting the kinship of all human beings—because the kinship is secured by each individual's equal kinship with and relationship to God in Christ; because the Christian doctrine addresses itself equally to each individual, teaches him that God has created him and Christ has redeemed him; because the Christian doctrine calls each and every person aside and says, "Close your door and pray to God[93] and you have the highest a person can have; love your Savior and you have everything both in life and in death, and then let the dissimilarities be there; they do not matter either way." The one who looks down from the top of a mountain and sees clouds below—is he disturbed by the sight, is he disturbed by the thunderstorm raging below in the low-lying regions of the earth? That is how high Christianity has placed everyone, unconditionally every human being, because for Christ, as for God's providence, there is no number, no crowd; for him the countless are counted, are all individuals.

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Christianity has placed every human being that high lest he should damage his soul by becoming arrogant over or by groaning under the dissimilarity of earthly life. Christianity has not *taken away the dissimilarity* any more than Christ himself would take or would ask God *to take the disciples out of the world*[94]—and this indeed amounts to the same thing. No person has ever lived in Christendom, any more than in paganism, who is not dressed or cloaked in the dissimilarity of earthly life. Just as little as the Christian lives or can live without his body, so little can he live without the dissimilarity of earthly life that belongs to every human being in particular by birth, by position, by circumstances, by education etc.—none of us is pure humanity. Christianity is too earnest to romanticize about pure humanity; it wants only to make human beings pure. Christianity is not some fairy tale, even though the blessedness it promises is more glorious than what the fairy tale possesses. Nor is it an ingenious fabrication that is supposed to be difficult to understand and that also insists on one condition, an idle head and an empty brain.

Thus Christianity has once and for all banished that abomination of paganism, but the dissimilarity of earthly life it has not taken away. This must continue as long as temporality continues and must continue to tempt every human being who comes into the world, inasmuch as by being a Christian he does not become exempt from dissimilarity, but by overcoming the temptation of dissimilarity he becomes a Christian. In so-called Christendom, therefore, the difference of earthly life still continually tempts—
IX 72 alas, perhaps it even more than tempts, so that one person is haughty and another defiantly envies. Both ways are in fact rebellion, are rebellion against the essentially Christian. Indeed, far be it from us to strengthen anyone in the presumptuous error that only the powerful and the distinguished are the guilty ones; for if the lowly and the powerless merely long enviously for the advantages denied them in earthly life instead of humbly longing for the blessed equality of the essentially Christian, this, too, damages their souls. [95]Christianity is neither blind nor one-sided; with the calmness of eternity it surveys equably all the dissimilarities of earthly life but does not divisively take sides with any single one. It sees, and surely with grief, that in the name of

Christianity earthly busyness and the false prophets of worldliness want to conjure up this appearance, as if it were only the powerful person who could be enamored of the dissimilarity of earthly life, as if the lowly person were entitled to do everything in order to achieve similarity—only not by way of becoming a Christian in earnestness and truth. I wonder if one would come closer to Christian similarity and equality that way?

Christianity, then, does not want to take away the dissimilarity, neither of high rank nor of lowliness. But, on the other hand, there is no temporal dissimilarity, neither the lowest nor the most acceptable in the eyes of the world, with which Christianity sides in partiality. Whether the temporal dissimilarity of which a person becomes enamored by clinging to it mundanely is shocking and revolting in the eyes of the world or innocent and loveworthy does not preoccupy Christianity at all, which does not make worldly distinctions, does not look at that with which a person is damaging his soul, but at his damaging his soul—with a triviality? Perhaps, but damaging his soul is certainly no triviality. Between the extremes of high rank and lowliness, there is a great number of more precise specifications of worldly dissimilarity, but Christianity makes an exception of none of these more precise and therefore less obvious dissimilarities. Dissimilarity is like an enormous net in which temporality is held; there are in turn variations in the meshes of this net—one person seems more trapped and bound in existence than another; but all this dissimilarity, the dissimilarity between difference and difference, this comparing dissimilarity, does not preoccupy Christianity at all, not in the least—such a preoccupation and concern is again nothing but worldliness. Christianity and worldliness will never come to a mutual understanding, even though it may for a moment deceptively seem so to the less sharply observant.

To bring about similarity among people in the world, to apportion to people, if possible equally, the conditions of temporality, is indeed something that preoccupies worldliness to a high degree. But even what we may call the well-intentioned worldly effort in this regard never comes to an understanding with Christianity. Well-intentioned worldliness remains piously, if you will, convinced that there must be one temporal condition, one IX 73

earthly dissimilarity—found by means of calculations and surveys or in whatever other way—that is equality. If this condition became the only one for all people, then similarity would have been brought about. For one thing, however, this cannot be accomplished, and, for another, the similarity of all by having in common the same temporal dissimilarity is still by no means Christian equality. Worldly similarity, if it were possible, is not Christian equality. Moreover, to bring about worldly similarity perfectly is an impossibility. Well-intentioned worldliness actually admits this itself. It rejoices when it succeeds in making temporal conditions the same for more and more people, but it acknowledges itself that its struggle is a pious wish, that it has taken on a prodigious task, that its prospects are remote—if it rightly understood itself, it would perceive that this will never be achieved in temporality, that even if this struggle is continued for centuries, it will never attain the goal.

Christianity, in contrast, aided by the shortcut of eternity, is immediately at the goal: it allows all the dissimilarities to stand but teaches the equality of eternity. It teaches that everyone is to *lift himself up above* earthly dissimilarity. Notice carefully how equably it speaks. It does not say that it is the lowly person who is to lift himself up while the powerful person should perhaps climb down from his loftiness—ah, no, that kind of talk is not equable; and the similarity that is brought about by the powerful person's climbing down and the lowly person's climbing up is not Christian equality—it is worldly similarity. No, even if it is the one who stands at the very top, even if it is the king, he is to *lift himself up* above the difference of loftiness, and the beggar is to *lift himself up* above the difference of lowliness. Christianity allows all the dissimilarities of earthly life to stand, but this equality in lifting oneself up above the dissimilarities of earthly life is contained in the love commandment, in loving the neighbor.

Because this is so, because the lowly person fully as much as the prominent and the powerful, because everyone in his different way can lose his soul by not Christianly willing to lift himself up above the dissimilarity of earthly life, and, alas, because it happens to both and in the most varied ways—therefore, willing
IX 74 to love the neighbor is often exposed to double, indeed, to mul-

tiple danger. Everyone who in despair has clung to one or another of the dissimilarities of earthly life so that he centers his life in it, not in God, also demands that everyone who belongs to the same dissimilarity must hold together with him—not in the good (because the good forms no alliance, does not unite two nor hundreds nor all people in an alliance), but in an ungodly alliance against the universally human. The one in despair calls it treason to want to have fellowship with others, with all people. On the other hand, these other people are in turn differentiated by way of other temporal dissimilarities and perhaps misunderstand it if someone not having their dissimilarity wants to side with them. Strangely enough, in connection with the dissimilarities of earthly life, through misunderstanding there are conflict and agreement simultaneously—one person wants to do away with one dissimilarity, but he wants another put in its place. Dissimilarity, as the word signifies, can mean the very different, the utterly different; but everyone who struggles against dissimilarity in such a way that he wants one specific dissimilarity removed and another put in its place is, of course, fighting for dissimilarity. Whoever then will love the neighbor, whoever thus does not concern himself with removing this or that dissimilarity, or with eliminating all of them in a worldly way, but devoutly concerns himself with permeating his dissimilarity with the sanctifying thought of Christian equality—that person easily becomes like someone who does not fit into earthly life here, not even in so-called Christendom; he is easily exposed to attacks from all sides; he easily becomes like a lost sheep among ravenous wolves. Everywhere he looks, he naturally sees the dissimilarities (as stated, no human being is pure humanity, but the Christian lifts himself up above the dissimilarities); and those who in a worldly way have clung firmly to a temporal dissimilarity, whatever it may be, are like ravenous wolves.

Let us cite some examples of the dissimilarity of earthly life in order to clarify this issue, and let us proceed very carefully. But may your patience in reading correspond to my diligence and time in writing it, inasmuch as, since being an author is my only work and my only task, I have both the ability and the obligation to use a careful—fussy, if you will—but certainly also helpful

precision, which others are unable to do since in addition to being authors they also must use in other ways their perhaps longer days, perhaps richer gifts, their perhaps greater working capacity.

IX 75 The times are past when only the powerful and the prominent were human beings—and the others were bond servants and slaves. This is due to Christianity, but from this it does not follow that prominence or power can no longer become a snare for a person so that he becomes enamored of this dissimilarity, damages his soul, and forgets what it is to love the neighbor. If this happens now, it certainly must happen in a more hidden and secret way, but basically it remains the same. Whether someone savoring his arrogance and his pride openly gives other people to understand that they do not exist for him and, for the nourishment of his arrogance, wants them to feel it as he demands expressions of slavish submission from them, or whether he slyly and secretly expresses that they do not exist for him simply by avoiding any contact with them (perhaps also out of fear that openness would incite people and endanger him personally)—these are basically one and the same. The inhumanity and the un-Christianness of this consists not in the way in which it is done but in independently wanting to deny kinship with all people, with unconditionally every person. Ah, to keep oneself unstained by the world[96] is the task and doctrine of Christianity—would to God that we all did it—but to cling to that in a worldly way as if it were the most glorious of all dissimilarities—that is plain defilement. It is not rough work that defiles—if it is done in purity of heart; and it is not lowly conditions that defile—if you devoutly take pride in leading a quiet life; but silk and ermine can defile if they cause a person to damage his soul. It is defilement if the lowly person shrinks because of his misery in such a way that he does not have the courage to want to be built up by the essentially Christian, but it is also defilement if the distinguished person wraps himself up in his high rank in such a way that he shrinks from being built up by the essentially Christian; and it is also defilement if someone whose dissimilarity is to be like the majority of people never emerges, in Christian elevation, from this dissimilarity.

So, then, this distinguished corruption will teach the distinguished person that he exists only for the distinguished, that he is to live only in the alliance of their circles, that he must not exist for other people, just as they must not exist for him. But be circumspect, as they say; he must know how to do it as smoothly and dexterously as possible lest it agitate people—that is, the secrecy and the art are simply to keep this secret to oneself. Avoiding contact must not be an expression of the relationship, nor must it be done in a conspicuous way that would attract attention—no, the evading must be done for the purpose of shielding oneself, and therefore so circumspectly that no one becomes IX 76
aware of it, to say nothing of being offended by it. Therefore he will go about as with closed eyes (but not, alas, in a Christian sense) when he moves around in the human throng. Proudly, and yet slyly, he will flee, as it were, from one distinguished circle to another. He must not look at these other people, lest he be seen, although all the attention of his eyes will lie in wait behind this screen, lest he should meet a fellow being or an even more distinguished person. His glance will hover indeterminately, fluctuating out over all these people, lest someone should catch his eye and remind him of the kinship. He must never be seen among the more lowly people, at least never in their company; and if this cannot be avoided then the distinguished condescension must be apparent—yet in its subtlest form in order not to offend and incite. He may very well use an exaggerated courtesy toward the more lowly, but he must never associate with them as equals, since that would express that he was—human, but he is—distinguished. If he can do this smoothly, dexterously, tastefully, elusively, and yet always keeping his secret (that the other people do not exist for him nor he for them), then this distinguished corruption will vouch for his having—good form.

Yes, the world has changed—and the corruption has changed also. Yet it would indeed be rash if one believed that the world had become good because it had changed. Just imagine one of those proud, defiant characters who delighted in this ungodly game of openly letting "those people" feel their paltriness—how surprised he would be if he found out that so much circumspection has now become necessary in order to keep this secret! Alas,

but the world has changed, and as the world changes the forms of corruption also gradually become more cunning, more difficult to point out—but they certainly do not become better.

So it is with distinguished corruption. And then if there were a distinguished person whose life, by birth and conditions, belonged especially to the same earthly dissimilarity, a distinguished person who would not assent to this divisive conspiracy against the universally human, that is, against the neighbor, if he did not have the heart to do this, if, clearly perceiving the consequences, he still trusted in God for the strength to bear these consequences while he lacked the strength to harden his heart—experience would certainly teach him what he was risking. First of all, the
IX 77 distinguished corruption would accuse him of being a traitor and self-lover—because he wanted to love the neighbor—since holding together with the corruption would be love and loyalty and honesty and devotion! If then in turn, as so often happens, the more lowly persons, from the standpoint of their dissimilarity, misunderstood and misjudged him (this person who did not, after all, belong to their synagogue), rewarded him with mockery and insults because he wanted to love the neighbor—well, then he would be in double danger. In other words, if he had wanted to place himself at the head of the more lowly and lead them in a revolt that would stamp out the dissimilarity of distinction, they very likely would have honored and loved him. But this he would not do; he wanted only to express what in him was a Christian need—to love the neighbor. For that very reason his fate would become precarious, for that very reason the double danger.

Then the distinguished corruption would no doubt triumphantly mock him and derisively and condemningly say, "He had it coming to him." It would no doubt use his name as a scarecrow to prevent inexperienced distinguished young people from going astray—from the good form of corruption. Many better ones among the distinguished, over whom the good form of corruption still exercised power, would not venture to defend him, would not dare to refrain from laughing with the others in "the council of the mockers,"[97] and the mocking laughter would no doubt be shrillest if anyone ventured to come to his defense.

For example, it is conceivable that a distinguished person could, even in circles of the distinguished, enthusiastically and eloquently champion love for the neighbor, but when it came down to something in actuality he would be unable to win his mind over to obedience to the view he perhaps triumphantly championed. But to champion, from inside and behind the partitions of dissimilarity, an opposite viewpoint, a viewpoint that in the Christian sense (not in the rebellious sense) wants to remove the dissimilarity—that, of course, is to remain within the dissimilarity. In the company of scholars, or in a setting that secures and emphasizes his dissimilarity as such, the scholar would perhaps be willing to lecture enthusiastically on the doctrine of the similarity of all people—but that, of course, is to remain within the dissimilarity. In the company of rich people, in a setting that in itself makes the advantages of wealth conspicuous, the rich person would perhaps be willing to make every concession to the similarity of human beings—but that, of course, is to remain within the dissimilarity. That better one, who in distinguished society could perhaps victoriously drive all objections from the field, would perhaps superiorly and cowardly escape contact with actuality's objection to the dissimilarity. IX 78

"Go with God"; we use this expression as a felicitation. If that better one among the distinguished were to go with God among people instead of proudly escaping, he perhaps would seek to hide from himself, and thus also from God, what he would get to see—but what God saw—that he was hiding. In other words, when someone goes with God, he does indeed go without danger; but he is also compelled to see and to see in a unique way. When you go with God, you need to see only one single miserable person and you will be unable to escape what Christianity wants you to understand—human similarity. Alas, but that better one would perhaps not quite dare to risk continuing this journey with God and its impression; he perhaps would back out—although that same evening, again in distinguished company, he would still champion the Christian view. [98]Yes, going with God (and it is indeed only in this company that one discovers *the neighbor*, because God is the middle term) in order to learn to know life and oneself is an earnest walk. Then honor, power, and glory

lose their worldly glamor; in company with God you are unable to delight in them in a worldly way. If you hold together (for alliance is not of the good) with some other people of a particular class and with a particular condition in life, even if it is only with your wife, the things of this world will tempt. Even if in your eyes they do not mean much, they tempt you comparatively in showing partiality,[99] they tempt you perhaps for her sake. But when you go with God, hold only to him, and understand under God everything you understand, then you will discover—shall I say, to your own detriment—then you will discover the neighbor; then God will constrain you to love him—shall I say, to your own detriment—because to love the neighbor is a thankless task.

It is one thing to let ideas compete with ideas, and it is one thing to argue and win in a dispute; it is something else to be victorious over one's own mind when one battles in the actuality of life. However hard one contending idea presses upon another, however hard one contender presses upon another in a dispute, all this contending is still at a distance and is like shadowboxing. On the other hand, the measure of a person's disposition is this: how far is he from what he understands to what he does, how great is the distance between his understanding and his actions. Basically we all understand the highest. A child, the simplest person, and the wisest all understand the highest and all understand the same thing, because it is, if I dare to say so, one lesson we are
IX 79 all assigned. But what makes the difference is whether we understand it at a distance—so that we do not act accordingly, or close at hand—so that we act accordingly and "cannot do otherwise," cannot refrain from doing it, like Luther, who understood very close at hand what he had to do when he said, "I cannot do otherwise, God help me. Amen."[100] At the distance of a quiet hour from life's and the world's confusion, every person understands what the highest is; when he departs, he has understood it; when it looks like good weather for him in life, he still understands it—but when the confusion begins the understanding vanishes, or it becomes manifest that this understanding was at a distance. To sit in a room where everything is so quiet that one can hear a grain of sand fall and can understand the highest—that

every person can do. But, to speak figuratively, to sit in the kettle the coppersmith is hammering on and then to understand the same thing—well, then one must have the understanding close at hand; otherwise it will become manifest that the understanding was at a distance—because with the understanding one was not present.

At the distance of a quiet hour from life's confusion, the child, the simplest person, and the wisest understand, and with almost equal ease, what every person should do—what every person should do. But when in the confusion of life there are only questions of what *he* should do, then it perhaps becomes manifest that this understanding was at a distance—indeed, it was at the distance of humanity from him.

At the distance of a dispute from action, at the distance of a noble resolve from action, at the distance of a solemn vow, of repentance, from action—everyone understands the highest. To understand, within the security of conditions unchanged through ancient custom, that a change should be made—everyone can do that, since this understanding is at a distance—is not unchangingness an enormous distance from change? Alas, in the world there is incessantly the pressing question about what this one can do, what that one can do, and what that one cannot do; eternity, which speaks of the highest, calmly assumes that every person can do it and therefore asks only if he did it. At the distance of stately condescension, the distinguished understand the similarity between human beings. At the distance of secret superiority, the learned and the cultured understand the similarity between human beings. Within the admission of a little advantage, the one whose dissimilarity is to be like the majority understands the similarity between human beings. At a distance all IX
recognize the neighbor; God alone knows how many there are 80
who recognize him in actuality—that is, close at hand. But at a distance the neighbor is a figment of the imagination—he who by being close at hand, the first the best, is indeed unconditionally every human being. At a distance the neighbor is a shadow that walks past everyone's thoughts on the road of imagination, but that the person who actually walked by at the same moment was the neighbor—this he perhaps does not discover. At a dis-

tance everyone recognizes the neighbor, and yet it is impossible to see him at a distance; if you do not see him so close at hand that before God you unconditionally see him in every human being, you do not see him at all.[101]

Let us now consider the dissimilarity of lowliness. The times are past when those called the more lowly had no conception of themselves or only the conception of being slaves, of not merely being lowly human beings but of not being human beings at all. The fierce rebellions, the horror[102] that followed upon that horror, are perhaps over also, but I wonder if the corruption may not still dwell hidden in a person? In that case the corrupted lowliness will lead the lowly person to believe that he must see his enemy in the powerful and the prominent, in everyone who is favored by some advantage. But be cautious, as the saying goes, because these enemies still have so much power that it could be dangerous to break with them. Therefore the corruption will not teach the lowly one to rise in rebellion or to repress entirely every expression of deference or to allow the secret to be disclosed, but it will teach that something should be done and yet not done, should be done and yet in such a way that the powerful person will derive no pleasure from it, although he will be unable to say that something has been withheld from him. Thus even in homage there will be a crafty defiance that, hidden, can exasperate, a reluctance that, hidden, says no to what the mouth professes, a tonelessness, as it were, of suppressed envy in the acclaim that honors the powerful. No force is to be used—that could become dangerous; it must not come to a break—that could become dangerous; but a secret of hidden exasperation, a remotely intimated painful dejection will transform the power and honor and eminence into an affliction for the powerful, the honored, and the eminent, who still would not be able to find anything specific to complain about—because here lie the art and the secret.

If, then, there was a lowly person into whose heart this secret of envy did not come and who also refused to allow the corruption from the outside to gain this power over him, a lowly person who without craven submission, without fear of people, modestly, but above all with joy, gave every advantage of earthly life
IX its due, happier and more joyful in giving than perhaps someone
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who receives often is and can be—he, too, would discover the double danger. His peers would perhaps push him away as a traitor, scorn him as slave-minded, and, alas, the privileged would perhaps misunderstand him and deride him as a climber. What would be regarded in the prior relationship as too lowly for the distinguished, to love the neighbor, would perhaps here be regarded as too presumptuous for the lowly person—to love the neighbor.

That is how dangerous it is to will to love the neighbor. There is plenty of dissimilarity in the world; there is dissimilarity everywhere in temporality—which, after all, is precisely the different, the multifarious. Moreover, by virtue of his dissimilarity a person may be able to get along with all dissimilarities in a compliant and accommodating compromise that scales down a little in one place and in turn demands a little in another place—but *eternity's equality*, to will to love the neighbor, *seems both too little and too much, and therefore it seems that this love for the neighbor does not fit properly into the relationships of earthly life.*

Imagine a person who prepared a banquet and invited as his guests the lame, the blind, the cripples, and the beggars. Now, far be it from me to believe anything else about the world than that it would find this beautiful, even though eccentric. But imagine that this man who gave the banquet had a friend to whom he said, "Yesterday I gave a great banquet"—is it not true that the friend would first and foremost be surprised that he had not been among those invited? Then when he found out who the invited guests had been—now, far be it from me to believe anything else about the friend than that he would find this beautiful, even though eccentric. Yet he would be surprised, and he would perhaps say, "It is a strange use of language to call that kind of a gathering a banquet—a banquet where no friends are present, where it is not a question of the excellence of the wine, the selectness of the company, the number of servants who waited table"—that is, the friend would think that a meal such as that could be called an act of charity but not a banquet. However good the food had been that they received, even if it had not merely been "substantial and edible" like poorhouse food, but actually choice and costly, yes, even if there had been ten kinds

of wine—the company itself, the arrangement of the whole affair, a certain lack, I know not what, would prevent calling such a thing a banquet; it runs contrary to language usage, which makes distinctions.

Suppose, now, that the man who had given the banquet answered, "But I thought I had language usage on my side.[103] Do we not read in Luke's Gospel (14:12–13) these words of Christ's: 'When you give a dinner or supper, do not invite your friends or your companions or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind.' Not only is the word 'banquet' used in this way here, but in the beginning an even less festive term, 'dinner' or 'supper' is used, and not until mention is made of inviting the poor and crippled is the word 'banquet' used. Do you not think it is as if Christ wanted to suggest that inviting the poor and the crippled is not only what we should do but is also something far more festive than eating dinner or supper with friends and relatives and rich neighbors, something one would not call a banquet, because inviting the poor—that is giving a banquet. [104]But I am well aware that our language usage is different, because according to common usage the list of those who are invited to a banquet is something like this: friends, companions, relatives, rich neighbors—who are able to reciprocate. But so scrupulous is Christian equality and its use of language that it requires not only that you shall feed the poor; it requires that you shall call it a banquet. Yet if in the actuality of daily life you strictly insist on this language usage and do not think that in the Christian sense it makes no difference under what name food is served to the poor, people will certainly laugh you to scorn.

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"But let them laugh. They laughed at Tobit, too, because willing to love the neighbor is always exposed to double danger, as we see in the example of Tobit. The king had forbidden, under punishment of death, burial of the dead. But Tobit feared God more than the king, loved the dead more than life—he buried them. This was the first danger. And then when Tobit dared to do this heroic deed, 'his neighbors laughed at him' (Tobit 2:8). That was the second danger."

So it was with the man who had given the banquet. Do you not think he was right, my listener? But might there not be something else to say against his conduct? Why so divisively invite only the lame and the poor, and on the other hand just as deliberately, yes, just as defiantly, not invite friends and relatives? Indeed, he could have invited them all equally. Undeniably; and if he was divisive in that way, we would not praise him or his use of language. But according to the words of the Gospel, the point is certainly this, that the others would not come. Thus the friend's surprise at not being invited ceased as soon as he heard what sort of company it had been. If the man, according to the friend's language usage, had given a banquet and had not invited the friend, he would have become angry; but now he did not become angry—because he would not have come anyway.[105] IX 83

[106]O my listener, does it seem to you that what has been set forth here is merely quibbling [*Ordstrid*] about the use of the word "banquet"? Or do you not perceive that the dispute [*Strid*] is about loving the neighbor? The one who feeds the poor—but still has not been victorious over his mind in such a way that he calls this meal a banquet—sees the poor and the lowly only as the poor and the lowly. The one who gives *the banquet* sees the neighbor in the poor and the lowly—however ludicrous this may seem in the eyes of the world. Alas, we not infrequently hear the world's lament that this person or that person is not earnest enough, but the question is what the world understands by earnestness, whether it does not more or less understand by it the busyness of worldly concerns. The question is whether the world, despite its earnestness, through this continual confusion of earnestness and vanity is not so facetious that if it came to see earnestness in the highest sense, that one would accordingly act in earnest—the question is whether the world would not quite involuntarily burst into laughter. That is how earnest the world is! If temporality's multifarious and multifariously compounded dissimilarity did not make it just as difficult to see whether someone loves the neighbor as it is difficult to see *the human being*, the world would always have plenty to laugh about—that is, if there is a sufficient number of people who love the neighbor.

To love the neighbor is, while remaining in the earthly dissim-

ilarity allotted to one, essentially to will to exist equally for unconditionally every human being. To will to exist openly for other people only according to one's advantages of earthly dissimilarity is pride and arrogance; but the sagacious invention of not willing to exist for others at all in order secretly to enjoy in alliance with one's peers the advantages of one's dissimilarity is cowardly pride. In both cases there is a cleft, but the person who loves the neighbor is at peace. He is at peace by being content with the dissimilarity of earthly life allotted to him, be it that of distinction or of lowliness; moreover, he lets every dissimilarity of earthly life stand and be regarded as it should and ought to be regarded here in this life. You shall not covet what is the neighbor's, not his wife, not his donkey, and therefore not the advantage granted him in this life either.[107] If this is denied to you, then you should still rejoice that it is granted to him.

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In this way the one who loves the neighbor is at peace. He neither cravenly avoids the more powerful but loves the neighbor, nor superiorly avoids the more lowly but loves the neighbor and wishes essentially to exist equally for all people, whether in actuality he is known by many or not. This is undeniably a considerable span of the wings, but it is not a proud flight that soars above the world; it is self-denial's humble and difficult flight along the ground. It is much easier and much more comfortable to steal through life by living in more exclusive withdrawal, if one is a prominent person, or in quiet obscurity, if one is a lowly person—indeed, strange as it may seem, one may even seem to accomplish more in this stealthy mode of living because one exposes oneself to much less opposition.

But even if it is very pleasant for flesh and blood to avoid opposition, I wonder if it is a comfort also in the hour of death. In the hour of death, surely the only comfort is that one has not avoided opposition but has suffered it. What a person will or will not achieve is not within his power; he is not the one who is to govern the world—he is simply and solely to obey. Therefore everyone (instead of asking which place is the most comfortable for him, which connections are the most advantageous for him) is first and foremost to place himself in the position where Gov-

ernance can use him if it so pleases Governance. The position is just this, to love the neighbor or to exist essentially equally for every human being. Any other position is divisive, however advantageous and comfortable and seemingly significant that place is. Governance cannot use the person who has placed himself there, because he is indeed in rebellion against Governance. But the one who accepted that slighted, that scorned and disdained proper place, without clinging to his earthly dissimilarity, without holding together with one single person, and existing essentially equally for every human being, that one will, even if he seemingly achieved nothing, even if he was exposed to the derision of the lower class or the mockery of the distinguished, or to the derision and mockery of both, that one in the hour of death will dare to say consolingly to his soul, "I have done my part; whether I have achieved anything, I do not know, whether I have benefited anyone, I do not know; but that I have existed for them, that I do know, and I know it because of their derision. And this is my consolation, that I will not take with me to the grave the secret that in order to have a good and undisturbed and comfortable life I denied kinship with other human beings, with the lowly, in order to live in stately seclusion with the distinguished, in order to live in hidden obscurity."

IX 85 Let the one who achieved so very much by means of an alliance and by not existing for all people, let him see to it that death does not change his life for him when it reminds him of the responsibility. The one who did his part to make people aware, the distinguished or the lowly, the one who, teaching, acting, and striving, existed equally for all people, that one has no responsibility if people by persecuting him showed that they had become aware. He has no responsibility—no, he has even been beneficial, because the condition for having had benefit is always first and foremost to become aware. But the one who cowardly existed only within the partitions of his alliance, where he achieved so very much and won so many advantages, the one who cowardly did not dare to make people aware, the lowly or the distinguished, because he had a suspicion that people's awareness is an ambiguous good if one has some truth to com-

municate, the one who cravenly had his far-famed activity confined within the security of partiality—that one bears the responsibility for not loving the neighbor.

If such a one were to say, "Well, what good is it to order one's life according to such a criterion?" I would answer, "What good do you think that excuse will be in eternity?" Eternity's commandment is infinitely higher than any ever-so-sagacious excuse. I wonder, too, whether a single one of those whom Governance has used as instruments in the service of truth (and let us not forget that every human being shall and ought to be such an instrument, at least shall and ought to arrange his life in such a way that he could be that) has arranged his life in any other way than to exist equally for every human being. No one like that has ever held together with the lowly or held together with the distinguished but has existed equally for the distinguished, has existed equally for the lowliest. Truly, only by loving the neighbor can a person achieve the highest, because the highest is to be able to be an instrument in the hand of Governance [*Styrelse*]. But, as previously stated, anyone who has placed himself in any other position, anyone who forms a party and alliance or is a member of a party, of an alliance, that person steers [*styre*] on his own, and all his achievement, even if it were the transforming of a world, is an illusion. Nor will he have great joy from it in eternity, since Governance very likely made use of it but, alas, did not use him as an instrument. He was a self-willful, self-wise person, and Governance makes use of the efforts of such a one also—by taking his arduous labors and by letting him miss his reward.[108] —
However ludicrous, however frustrating, however inexpedient loving the neighbor may seem in the world, it is still the highest
IX 86 a person is capable of doing. But *the highest* has never quite fitted into the relationships of earthly life—*it is both too little and too much.*

Just look at the world that lies before you in all its variegated multifariousness; it is like looking at a play, except that the multifariousness is much, much greater. Because of his dissimilarity, every single one of these innumerable individuals is something particular, represents something particular, but essentially he is something else. Yet this you do not get to see here in life; here

you see only what the individual represents and how he does it. It is just as in the play. But when the curtain falls on the stage, then the one who played the king and the one who played the beggar etc. are all alike; all are one and the same—actors. When at death the curtain falls on the stage of actuality (it is a confusing use of language to say that at death the curtain is raised on the stage of eternity, since eternity is not a stage at all; it is truth), then they, too, are all one, they are human beings. All of them are what they essentially were, what you did not see because of the dissimilarity that you saw—they are human beings.

The theater of art is like a world under a magic spell. But just suppose that some evening all the actors became confused in a common absentmindedness so that they thought they actually were what they represented. Would this not be what we might call, in contrast to the spell of the dramatic arts, the spell of an evil spirit, a bewitchment? Similarly, what if under the spell of actuality (for we are indeed all under a spell, each one conjured into his dissimilarity) our fundamental ideas became confused so that we thought that we essentially are what we represent? Alas, is this not just the way it is? We seem to have forgotten that the dissimilarity of earthly life is just like an actor's costume, or just like a traveler's cloak, so that each one individually should be on the watch and take care to have the outer garment's fastening cords loosely tied and, above all, free of tight knots so that in the moment of transformation the garment can be cast off easily. Yet we all, of course, have enough artistic sense to be jarred if an actor on stage, when in the moment of transformation he is supposed to throw off his disguise, has to run offstage to get the cords untied. But, alas, in the life of actuality one laces the outer garment of dissimilarity so tight that it completely conceals the fact that this dissimilarity is an outer garment, because the inner glory of equality never or very rarely shines through as it continually should and ought.

The actor's art is the art of deceiving; the art is the deception. To be able to deceive is the great thing, and to allow oneself to be deceived is just as great. Therefore one must not be able and must not want to see the actor through the costume; therefore it is the pinnacle of art when the actor becomes one with what he

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represents, because this is the pinnacle of deception. But the actuality of life, even if it is not, like eternity, the truth, still ought to be of the truth, and therefore the other something that everyone essentially is should continually glimmer through the disguise. Alas, but in the life of actuality, there the individual in his temporal growth grows together with the dissimilarity; this is the opposite of eternity's growth, which grows away from the dissimilarity. The individual becomes deformed; from eternity's point of view, every such individual is a cripple. In actuality, alas, the individual grows together with his dissimilarity in such a way that in the end death must use force to tear it from him.

Yet if someone is truly to love his neighbor, it must be kept in mind at all times that his dissimilarity is a disguise. As previously said, Christianity has not wanted to storm forth to abolish dissimilarity, neither the dissimilarity of distinction nor of lowliness; nor has it wished to effect in a worldly way a worldly compromise among the dissimilarities; but it wants the dissimilarity to hang loosely on the individual, as loosely as the cape the king casts off in order to show who he is, as loosely as the ragged costume in which a supranatural being has disguised himself. In other words, when the dissimilarity hangs loosely in this way, then in each individual there continually glimmers that essential other, which is common to all, the eternal resemblance, the likeness.

If this were the case, if each individual lived this way, then temporality would have reached its highest. It cannot be like eternity, but this expectant solemnity that without stopping the course of life rejuvenates itself every day with the eternal and with eternity's equality, every day saves the soul from the dissimilarity in which it still remains—this would be the reflection of eternity. If, then, in the life of actuality you should see the ruler, cheerfully and respectfully bring him your homage, but you would still see in the ruler the inner glory, the equality of the glory that his magnificence merely conceals. If, then, you should see the beggar—perhaps in your sorrow over him suffering more than he—you would still see in him the inner glory, the equality of the glory, that his wretched outer garment conceals. Yes, then you would see, wherever you turned your eye, the neighbor.

From the beginning of the world, no human being exists or has existed who is the neighbor in the sense that the king is the king, the scholar the scholar, your relative your relative—that is, in the sense of exceptionality or, what amounts to the same thing, in the sense of dissimilarity—no, every human being is the neighbor. In being king, beggar, rich man, poor man, male, female, etc., we are not like each other—therein we are indeed different. But in being the neighbor we are all unconditionally like each other. Dissimilarity is temporality's method of confusing that marks every human being differently, but the neighbor is eternity's mark—on every human being. Take many sheets of paper, write something different on each one; then no one will be like another. But then again take each single sheet; do not let yourself be confused by the diverse inscriptions, hold it up to the light, and you will see a common watermark on all of them. In the same way the neighbor is the common watermark, but you see it only by means of eternity's light when it shines through the dissimilarity. IX 88

My listener, surely there can be no doubt that this must seem glorious to you, that it has always appeared this way to you whenever in silent elevation you let the thought of eternity rule and devoted yourself to contemplation—if only this understanding does not remain at a distance. Oh, but should it not be able to seem so glorious to you that you for your part would resolve to make this agreement with God that you will hold together with him in order to hold fast to this understanding—that is, in order to express in your life that together with him you hold fast to this understanding as the only one, no matter what will happen to you in life on account of this understanding, indeed, should it even cost you your life, and that together with God you still hold fast to this understanding as your victory over all humiliations and all wrongs. Remember that the person who in order truly to will one thing chose to will the good in truth has this blessed comfort: one suffers only once but is victorious eternally.[109]

See, the poet knows how to talk volubly about erotic love's devotion, about what an ennobling power it exerts over a human being to fall in love and to be in love, about what a transfigura-

tion permeates his whole being, about what a heavenly difference, according to the poet's opinion, there must be between someone in love and someone who never experienced the change of erotic love. Oh, the true devotion, however, is to give up all claims on life, all claims on power and honor and advantage, all claims—but the happiness of erotic love and friendship is among the very greatest claims—that is, to give up all claims in order to understand what an enormous claim God and eternity have upon the individual himself. The one who will accept this
IX understanding is on the point of loving the neighbor. A life of a
89 human being begins with the illusion that a long, long time and a whole world lie before him in the distance, begins with the foolhardy delusion that he has such ample time for his many claims. The poet is the eloquent and enthusiastic confidant of this foolhardy but beautiful delusion. But when a person in the infinite transformation discovers the eternal itself so close to life that there is not the distance of one single claim, of one single evasion, of one single excuse, of one single moment of time from what *he* in this instant, in this second, in this holy moment *shall* do—then he is on the way to becoming a Christian. It is a mark of childishness to say: *Me wants, me—me*; a mark of adolescence to say: *I*—and *I*—and *I*; the sign of maturity and the devotion of the eternal is to will to understand that this *I* has no significance unless it becomes the *you* to whom eternity incessantly speaks and says: *You* shall, *you* shall, *you* shall. Youthfulness wants to be the only *I* in the whole world; maturity is to understand this *you* personally, even if it were not even addressed to a single other person. *You* shall, *you* shall love the neighbor. O my listener, it is not *you* to whom *I* am speaking; it is *I* to whom eternity says: *You* shall.[110]

III A

IX 90

Romans 13:10. Love Is the Fulfilling of the Law[111]

"To promise is honorable [*ærlig*], but to keep is hard [*besværlig*]," says the proverb—but with what right? It is certainly clear that to keep a promise is honorable, and in that case the proverb can be right that to keep is honorable and also hard. But then what becomes of the promising? Indeed, according to the suggested explanation, the proverb says nothing about what it is; perhaps, then, to promise is nothing at all; perhaps it is less than nothing. Perhaps the proverb even cautions against promising, as if it would say: Waste no time on promising; keeping, which is the honorable thing, is hard enough. Truly, to promise is certainly far from being honorable, even if the promise is by no means dishonorably intended. Would it not be dubious to give *promising* the name of honor, dubious in a world that deceitfully promises so much, in a generation that is all too inclined to promise and to deceive itself honorably by promising? As far as the proverb itself is concerned, would it not be dubious since there is indeed another proverb that knows the world and people, knows from experience that "money lent, when it is repaid as promised, is money found?" Therefore one might rather go to the opposite extreme and say, "To promise is dishonorable," on the assumption that true faithfulness is specifically characterized by not making promises, by not wasting time making promises, by not flattering oneself by making promises, by not demanding double payment, first for the promise and then for fulfilling the promise. Preferably, however, one must try to focus attention solely and decisively on keeping it, while, as an introduction, a rousing admonition from the authority warns against promising.

IX 91

[112]There is a parable in Holy Scripture (Matthew 21:28–31) that is only seldom treated in a religious discourse and yet is very

instructive and very stimulating. Let us dwell on it a little. There was "a man who had two sons"; in this he is like the prodigal son's father, who also had two sons.[113] Indeed, the likeness between these two fathers is even greater, inasmuch as the one son of the father we are discussing was also a prodigal, as we shall now hear in the story.

The father "went to the first and said, 'Son, go out and work in my vineyard today.' But he answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he repented of it and he went. And the father went to the second and said the same. But he answered, 'I will, sir,' and he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" We could also ask in another way—which of these two was the prodigal son? Was it not the one who said yes, the obedient one who not only said yes but said, "I will, *sir*," as if to show his unconditional obedient submission to his father's will? Was it not he who said yes, he who was secretly lost, so it did not become generally known of him as of that prodigal son who wasted his goods with prostitutes and ended by herding swine—but also ended by being won back? Did not he who said yes, who in a remarkable way resembles the prodigal son's brother, since just as the latter's righteousness is made suspect in the Gospel, although he called himself the righteous one or the good son, so also this brother, this yes-brother (a special word we have in our vocabulary that we can apply to him for brevity's sake) regarded himself as being the good son—did he not indeed say yes, did he not say, "I will, sir"—and to promise is certainly honorable [*ærlig*], says the proverb!

The other brother, however, said no. A no of that sort, signifying that one does exactly what one said no to, can sometimes have its basis in a not inexplicable eccentricity. In such a feigned no, there sometimes hides a kind of honesty [*Ærlighed*] that is a stranger and an exile on this earth, whether it is because the speaker has become so nauseated by hearing again and again the yes that means one does not do what one says, that he has become accustomed to saying no where others say yes in order then to do what the yes-brothers refrain from doing; or it is because the speaker has a concerned distrust of himself and therefore avoids promising something lest he promise too much; or it is

because the speaker in his honest zeal to do the good wishes to prevent the hypocritical show of a promise. In the Gospel, however, this no is not said in this way, without being meant; it is an actual disobedience on the part of the son, but he repents of it and still goes out and does his father's will. IX 92

But what, then, does the parable want to point out—is it not the danger of being in too great a hurry to say yes even if it is meant at the moment? The yes-brother is not represented as someone who *was* a deceiver when he said yes but as someone who *became* a deceiver because he did not keep his promise, and even more accurately as someone who by his very eagerness in promising became a deceiver—that is, the promise became the trap. If he had not promised anything, he perhaps would more likely have done it. In other words, the one who says yes or promises something very easily deceives himself and easily deceives others also, as if he had already done what he promised, or as if by promising he had at least done some of what he promised to do, or as if the promise itself were something meritorious. Then when he does not do what he promised, the road has become very long before he comes back to the truth again and only reaches the beginning of doing just a little of what he promised. Alas, what he promised to do may have been protractive enough, but now by means of the unfulfilled promise he has gotten away from the beginning by the distance of an illusion. Now it is no longer as it was at that moment when he mistook the road and instead of beginning the work swung around it by means of the promise. Before he reaches the beginning again, he must go back along this whole detour. On the other hand, the way from having said no, the way through repentance to making up for it, is much shorter and much easier to find.

The yes of the promise is sleep-inducing, but the no, spoken and therefore audible to oneself, is awakening, and repentance is usually not far away. The one who says, "I will, sir," is at the same moment pleased with himself; the one who says no becomes almost afraid of himself. But this difference is very significant in the first moment and very decisive in the next moment; yet if the first moment is the judgment of the momentary, the second moment is the judgment of eternity. This is precisely why

the world is so inclined to promises, inasmuch as the worldly is the momentary, and at the moment a promise looks very good. This is why eternity is suspicious of promises, just as it is suspicious of everything momentary.

Suppose that neither of the brothers went and did his father's will—in that case the brother who said no would be closer to doing his father's will insofar as he was closer by being *aware* that he was not doing his father's will.

IX 93 A no does not hide anything, but a yes very easily becomes an illusion, a self-deception, which of all difficulties is perhaps the most difficult to overcome. Ah, it is all too true that "the road to hell is paved with good intentions," and [114]surely the most dangerous thing of all is for a person to go backward by means of good intentions, as by means of promises. It is very difficult to discover that it actually is regression. When a man turns his back on someone and walks away, it is easy to see that he is walking away; but when a person hits upon the idea of facing one from whom he is walking away, hits upon the idea of walking backward while with appearance and glance and salutations he greets someone, giving assurances again and again that he is coming immediately or even incessantly saying, "Here I am!"—although he is moving further and further, note well, backward: then it is not very easy to become aware. And so it is also with the one who, rich in good intentions and quick to promise, moves backward further and further away from the good. By means of the intention and the promise, he is facing in the direction of the good, is turned toward the good but is moving backward further and further away from it. With every renewed intention and promise it looks as if he took a step forward, and yet he is not merely standing still, but he is actually taking a step backward. The intention taken in vain, the unfulfilled promise, leaves despondency, dejection, that in turn perhaps soon blazes up into an even more vehement intention, which leaves only greater listlessness. Just as the alcoholic continually needs a stronger and stronger stimulant—in order to become intoxicated, likewise the one who has become addicted to promises and good intentions continually needs more and more stimulation—in order to go backward.

We do not praise the son who said no, but we try to learn from the Gospel how dangerous it is to say, "I will, sir." A promise with regard to action is like a changeling—therefore take care! The very moment the baby is born, when the mother's joy is greatest because her suffering is over, when for very joy she is perhaps less attentive, then come, so thinks superstition, the hostile powers and place a changeling in place of the child. In the great but therefore also dangerous moment of beginning, when one is supposed to begin, the hostile powers come and slip in a changeling promise and prevent one from making the actual beginning—alas, how many there are who have been deceived in this way, yes, as if bewitched!

See, this is why it is very important for a person in all his relationships, and with regard to every task, that undivided attention be concentrated immediately upon the essential and the decisive. So it must also be with love, lest it be permitted at any IX 94
moment to seem other than it is, or lest even a deceptive appearance establish itself and become a trap, lest love begin to take its time, in flattering delusion to entertain itself with itself, but instead it is immediately under way with the task and is constrained to understand that every previous moment is a wasted moment and more than just wasted time, that any other expression of love is procrastination and regression. This is expressed precisely in the words of our text:

Love is the fulfilling of the Law,

and we shall now make these words the subject of our consideration.

If anyone asks, "What is love?" Paul answers, "It is the fulfilling of the Law,"[115] and instantly every further question is precluded by that answer. The Law—alas, that is already a prolix matter; but to fulfill the Law—well, you yourself perceive that if this is to be achieved there is not a moment to waste. Frequently in this world the question "What is love?" has certainly been asked out of curiosity, and frequently there has been some idler who in answering became involved with the curious asker, and these two, curiosity and idleness, liked each other so much that they

were almost incapable of becoming tired of each other or of asking and answering the question. But Paul does not become involved with the questioner, least of all in prolixities. On the contrary, he imprisons with his answer, imprisons the questioner in obedience under the Law; with his answer he immediately points the direction and gives the impetus to act accordingly. This is not the case with only this answer of Paul's, but it is the case with all of Paul's answers and with all of Christ's answers. This mode of answering, to swing away from the direction of the question toward the remote in order instantaneously to press the task as close as possible to the questioner, what he has to do—this is especially characteristic of the essentially Christian. That simple wise man of old,[116] who in the service of knowledge passed judgment on paganism, understood the art of questioning, how by the question to imprison everyone who answered in ignorance. But the essentially Christian, which is not related to knowing but to acting, has the singular characteristic of answering and by means of the answer imprisoning everyone in the task. For that reason it
IX 95 was very dangerous for the Pharisees and the Sophists and the hairsplitters and the ruminators to ask Christ questions. The questioner did indeed always receive an answer, but in addition to the answer he in one sense learned too much. He received an imprisoning answer that did not ingeniously become prolixly involved in the question but with divine authority grasped the questioner and placed him under the obligation to do accordingly; whereas the questioner perhaps wished only to remain at the protracted distance of curiosity or inquisitiveness or definitions from himself and from—doing the truth. How many an individual has not asked, "What is truth?" and at bottom hoped that it would be a long time before the truth would come so close to him that in the same instant it would determine what it was his duty to do at that moment. When the Pharisee, "in order to justify himself," asked, "Who is my neighbor?"[117] he presumably thought that this might develop into a very protracted inquiry, so that it would perhaps take a very long time and then perhaps end with the admission that it was impossible to define the concept "neighbor" with absolute accuracy—for this very reason he asked the question, to find an escape, to waste time, and to justify

himself. But God catches the wise in their foolishness,[118] and Christ imprisoned the questioner in the answer that contained the task. So it is with all of Christ's answers. He does not in prolix discourse warn against futile questions that only give rise to quarrels and evasions—alas, prolix discourse against them is not much better than what it wants to oppose. No, as he taught, so does he answer, with divine authority, since the authority is to assign the task. The hypocritical questioner received the answer he deserved, but not the answer he wanted. He did not receive an answer that could feed his curiosity, nor an answer that he could broadcast, because the answer has the remarkable quality that if it is repeated to someone it immediately imprisons the individual to whom it is told, imprisons him in particular in the task. Even if someone would presumptuously attempt to tell one of Christ's answers as an anecdote, it is of no use, it cannot be done—the answer imprisons by binding to the task the one to whom it is told. An ingenious answer that addresses itself to human ingenuity is essentially indifferent to who said it or to whom it is said. Every one of Christ's answers has exactly the opposite quality, which moreover is twofold: it is infinitely important that it is Christ who has said it, and when it is told to the single individual IX 96
it is to *him* that it is told. The whole emphasis of eternity rests on this, that it is to him, even though it is told in that way to all individuals. Ingenuity is turned in upon itself and to that extent is as if blind; it does not know whether anyone is looking at it and does not come too close to anyone by looking at him. Divine authority, on the other hand, is as if all eyes; it first constrains the person being addressed to see who it is with whom he is speaking and then fastens its piercing look upon him and with this look says: It is to you to whom this is said. That is why people prefer being involved with ingenuity and profundity, because they can play blindman's buff with them, but they are afraid of authority.

For that reason, perhaps, people are not quite willing to become involved in Paul's answer, which, as stated, is imprisoning. In other words, as soon as any other reply is given to the question "What is love?" then there is also time, an interval, a spare moment, then a concession is made to curiosity and idleness and selfishness. But if love is the fulfilling of the Law, then there is not

time even for a promise—because to promise is here used as the last thing, which will give love a wrong direction, away from acting, away from *immediately* beginning the task; the promise lies right at the beginning and is deceptively like a beginning, yet without being that. Therefore, even if this promise of love were not so readily an incitement of the moment that in the next moment is a deception, a momentary blazing up that leaves listlessness, a leap forward that leads backward, a grasping in advance that in turn procrastinating holds back, an introduction that does not lead to the issue—even if this were not the case, the promise is still a dwelling, a dreamy or pleasant or astonished or light-minded or fanciful dwelling on love, as if it first must gather itself together, or as if it were thinking it over, or as if it were surprised at itself and at what it will be capable of—the promise is a dwelling on love and therefore a jest, a jest that can become dangerous, because love in earnest is the fulfilling of the Law. But Christian love, which gives everything away, for that very reason has nothing to give away, not one moment, not one promise.

Yet this is not busyness, least of all a worldly busyness, and busyness and worldliness are inseparable ideas. What is it to be busy? Ordinarily we think that the manner in which a person is occupied determines whether he is to be called busy. But this is not the case. The manner is decisive only within a more precise specification—that is, not until the object is defined. The one who occupies himself only with the eternal, uninterruptedly at
IX 97 every moment, if this were possible, is not busy. Thus the one who actually occupies himself with the eternal is never busy. To be busy is to occupy oneself, divided and scattered (which follows from the object that occupies one), with all the multiplicity in which it is simply impossible for a person to be whole, whole in all of it or whole in any particular part of it, something only the insane can succeed in doing. To be busy is, divided and scattered, to occupy oneself with what makes a person divided and scattered. But Christian love, which is the fulfilling of the Law, is, whole and collected, present in its every expression, and yet it is sheer action; consequently it is as far from inaction as it is from busyness. It never accepts anything in advance or gives a promise in place of action; it never rests satisfied in the delusion of being

finished; it never dwells indulgently on itself; it never sits idle marveling at itself. It is not that hidden, private, mysterious feeling behind the lattice of the inexplicable that the poet wants to lure to the window; it is not a mood in the pampered soul that knows and wants to know no law, or wants to have its own law and listens only to songs—Christian love is sheer action, and its every work is holy, because it is the fulfilling of the Law.

This, then, is Christian love. Even if it is not or was not like this in any human being (although by abiding in love every Christian works so that his love might become like this[119]), it was, however, like this in him who was love, in our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore the same apostle says of him (Romans 10:4), "Christ was the end of the Law." What the Law was not capable of accomplishing, as little as it could save a person—that Christ was. Whereas the Law with its requirement became everyone's downfall because they were not what it required and through it only learned to know sin, Christ then became the downfall of the Law; because he was what it required. Its downfall, its end—for when the requirement is fulfilled, the requirement exists only in the fulfillment, but consequently it does not exist as requirement. Just as thirst when satisfied exists only in the solace of the refreshment, so Christ came not to abolish the Law but to perfect it; therefore, from this time forth, it exists in the perfect fulfillment.

Yes, he was Love, and his love was the fulfilling of the Law. "No one could convict him of any sin,"[120] not even the Law, which together with the conscience knows everything; "no guile IX
was found on his lips;"[121] but everything in him was truth. There 98
was in his love not the distance of a moment, of a feeling, of an intention from the Law's requirement to its fulfillment. He did not say no, as the one brother did, nor yes, as the other brother did,[122] because his food was to do his father's will.[123] In this way he was one with the Father,[124] one with every single requirement of the Law; therefore perfectly fulfilling it was the need in him, his one and only life necessity. In him love was sheer action; there was no moment, not a single one in his life, when love in him was merely the inactivity of a feeling that hunts for words while it lets time slip by, or a mood that is its own gratification, dwells on itself while there is no task—no, his love was sheer

action. Even when he wept, this did not just fill up time, because even though Jerusalem did not know what made for its peace[125]—he knew it. If the mourners at the grave of Lazarus did not know what was going to happen, he knew what he would do.[126]

His love was totally present in the least things as in the greatest; it did not concentrate more intensely in single great moments, as if the hours of daily life were outside the requirements of the Law. It was equally present in every moment, not greater when he expired upon the cross than when he let himself be born. It was the same love that said, "Mary has chosen the better part"[127] and the same love that with a look rebuked—or forgave—Peter.[128] It was the same love when he received the disciples who returned home joyful from having performed miracles in his name[129] and the same love when he found them sleeping.[130] —In his love there was no demand upon any other person, upon any other person's time, energy, assistance, service, or reciprocal love. What Christ required of him was solely the other person's benefit, and he required it solely for the sake of the other person; no one lived with him who loved himself as deeply as Christ loved him. In his love there was no bargaining, compromising, partisan agreement with anyone outside the agreement that in him was with the Law's infinite requirement. In Christ's love no exemption was claimed for him, not the slightest, not a penny's worth.

His love made no distinction, not the tenderest distinction
IX between his mother and other people, for he pointed to his disci-
99 ples and said, "These are my mother";[131] and in turn his love did not make the distinction of disciples, because his sole wish was that everyone would become his disciple, and this he wished for everyone's own sake. And in turn, his love made no distinction among the disciples, because his divine-human love was equal love for all people, since it wanted to save them all, and equal love for all who would allow themselves to be saved.

Christ's life was sheer love, and yet his whole life was only one single workday; he did not rest before *that* night came when he *could* no longer work.[132] Prior to that time his work did not change with the alternation of day and night, for if he was not working he watched in prayer.

In this way he was the fulfilling of the Law. For this he asked no reward; his only request, the only purpose of his whole life from birth to death, was as innocent to offer himself, something that even the Law, when it demands its due to the utmost, does not dare to require. In this way he was the fulfilling of the Law; he had only one confidant, so to speak, who was somewhat able to follow him, a confidant who was sufficiently attentive and sleepless to make a search; it was the Law itself, which followed him step by step, hour by hour, with its infinite requirement—but he was the fulfilling of the Law.

How impoverished never to have loved—ah, but even the person who became richest through his love, what are all his riches but poverty compared with this fullness! And yet, this is not so; let us never forget that there is an eternal difference between Christ and every Christian. Even though the Law is abolished, it still stands here with its power and fixes an everlasting chasmic abyss between the God-man and every other person, who cannot even grasp but can only believe what the divine Law must admit, that he was the fulfilling of the Law. Every Christian believes it and appropriates it in faith, but no one has known it except for the Law and him who was the fulfilling of the Law. Only in his strongest moment can a person understand that something that is present weakly enough at his strongest moment was present far more strongly and yet equally at every moment, but the next moment he cannot understand this, and therefore he must believe and hold to the belief, so that his life will not become confused by understanding at one moment and not understanding at many other moments.

Christ was the fulfilling of the Law. How this thought is to be understood we are to learn from him, because he was *the explanation*, and only when the explanation *is* what it explains, when the explainer *is* what is explained, when the explanation [*Forklaring*] is the transfiguration [*Forklarelse*], only then is the relation the right one. Alas, we are unable to explain in this way. If we can do nothing else, we can learn humility from this in relation to God. Our earthly life, which is frail and infirm, must separate explaining and being, and this weakness of ours is an essential expression of how we relate to God. Suppose a person in all sincerity, humanly speaking, loves God—ah, but God has loved him first; IX 100

God is an eternity ahead—that is how far the human being is behind. So it is with every one of eternity's tasks. When a person at long last starts to begin, how infinitely much was wasted beforehand, even if for a moment we would forget all the deficiencies, all the imperfections of the effort that at long last had its beginning! Suppose a person in all sincerity, humanly speaking, sought first God's kingdom and his righteousness[133]—oh, what a long time passed before he merely learned to understand this properly, and how infinitely far removed from *first* seeking God's kingdom and his righteousness. It is the same at every point; wasted time precedes every human beginning. In earthly affairs we usually speak of the lamentable circumstance that one must go into debt in order to start an enterprise; in relation to God, every person begins with an infinite debt, even if we forget what the debt amounts to daily after the beginning. All too often this is forgotten in life, and why, indeed, if it is not because God also is forgotten. Then one person compares himself with another, and the one who has understood somewhat more than others congratulates himself on being something. Would that he himself might understand that before God he is nothing. And now since people are so eager to be something, it is no wonder that however much they talk about God's love they are reluctant to become really involved with him, because his requirement and his criterion reduce them to nothing.

Use one-tenth of the power that is granted to you; when you use it to the utmost, then turn your back upon God and compare yourself with other human beings—in a very short time you will be advanced among the people. But turn around, turn toward God, use the ten-tenths, if possible extort the most extreme emergency aid—and you will still be as nothing, at an infinite distance from having achieved something, in infinite debt! This is why one can say that in a certain sense it does not help to speak
IX 101 to a person about the highest, because an entirely different revolution than any talking can produce must take place. In other words, if you want to be well off and yet easily manage to become something, then forget God, never let yourself really become aware, never let it become really clear to you that it is he who has created you from nothing; proceed on the presupposi-

tion that a human being does not have time to waste on keeping in mind the one to whom he infinitely and unconditionally owes everything. But one is never entitled to ask another about that; so forget it and be noisy along with the crowd, laugh or cry, be busy from morning until night, be loved and respected and esteemed as a friend, as a public official, as a king, as a pallbearer. Above all, be an earnest person by having forgotten the one and only earnestness, to relate yourself to God, to become nothing. Oh, but then keep in mind—yet it does not help to talk—but would to God that you might understand what you lost, that this annihilation before God is so blessed that you at every moment would seek to return to this annihilation more intensely, more warmly, more fervently than the blood returns to the place from which it was forcibly expelled. But to worldly wisdom this, of course, is and must be the greatest foolishness. Therefore never hold fast to God (we must indeed speak this way if we want to express plainly the secret of the halfheartedness that with false words pretends that it, too, holds fast to God), "never hold fast to God, because by holding fast to him you lose what no one who holds fast to the world ever lost, not even the person who lost the most—you lose unconditionally everything." This is indeed true, inasmuch as the world cannot take everything, simply because it cannot give everything. That can be done only by God, who takes everything, everything, everything—in order to give everything—who does not piecemeal take little or much or exceedingly much but takes infinitely everything if you truly hold fast to him. "Therefore, flee from him. Even to approach a king, if you want to be something, can be dangerous enough, and the proximity of a powerfully endowed intellect is dangerous, but it is infinitely more dangerous to draw near to God."[134]

But if God is to be left out and forgotten, I do not know what sense there is in discussing such an expression or what meaning other than a disgusting meaninglessness there would be in discussing this expression: Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Let us then not timorously and traitorously avoid understanding, as if we feared—what the natural man certainly fears, however much he spouts about a craving for knowledge and insight—getting to know too much; to speak about love as the fulfilling of the Law

IX 102 is of course an impossibility without simultaneously acknowledging one's own guilt and making every human being guilty.

Love is the fulfilling of the Law. *Despite all its many provisions, the Law is still somewhat indefinite*, but love is the fulfilling. The Law is like a laborious speaker who despite all his efforts still cannot say everything, but love is the fulfilling.

It might seem strange to say that the Law is the indefinite [*Ubestemte*], since it has its very strength in the provisions [*Bestemmelse*]; indeed, it owns and controls all the provisions. Yet this is the case, and therein lies the weakness of the Law. Just as the shadow is weak in comparison with the strong actuality, so is the Law; but just as there is always something indefinite in the shadow, so also there is something indefinite in the silhouette of the Law, no matter how accurately this is carried out. Therefore also in Holy Scripture the Law is called "a shadow of things to come,"[135] since the Law is not a shadow that accompanies the actuality of love—but the Law is taken up into love, it is the shadow of what is to come. When an artist sketches a plan, the design of a work, however accurate the sketch is, there is always something indefinite. Not until the work is finished, not until then can one say: Now there is not the slightest indefiniteness, not of a single line, not of a single point. Thus there is only one sketch that is completely definite, and that is the work itself, but this of course means that no sketch is or can be completely and unconditionally definite. Thus the Law is a sketch and love the fulfilling and the entirely definite; in love the Law is the entirely definite. There is only one power that can carry out the work for which the Law is the sketch—namely, love. Yet, just as the sketch and the work are by one and the same artist, so also the Law and love are from one and the same source; they are no more incompatible with each other than the work of art corresponding perfectly to the sketch is incompatible with the sketch because it is still more definite than all the provisions of the sketch.

This is why Paul says in another place (I Timothy 1:5): "Love is the sum of the commandment." But in what sense is this said? Yes, it is said in the same sense as it is said that love is the fulfilling of the Law. In another sense it is the sum of all the particular

commandments, you shall not steal etc. Just make the attempt, whether you find the sum that way no matter how long you go on counting, and you will see that it is useless labor, because the concept of the Law is to be inexhaustible, limitless, endless in its provisions; every provision begets of itself an even more precise provision, and in turn a still more precise provision by reference and in relation to the new provision, and so on infinitely. The relation of love to the Law is here like the relation of faith to understanding. The understanding counts and counts, calculates and calculates, but it never arrives at the certainty that faith possesses; in the same way the Law defines and defines but never arrives at the sum, which is love. When one speaks of a "sum," the very expression seems to invite counting, but when a person has become weary of counting and yet is also all the more eager to find the sum, he understands that this word must have a deeper meaning. Similarly, when the Law has set, as it were, all its provisions on a person and hunted him weary because there is a provision everywhere, and yet every provision, even the most definite, still has the indefiniteness that it can become even more definite (since the perpetually indefinite resides in the provisions and the undying disquietude[136] of their multiplicity)—then a person is taught to understand that there must be something else that is the fulfilling of the Law. But there is no conflict between the Law and love, no more than there is a conflict between the sum and that of which it is the sum, no more than there is conflict between the vain attempts to find the sum and the happy discovery, the happy decision, that it has been found. IX 103

A human being groans under the Law. Wherever he looks, he sees only requirement but never the boundary, alas, like someone who looks out over the ocean and sees wave after wave but never the boundary. Wherever he turns, he meets only the rigorousness that in its infinitude can continually become more rigorous, never the boundary where it becomes gentleness. The Law starves out, as it were; with its help one never reaches fulfilling, since its purpose is to take away, to require, to exact to the utmost, and in the continually remaining indefiniteness in the multiplicity of all its provisions is the inexorable exaction of the requirements. With every provision the Law requires some-

thing, and yet there is no limit to the provisions. The Law is therefore the very opposite of life, but life is the fulfilling. The Law is like death. But I wonder if life and death do not actually know one and the same thing, because just as life knows accurately everything that received life, so also death knows accurately everything that received life. In a certain sense, then, there is no conflict between the Law and love with regard to knowledge; but love gives, the Law takes, or, to describe the relation more precisely in its sequence, the Law requires, love gives. There is not one of the Law's provisions, not a single one, that love wants to have removed; on the contrary, love gives them all complete fullness and definiteness for the first time; in love all the Law's provisions are much more definite than they are in the Law. There is no conflict, no more than between hunger and the blessing that satisfies it.[137]

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Love is the fulfilling of the Law, because love is no shirking of the tasks, no indulgence that, claiming exemption or giving exemption, coddling or being coddled, sneaks in between love and the fulfilling of the Law, as if love were an idle feeling too distinguished to express itself in action, a pretentious incompetence that neither can nor will give satisfaction. Only foolishness speaks of love this way—as if there were a conflict between the Law and love, which there certainly is also, but **in** love there is no conflict between the Law and love, which is the fulfilling of the [138]Law—as if there were an essential difference between the Law's requirement and love, which there certainly is, but not **in** love, in which the fulfillment is altogether one and the same with the requirement. Only foolishness sets the Law and love at loggerheads, thinks that it speaks wisely when it relays comments between them or even speaks ill of the one to the other.

The *fulfilling of the Law*—but what law is referred to here? Our text is the *apostolic* word, we are speaking about *Christian love*; therefore here the law can be only *God's Law*. The world (insofar as the world is different from what we have called "foolishness") and God, worldly wisdom and Christianity, agree that there is a law that love is to fulfill in order to be love, but they disagree about what the law is, and this disagreement is an infinite difference. *Worldly wisdom is of the opinion that love is a relationship be-*

tween persons; Christianity teaches that love is a relationship between: a person—God—a person, that is, that God is the middle term. However beautiful a relationship of love has been between two people or among many, however complete all their desire and all their bliss have been for themselves in mutual sacrifice and devotion, even though everyone has praised this relationship—if God and the relationship with God have been omitted, then this, in the Christian sense, has not been love but a mutually enchanting defraudation of love. *To love God is to love oneself truly; to help another person to love God is to love another person; to be helped by another person to love God is to be loved.*

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Worldly wisdom certainly is not of the opinion that the person who loves is himself to decide arbitrarily what he wants to understand by love. Love is indeed devotion and sacrifice, and therefore the world thinks that the object of love (whether it be a beloved or friend or loved ones or a social club or the contemporaries, what for the sake of brevity we will hereafter call "the beloved") is to determine whether devotion and sacrifice have been shown, and whether the devotion and sacrifice shown are love. Thus it depends on whether the people who are to judge know how to judge correctly. If, namely, the object of love, the judge, does not by himself before God have a true idea of what it is to love oneself—that it is to love God—then neither does the beloved have a true idea of what it is to be loved by another person, that it is to be helped to love God. But when that is the case, the beloved will regard a false kind of devotion and sacrifice as true love and will regard true love as lovelessness. The merely human judgment about love is not the true judgment, because to love God is true self-love. When, however, God is the middle term in judging love, there still follows a final and double judgment that, even though basically it is the only decisive judgment, does not begin until the human judgment is finished and has decided whether or not it is love.

The judgment is this: is it actually love, in the divine sense, to show a devotion such as the object of love demanded? Next, is it love, in the divine sense, on the part of the object of love to demand such devotion? Every person is God's bond servant; therefore he dare not belong to anyone in love unless in the same

love he belongs to God and dare not possess anyone in love unless the other and he himself belong to God in this love—a person dare not belong to another as if that other person were everything to him; a person dare not allow another to belong to him as if he were everything to that other. If there was between two or among several a relationship of love so happy and perfect that the poet was bound to exult in it, indeed, so blissful that someone who was not a poet would have to become one out of wonder and joy over this sight—this is by no means the end of the matter. Now Christianity steps forward and asks about the relationship to God, whether each individual is first related to God and then whether the relationship of love is related to God. If this is not the case, then Christianity, which certainly is the
IX 106 protector of love or because it is that, in God's name will not hesitate to split up this relationship until the lovers are willing to understand this. And if only one party understands it, then Christianity, which certainly is the protector of love, will not hesitate to lead him out into the horror of a collision such as no poet dreams of or has ventured to portray. Just as little as a poet can involve himself with the Christian requirement *to love one's enemy*, just as little, or if possible even less, can he involve himself with the Christian requirement: out of love and in love *to hate the beloved.* Yet Christianity in God's name does not hesitate to tighten the relationship to that tension. Christianity does this not merely to collect, as it were, God's outstanding claim (since God, after all, is the bond servant's master and owner) but does it also out of love for the lovers, because to love God is to love oneself, to love another person as God is to deceive oneself, and to allow another person to love one as God is to deceive this other person.

To such a high point, to such madness, humanly speaking, Christianity can press the requirement if love is to be the fulfilling of the Law. Therefore it teaches that the Christian must, if it is required, be able to hate father and mother and sister[139] and the beloved—in the sense, I wonder, that he should actually hate them? Oh, far be this abomination from Christianity! But certainly it is in the sense that love, faithful and true love, divinely understood, must be regarded by the loved ones, the nearest and dearest ones, the contemporaries, as hate, because these refuse to

understand what it is to love oneself, that it is to love God, and that to be loved is to be helped by another person to love God, whether or not the actual result is that the loving one submits to being hated.

See, worldly wisdom has a long list of various expressions for sacrifice and devotion. I wonder if among them this is also found: out of love to hate the beloved, out of love to hate the beloved and to that extent oneself, out of love to hate the contemporaries and to that extent one's own life? See, worldly wisdom knows many and extremely diverse instances of unhappy love. I wonder if among all these you find the suffering of having to seem to hate the beloved, of having to have hate as the final and sole expression of one's love, or of having to be hated by the beloved as a reward for one's love because there is the infinite difference of Christian truth between what the one and what the other understand by love?

Whatever the world before the time of Christianity saw of unhappy love, the collision of love with the horror of events, the collision of love with what within the same fundamental conception of the nature of love is the opposite of love, the collision of love between relatively different conceptions of love, yet within the common fundamental conception—the world before the time of Christianity never saw that in loving there was the possibility of a collision between two conceptions between which there was a difference of eternity, between the divine conception and the merely human conception. But if there is such a collision, then, in the divine sense, it is indeed love to hold fast to the true conception, eternity's conception, to love by virtue of it, whereas the person or persons loved must regard this as hate if they have the merely human conception. Let us speak quite humanly about the highest. Unfortunately, in so-called Christendom one is easily tempted to fancy that a person believes what he does not even have an impression of, at least not enough for becoming aware. Let us speak only quite humanly about the highest, but without ever forgetting that the one the discourse is about here is separated from every human being by an eternal difference: Christ's life is really the only unhappy love. In the divine sense, he was Love; he loved by virtue of the divine con-

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ception of what love is, loved the whole human race. Out of love he did not dare to give up this conception, because that would mean to deceive the human race. For this reason his whole life was a horrible collision with the merely human conception of what love is. It was the ungodly world that crucified him; but even the disciples did not understand him and continually seemed to be trying to win him over to their conception of what love is, so that he even had to say to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan!"[140] The unfathomable suffering of this terrible collision: that the most honest and most faithful disciple, when he, not only well-intentioned, no, but burning with love, wishes to give the best advice, wishes only to express how deeply he loves the master, that the disciple, because his conception of love is false, speaks in such a way that the master must say to him: You do not know it, but to me your words sound as if it were Satan who was speaking!

This is the way Christianity came into the world; with Christianity came the divine explanation of what love is. We often complain about misunderstanding, especially when it is most painfully blended with love, when we recognize that love is unhappily present in its every expression, that we surely are loved but are not understood, that undoubtedly everything is made so painful because it is done out of love through a misunderstanding—but to be misunderstood in such a way as any human being has never, never been misunderstood by another human being, to be misunderstood as Christ was misunderstood—and then to be love as Christ was Love! We pretend that only ungodliness had to collide with Christ. What a misunderstanding! No, the best and the most loving person, humanly speaking, who ever lived had to collide with him, had to misunderstand him, because this best person should first learn from him what love is, in the divine sense. Christ's love was not devoted, in the human sense—anything but; he does not make himself unhappy in order, humanly understood, to make his own happy. No, he makes himself and his own as unhappy as possible, humanly speaking—he who had had it in his power to establish the kingdom of Israel and make everything good for himself and his own, as any contemporary could clearly see![141] Since he could, since he

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would not, the defect then lay in him, in his heart, that he would not sacrifice his conceptions, his delusions, but cruelly preferred to sacrifice himself and his own—that is, forfeited his own life and the lives of those he loved! He does not establish any kingdom on earth; neither does he sacrifice himself so that the apostles could inherit the gain. No, it is indeed madness, humanly speaking: he sacrifices himself—in order to make the loved ones just as unhappy as himself!

Was it actually love to gather a few simple, lowly people about himself, to win their devotion and love as no one's love had ever been won, to allow it for a time to seem to them as if now the prospect of fulfilling their proudest dream was opening—in order then to reconsider suddenly and change the plan,[142] in order then, without being moved by their pleas and without taking the slightest account of them, to throw himself from this seductive height into the abyss of all dangers, in order then to give himself without resistance into the power of his enemies, in order in mockery and scorn to be nailed to the cross like a criminal while the world shouted with joy—was this actually love! Was it actually love to be separated from his disciples in this way, to leave them abandoned in a world that for his sake was bound to hate them, to turn them like straying sheep out among ravenous wolves,[143] whose bloodthirstiness he himself had just stirred up against them—was this actually love!

What, then, does this man want? What does he want of these naive, honest though limited people whom he so horribly deceives? Why does he call his relationship to them love, why does he continue to call it love, why does he die without admitting that he deceived them, so that he dies with the claim that it still IX
was love—alas, while the disciples with crushed hearts but with 109
touching loyalty do not presume to have any opinion about his conduct, probably because he had overwhelmed them, since everyone else readily perceives that he, whatever he was otherwise (perhaps, regarded as a fanatic, even to be excused) acted as a deceiver in relation to his disciples! And yet he was love, and yet he did everything out of love and wanted to bring salvation to humanity, and by what means? By the relationship with God—because he was love. Yes, he was Love, and he knew in his inner-

most being and in responsibility before God that it was the sacrifice of Atonement that he was bringing, that he truly loved the disciples, loved the whole human race, or in any case everyone who would allow himself to be saved!

The fundamental untruth in the merely human view of love is that love is withdrawn from the relationship with God and thereby from the relation to the Law that is referred to when it is said "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." Through a strange misunderstanding, one is perhaps inclined to think that love for the neighbor is not supposed to be withdrawn from the relationship with God but rather erotic love and friendship, as if Christianity were something halfway that is not supposed to permeate everything, as if the doctrine about love for the neighbor were not specifically intended for that and thus for transforming erotic love and friendship, whereas through a strange misunderstanding many perhaps think that they need God's help to love the neighbor, the less loveworthy object, but when it comes to erotic love and friendship they get along best by themselves—alas, as if God's intervention here would be disturbing and inconvenient. But no love and no expression of love may merely humanly and in a worldly way be withdrawn from the relationship to God.

Love is a passion of the emotions, but in this emotion a person, even before he relates to the object of love, should first relate to God and thereby learn the requirement, that love is the fulfilling of the Law. Love is a relationship to another person or to other persons, but it is by no means and may by no means be a marital, a friendly, a merely human agreement, a coterie of people, be it ever so loyal and tender! Each one individually, before he relates in love to the beloved, the friend, the loved ones, the contemporaries, must first relate to God and to God's requirement. As soon as one leaves out the God-relationship, the participants' merely human definition of what they want to understand by loving, what they want to require of each other, and their mutual judg-
IX 110 ment by virtue of that become the highest judgment. Not only shall the person who totally belongs to God's calling not belong to a woman, lest he be delayed by wanting to please her,[144] but also the person who in love belongs to a woman shall first and foremost belong totally to God, shall not seek first to please his

wife but shall first do his utmost so that his love may please God. [145]Therefore it is not the wife who is to teach the husband how he is to love her, or the husband the wife, or the friend the friend, or the contemporaries the contemporary, but it is God who is to teach each individual how he is to love if his love is to stand in even the slightest relation to the Law the apostle refers to when he says, "Love is the fulfilling of the Law."

It naturally follows that the person who has only a worldly or a merely human conception of what love is must come to regard as self-love and lovelessness precisely that which is love in the Christian sense. [146]When, however, the God-relationship determines what is love between human beings, the love is prevented from stopping in any self-deception or illusion, while in turn the requirement of self-denial and sacrifice is certainly made infinite. The love that does not lead to God, the love that does not have the single goal of leading the lovers to love God, stops with the merely human judgment of what love is and what love's sacrifice and giving of itself [147]are; it stops and thereby avoids the possibility of the horror of the final and most terrible collision: that in the love-relationship there is the difference of infinity between the conceptions of what love is.

According to a purely human understanding, this collision can never happen, because according to a purely human understanding the basic idea of what love is must essentially be held in common. Only according to the Christian understanding is the collision possible, since it is the collision between the essentially Christian and the merely human. Christianity, however, knows how to steer through this difficulty, and never has any doctrine taught how to persevere steadily in love as Christianity has. Unalterably and unwaveringly, precisely for the sake of the loved ones, it teaches to hold fast to the true conception of what love is and then willingly to endure being hated by the beloved as a reward for his love—because there is indeed the difference of infinity, the linguistic difference of an eternity between what the one party understands by love and what the other party understands by it. To conform to the beloved's idea of what constitutes love is, humanly speaking, to love, and if someone does that he is loved. But, directly counter to the beloved's

merely human conception of what constitutes love, to deny the
IX 111 wish and to that extent what the lover himself, in the human sense, might also wish, in order to hold fast to God's conception of love—that is the collision. [148]It can never occur to the merely human view of what love is that by being loved as dearly as it is possible to be loved by another person someone can stand in the other person's way. Yet, in the Christian sense, this is possible, because to be loved in this way can be an obstacle to the lover's God-relationship.

But what, then, is to be done? For such a beloved to warn against this will surely not help much, since in so doing he would become even more worthy of love—and the loving one even more deceived. Christianity knows how to remove the collision without, however, removing the love. It requires only this sacrifice (admittedly the hardest possible in many cases and always very hard): willingly to endure being hated as a reward for one's love. Wherever a person is so loved and so admired by others that he begins to be dangerous to their God-relationship, there is the collision; but where the collision occurs there is also required the sacrifice that the merely human conception of what constitutes love does not suspect. The essentially Christian is this: truly to love oneself is to love God; truly to love another person is with every sacrifice (also the sacrifice of becoming hated oneself) to help the other person to love God or in loving God.

[149]This is no doubt very easy to understand, but in the world this view seems to have its great difficulties because an opposite view of what love is, a worldly, a merely human but also ingeniously and poetically developed view, either explains that all this about a God-relationship is actually a delusion, a retardation, or at least in talking about love is silent about the God-relationship. Just as nowadays attempts are made in so many ways to emancipate people from all bonds, also beneficial ones, so also attempts are made to emancipate the emotional relationships between people from the bond that binds one to God and binds one in everything, in every expression of life. In connection with love, there is the desire to teach people something totally new, something for which the now old-fashioned Holy Scripture already has the characteristic expression—there is the desire to

teach people the freedom that is "without God in the world."[150] The abominable era of bond service is past, and so there is the aim of going further—by means of the abomination of abolishing the person's bond service in relation to God, to whom every human being, not by birth but by creation from nothing, belongs as a bond servant, and in such a way as no bond servant has ever belonged to an earthly master, who at least admits that thoughts and feelings are free; but he belongs to God in every thought, the most hidden; in every feeling, the most secret; in every movement, the most inward. Yet this bond service is found to be a burdensome encumbrance and therefore there is a more or less open intent to depose God in order to install human beings—in the rights of humanity? No, that is not needed; God has already done that—in the rights of God. If God is dismissed, the place will indeed be vacant. IX 112

As a reward for such presumption, all existence will in that way probably come closer and closer to being transformed into doubt or into a vortex.[151] What, after all, is the Law, what is the Law's requirement of a person? Well, that is for people to decide. Which people? Here the doubt begins. Since one person does not stand essentially higher than another, it is left entirely up to my arbitrary decision with whom I will affiliate in the determination of the highest unless I myself—even more arbitrarily, if possible—could be in a position to hit upon a new determination and as a recruiter win an alliance for it. It is also left up to my arbitrary decision to assume one thing as the Law's requirement today and something else tomorrow. Or should the determination of what is the Law's requirement perhaps be an agreement among, a common decision by, all people, to which the individual then has to submit? Splendid—that is, if it is possible to find the place and fix a date for this assembling of all people (all the living, all of them? —but what about the dead?), and if it is possible, something that is equally impossible, for all of them to agree on one thing! Or is perhaps the agreement of a number of people, a certain number of votes, sufficient for the decision? How large a number is necessary? Furthermore, if what the Law requires is a merely human determination of what the Law requires (but not by the individual human being, because we thereby

become involved in pure arbitrariness, as indicated), how then will the individual be able to begin to act, or is it left to chance to decide where he happens to begin instead of everyone's having to begin at the beginning? In order to have to begin to act, the individual must first find out from "the others" what the Law's requirement is, but each one of these others must in turn as an individual find this out from "the others." In this way all human life transforms itself into one big [152]excuse—is this perhaps the great, matchless common enterprise, the great achievement of the human race? The category "the others" becomes
IX 113 fanciful, and the fancifully sought determination of what constitutes the Law's requirement is a false alarm.

If, now, this inhumanly protracted labor on the common agreement among all people is not finished in one evening but drags on from generation to generation, how the individual comes to begin will then become purely accidental; it will depend upon when the individual joined the game, so to speak. Some would begin at the beginning but would die before they had come halfway; others would begin midway but would die without seeing the end, which no one actually would see, inasmuch as it would not come until all was finished, world history had ended, because only then would it be fully known what the Law's requirement is. What a pity that human life would not now stand at the beginning, but that it just now was finished and as a consequence was lived out by all human beings without full knowledge of what the Law's requirement is.

When out of seven people who are all charged with having committed a crime others could not have committed, the seventh says, "It was not I, it was the others," "the others" are understood to be the six others, and so on down the line. But what if all seven, each one separately, said, "It was the others"?—what then? Does that not conjure up a mirage that has multiplied the actual seven in an attempt to fool us into thinking that there were many more, although there were only seven? So, too, when the whole human race, each one separately, hits upon saying "the others," an apparition is conjured up, as if the race existed one more time in addition to the time of its actual existence, except that it is very difficult here to point out the falsity, the bedazzle-

ment with the appearance of profundity, because the race is innumerable. Yet the situation is exactly the same as in what one could be tempted to call "The Fairy Tale of the Seven and the Seven Others." This is the situation if the merely human determination of what constitutes the Law's requirement is supposed to be the Law's requirement: we help ourselves upward with the fanciful dizziness "the others," and down here we support each other by means of a little alliance. Human existence is indeed at hand a second time, but not fancifully; the second time of its existence is its existence in God, or, more correctly, this is its first existence, whereby each individual learns from God what the Law's requirement is; the actual existence is the second time.

But to what can we compare that confused state just described? Is it not a mutiny? Or should we hesitate to call it that if at a given time the whole human race was guilty of it and we then add, note well, that it is a mutiny against God? Or is morality subordinated to coincidence in this way: when a great number do what is wrong, or we all do it, then this wrong is the right? IX 114
This explanation would in turn be nothing more than a repetition of the thinking of mutiny or its thoughtlessness, because then it ultimately is people who determine the Law's requirement instead of God. Therefore the one who forgets this not only becomes personally guilty of rebellion against God but also contributes his share to the mutiny's gaining the upper hand. Who would stop such a mutiny, if there is one? Should we perhaps repeat the fallacy of the mutiny, but in a new pattern, and each one separately say: I cannot stop it; "the others must"? Is not each individual under an obligation to God to stop the mutiny, not, of course, by loud noise or fancied importance, not by domineeringly wanting to compel others to obey God, but by being unconditionally obedient oneself, by unconditionally holding to the God-relationship and to God's requirement, and thereby expressing that as far as he is concerned God exists and is the only sovereign, whereas he is an unconditionally obedient subject?

Only when all of us, each one separately, receive our orders at one place, if I may put it this way, and then each one separately unconditionally obeys the same orders, only then are there substance and purpose and truth and actuality in existence. Inas-

much as the order is one and the same, one person could of course be informed of it by another—provided it was certain or at least certain enough that this other person communicated the right thing. Nonetheless, it would still be a disorder, since it conflicts with God's order, because God wants each individual, for the sake of certainty and of equality and of responsibility, to learn for himself the Law's requirement. When this is the case, there is durability in existence, because God has a firm hold on it. There is no vortex, because each individual begins, not with "the others" and therefore not with evasions and excuses, but begins with the God-relationship and therefore stands firm and thereby also stops, as far as he reaches, the dizziness that is the beginning of mutiny.

So it is also with the Law of love—then there are substance and truth and durability in existence when all of us, each one individually, find out from God what the requirement is to which we must conform, and when in other respects we all, each one individually, defend ourselves against the human confusion (yet it is self-evident that if we all did that there would be no confusion)—yes, if it is necessary, defend ourselves against the beloved, against the friend, against those nearest who after all are especially the object of love, insofar as they in any way want to teach us another explanation or sidetrack us, but thank them if they want to help us to the right understanding. Let us not forget
IX 115 this; let us not deceive or be deceived by vague, hazy ideas about what love is but give heed to God's explanation, indifferent to whatever the beloved and the friend and the loved ones think or do not think—yet no, not indifferent; on the contrary, quite deeply concerned if they disagree with us, but undisturbed and unchanged still continuing to love them.

[153]There actually is a conflict between what the world understands and what God understands by love. It is easy enough to bring about an apparent agreement (as is already apparent in the use of one and the same word: "love"), whereas it is more difficult to detect accurately the disagreement; but this difficulty is unavoidable if we are to know the truth. One often hears it said by the world that self-love is the most sagacious policy in the

world. Even this saying does not give one the best idea of the world, since it is hardly a good world in which self-love is the most sagacious policy or provides the greatest advantage. But even though the world regards self-love as the most sagacious policy, from this it does not follow that it could not in return regard love as the more noble. In fact, it does that, but the world does not understand what love is.

Again, it is easy enough to bring about an apparent agreement between God's view of love and the world's; it is already apparent in this common expression that love is noble. Yet the misunderstanding remains concealed. What is the point of praising love as noble, which Christianity also does, when the world understands something else by love and then in turn understands something else by nobility! No, if the world is to be explicit, it must say, "Not only is self-love the most sagacious policy, but if you want to be loved by the world, if you want the world to praise your love and you as noble, then you must be self-loving, in the Christian sense, because what the world calls love is self-love." The distinction the world makes is namely this: if someone wants to be self-loving all by himself, which, however, is rarely seen, the world calls this self-love, but if he, self-loving, wants to hold together in self-love with some other self-loving people, particularly with many other self-loving people, then the world calls this love. The world cannot go beyond that in defining what love is, because it has neither God nor the neighbor as the middle term. What the world honors and loves under the name of love is an alliance in self-love. The alliance also requires sacrifice and devotion on the part of the one it will call loving; it requires that he sacrifice a portion of his own self-love in order to hold together in the united self-love, and it requires that he sacrifice the God-relationship in order to hold together in a worldly way with the alliance that excludes God or at most takes him along for the sake of appearance. By love, however, God understands self-sacrificing love in the divine sense, the self-sacrificing love that sacrifices everything in order to make room for God, even if the heavy sacrifice became even heavier because no one understood it, something that in another sense belongs to true sacrifice, inas- IX 116

much as the sacrifice that people understand has its reward, after all, in popular approval and to that extent is not true sacrifice, which must unconditionally be without reward.

Therefore, in understanding the apostle's words that love is the fulfilling of the Law, we dare not assent to the superficial talk that if a person really has love people will then also love him. He will more likely be accused of self-love just because he will not love people in the sense in which they, self-loving, love themselves. These are the circumstances: the highest degree of self-love the world also calls self-love; the self-love of the alliance the world calls love; a noble, self-sacrificing, magnanimous, human love that still is not Christian love is ridiculed by the world as foolishness; but Christian love is hated, detested, and persecuted by the world. Let us not once again by way of a dubious agreement gloss over the irregularities by saying: That is the way it is in the world, but it is different with the Christian. This is entirely true, but if every baptized person is a Christian and baptized Christendom is nothing but Christians, then "the world" does not exist at all in a Christian country, which can be shown by means of the records of the sexton and the police sergeant.

No, there actually is a conflict between what God understands and what the world understands by love. Ah, but if it is inspiring to fight for hearth and fatherland, then it is also inspiring to fight for God, which that person does who before God, face-to-face with him, holds fast to the God-relationship and its definition of what love is! It is true that God does not need any human being any more than he needs the whole human race or everything that at any moment is for him the nothing from which he created it. Yet the one who fights the good fight[154] to express that God exists and is the Lord whose explanation is to be obeyed unconditionally is fighting for God.

[155]The God-relationship is the mark by which the love for people is recognized as genuine. As soon as a love-relationship does not lead me to God, and as soon as I in the love-relationship do not lead the other to God, then the love, even if it were the highest bliss and delight of affection, even if it were the supreme good of the lovers' earthly life, is still not true love. This the world can never get into its head, that God in this way not only

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becomes the third party in every relationship of love but really becomes the sole object of love, so that it is not the husband who is the wife's beloved, but it is God, and it is the wife who is helped by the husband to love God, and conversely, and so on. The merely human view of love can never go beyond mutuality: the lover is the beloved, and the beloved is the lover. Christianity teaches that such a love has not yet found its true object—God. The love-relationship requires threeness: the lover, the beloved, the love—but the love is God. Therefore, to love another person is to help that person to love God, and to be loved is to be helped.

The world's talk about love is confusing. For example, when a youth going out into the world is told, "Love, then you will be loved," this is quite true—especially if the journey he is beginning is into eternity, into the land of perfection. But the young man must go out into the world, and thus it is deceitful to speak this way without reminding him to hold to God in order to learn what love is and that the world, if it has not learned the same thing from God (ah, then it would surely be the land of perfection the youth would enter!), has a totally different conception of love.

If Christ had not been Love and the love in him the fulfilling of the Law, would he then have been crucified? If he had scaled down the requirement for himself and agreed with those who make love into everything else but the fulfilling of the Law in the divine sense, if instead of being the world's teacher and Savior out of love he had shaped his idea of what it is to love in accordance with the world's idea of what it is to love, would he not then have been loved and praised by all or even (what appalling madness!) have been idolized by his adherents? If the apostles had not maintained firmly that love is the fulfilling of the Law and therefore something different from the fulfillment of human agreements and participation in human alliances, if they had not held fast to loving people in this sense without wanting to become involved in adapting themselves to the world's idea of what it is to love—would they then have been persecuted?

What is it that the world loves and calls love, what else is it but half-heartedness and a totally earthly alliance in worldliness, which, in the eternal sense, is half-heartedness. Has any human

being ever been denounced for self-love more than the person
IX 118 who actually held fast to God's requirement and in faithfulness to it loved people and therefore continued to love them even though misunderstood and persecuted? [156]Is it not also natural for the world to be angry that there is someone who is loved more by such a person, someone toward whom the love of such a person is love for humanity? [157]When a person's efforts are aimed at gaining earthly advantage, one is certainly unjust in complaining about the world if one complains about not finding any friends, since at that price one can surely become loved, win friends, and have many or a few with whom one lovingly holds together. But when the effort of a person, with every sacrifice, the sacrifice of everything, impoverished, scorned, excluded from the synagogue, is aimed at unconditionally holding together with God in loving people, then you can, if it comes to that, advertise in the newspaper that you seek a friend—if you simply add the conditions and underscore "that it is not for the sake of advantage"—you will have difficulty finding anyone.

We wonder at Christ's choosing such insignificant people as apostles but—aside from what no doubt was determinative in the choice, namely, that the more insignificant the apostle was as a person, the stronger the impression on him of the divine authority granted him—is it not even more to be wondered at that Christ acquired them at all, that he actually did succeed in forming a band of eleven whose destiny was to stay together in a willingness to be scourged, persecuted, mocked, crucified, and beheaded, and whose destiny also was not mutual flattery but mutual assistance to humility before God? Would it not sound like terrible mockery of what the world understands by love, but could it not also have the effect of beneficial awakening in these times when so many social organizations are being formed, if someone advertised that he intended to form such a society of love? When someone makes every sacrifice and then there are lots of people who indolently want to take advantage of his sacrifices, this the world can understand; the kind of participation that wants a total share of the benefits and scarcely a half share of the work is found often enough in the world. Genuine participation is indeed also found on earth, but wherever you find it, you will find it hated and persecuted by the world.

Try this, imagine a person (and you need not even imagine him as possessing the perfection that distinguishes those glorious ones who, repudiated by the human race, became the honor of the human race), imagine a person who was or became, or was and remained, so unhappy that the things of this earth and earthly advantage had in his eyes lost their attraction, so unhappy that IX 119
this person, "weary of sighing" (Psalm 6:7 [6:6]), "deeply grieved, thought of suicide," as we read of the unhappy Sara in Scripture (Tobit 3:10); imagine that precisely in the darkest hour of his need it became entirely clear to him that despite all his unhappiness, which surely would not be alleviated if he were to gain all the world's goods, since their possession, by inviting him to enjoy them, would be only a painful reminder of his wretchedness, nor would his unhappiness actually be increased by earthly adversity, which would instead be in tune with his mood just as bad weather is for someone who is melancholy; imagine that it became entirely clear to him that the highest still remained for him: to will to love humanity, to will to serve the good, to serve the truth solely for the sake of truth, the only thing that truly could enliven his troubled mind and give him a zest for life for an eternity—imagine such a person in the world and you will see that he will fare badly—he will not win the world's love, he will not be understood, will not be loved by the world. In proportion to their greater or lesser belonging to the world, some people will be sorry for him, some will laugh at him, some will rather be rid of him because they have noticed the sting, some will envy him and yet not envy him, some will feel attracted to him but then in turn be repelled by him, some will work against him but yet have everything in readiness to honor him after his death; some young people will femininely feel carried away by him but when just a little older will not quite understand him anymore—but the world would directly and plainly make his self-love evident because he procured no earthly advantage either for himself or for others, indeed, not for one single other person. The world is no better than this; the highest that it acknowledges and loves is, at best, to love the good and humanity, yet in such a way that one also looks to one's own earthly advantage and that of a few others. Whatever goes beyond that, the world with the best will (after all, this is only a manner of speak-

ing) is unable to grasp; one step beyond that and you have lost the world's friendship and love. So it is with the world and its love. No observer testing the specific gravity of a liquid with a hydrometer can vouch for the degree of density more surely than I will vouch for this view of the world's love, which is not entirely evil, as it is sometimes vehemently represented, nor is it untainted but is good and evil to a certain degree. But from the Christian point of view this "to a certain degree" is certainly of evil.

Yet we do not say this for the purpose of judging—let us not waste time on that. The deliberation seeks, with the help of
IX 120 thought and a little knowledge of human nature, only to penetrate the illusions or to understand those apostolic words within the daily situations of life, precisely where the illusions are at home. It takes no time at all to be deceived; one can be deceived immediately and remain so for a long time—but to become aware of the deception takes time. It probably is easier to come up with an imaginary notion of what love is and then to satisfy oneself in one's imagination; it is much easier hastily to get a few people to hold together in self-love and be loved and esteemed by them to the end—on the whole there is nothing as easy and nothing as sociable as going astray. [158]But if your ultimate and highest goal is to have life made easy and sociable, then never become involved with Christianity, shun it, because it wants the very opposite; it wants to make your life difficult and to do this by making you alone before God. No earnest person, therefore, wearies of tracking down the illusions, because insofar as he is a thinking person he fears most to be in error,[159] however cozy the arrangement is, however good the company—and as a Christian he fears most to be lost without knowing it—however flattering, however splendid the surroundings and the company are.

That such pretentiousness is not love seems so easy to perceive that one would think that no one could entertain such a view. But this is not always the case, and here is a specific example of an illusion, insofar as purely human judgment is to be decisive. If the pretentious person himself were to think of calling it love, one presumably would object, and then there would be no illusion. This emerges only when the others wish to become the

object of this pretentiousness, regard it as love, praise it as love and him as loving. Without being a great judge of character, one would find it difficult to point out situations in life in which a person can be in such a position that there are those who will especially look with favor on him, especially praise his love, if in the name of love he demands everything of them. After all, there are people who do not actually know anything about love [*Kjerlighed*] other than that it is caressing [*Kjælerie*]. Such people expressly want the person they are supposed to love and cherish to be pretentious.

There are people who have inhumanly forgotten that everyone should fortify himself by means of the universal divine likeness of all people, have forgotten that therefore, whether a person is man or woman, poorly or richly endowed, master or slave, beggar or plutocrat, the relationships among human beings ought and may never be such that the one worships and the other IX
is the one worshiped. This is so easy to perceive that one might 121
think that this abomination can originate only from a misuse of superiority, that is, only with the superior person. Alas, it can originate also with the powerless person, who himself desires it in order in this way to have an importance of sorts for the superior one. Take away eternity's equality and its divine rehabilitation, that is, assume that it is forgotten, then the vulnerable woman in relation to the arrogant man, the poorly endowed and yet vain individual in relation to the richly endowed, the poor and yet only worldly-concerned in relation to "the all-powerful man," the very subordinate and yet earthly-minded in relation to the ruler—they know of no other expression for the relation than to abase themselves and to throw themselves away. And since they know nothing higher because they *refuse* to know anything higher, they themselves desire this abomination, desire it with every passion. Their desire is to exist for the powerful person. This cannot be done in a worldly way as power; then abasement becomes what is desired.

Is it perhaps not apparent that a young girl would rather inhumanly throw herself away and worship the idolized one, craving only one thing of him, that he inhumanly should demand everything of her, and in that situation highly praising his love, rather

than understanding that for God all these dissimilarities among people are but jest, trumpery, often to one's ruin! Yet the girl would call it self-love if the idolized one sought to impart this knowledge to her. Is it not apparent that the weak (by forgetting God), abject person had only one wish, to be obliged to cast himself in the dust before the ruler—in order at least to exist for him—only one craving, that the ruler will step on him so that he can joyfully praise the ruler's gracious love and kindness! Is it not apparent that these vain people who have completely forgotten God desire only a relationship to the prominent and willingly call the most abject relationship a sign of his love! And if he will not have this, if he wants to prevent this by helping them to that blessed likeness before God, it is then called self-love. Only when the eternal is taken away from a person or it is in him as if it were not present—the eternal that simultaneously can cool all the unhealthy passions in human relations but can also kindle them when temporality wants to freeze them—only when the eternal is taken away from a person is there no security against his being able to think of calling this abomination by the name of love and of even passionately craving to be the object of this
IX 122 abomination. A person can inhumanly wish to make himself indispensable by his power, but he can also wish to make himself indispensable by his weakness and therefore, even crawling and begging, call another person's pretentiousness by the name of love.

[160]But eternity's requirement will not exempt a person from fulfilling God's Law, even if the whole world were to exempt him, even if the whole world were to love his pretentiousness but misunderstand his love, because perhaps only through despair can this requirement teach the despairing ones to hold to God instead of, begging, to damage their souls. Eternity's requirement will prevent love from coming to a standstill in any self-deception and from gratifying itself in any illusion. It will be no excuse that people themselves do indeed desire to become the object of pretentiousness and themselves call it love and being loved. It is God who has placed love in the human being, and it is God who in every case will determine what is love.

But when the friend, the beloved, the loved ones, and the

contemporaries notice that you want to learn from God what it is to love instead of learning it from them, they will perhaps say to you, "Spare yourself. Give up this exaggeration. Why do you want to take life so seriously? Ease up on the requirement. Then we would live a beautiful, a rich, and a meaningful life in friendship and joy." If you give in to the suggestions of this false love, you will be loved and praised for your love. But if you refuse, if in loving you are unwilling to be a traitor either to God or to yourself or to the others, you will have to put up with being called self-loving. Your friend will very likely not care for your conviction that truly to love yourself is to love God, that to love another human being is to help him to love God. Even if you say nothing, he no doubt notices that your life, if it truly relates to God's requirement, contains an admonition, a requirement for him—this is what he wants to remove. The reward for this is friendship and the good name of a friend. In the world, unfortunately, the worldly has so much the upper hand that when someone speaks about false friendship people promptly think of deception in terms of earthly advantages or of perfidiousness in connection with earthly goods. This surely was not your friend's intention or idea. He only wanted to defraud you of the God-relationship and wanted you, as a friend, to help him defraud himself—in this fraud he would then hold together with you in life and death.

People speak of the falseness of the world and promptly take this to mean that it deceives someone with regard to material goods, frustrates someone's great expectations, ridicules someone's bold plans; but they seldom give any thought to the most dangerous falseness of the world: that when it honestly holds to everything, almost more than it has promised, precisely then it deceives most dangerously—by means of its honest friendship (of course it would be false friendship if it defrauded someone of the temporal), it wants to teach one to forget God. There is some talk of making a bargain with the evil one, and if one asks what advantages are offered in compensation, mention is made of power, honor, the gratification of desires, and the like. But what people forget to talk about and think about is that by such a bargain one can also manage to be loved by people and to be praised for one's

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love. Yet this is the case—since the opposite certainly is and was the case, that those who in love to God loved people became hated in the world. Just as the world has wanted to tempt a person to forget God by offering him power and dominion and then in turn treated the same person as the scum of the earth because he withstood the temptation, so also has the world temptingly offered a person its friendship and in turn hated him because he would not be its friend. The world prefers not to hear anything about the eternal, God's requirement of love, and likes even less to see it expressed in life. But does the world therefore call itself self-loving? By no means. What, then, does the world do? Then the world says of the person who wants to hold to God that he is self-loving. The expedient is an old one: to sacrifice one person when all the others can profit from it.[161]

God and the world agree in this, that love is the fulfilling of the Law; the difference is that the world understands the Law as something it thinks up by itself, and the one who assents to this and complies with it is a loving person. How many a one has not been corrupted, in the divine sense, by a girl's love because he, defrauded of his God-relationship, became all too faithful to her, while she in turn was inexhaustible in her eulogies of his love? How many a one has not been corrupted by relatives and friends, although his corruption was as if nonexistent, since he now became especially loved and praised for his love—by relatives and friends? How many a one has not been corrupted by the contemporaries, the contemporaries who in return idolized his loving disposition because they got him to forget his God-relationship and changed into something that could be paraded noisily, shouted about, and indulgently admired without his sensing any reminder of something higher? To ask another and truly earnest question and without even pointing to the highest prototype but being satisfied with a lesser one who in so-called Christendom is, sorry to say, still adequate enough—why did that simple wise man of old, when he defended his life, accused by self-love and worldliness before the judgment seat of light-mindedness and condemned to death, why did he compare himself to a "gadfly"[162] at the same time as he called himself a divine gift, and why did he love young people so much? As for the first, was it not

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because he, as a pagan, could do it, had loved people in something higher, that is, because he had had an awakening influence and did not let himself in any way be spellbound by temporality or by any human being, not by any languid or fervent alliance in erotic love, in friendship, in agreement with others, with the times, but preferred to be the self-lover, the teaser, whom no one loved! As for the latter, was it not because he perceived that young people still had a receptivity for the divine, which is so easily lost over the years in wheeling and dealing, in erotic love and friendship, in subjection to a merely human judgment and to the demands of the times! Therefore, because he, by means of the eternal and "something divine,"[163] had prevented his love for people from coming to a standstill in self-deception or illusion, that is, because he, by holding himself close to the requirement, had been like a requirement to the people.

If, then, you in any way, even in human frailty, will aspire to carry out the words of the apostle, that love is the fulfilling of the Law, then take care with people! In the sense, perhaps, that you should refrain from loving them? How unreasonable—how then could your love become the fulfilling of the Law! But take care lest it become more important to you that you are looked upon as loving them than that you love them. Take care lest being loved is more important to you than that in which you are to love one another; take care lest they trick you out of the highest because you cannot bear to be called self-loving! Do not, in order to give evidence of your love, appeal to people's judgment of you, inasmuch as the judgment of people has validity only insofar as it harmonizes with God's requirement; in any other case people are merely your accomplices![164] Moreover, learn and never forget the lesson, this sadness that is the truth of earthly life, that all love between human beings neither can be nor will be perfectly happy, never dares to be perfectly secure! In the divine sense, even the happiest love between two people still has one danger that the merely human view of love does not think of, the danger that the earthly love could become too intense, so that the God-relationship is disturbed, the danger that the God-relationship can require even the happiest love as a sacrifice when, humanly speaking, there is nothing but peace and no danger is

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even in sight. A consequence of the possibility of this danger is that with concern you must always be on watch, even in the happiest love-relationship, although your concern, of course, is not that you might grow weary of your beloved or your beloved of you, but with concern that the two of you might forget God, or the beloved might, or you yourself. Moreover, to call to mind the introduction to this deliberation, a consequence of the possibility of this danger is the difficulty, in the Christian sense, of promising love when to keep the promise can mean having to be hated by the beloved. God, who, as has been pointed out, is indeed the sole true object of love, is the only one whom it is always happy, always blessed to love; you need not watch in concern, but only watch in adoration.

Love is the fulfilling of the Law. But the Law has an inexhaustible number of provisions—how then should we ever finish discussing them? Let us therefore concentrate this multiplicity in the crucial issue. The requirement of the *Law* must be twofold—namely, *partly a requirement of inwardness and partly a requirement of continuance.*

What, then, is the required inwardness? The merely human view of love also requires inwardness, devotion, sacrifice, but defines it only humanly. The devotion of inwardness is: with every sacrifice to satisfy the beloved's (the object's) idea of what love is, or on one's own responsibility to be willing to venture to decide what love is. But to love oneself in the divine sense is to love God, and truly to love another person is to help that person to love God or in loving God. Therefore, inwardness here is not defined merely by the love-relationship but by the God-relationship. Thus the required inwardness is the inwardness of self-denial, which is more explicitly defined not in relation to the beloved's (the object's) idea of love but in relation to helping the beloved to love God. As a consequence the love-relationship as such can be the sacrifice that is required.

IX 126 The inwardness of love must be self-sacrificing and therefore without the requirement of any reward. The purely human view of love also teaches that love requires no reward—it wants only

to be loved, as if this were no reward, as if the whole relationship did not still remain within the category of human relationships. But the inwardness of Christian love is to be willing, as reward for its love, to be hated by the beloved (the object). This shows that this inwardness is an unalloyed God-relationship. It has no reward, not even that of being loved: thus it belongs entirely to God, or in it the person belongs entirely to God. The self-denial, the self-control, and the self-sacrifice that are still only transactions within temporality, within the horizon of the human, are not truly Christian and are like a jest compared with Christian earnestness, are like a tentative running start at Christian decisiveness. [165]One is willing to sacrifice this or that and everything, but one still hopes to be understood and thereby to remain in a connectedness of meaning with people, who must acknowledge one's sacrifices and rejoice in them. One is willing to forsake everything, but one still does not expect as a result to become forsaken by language and people's understanding. The movement of sacrifice accordingly becomes specious; it makes a show of forsaking the world but still remains within the world. We by no means wish to disparage this—ah, perhaps even this merely human sacrifice is found rarely enough. From the Christian point of view, however, we must say that it stops halfway. It climbs to a high place, inasmuch as, humanly speaking, sacrifice does indeed stand high; it casts off everything in order to climb to this elevated place, the height of which admiration notices, while the sacrifice sees that it is seen. But to stand on this elevated place (inasmuch as sacrifice truly is elevation) accused, scorned, hated, mocked almost worse than the lowest of the low—that is, suprahumanly striving to reach this elevated place and to stand on that elevated place in such a way that it appears to everyone that one is standing on the lowest place of contemptibility—this, in the Christian sense, is sacrifice; moreover, in the human sense it is madness. There is only one who sees the true connectedness, and he does not admire, since God in heaven does not admire any human being. On the contrary, while the true sacrifice has only one single abode—God—it nevertheless in turn seems to be forsaken by God, because it understands that before God it has no merit at all, but also humanly understands that by sacrificing only

half of what it sacrificed it would be understood by people, would be loved and admired, and yet in a certain sense it would have before God the same significance as the true sacrifice, be-
IX 127 cause before God no sacrifice, not one, has merit. In the Christian sense this is sacrifice, and in the human sense this is also madness. This, in the Christian sense, is to love; if it is so that to love is the highest happiness, this is indeed the hardest suffering—if being related to God were not the highest blessedness!

The other requirement of the Law is the continuance of love throughout the duration of time. The merely human view of love also makes this requirement, but in the Christian sense the requirement is different inasmuch as the required inwardness is different. The requirement of continuance in time means that the same inwardness of love is to be maintained throughout the duration of time, which, if it happens, is in a certain sense a new expression for inwardness. As soon as you believe that you have done enough in your love or have loved long enough and now must claim something from the other, you discover that your love is in the process of becoming a requirement, as if, however self-sacrificing and devoted your love is, there were still a boundary where it must show itself to be fundamentally a requirement—but love is the fulfilling of the Law.[166] We are not discussing here any great moment of self-denial; after all, the Law requires the same inwardness throughout the duration of time. Throughout the duration of time! But is this not, so to speak, a twisting of a person's soul and a contradiction in the requirement to make the requirement in such different directions at the same time, in the direction of length and in the direction of depth! See, the arrow flies swiftly through the air horizontally, but if at the same time it is supposed to bore down into the earth and yet continue to fly with the speed of an arrow—what a requirement! Alas, in the great moment of inspiration the eternal lingers, but when time begins its restless busyness, when it keeps on going—then not to go along with time away from the inspiration, but precipitously to proceed with the speed of time and yet slowly with the lingering of the eternal! To lie at death's door (and when a person in self-denial has had to make the hardest sacrifice, as a reward for his love to be hated by its object, he is indeed like

someone lying at death's door), and then to have a future, a long life ahead of one, although everything is over—that is, simultaneously and at every moment lying at death's door and, upright, having to walk forward: what a requirement! To lie down is the very opposite of walking upright, but to lie at death's door is certainly the most decisive expression for lying down and thus at the greatest possible distance from uprightness. Have you ever seen a weary traveler carrying a heavy burden and with every step struggling to keep from sinking to the ground; he holds himself upright only by supreme effort; he struggles in order not IX 128
to collapse. But to have collapsed, to lie down, to lie at death's door—and then to hurry intrepidly ahead in the stride of an upright person—marvelous! And this can be the requirement and can also be the requirement of perseverance throughout the duration of time.

Alas, in the world of the spirit there is something deceptive that is without analogy in the external world. For example, we say that a child must learn to spell before it can learn to read. For better or for worse, this is an unavoidable necessity. No child has ever been prompted by appearance or illusion to fancy that it could read long before it could spell. But in spiritual matters, how seductive! Does not everything here begin with the great moment of the resolution, the intention, the promise—where one reads as fluently as the most accomplished lecturer presents the most practiced reading. And only then comes the next part; then one is to proceed to the very small things, the purely everyday things that will not make any great impression whatever or help one by way of the grand connectedness of things. Alas, on the contrary, just as it is with spelling, which separates the words and takes them apart, so it is also in the long, long hours when one cannot fathom the meaning and waits in vain for the connectedness. To struggle with oneself in self-denial, especially if one's aim is to be victorious, is regarded as the hardest of struggles; and to struggle with time, if one's aim was to be totally victorious, is regarded as an impossibility.[167]

[168]The heaviest burden laid upon a person (because he himself laid the burden of sin upon himself) is in a certain sense time—indeed do we not say that it can be deathly long! And yet on the

other hand, what a mitigating, what an alleviating, what a seductive power time has! But this mitigating, this seductive power is, of course, a new danger. If a person is guilty of something—if only some time passes, especially if during that time he seems to have made some improvement, how mitigated his guilt appears to him! But is this really so? Is it also the case that when the thoughtless person has in the next moment forgotten his guilt, it is then forgotten?

Tell me, then, if it is possible to speak about this verse that says love is the fulfilling of the Law without judging against one's will, even if it is one's will only to judge oneself! Is there any more accurate expression for how infinitely far a person is from fulfilling the requirement than this, that the distance is so great
IX 129 that he actually cannot begin to calculate it, cannot total up the account! Not only is so much neglected every day, to say nothing of what guilt is incurred, but when some time has passed, one is not even able to state accurately the guilt as it once appeared to oneself, because time changes and mitigates one's judgment of the past—but, alas, no amount of time changes the requirement, eternity's requirement—that love is the fulfilling of the Law.

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Love Is a Matter of Conscience

> I Timothy 1:5. But the sum of the commandment is love out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of a sincere faith.

If one were to state and describe in a single sentence the victory Christianity has won over the world or, even more correctly, the victory by which it has more than overcome the world[169] (since Christianity has never wanted to conquer in a worldly way), infinity's change that Christianity has as its aim, by which everything indeed remains as it was (since Christianity has never been a friend of the trumpery of novelty) and yet in the sense of infinity has become completely new—then I know of nothing shorter but also nothing more decisive than this: it has made every human relationship between person and person a relationship of conscience. Christianity has not wanted to topple governments from the throne in order to place itself on the throne; it has never contended in an external sense for a place in the world, of which it is not (in the heart's room, if it finds a place there, it still takes no place in the world), and yet it has infinitely changed everything it allowed and allows to continue.

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In other words, just as the blood pulses in every nerve, so does Christianity want to permeate everything with the relationship of conscience. The change is not in the external, not in the apparent, and yet the change is infinite. Just as if a person, instead of having blood in his veins, had that divine fluid that paganism dreamed of[170]—just so does Christianity want to breathe the eternal life, the divine, into the human race. That is why Christians have been called a nation of priests,[171] and that is why one

can say, bearing in mind the relationship of conscience, that it is a nation of kings.[172]

[173]Take the most lowly, the most disregarded servant, take what we call a rather simple, indigent, poor charwoman, who earns her living by the most menial work—from the Christian point of view, she has the right, indeed, we most urgently beseech her in the name of Christianity to do it—she has the right to say, as she is doing her work and talking to herself and to God, something that in no way slows up the work, "I am doing this work for wages, but that I do it as carefully as I am doing it, I do—for the sake of conscience." Alas, in a worldly sense, there is only one person, only one, who acknowledges no other duty than the duty of conscience, and that is the king. Yet that lowly woman has the right, in the Christian sense, to say regally to herself before God, "I am doing it for the sake of conscience!" If the woman becomes displeased because no one wants to listen to such talk, this merely shows that she is not of a Christian mind; otherwise it seems to me that it is enough that God has permitted me to talk this way with him—greedily to demand freedom of speech in this regard is great folly against oneself. There are certain things, among them particularly the secrets of inwardness, that lose by being made public and that are completely lost when the publication has become the most important thing to one. Yes, in that case there are secrets that are not merely lost but become altogether meaningless. Christianity's divine meaning is to say in confidence to every human being, "Do not busy yourself with changing the shape of the world or your situation, as if you (to stay with the example), instead of being a poor charwoman, perhaps could manage to be called 'Madame.' No, make Christianity your own, and it will show you a point outside the world, and by means of this you will move heaven and
IX 132 earth[174]; yes, you will do something even more wonderful, you will move heaven and earth so quietly, so lightly, that no one notices it."[175]

This is the miracle of Christianity, even more miraculous than turning water into wine,[176] this miracle, without any accession of a new king, indeed, without the lifting of a hand, of quietly making everyone a king, in the divine sense, and doing it so

lightly, so deftly, so wondrously, that in a certain sense the world does not need to find out about it. In the external world, the king should and ought to be the only one who rules according to his conscience, but to obey—for the sake of conscience—must be granted to everyone; this, indeed, no one, no one at all can prevent. And there within, deep within where the essentially Christian dwells in the relationship of conscience, there everything is changed.[177]

See, the world makes a great noise merely in order to achieve a little change, sets heaven and earth in motion for nothing, like the mountain that gives birth to a mouse—Christianity quietly makes infinity's change as if it were nothing. It is very quiet, as nothing of this world can be; it is very quiet, as only the dead and inwardness can be. Indeed, what else is Christianity but inwardness!

In this way Christianity transforms every relationship between person and person into a relationship of conscience, this also into a relationship of love. This is what we want to consider now: that in the Christian sense

love is a matter of conscience.

The apostolic word just read obviously contains a double meaning—first, "The sum of the commandment is love." We developed this in the previous deliberation although we linked the discussion to another verse, that love is the fulfilling of the Law. But our text goes on to say: If love is to be the sum of the commandment, it must be out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of a sincere faith. We choose, however, to concentrate attention on the one provision, that love is a matter of conscience, which essentially contains the other two and to which they essentially refer.[178]

That a particular kind of love is Christianly made a matter of conscience is sufficiently known to everyone. We are speaking about marriage. Before the minister of the Church joins the two for the life together that has been their heart's choice (something, however, he does not ask them about), he first asks each one individually: Have you consulted with God and with your conscience? Therefore the minister of the Church refers love to the

IX 133 conscience, which indeed is why he speaks to them as to strangers and does not use "*Du*," the familiar form of address. He lays on the heart of each one individually that it is a matter of conscience; he makes an affair of the heart a matter of conscience. Surely this cannot be expressed more definitely and clearly, and yet there is still another expression of the same view contained in the form of a question, or in the questioning of each one individually. To question the single individual is the more common expression for the relationship of conscience, and this is why it also is precisely Christianity's essential view of the human race—namely, first and foremost to view all these countless ones separately, individually as the single individual.

So the minister of the Church asks the two, each one individually, whether he and she have consulted with God and with their consciences. This is infinity's change that in Christianity takes place in erotic love. Like all of Christianity's changes, it takes place very unobtrusively, very secretly, because it belongs only to a person's hidden inwardness, the incorruptible being of the quiet spirit. What abominations has the world not seen in the relationships between man and woman, that she, almost like an animal, was a disdained being in comparison with the man, a being of another species. What battles there have been to establish in a worldly way the woman in equal rights with the man—but Christianity makes only infinity's change and therefore quietly. Outwardly the old more or less remains. The man is to be the woman's master and she subservient to him; but inwardly everything is changed, changed by means of this little question to the woman, whether she has consulted with her conscience about having this man—as master, for otherwise she does not get him. Yet the conscience-question about the conscience-matter makes her in inwardness before God absolutely equal with the man. What Christ said about his kingdom, that it is not of this world,[179] holds true of everything Christian. As a higher order of things, it wants to be present everywhere but not to be seized. Just as a friendly spirit surrounds the dear ones, follows their every step but cannot be pointed to, so the essentially Christian wants to be a stranger in life because it belongs to another world, a stranger in the world because it belongs to the inner being. In

the name of Christianity, fatuous people have fatuously been busy about making it obvious in a worldly way that the woman should be established in equal rights with the man—Christianity has never required or desired this. It has done everything for the woman, provided she Christianly will be satisfied with what is Christian; if she is unwilling, then for what she loses she gains only a mediocre compensation in the fragment of externality she can in a worldly way obtain by defiance. IX 134

So it is with marriage. But because Christianity through marriage has made erotic love [*Elskov*] a matter of conscience, it still does not seem to follow that on the whole it has made love [*Kjerlighed*] a matter of conscience. Yet anyone who holds another view is in error about the essentially Christian. Christianity has not selectively made erotic love a matter of conscience, but because it has made all love a matter of conscience it has made erotic love that also. Moreover, if it would be difficult to transform any kind of love into a matter of conscience, then certainly erotic love, which is based on drives and inclination. Drives and inclination themselves seem to be quite adequate to decide whether erotic love is present or absent, and to that extent erotic love seems to challenge the essentially Christian, just as the essentially Christian challenges it. For example, when two people love each other—something they themselves must of course know best—and nothing otherwise stands in the way of their union, why then make difficulties, as Christianity does, by saying: No, they must first have answered the question whether they have consulted with God and with their consciences. Christianity does not want to make changes in externals; neither does it want to abolish drives or inclination—it wants only to make infinity's change in the inner being.

The change of infinity (which is the hidden being of inwardness, which is inwardly directed toward the God-relationship and therein is different from the inwardness directed outwardly) is what Christianity wants to make everywhere, and therefore it also wants to transform all love into a matter of conscience. Therefore one is mistaken about the essentially Christian in thinking that it is a particular kind of love that it selectively wants to make a matter of conscience. On the whole, one cannot make

something particular a matter of conscience; either one must make everything that, as Christianity does, or nothing at all. The inner power of the conscience to spread is similar to God's omnipresence—one cannot restrict it to a particular place and say that God is everywhere present in this particular place, for that is simply a denial of his omnipresence. In the same way, to restrict the relationship of conscience to something in particular is, on the whole, to deny the relationship of conscience.

If we want to think of a starting point in Christianity's doctrine of love (even though it is impossible to fix a starting point in a
IX circular motion), we cannot say that Christianity begins by mak-
135 ing erotic love a matter of conscience, as if this matter had first and foremost attracted the attention of the Christian doctrine, which has something quite different to think about than getting people married. No, Christianity has begun from the foundation and therefore with the Spirit's doctrine of what love is. In order to determine what love is, it begins either with God or with the neighbor, a doctrine about love that is the essentially Christian doctrine, since one, in order in love to find the neighbor, must start from God and must find God in love to the neighbor. From this foundation, Christianity now takes possession of every expression of love and is jealous for itself. Thus one can say that it is the doctrine about the human being's God-relationship that has made erotic love a matter of conscience just as well as one can say that it is the doctrine of love for the neighbor. Both are equally the Christian objection to the self-willfulness of drives and inclination. Because the man belongs first and foremost to God before he belongs to any relationship, he must first be asked whether he has consulted with God and with his conscience. So also with the woman. Moreover, just because the man is first and foremost the neighbor, even in the relationship to the beloved woman, and she is to him first and foremost the neighbor, the question must be asked whether he and she have consulted with their consciences. In the Christian sense there is equality of all persons before God, and in the doctrine of loving the neighbor there is equality of all persons before God. One perhaps supposes that there is love for the neighbor even when it is a cast-off erotic love; ah, love for the neighbor is the ultimate and the highest

love and therefore should be ranked even higher than the first and highest moment of falling in love.

This is Christianity. It is so far from being a matter of first having to get busy to find the beloved that, on the contrary, in loving the beloved we are first to love the neighbor. To drives and inclination this is no doubt a strange, chilling inversion; yet it is Christianity and no more chilling than the spirit is in relation to the sensate or the sensate-psychical; moreover, it is specifically a quality of the spirit to burn without blazing. Your wife must first and foremost be to you the neighbor; that she is your wife is then a more precise specification of your particular relationship to each other. But what is the eternal foundation must also be the foundation of every expression of the particular.

If this were not the case, how would we find room for the doctrine of love for the neighbor; and yet we ordinarily forget it completely. Without really being aware of it ourselves, we talk like pagans about erotic love and friendship, arrange our lives paganly in that regard, and then add a bit of Christianity about loving the neighbor—that is, a few other persons. But the man who does not see to it that his wife is to him the neighbor, and only then his wife, never comes to love the neighbor, no matter how many people he loves—that is, he has made his wife an exception. This exception he will then love either too ardently all through life or at first too ardently and then too coolly. To be sure, the wife and the friend are not loved in the same way, nor the friend and the neighbor, but this is not an essential dissimilarity, because the fundamental similarity is implicit in the category "neighbor." The category "neighbor" is like the category "human being." Each one of us is a human being and then in turn the distinctive individual that he is in particular, but to be a human being is the fundamental category. No one should become so enamored of his dissimilarity that he cravenly or presumptuously forgets that he is a human being. No person is an exception to being a human being because of his particular dissimilarity but is a human being and then what he is in particular. Thus Christianity has nothing against the husband's loving his wife in particular, but he must never love her in particular in such a way that she is an exception to being the neighbor that

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every human being is, because in that case he confuses what is essentially Christian—the wife does not become for him the neighbor, and thus all other people do not become for him the neighbor either. If there lived one human being who because of his dissimilarity was an exception to being a human being, then the concept "human being" would be confused; the exception is not a human being, and the other human beings are not human beings either.

We speak of a man's conscientiously loving his wife or his friend or those nearest and dearest to him, but we often speak in a way that involves a great misconception. Christianity teaches that you are to love every human being, therefore also your wife and friend, conscientiously; it is indeed a matter of conscience. However, when we speak about conscientiously loving wife and friend, we usually mean loving in a divisive way or, what amounts to the same thing, loving them so preferentially in the sense of an alliance that one has nothing at all to do with other human beings. But in the Christian sense that kind of conscientiousness is simply a lack of conscientiousness. We also perceive that as a consequence it is the wife and the friend who are to determine whether the love shown is conscientious. Herein lies the falsehood, because it is God who by himself and by means of the middle term "neighbor" checks on whether the love for wife
IX and friend is conscientious. In other words, only then is your love
137 a matter of conscience. It is certainly clear, however, that one can truly be conscientious only in a matter of conscience, since otherwise we could also speak about being conscientious in receiving stolen goods. Before there can be any question of loving conscientiously, love must first be qualified as a matter of conscience. But love is qualified as a matter of conscience only when either God or the neighbor is the middle term, that is, not in erotic love and friendship as such. But if love is not qualified as a matter of conscience in erotic love and friendship as such, then the so-called conscientiousness becomes more and more dubious the firmer the alliance becomes.

In other words, Christianity is not related as a more explicit definition pertaining to what in paganism and in general has been called love but is a fundamental change. Christianity has not

come into the world to teach this or that change in how you are to love your wife and your friend *in particular*, but to teach how you are to love all human beings *universally-humanly*. It is in turn this change that Christianly changes erotic love and friendship.

We sometimes hear people say that to ask someone about his love affair is a question of conscience. But frequently enough this is not understood altogether correctly. The reason for its being a question of conscience is that a human being in his erotic love belongs first and foremost to God. Therefore no one becomes angry when the pastor asks, because he asks in God's name. But usually this is not what is meant, but rather only that erotic love is such an intimate matter that any third person is an intruder, every third person—even God—which, in the Christian sense, is lack of conscientiousness. Yet a question of conscience pertaining to a matter in which a person does not relate himself to God is on the whole inconceivable, because to relate to God is precisely to have conscience. Thus a person could not have anything on his conscience if God did not exist, because the relationship between the individual and God, the God-relationship, is the conscience, and this is why it is so terrible to have even the slightest thing on one's conscience, because one immediately has along with it the infinite weight of God.

Love is a matter of conscience and thus is not a matter of drives and inclination, or a matter of feeling, or a matter of intellectual calculation.

The worldly or merely human point of view recognizes a great many kinds of love and is well informed about the dissimilarity of each one and the dissimilarity between each particular one and the others. It studies in depth the dissimilarity of these dissimilarities—if it is at all possible to study in depth something that has no depth. With Christianity the opposite is the case. It recognizes really only one kind of love, the spirit's love, and does not concern itself much with working out in detail the different ways in which this fundamental universal love can manifest itself. Christianly, the entire distinction between the different kinds of love is essentially abolished. IX 138

The merely human point of view conceives of love *either* solely in terms of immediacy, as drives and inclination (erotic love), as inclination (friendship), as feeling and inclination, with

one or another differentiating alloy of duty, natural relations, prescriptive rights, etc., *or* as something to be aspired to and attained because the understanding perceives that to be loved and favored, just like having persons one loves and favors, is an earthly good. Christianity is not really concerned with all this, neither with that sort of immediacy nor that sort of comfortableness. Christianity allows all this to remain in force and have its significance externally, but at the same time through its doctrine about love, which is not predicated on comfortableness, it wants to have infinity's change take place internally. There is something wonderful and perhaps for many something odd, something incomprehensible, in the fact that the eternal power of the essentially Christian is so indifferent to acknowledgment in the external world; there is something wonderful in the fact that earnestness is just this, that inwardness, for the sake of earnestness, plays the stranger in worldliness this way. Indeed, that is why there have in Christianity been times when it was thought necessary to betray the secret and provide Christianity with a worldly expression in the secular world. So they wanted to abolish marriage and indeed lived hidden away in the cloister. But the hiding place of inwardness or the hidden person's inwardness,[180] which "keeps the secret of faith" (I Timothy 3:9), is a much more secure hiding place. Thus, compared with true Christian inwardness, the cloister's hiding place in the solitude of the forest or far away on an inaccessible mountaintop and the silent inhabitant's hiding place in the cloister are childishness, just as when a child hides himself—so that someone will come and find him. The cloister's hidden occupant notified the world that he had hidden himself, that is, in the Christian sense, that he had not hidden himself in earnest but was playing hide-and-seek.

Through a similar misunderstanding of Christianity, through a similar piece of childishness, people thought that it was Chris-
IX tian to betray the secret, to express in a worldly way Christian-
139 ity's indifference to friendship, to the family relationships, to love of the fatherland—which is indeed false, because Christianity is not indifferent in a worldly way to anything; on the contrary, it is concerned about everything simply and solely in a spiritual way. But to express one's indifference in such a way that one is

eager for the relevant persons to find out about it is certainly not being indifferent. Such indifference is comparable to someone's going up to another and saying, "I don't care about you," to which the other might answer, "Then why bother to tell me!" Again it was a piece of childishness; it was a childish way of being distinguished by Christianity.

But the essentially Christian is too earnest to be distinguished. It does not wish to bring about any external change at all in the external sphere; it wants to seize it, purify it, sanctify it, and in this way make everything new while everything is still old. The Christian may very well marry, may very well love his wife, especially in the way he ought to love her, may very well have a friend and love his native land; but yet in all this there must be a basic understanding between himself and God in the essentially Christian, and this is Christianity.

God is not like a human being; it is not important for God to have visible evidence so that he can see if his cause has been victorious or not; he sees in secret just as well. Moreover, it is so far from being the case that you should help God to learn anew that it is rather he who will help you to learn anew, so that you are weaned from the worldly point of view that insists on visible evidence. If Christ had felt any need to get visible evidence, he certainly would have delivered a blow, summoned the twelve legions of angels.[181] This is precisely what he refused to do; instead he gave the apostles, who wished visible evidence, a reprimand, that they did not know in what spirit they were speaking,[182] since they wanted to have a decision in the external sphere. A decision in the external sphere is what Christianity does not want (except insofar as it wants to establish some sign that is an offense to worldliness, such as, for example, the sign of a sacrament); rather, by the lack of this, it wants to test the individual's faith, to test whether the individual will keep the secret of faith and be satisfied with it. The worldly always needs decisions in the external sphere; otherwise it mistrustfully does not think that there is a decision. But this occasion for mistrust is the spiritual trial in which faith is to be tested. From the worldly point of view, a much more certain way of deciding it and of being altogether sure that a God exists would be to have a picture

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of him hung up—then we could see: that God exists? or that an idol exists (which really does not exist)? From the worldly point of view, it would also have been a much more certain way if Christ had sought to show who he was by means, perhaps, of splendid processions instead of taking the form of a lowly servant[183] without ever being noticeable, so that he looked just like any other human being and in a worldly way completely failed his task—but this is precisely the spiritual trial in which faith is tested.

It is the same with the Christian view of love. Worldly misunderstanding needs to have it outwardly expressed that love in the Christian sense is the spirit's love—ah, but this cannot be outwardly expressed, since it is indeed inwardness. But this is an offense to worldliness, as is all Christianity, and therefore the opposite is likewise an offense, that Christianity makes an arbitrary external sign into the sole decision in the external sphere, such as the water in Baptism. The world is always diametrically opposed; where Christianity wants to have inwardness, worldly Christendom wants outwardness, and where Christianity wants outwardness, worldly Christendom wants inwardness—which can be explained by the fact that wherever the essentially Christian is found it is accompanied by offense.

Christianity, however, knows only one kind of love, the spirit's love, but this can lie at the base of and be present in every other expression of love. How wonderful! This thought of the essentially Christian life has something in common with the thought of death. Imagine a person who wanted to gather all at once the impression of all of life's dissimilarities between human beings he had seen and, having completed the enumeration, would say, "I see all these different human beings, but I do not see humanity."[184] So it is with Christian love in relation to the different kinds of love; it is in all of them—that is, it can be, but Christian love itself you cannot point to. You know erotic love by the woman who is the beloved, friendship by the friend, love of the native land by the object; but Christian love you cannot know even by its loving the enemy, since this can also be a hidden form of embitterment, if someone does it in order to heap coals of fire on his head.[185] Nor can you know Christian love by

its hating the beloved, since it is really impossible for you to see this if you are not personally involved and if you do not know this with God. From God's side, what confidence, in a certain sense, in a human being, and what earnestness! We human be- IX
ings, we take care to have sure and reliable signs by which love 141
is known. But God and Christianity have no signs—is this not to have a great, indeed, the utmost confidence in human beings! When, in a relationship to a human being, we renounce the signs by which that person's love is to be known, we are indeed saying that we are showing him boundless confidence, that we are willing to believe him despite all appearances. But why do you believe that God shows such a confidence? Is it not because he sees in secret? What earnestness!

But *you* never see and no human being has ever seen Christian love, in the same sense as no one has ever seen *humanity*. Yet "humanity" is the essential specification, and yet Christian love is the essential love, just as in the Christian sense there is only one kind of love. To repeat, Christianity has not changed anything in what people have previously learned about loving the beloveds, the friend, etc., has not added a little or subtracted something, but it has changed everything, has changed love as a whole. Only insofar as a change of inwardness in erotic love and friendship results from this fundamental change, only to that extent has it changed these. This it has done by making all love a matter of conscience, which in relation to erotic love and friendship etc. can signify the cooling of passions just as much as it signifies the inwardness of the eternal life.

Love is a matter of conscience and therefore must be out of a pure heart and out of a sincere faith.

A pure heart. Usually we say instead that a free heart is required for love or giving oneself in love. This heart must not belong to anyone else or to anything else; yes, even the hand that gives it away must be free. It must not be the hand that takes the heart by force and gives it away, but it must rather be the heart that gives away the hand. This heart, free as it is, will then find total freedom in giving itself away. Nothing—the bird you release from your hand, the arrow from the slackened bow string, the bent branch that snaps back—nothing is as free as the free heart when

it freely gives itself away. The bird is free only because you let it go, and the arrow speeds forward only because it leaves the bowstring, and the branch snaps back only because the pressure ceases; but the free heart does not become free through the cessation of resistance—it was free, it had its freedom—and yet it found its freedom. What a beautiful thought, what blissful freedom that finds what it has!

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But I am speaking almost like a poet, which may indeed be permissible if the main issue is not forgotten, if I speak expressly to illuminate the main issue. Therefore we try to talk ingratiatingly, if possible, about what people are generally pleased to hear, lest it tempt someone to think that a lack of sense or ability to speak about this kept us from speaking about it or kept us continually speaking about it exclusively and as if about the highest—while forgetting the main issue: the essentially Christian.

A pure heart is not a free heart in this sense, or it is not what is under consideration here, since a pure heart is first and last a *bound heart.* For this reason it is not as delightful to speak about this as to speak about freedom's blissful self-esteem and self-esteem's blissful delight in the boldness of giving oneself. A bound heart, yes, in the deepest sense a bound heart—no ship riding with all its anchors out is as bound as the heart must be that is to be pure—namely, that heart must be bound to God. No king who bound himself by the strictest coronation charter, and no individual who bound himself by the heaviest obligation, and no day laborer who bound himself to work every day, and no private teacher who bound himself to giving lessons by the hour is as bound, since every such person can still say to what extent he is bound; but the heart, if it is to be pure, must without limit be bound to God. No power is able to bind in this way; the king can die and be released from the charter, the master can die and then the day laborer's obligation ends, and the time of instruction can be over—but God does not die, and the bond that binds is never broken.

In this way the heart must be bound. You who burn with the desire of erotic love or with the craving of friendship, please remember that what you say about freedom has never been de-

nied by Christianity; but still there must first be this infinite boundedness if the beloved's heart and if your heart is to be pure. Therefore, first the infinite boundedness, and then the talk about freedom can begin. [186]There is a foreign word that is very often used in scholarly work but still more in trade and commerce; it is often heard in the lanes and on the streets, in the circles of busy people, and in the mouth of the businessman—it is the word "priority." [187]Scholarship speaks a great deal about God's priority, and businessmen speak of priorities. Let us then use this foreign word to express the thought in a way that will most surely make the right impression. Let us say: Christianity teaches that God has first priority. Scholarship does not speak about God's priority in exactly this way; it prefers to forget what businessmen know about priorities—that priority is a claim. God has first priority, and everything, everything a person owns is pledged as collateral to this claim. If you remember this, then you can talk about the desire of freedom as much as you please, but oh, if you actually remember this, this desire will not tempt you. IX 143

The free heart has no consideration; heedlessly it throws itself into the delight of giving itself; but the heart infinitely bound to God has one infinite consideration, and the one who at every moment must take into account the most numerous considerations is not as bound by consideration as is that heart which is infinitely bound to God. Wherever it is, alone with itself, or filled with the thought of others, or in the company of others, whatever else the infinitely bound heart is occupied with, it always has this consideration with it. You who speak so beautifully about how much the beloved means to you or you to the beloved, remember that if a pure heart is to be given away in erotic love the first consideration must be for your soul as well as for your beloved's! This consideration is the first and the last; from this consideration there is no separation without guilt and sin.

The free heart has no history; when it gave itself away, it gained its history[188] of love, happy or unhappy. But the heart bound infinitely to God has a prior history and therefore understands that erotic love and friendship are only an interlude, a contribution to this, the one and only history of love, the first and

the last. You who know how to speak so beautifully about erotic love and friendship, if you realized that this is but a very little segment within that eternal history—how you would condense your remarks commensurate to the brevity of that segment! You begin your history with the beginning of love and end at a grave. [189]But that eternal love-history has begun much earlier; it began with your beginning, when you came into existence out of nothing, and, just as surely as you do not become nothing, it does not end at a grave. When the couch of death is prepared for you, when you go to bed never to get up again and they are only waiting for you to turn to the other side to die, and the stillness grows around you—then when those close to you gradually leave and the stillness grows because only those closest to you remain, while death comes closer to you; then when those closest to you leave quietly and the stillness grows because only the most intimate ones remain; and then when the last one has bent over you for the last time and turns to the other side because you yourself are now turning to the side of death—there still remains one on that side, the last one by the deathbed, he who was the
IX 144 first, God, the living God—that is, if your heart was pure, which it became only by loving him.

This is the way we must speak about a pure heart and about love as a matter of conscience. If erotic love and earthly love are the joy of life, so that the happy person truthfully says, "Now I am living for the first time," so it is the joy of life just to hear the lover talk about his happiness, about life, that is, its delight—then one who has died must talk about that conscientious love, one who has died who did not, note well, become bored with life but truly gained eternity's life-joy. But it is one who has died who is speaking, and, alas, to many this seems so forbidding that they dare not listen to his glad message, whereas everyone gladly listens to the one about whom we say in a preeminent sense, "He lives." Yet there must be one who has died, and the moment the contemporaries gladly cheer the happy one with "Long live," eternity says, "Die," that is, if your heart is to become pure. No doubt there has been someone who became happy, indescribably happy or unhappy, by loving a human being, but no person's heart ever became pure unless it became that by loving God.

A sincere faith. Would any more revolting combination be possible than loving—and falsity? But it is, of course, an impossibility, because to love falsely is to hate. This holds true not only for falsity, but it is impossible to join the slightest lack of honesty with loving. As soon as there is any lack of honesty, there is also something concealed, but selfish self-love hides itself in this concealment, and insofar as this is present in a person, he does not love. In honesty the lover presents himself before the beloved, and no mirror is as accurate as honesty in catching the slightest triviality, if it is genuine honesty or if in the lovers there is genuine faithfulness in reflecting themselves in the mirror of honesty that erotic love holds between them.

But if two human beings can in honesty become transparent to each other in this way, is it not then something arbitrary when Christianity speaks of a sincere faith in another sense, insofar as by that it means honesty before God? If two people are to love each other in sincere faith, is it not simply necessary that honesty before God must first be present in each individual? Is it insincerity only when a person consciously deceives others or himself? Is it not also insincerity when a person does not know himself? Indeed, can such a person promise love out of a sincere faith, or can he—keep what he promises? Yes, that he can, but if he cannot promise, can he then keep what he cannot even promise? The one who does not know himself cannot promise love out of a sincere faith. IX 145

The concept of confidentiality involves a redoubling and is this: the one with whom a person has the most intimate relationship, that is, the relationship that is best suited to receive the confidential communication or the communication in confidence, only to him can he actually confide or show confidence or open himself in confidence. But confidentiality relates itself to itself in such a way that there remains in confidence something inexpressible as the essential; the confidence is not, as one would think, what is said. For example, if a wife has her most intimate relationship, humanly speaking, with her husband, she certainly can in confidence communicate one thing or another to her parents, but this confidentiality is confidentiality about confidentiality. The wife will therefore feel that she is far from being able to

confide everything to them or to confide in them in the same way as she confides in her husband, with whom she has her most intimate relationship—but also her most confidential one—in whom she can actually confide only with regard to her most intimate relationship, which is the relationship with him. External matters and trifling things cannot be communicated in confidence, or only in a droll and meaningless way; but note that when the wife wishes to communicate to someone else her most intimate affair, the relationship with her husband, she herself perceives that there is only one to whom she can fully communicate this in confidence, and this one person is the same one to whom and with whom she has the relationship.

With whom does a person have his most intimate relationship, with whom can one have the most intimate relationship? —is it not with God? But then all confidentiality between human beings ultimately becomes only confidentiality about confidentiality. Only God *is confidentiality*, just as he is Love. Therefore when two people in honesty plight troth to each other, is this really plighting troth to each other if they first, each one separately, plight and have plighted troth to another? Yet this is necessary if in a Christian sense they are to love out of a sincere faith. When two people completely confide in each other, is this completely confiding in each other if they first, each one separately, confide in a third person? Yet this is necessary if they are to confide completely in each other, even if in each individual's confidentiality with God there remains the inexpressible that is precisely the sign that the relationship with God is the most intimate, the most confidential.

How inviting, how ingratiating sounds the talk about the confidentiality of two lovers with each other, and yet there is insin-
IX cerity in this talk just as there is insincerity in this confidentiality.
146 But if there is to be talk about love out of a sincere faith, then one who has died must speak, and at first it sounds as if a separation were placed between the two, who should be joined in the most intimate and confidential life together. Yes, it is like a separation, and yet it is eternity's confidentiality that is placed between them. Many, many times two people have become happy in the

relationship of confidentiality with each other, but never has anyone loved out of a sincere faith except through the separation's positing confidentiality with God, which in turn is indeed God's assent to the lovers' confidentiality. —Only then, when it is a matter of conscience, is love out of a pure heart and out of a sincere faith.

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IV

Our Duty to Love the People We See

> I John 4:20. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for how can he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, love God, whom he has not seen?

How *deeply* the need of love is rooted in human nature! The first remark, if we dare to say so, that was made about humanity and that was made by the only one who could truly make it, by God, and about the first human being, says just this. We read in Holy Scripture, "God said, it is not good for the man to be alone."[190] So the woman was *taken* from the man's side and *given* to him for companionship—because love and life together first take something away from a person before they give. Throughout all ages everyone who has deeply pondered human nature has acknowledged this innate need for companionship. How often it has been said and repeated and repeated again, how often someone has bemoaned the solitary or described the pain
IX 148 and misery of solitariness, how often someone, wearied in the corrupted, the noisy, the confusing life together, has let his thoughts wander out to a solitary place—only to learn again to long for companionship! This is how we are continually turned back to that thought of God's, the first thought about the human being. In the busy, teeming crowd, which as companionship is both too much and too little, a person grows weary of society; but the cure is not to make the discovery that God's thought was wrong—no, the cure is simply to learn all over again that first thought, to be conscious of longing for companionship. So deeply is this need rooted in human nature that since the creation of the first human being there has been no change, no new dis-

covery has been made, but this selfsame first observation has only been confirmed in the most diverse ways, varied from generation to generation in the expression, in the presentation, in the turns of thought.

So deeply is this need rooted in human nature, and so *essentially* does it belong to being human, that even he who was one with the Father and in the communion of love with the Father and the Spirit, he who loved the whole human race, our Lord Jesus Christ, even he humanly felt this need to love and be loved by an individual human being. He is indeed the God-man and thus eternally different from every human being, but still he was also a true human being, tested in everything human. On the other hand, the fact that he experienced this is the very expression of its belonging essentially to a human being. He was an actual human being and therefore can participate in everything human. He was not an ethereal figure that beckoned in the clouds without understanding or wanting to understand what humanly befalls a human being. Ah, no, he could have compassion on the crowd that lacked food,[191] and purely humanly, he who himself had hungered in the desert.[192] In the same way he could also sympathize with people in this need to love and to be loved, sympathize purely humanly. This is described in the Gospel of John (21:15ff.), where we read, "Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' " How moving this is! Christ says: Do you love me *more than these*? Indeed, it is like an appeal for love; this is the way of speaking that characterizes one for whom it is of great importance to be the most loved. Peter himself perceives this and the misrelation, similar to the misrelation when Christ was to be baptized by John. Therefore Peter does not merely answer yes but adds, "Lord, you know that I love you." This answer indicates the misrelation. Even though a person otherwise knows that he is loved because he has heard IX 149
the yes before, he is very eager to hear it and therefore wants to hear it again, even though he knows it from something other than this mere yes, to which he still turns back, craving to hear it—it is of course in another sense that Christ can be said to know that Peter loves him.

Yet "Christ says to him a second time: 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' Peter says to him, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' " What else is there to answer, while the misrelation becomes only more perceptible because the question is asked a second time! "Christ says to him the third time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' Peter was grieved because he said it to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he answers, 'Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.' " Peter does not answer yes anymore, and neither does he allude in his answer to what Christ must know from experience about Peter's disposition. "You know that I love you," he answers, "*You know everything*, you know that I love you." So Peter does not answer yes anymore; he almost shrinks back from the misrelation, since a yes is like an actual answer to an actual question, whereby the asker learns something or comes to know it more certainly than he knew it before. But how can the one who "knows everything" learn something or by means of another's assurances come to know something more certainly? And yet, if he cannot do this, he cannot love in a purely human way either, for the very enigma of love is this—that there is no higher certainty than the beloved's renewed assurances. In the human sense, to be absolutely certain of being loved is not to love, since this means to stand above the relationship between friend and friend.

What an appalling contradiction that the one who is God loves humanly, since to love humanly is to love an individual human being and to wish to be that individual human being's best beloved. This, you see, is why Peter became despondent over the asking of the question a third time! In love's direct relationship between persons, there is a new joy in the asking of the question a third time, and a new joy at answering a third time, or the too-often-repeated question makes one despondent because it seems to betray mistrust. But when the one who knows everything asks a third time, that is, finds it necessary to ask a third time, then it surely must be because he, since he knows everything, knows that the love is not sufficiently strong or deep or high-spirited in the person who is asked, one who indeed also denied three times.[193] Peter certainly thought this was the reason the Lord found it necessary to ask the question a third time—

for it is inconceivable, is it not, that it would have been asked because the Lord himself felt the need to hear this yes a third time—this idea is beyond a person's capacity; even if it is permitted, it almost bans itself. Ah, but how human! He who did not have one word to say to the high priests who condemned him to death, or to Pilate, who held his life in his hands—he asks three times if he is loved; indeed, he asks if Peter loves him "more than these"! IX 150

So *deeply is love rooted in human nature, so essentially does it belong to a human being*, and yet people very often hit upon escapes in order to deprive [*unddrage*] themselves—of this blessing. Accordingly they hit upon deceptions—in order to deceive [*bedrage*] themselves or to make themselves unhappy. Sometimes the escape is clad in the form of dejection. People bemoan humanity and its unhappiness, bemoan finding no one whom they can love, because to bemoan the world and its unhappiness is always easier than to beat one's breast and bemoan oneself. Sometimes the self-deception is in the form of an accusation; people are accused of not being worth loving—one "grumbles against"[194] people, since it is always easier to be the accuser than to be the accused. Sometimes the self-deception is the proud self-satisfaction that considers it futile to seek what could be worthy of himself—since it is always easier to demonstrate one's superiority by being fastidious about everyone else than to demonstrate it by being rigorous with oneself. And yet, yet they all agree that this is a misfortune and that this state of affairs is wrong! And what is it that is wrong, what else but their searching and rejecting! Such people do not perceive that their words sound like a mockery of themselves, because the inability to find any object for one's love among people amounts to denouncing oneself as totally lacking in love.

Is this indeed love, to want to find it outside oneself? I thought that this is love, to bring love along with oneself. But the one who brings love along with himself as he searches for an object for his love (otherwise it is a lie that he is searching for an object—for his love) will easily, and the more easily the greater the love in him, find the object and find it to be such that it is lovable. To be able to love a person despite his weaknesses and

defects and imperfections is still not perfect love, but rather this, to be able to find him lovable despite and with his weaknesses and defects and imperfections. Let us understand each other. It is one thing fastidiously to want to eat only the choicest and most
IX 151 delectable dish when it is exquisitely prepared or, even when this is the case, fastidiously to find one or another defect in it. It is something else not merely to be able to eat the plainer foods but to be able to find this plainer food to be the most exquisite, because the task is not to develop one's fastidiousness but to transform oneself and one's taste.

Or suppose there are two artists and one of them says, "I have traveled much and seen much in the world, but I have sought in vain to find a person worth painting. I have found no face that was the perfect image of beauty to such a degree that I could decide to sketch it; in every face I have seen one or another little defect, and therefore I seek in vain." Would this be a sign that this artist is a great artist? The other artist, however, says, "Well, I do not actually profess to be an artist; I have not traveled abroad either but stay at home with the little circle of people who are closest to me, since I have not found one single face to be so insignificant or so faulted that I still could not discern a more beautiful side and discover something transfigured in it. That is why, without claiming to be an artist, I am happy in the art I practice and find it satisfying." Would this not be a sign that he is indeed the artist, he who by bringing a certain something with him found right on the spot what the well-traveled artist did not find anywhere in the world—perhaps because he did not bring a certain something with him! Therefore the second of the two would be the artist. Would it not really be sad if what is intended to beautify life could only be like a curse upon it, so that, instead of making life beautiful for us, "art" only fastidiously discovered that none of us is beautiful! Would it not be even sadder, as well as even more confused, if love, too, would be only a curse because its requirement could only make it obvious that none of us is worth loving, rather than that love would be known by the very fact that it is loving enough to be able to find something lovable in all of us, that is, loving enough to be able to love all of us!

It is a sad but altogether too common inversion to go on talking continually about how the object of love must be so it can be loveworthy, instead of talking about how love must be so it can be love. It is common not only in daily life—ah, how often do we not see that even the person who calls himself a poet places all his merit in the sophisticated, soft, exalted fastidiousness that, with regard to loving, inhumanly knows how to reject and reject again and assumes it to be his task in this regard to initiate people into all the abominable secrets of fastidiousness. That anyone wants to do this, that many are so inclined, so inquisitive to learn—that is, to acquire a knowledge that actually serves only to embitter life for themselves and for others! How much there is in life of which it is true, that if we had not come to know it, we would have found it all beautiful or even more beautiful. But as soon as one has been initiated into the defilement of fastidiousness, how difficult it is to gain what has been lost, the dowry of good nature and of love that God has basically bestowed on every person! IX 152

But if no one else can or will, an apostle will always know how to lead us along the right road in this regard, the right road that guides us both to do what is right to others and to make ourselves happy. Therefore we have chosen a verse from the Apostle John: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for how can he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, love God, whom he has not seen?" We shall make these words the subject of our consideration as we, joyful in the task, choose to speak about:

the duty to love the people we see,

[195]but not in the sense as if the discourse were about loving all the people we see, since that is love for the neighbor, which was discussed earlier. It means rather that the discourse is about the duty to find in the world of actuality the people we can love in particular and in loving them to love the people we see. *When this is the duty, the task is not to find the lovable object, but the task is to find the once given or chosen object—lovable, and to be able to continue to find him lovable no matter how he is changed.*

But first we shall create a little difficulty for ourselves with

regard to the apostolic words just read, a difficulty that earthly sagacity, perhaps even conceited about its acumen, could conceive of raising, whether or not it actually did. When the apostle says, "How can he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, love God, whom he has not seen?" a sagacious person could raise the objection that this is a deceptive turn of thought. He has been convinced that the brother, whom he has seen, is
IX 153 not worthy of love, but how can it be concluded from this (that he did not love someone whom he saw was not worthy of love) that there would be any hindrance to him in loving God, whom he has not seen. Yet the apostle thinks that there is some hindrance to such a person in loving God, although by the phrase "his brother" he surely is not speaking in particular about one very specific person but in general about loving people. The apostle thinks that a divine claim is entered against the credibility of a person's statement about loving what is unseen when it turns out that this person does not love what is seen, whereas it could indeed seem just as fanatical to want to express that one loves only what is not seen by not loving anything that is seen. It is a divine claim entered against human fanaticism with regard to loving God, because it is fanatical, even if it is not hypocritical, to want to love the unseen in this way.

The matter is quite simple. A person should begin with loving the unseen, God, because then he himself will learn what it is to love. But that he actually loves the unseen will be known by his loving the brother he sees; the more he loves the unseen, the more he will love the people he sees. It is not the reverse, that the more he rejects those he sees, the more he loves the unseen, since in that case God is changed into an unreal something, a delusion. Such a thing can occur only either to a hypocrite and a deceiver, in order to find an escape, or to someone who misrepresents God, as if God were envious [*misundelig*] of himself and of being loved, instead of the blessed God's being merciful [*miskundelig*] and therefore continually pointing away from himself, so to speak, and saying, "If you want to love me, then love the people you see; what you do for them, you do for me." God is too exalted to be able to receive a person's love directly, to say nothing of being able to take pleasure in what can please a fanatic. If

someone says of the gift that could help his parents that it is corban,[196] that is, intended for God, this is not well-pleasing to God. If you want to show that it is intended for God, then give it away, but with the thought of God. If you want to show that your life is intended to serve God, then let it serve people, yet continually with the thought of God. God does not have a share in existence in such a way that he asks for his share for himself; he asks for everything, but as you bring it to him you immediately receive, if I may put it this way, a notice designating where it should be delivered further, because God does not ask for anything for himself, although he asks for everything from you. —Thus the apostle's words, properly understood, lead directly to the subject of the discourse. IX 154

When it is a duty to love the people we see, *one must first and foremost give up all imaginary and exaggerated ideas about a dreamworld where the object of love should be sought and found—that is, one must become sober, gain actuality and truth by finding and remaining in the world of actuality as the task assigned to one.*

With regard to loving, the most dangerous of all escapes is wanting to love only the unseen or that which one has not seen. This escape is so high-flying that it flies over actuality completely; it is so intoxicating that it easily tempts and easily imagines itself to be the highest and most perfect kind of love. No doubt it rarely occurs to a person brazenly to speak ill of loving; far more common, however, is the deception by which people defraud themselves out of actually starting to love because they speak too fanatically about loving and about love. This is rooted much more deeply than one thinks; otherwise the confusion could not have established itself as firmly as it has, the confusion of calling that a misfortune which is a guilt: not to find any object of love, whereby they further prevent themselves from finding it. If they first perceived that this was their guilt, they surely would find it. Love is commonly thought of as admiration's wide-open eye that is searching for excellences and perfections. It is then that one complains that the search is futile. We shall not decide to what extent the individual is or is not justified in this, whether what he is seeking, the lovable excellences and perfections, is not to be found, whether he is not confusing seek-

ing with fastidiousness. No, we do not wish to dispute in this manner, we do not wish to carry on a dispute within this conception of love, because this whole conception is an error, since love is rather the closed eye of forbearance and leniency that does not see defects and imperfections.

But the difference between these two conceptions is very substantial; there is a world of difference, the difference of inversion. Only the latter conception is the truth; the former is an error. And an error, as we know, never stops by itself; it only goes more and more astray, so that it becomes increasingly difficult to find the way back to the truth. The way of error is easy to find, but
IX 155 to find the way back is very difficult—[197]as is told in the legend of Mount Venus,[198] which is supposed to be somewhere on earth, that no one who found his way into it was able to find his way back. Thus when a person with the wrong conception of the nature of love goes out in the world, he seeks and seeks, so he thinks, in order to find the object, but, so he thinks, in vain. Yet he does not change the conception; on the contrary, enriched with the manifold knowledge of fastidiousness, he seeks more and more fastidiously but, so he thinks, in vain. Yet it does not occur to him that the defect could be in him or in the wrong conception. On the contrary, the more sophisticated he becomes in his fastidiousness, the more inflated become his ideas about himself and the perfection of his conception—does it not also clearly show him how imperfect people are, and this, of course, can be discovered only with the aid of perfection!

Meanwhile he is convinced that this is not his fault, that he is not doing this with any evil or spiteful purpose—he who is indeed simply seeking love. Far be it from him to give up love, he who very vividly feels how his conception is becoming more and more fanatical—for what indeed could ever be more fanatical than an error! Moreover, he has not halted the error; just the opposite, by means of it he has dizzily reeled out—into loving the unseen, a mirage, which one does not see. Does it not amount to the same thing: *to see a mirage*—and: *not to see*? Take the mirage away, then you see nothing—a person admits that himself; but take away the seeing, then you see a mirage—a person forgets that. But, as stated, he refuses to give up love, nor will

he disparage it; he wants to talk fanatically about it and keep—the love for the unseen. What a lamentable error!

We say of worldly honor and power, wealth and happiness, that they are vapors, and so they are. But that the strongest power in a person, a power that according to its definition is anything but vapor inasmuch as it is life and energy, that it is changed into vapor and that the one intoxicated in these vapors proudly thinks that he has grasped the very highest—he has really grasped a cloud and a figment of the imagination, which always soars high above actuality—see, that is terrible! Usually people piously warn against wasting God's gifts, but what gift of God is comparable to love, which he implanted in the human heart—alas, and then to see it wasted in this way! The sagacious person thinks, foolishly, that one wastes one's love by loving imperfect, weak IX
people; I should think that this is applying one's love, making use 156
of it. But to be unable to find any object, to waste love in vainly seeking, to waste it in empty space by loving the unseen—that is truly to waste it.

Therefore, become sober; come to your senses, understand that the defect lies in your conception of love, that it is supposed to be a claim, and most glorious when all existence cannot satisfy it any more than you are able to demonstrate that you are entitled to collect on this claim. At the same moment you have changed your conception of love so that it is exactly the opposite of a claim, is an outstanding debt to which God obligates you at the same moment you have found [199]actuality. —And this is the duty, to find actuality in this way with closed eyes (because in love you do indeed close them to weakness and frailty and imperfection), instead of failing to see actuality with wide-open eyes (yes, wide-open or staring like a sleepwalker's). This is the duty, the first condition for your being able in loving to begin at all to love the people you see. The condition is to find the firm footing of actuality. Error is always vague; that is why it sometimes seems so easy and so spiritual—because it is so ethereal. Truth steps firmly and therefore sometimes also with difficulty; it stands on firm footing and therefore sometimes appears to be very simple. It is indeed a considerable change: instead of having a claim on which to collect payment, to get a duty to perform; instead of traveling

over a world, to take a world on one's shoulders, so to speak; instead of passionately seeking admiration's luscious fruit, to have to bear patiently with defects. Ah, what a change! Yet it is by this change that love comes into existence, the love that can fulfill the duty—in loving to love the people we see.

[200]When it is a duty in loving to love the people we see, *then in loving the actual individual person it is important that one does not substitute an imaginary idea of how we think or could wish that this person should be.* The one who does this does not love the person he sees but again something unseen, his own idea or something similar.

In connection with loving there is a kind of conduct that for love has a dubious addition of equivocation and fastidiousness. It is one thing, of course, to reject and reject again and never find any object for one's love; it is something else in loving what a person himself calls the object of his love to fulfill scrupulously
IX 157 and honestly this duty to love what one sees. It is indeed always a worthy wish and again a worthy wish that the one we are to love may have the lovable perfections—we wish it not only for our own sakes but also for the sake of the other. Above all, it is worthy to wish and to pray that the one we love might always be and act in such a way that we are able to approve and agree completely. But in God's name let us not forget that it is not a merit on our part if he is like that, even less a merit on our part to require this of him—if there is to be any question of merit on our part, which nevertheless is unseemly and an unseemly way to talk with regard to love, it would just be to love equally faithfully and tenderly.

[201]But there is a fastidiousness that continually works, as it were, against love and wants to prevent it from loving what it sees, since fastidiousness, unsteady of glance and yet in another sense very precise, volatilizes the actual form or takes offense at it and then cunningly demands to see something else. There are people of whom it may be said that they have not attained form, that their actuality has not become integrated, because in their innermost beings they are at odds with themselves about what they are and what they will to be. But one can, by the way in which one sees, make another person's form vacillating or un-

real, because love, which should love the person it sees, cannot really make up its mind but at one time wants to have a defect removed from the object and at another wants a perfection added—as if the bargain, if I may put it that way, were not as yet concluded. But the person who in loving this way is inclined to be fastidious does not love the one he sees and easily makes even his love as loathsome to himself as he makes it difficult for the beloved.

The beloved, the friend, is of course a human being also in the more ordinary sense and exists as such for the rest of us, but for you he should exist essentially only as the beloved if you are to fulfill the duty of loving the person you see. If there is a duality in your relationship so that to you he is partly just this individual human being in the more ordinary sense, partly the beloved in particular, then you do not love the person you see. Instead it is as if you had two ears in the sense that you do not, as is normal, hear one thing with both ears but hear one thing with one and something else with the other. With the one ear you hear what he says and whether it is wise and correct and penetrating and brilliant etc., and, alas, only with the other ear do you hear that it is the beloved's voice. With the one eye you look at him, testing, searching, criticizing, and, alas, only with the other eye IX
do you see that he is the beloved. Ah, but to divide in this way 158
is not to love the person one sees. Is it not as if there were a third party always present, even when the two are alone, a third who coldly examines and rejects, a third who disturbs the intimacy, a third who sometimes may even make the person concerned disgusted with himself and his love because of being fastidious in this way, a third who would upset the beloved if he knew that this third is present! What, indeed, does it mean that this third is present? Does it mean that you cannot love if . . . . . if now this or that is not according to your wishes? Does the third party therefore mean disunion, separation, so that as a consequence the thought of separation takes part—in the confidential relationship, alas, just as when in paganism the destructive nature was insanely included in the unity of the godhead?[202] Does this third party mean that in a certain sense the love-relationship is no relationship at all, that you stand above the relationship and test the

beloved? In that case, do you consider that something else is being tested, whether you actually do have love or, more accurately, that something else is decided, that you actually do not have love?

Life certainly has tests enough, and these tests should find the lovers, find friend and friend, united in order to pass the test. But if the test is dragged into the relationship, treachery has been committed. Indeed, this secretive inclosing reserve is the most dangerous kind of faithlessness; such a person does not break faith but continually leaves it vague whether he is bound by his faith. Is it not faithlessness when your friend shakes your hand and there is something indefinite about your handshake, as if it were he who clasped your hand but it was doubtful to what extent he corresponded at that moment to your conception, so that you responded in the same way? Is it being in a relationship if one at every moment seems to begin all over to enter into the relationship; is it loving the person you see if you at every moment look at him, testing, as if it were the first time you saw him? It is disgusting to see the fastidious person who rejects all food, but it is also disgusting to see the one who does eat the food graciously offered him and yet in a sense does not eat it but continually only samples the food as if he had eaten his fill or makes an effort to taste a more delectable dish but is sated by the simpler food.

No, if a person is to fulfill the duty in loving to love the people he sees, then he must not only find among actual people those he
IX 159 loves, but he must root out all equivocation and fastidiousness in loving them so that in earnestness and truth he loves them as they are and in earnestness and truth takes hold of the task: to find the once given or chosen object lovable. By this we do not mean to recommend a childish infatuation with the beloved's accidental characteristics, still less a misplaced sentimental indulgence. Far from it, the earnestness consists precisely in this, that the relationship itself will with integrated power fight against the imperfection, overcome the defect, and remove the heterogeneity. This is earnestness; fastidiousness makes the relationship itself equivocal. One of the two, through his weakness or by his defect, does not become alien to the other, but the union regards the weaker element as something alien, the overcoming and removal of

which is equally important to both. It is not you who, on the grounds of the weakness of the beloved, are to remove yourself, as it were, from him or make your relationship more distant; on the contrary, the two are to hold together all the more firmly and inwardly in order to remove the weakness. As soon as the relationship is made equivocal, you do not love the person you see; then it is indeed as if you demanded something else in order to be able to love. On the other hand, when the defect or the weakness makes the relationship more inward, not as if the defect should now become entrenched but in order to conquer it, then you love the person you see. You see the defect, but the fact that your relationship then becomes more inward shows that you love the person in whom you see the defect or the weakness or the imperfection.

Just as there are hypocritical tears, a hypocritical sighing and complaining about the world, so also there is a hypocritical sorrow over the beloved's weaknesses and imperfections. It is very soft and easy to wish the beloved to have all possible perfections, and then if something is lacking it is in turn very soft and easy to sigh and sorrow and become self-important by one's presumably very pure and very deep sorrow. On the whole, it is perhaps a more common form of sensuality to want selfishly to make a show of the beloved or friend and to despair over every triviality. But would this be loving the people one sees? [203]Ah, no, the people one sees, and likewise we ourselves when others see us, are not perfect; and yet it is very often the case that a person develops within himself this sentimental frailty that is designed only for loving the absolute epitome of perfections. And yet, although we human beings are all imperfect, we very rarely see the healthy, strong, capable love that is designed for loving the more imperfect persons, that is, the people we see.

When it is a duty in loving to love the people we see, *there is no limit to love; if the duty is to be fulfilled, love must be limitless, it is unchanged, no matter how the object becomes changed.* IX 160

[204]Let us think about what we were reminded of in the introduction to this deliberation—the relationship between Christ and Peter. I wonder if Peter, especially in his relationship to Christ, was indeed an epitome of all perfections—and on the

other hand Christ still knew his defects! Let us speak quite humanly about this relationship. God knows what trivialities, which ordinarily are all too insignificant and yet very carefully collected and very carefully hoarded, give us human beings either immediately or, what is just as sad, after a long time, an occasion for accusing someone or other of self-interest, faithlessness, and treachery. God knows how far it usually is from being the case that the plaintiff makes even a slight effort to place himself in the accused's place so that the judgment, the severe and merciless judgment, might not be a hasty judgment but might be at least thoughtful to the extent that it knows definitely whereof it judges. God knows how often one sees this sad sight, how passion swiftly equips even the perhaps otherwise limited person, when he presumably is an injured party, with an amazing acuteness, and on the other hand how it makes obtuse even the perhaps otherwise insightful person, when he presumably is an injured party, with regard to any mitigating, exonerating, justifying view of the wrong, because the injured passion is pleased to be blindly acute. But we will all agree that if the same thing happened in a relationship between two friends as happened to Christ with Peter, there would surely be sufficient reason to break—with such a traitor.

If your life had been brought to the most crucial decision and you had a friend who on his own initiative loudly and solemnly swore loyalty to you, yes, that he was willing to risk his life for you, and then in the moment of danger he did not stay away (that would have been almost more forgivable)—no, he came, he was present, but he did not lift a finger; he calmly stood there and looked on—yet, no, he did not stand calmly; his one and only thought was to save himself and on any condition; he did not even take flight (that would have been almost more forgivable); no, he remained standing there as a spectator, which he made sure he could be, by denying you—what then? We shall not even trace the consequences; let us only describe the situation rather vividly and speak quite humanly about it.

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[205]So, then, you stood there accused by your enemies, condemned by your enemies; it was literally true that you stood surrounded on every side by enemies. The mighty, who perhaps

could have understood you, had hardened themselves against you; they hated you. Therefore you now stood accused and condemned, while a blinded, raging crowd howled insults at you, even rejoicing insanely at the thought that your blood would be upon them and upon their children.[206] And this pleased the mighty, who themselves usually held the crowd in deep contempt; it pleased them because it gratified their hatred that it was brute savagery and the lowest meanness that had found in you its quarry and its prey. You had reconciled yourself to your fate, were conscious of the impossibility of saying one single word, since derision was merely seeking an opportunity. Thus a magnanimous word about your innocence, as if it were defiance, would give derision a new occasion; thus the clearest proof of your integrity would make derision even more indignant and furious; thus a cry of pain, as if it were cowardliness, would give derision a new occasion.

In this way you stood cast out of human society and yet not cast out; after all, you stood there surrounded by human beings, but not one of them all saw in you a human being, although in another sense they did see in you a human being, because they would not have treated an animal as inhumanly. What horror, more terrible than if you had fallen among wild beasts, for I wonder if even the wild, nocturnal howling of bloodthirsty beasts of prey is as horrible as the inhumanity of a raging crowd. I wonder if one beast of prey in a pack can incite another to greater savagery than is natural for each one separately in the way that one human being in the impenitent crowd can incite another to even more than animal bloodthirstiness and savagery. I wonder if the spiteful or flashing eyes of the most bloodthirsty beast of prey have the fire of evil that is ignited in the individual's eyes when he, incited and inciting, rages with the wild crowd!

In this way you stood—accused, condemned, insulted; you sought in vain to discover a form that still resembled a human being, to say nothing of a kind face upon which your eyes could rest—and then you saw him, your friend, but he denied you. And the derision, which had been strident enough, now sounded as if echo had amplified it a hundred times!

If this had happened to you, is it not true that you would

already have perceived it as being too magnanimous of you if, instead of thinking of revenge, you looked away from him and said to yourself, "I would rather not see that traitor before my eyes!" —How differently Christ acted! He did not look away
IX 162 from Peter in order to become seemingly unaware of his existence; he did not say, "I do not want to see that traitor"; he did not leave him to take care of himself. No, he "looked at him."[207] He immediately caught him with a look; if it had been possible, he surely would not have avoided speaking to him.

And how did Christ look at Peter? Was this look repelling; was it like a look of dismissal? Ah, no, it was as when a mother sees the child in danger through its own carelessness, and now, since she cannot manage to grasp the child, she catches it with her admittedly reproachful but also saving look. Was Peter then in danger? Ah, who is unable to perceive it: how hard it is for a person to have denied his friend! But in the passion of anger the wronged friend cannot see that the one denying is in danger. Yet he who is called the Savior of the world always saw clearly where the danger was, saw that it was Peter who was in danger, saw that it was Peter who should and must be saved. The Savior of the world did not make the mistake of seeing his cause as lost if Peter did not hasten to help him, but he saw Peter as lost if he did not hasten to save Peter. I wonder if there lives or has ever lived a single human being who cannot understand this, which is so clear and obvious, and yet Christ is the only one who saw it at the moment of decision when he himself was the one accused, the one condemned, insulted, denied.

Rarely is a person tested in a life-and-death decision, and therefore a person rarely has occasion to test so radically the devotion of friendship, but in a more important moment to find only timorousness and sagacity where by virtue of the friendship you were justified in expecting courage and resoluteness, to find equivocation, double-mindedness, and evasion instead of openness, determination, and steadfastness, to find only chatter instead of a thoughtful comprehensive view! Alas, how difficult then, in the rush of the moment and of passion, to be able to understand immediately on which side the danger lies, which of the friends is more in danger, you or he who leaves you in the lurch this

way; how difficult then to love the person one sees—when one sees him changed in this way!

We are now accustomed to praise Christ's relationship to Peter, but let us take care that this praise is not an illusion, a figment of the imagination, because we are unable or unwilling to stretch our thinking to think of ourselves as contemporary with the event. So we praise Christ and, on the other hand, provided we are able to become contemporary with a similar event, act and think altogether differently. No account regarding the contemporaries' view of Christ's relationship has been preserved, but if you meet them, these contemporaries, then question them, and you will hear that on this occasion, as on almost every occasion Christ did something, it was said, "The fool! Granted that his cause was ever so hopelessly lost, yet not to have the power to muster all his strength for the last time into one single look that could crush this traitor! What sniveling weakness! Is this acting like a man!" This was the judgment, and the derision acquired a new expression. Or the man of power who presumed to grasp the situation would say, "Well, why did he seek the company of sinners and publicans, his adherents among the lowest class of people? He should have joined with us, with the synagogue of the elite, but now he is getting his deserved reward, now when it becomes apparent what reliance can be placed upon that kind of people. Yet just as he has always given in, so he does it to the very end; he is not even indignant over such shabby perfidiousness!" Or a more sagacious person who even felt himself to be kindly disposed would say, "The fact that the high priests had him seized, that he, fanatical as he was, now sees everything lost, must have weakened his mind and broken his courage, so that he collapsed completely into an unmanly, powerless stupor. This can explain his forgiving such treachery, since no man acts that way!" Alas, it is only all too true: no man acts that way. It is for this very reason that Christ's life is the only instance in which it is seen that a teacher, at the moment his cause as well as his life is lost and everything is most terribly forfeited by the disciple's denial, that a teacher by his look in that instant and in that disciple wins his most zealous adherent and thus to a large extent his cause, although it is hidden from all.

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[208]Christ's love for Peter was boundless in this way: in loving Peter he accomplished loving the person one sees. He did not say, "Peter must first change and become another person before I can love him again." No, he said exactly the opposite, "Peter is Peter, and I love him. My love, if anything, will help him to become another person." Therefore he did not break off the friendship in order perhaps to renew it if Peter would have become another person; no, he preserved the friendship unchanged and in that way helped Peter to become another person. Do you think that Peter would have been won again without Christ's faithful friendship? But it is so easy to be a friend when this means nothing else than to request something in particular from the friend and, if the friend does not respond to the request, then to let the friendship cease, until it perhaps begins again if he responds to the request. Is this a relationship of friendship? Who is closer to helping an erring one than the person who calls himself his friend, even if the offense is committed against the friend! But the friend withdraws and says (indeed, it is as if a third person were speaking): When he has become another person, then perhaps he can become my friend again. We are not far from regarding such behavior as magnanimous. But truly we are far from being able to say of such a friend that in loving he loves the person he sees.

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Christ's love was boundless, as it must be if this is to be fulfilled: in loving to love the person one sees. This is very easy to perceive. However much and in whatever way a person is changed, he still is not changed in such a way that he becomes invisible. If this—the impossible—is not the case, then of course we do see him, and the duty is to love the person one sees. Ordinarily we think that if a person has essentially changed for the worse, he is then so changed that we are exempt from loving him. What a confusion of language: to be exempt from loving, as if it were a compulsory matter, a burden one wished to cast off! But Christianity asks: Can you because of this change no longer see him? The answer to that must be: Certainly I can see him; I see that he is no longer worth loving. But if you see *this*, then you do not really see him (which you certainly cannot deny you are doing in another sense), you see only the unworthiness and the

imperfection and thereby admit that when you loved him you did not see *him* in another sense but merely saw his excellence and perfections, which you loved.

The Christian point of view, however, is that to love is to love precisely the person one sees. The emphasis is not on loving the perfections one sees in a person, but the emphasis is on loving the person one sees, whether one sees perfections or imperfections in this person, yes, however distressingly this person has changed, inasmuch as he has not ceased to be the same person. He who loves the perfections he sees in a person does not see the person and therefore ceases to love if the perfections cease, when the change begins, although this change, even the most distressing, still does not mean that the person ceases to exist. [209]Alas, but even the wisest and most ingenious purely human view of love is still something high-flying, something vague; Christian love, IX 165
however, comes down from heaven to earth. Thus the direction is the opposite. Christian love is not supposed to soar up to heaven, since it comes from heaven and with heaven. It comes down and thereby accomplishes loving the same person in all his changes, because it sees the same person in all the changes. Purely human love is continually in the process of flying away after, so to speak, or flying away with, the beloved's perfections. We say of a seducer that he steals a girl's heart, but of all purely human love, even when it is most beautiful, we must say that it has something thievish about it, that it really steals the beloved's perfections, whereas Christian love grants the beloved all his imperfections and weaknesses and in all his changes remains with him, loving the person it sees.

If this were not so, Christ would never have had a chance to love, for where would he have found the perfect person! Wonderful! What was it, namely, that for Christ was actually the obstacle to finding the perfect person? Was it not simply that he himself was the perfect one, which is to be recognized by his having boundlessly loved the person he saw! What a remarkable intersecting of the conceptions! With regard to love, we continually speak, again and again, about the perfect person; with regard to love, Christianity, too, continually speaks, again and again, about the perfect person—alas, but we human beings

speak about finding the perfect person in order to love him, whereas Christianity speaks about being the perfect person who boundlessly loves the person he sees. We human beings want to look upward in order to look for the object of perfection (although the direction is continually toward the unseen), but in Christ perfection looked down to earth and loved the person it saw. We ought to learn from Christianity, because it is indeed true, in a far more universal sense than it is said, that no one ascends into heaven except the one who descends from heaven.[210] However visionary this talk about soaring up to heaven, it is a delusion if you do not first Christianly descend from heaven. But Christianly to descend from heaven is boundlessly to love the person you see just as you see him.

IX 166 Therefore if you want to be perfect in love, strive to fulfill this duty, in loving to love the person one sees, to love him just as you see him, with all his imperfections and weaknesses, to love him as you see him when he has changed completely, when he no longer loves you but perhaps turns away indifferent or turns away to love another, to love him as you see him when he betrays and denies you.

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Our Duty to Remain in Love's Debt to One Another

Romans 13:8 Owe no one anything, except to love one another.

Many different attempts have been made to characterize and describe how love is felt by someone in whom it is, the state of love, or what it is to love. Love has been called a feeling, a mood, a life, a passion; yet since this is such a general definition, attempts have been made to define it more precisely. Love has been called a want, but, note well, such a want that the lover continually wants what he actually possesses—a longing, but, note well, continually for what the lover actually has—since otherwise it is indeed unhappy love that is described.

That simple wise man of old has said, "Love is a son of wealth and poverty."[211] Who, indeed, has ever been more impoverished than someone who has never loved! But on the other hand I wonder if even the poorest person, who stoops to pick up crumbs and humbly thanks for a penny, I wonder if he actually has any idea at all how little the triviality can be that has infinite worth for the lover, how little the triviality can be that the lover (in his poverty!) very carefully picks up and safely hides—as the most precious treasure! I wonder if even the poorest person is simply in a position to see what can be so little that only the sharpened glance of passion (love in its poverty!) sees it, and enormously magnified! But the smaller the object is that poverty picks up, if it thanks immoderately for it, as if the object were extraordinarily great, the greater the poverty shows itself to be. Not even all the avowals of the most extreme poverty demon-

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strate this as decisively as when the poor man to whom you gave less than a shilling thanked you for it with a passion as if you had given him wealth and abundance, with a passion as if he now had become rich. Alas, it is all too evident that the poor man remained just as poor—therefore it was only his insane notion that he now had become rich. So impoverished is love's poverty!

A noble man has said of love: "It takes everything and it gives everything."[212] Who indeed received more than the one who received a person's love; and who gave more than the one who gave a person his love! On the other hand, I wonder if even envy, when it enviously strips a person of his real or supposed greatness, can penetrate in this way to the innermost garment! Ah, envy is ever so obtuse. It does not even suspect where the inclosure could be, or that there exists an inclosure where the truly rich man has his true treasure hidden. It does not suspect that there actually is a hiding place that is burglarproof to thieves (thus also to envy), just as there is a treasure that thieves (thus also envy) are not able to steal.[213] But love can penetrate to the innermost being and can strip a person in such a way that he possesses nothing, nothing, so that he himself admits that he possesses nothing, nothing, nothing. Wonderful! Envy takes, so it thinks, everything, and when it has taken it the person says: I have actually lost nothing. But love can take everything in such a way that the person himself says, "I possess nothing at all."[214]

Yet love is perhaps most correctly described as an infinite debt; when a person is gripped by love, he feels that this is like being in an infinite debt. Ordinarily we say that a person who is loved runs into debt by being loved. Thus we say that children are in love's debt to their parents because they have loved them first, so that the children's love is only a part-payment on the debt or a repayment. And this is indeed true. But such talk is all too reminiscent of an actual bookkeeping arrangement: a debt is incurred and it must be paid off in installments; it is love that is shown to us, and it must be paid off in installments with love. We are not, however, speaking about that, about *running into debt by receiving.* No, the one who loves runs into debt; in feeling himself gripped by love, he feels this as being in an infinite debt. Amazing! To give a person one's love is, as has been said, the highest a person

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can give—and yet by giving it he runs into an infinite debt. Therefore we can say that *this is the distinctive characteristic of love: that the one who loves by giving, infinitely, runs into infinite debt.* But this is the relationship of the infinite, and love is infinite. By giving money, one surely does not run into debt; on the contrary, it is rather the recipient who runs into debt. When, however, the lover gives what is infinitely the highest that one person can give to another, his love, he himself runs into an infinite debt. What beautiful, what sacred modesty love brings along with it! Not only does it not dare to persuade itself to become conscious of its deed as something meritorious, but it is even ashamed to become conscious of its deed as a part-payment on the debt. It becomes conscious of its giving as an infinite debt that cannot possibly be repaid, since to give is continually to run into debt.

Love could be described in this way. Yet Christianity never dwells on conditions or on describing them; it always hastens to the task or to assigning the task. This is specifically expressed in the words of the apostle just read, "Owe no one anything, except to love one another," which words we shall use as the basis of this deliberation:

our duty to remain in love's debt to one another.

To remain in a debt! But should that be difficult? After all, nothing is easier than to remain in a debt! On the other hand, should remaining in a debt be the task! After all, we think just the opposite, that the task is to get out of a debt. Whatever the debt happens to be—a money debt, a debt of honor, a promise debt—in short, whatever the debt, the task is always the opposite, to get out of the debt, the sooner the better. But here it is supposed to be the task, an honor, to remain in it! And if it is the task, then of course it must be an action, perhaps a complicated, a difficult action; but to remain in a debt is the very expression for not doing the least thing, the expression for inactivity, indifference, IX
indolence. And here this same thing is supposed to be the expression for the very opposite of indifference, the expression for infinite love! 170

See, all this, all these odd difficulties that pile up, so to speak,

against this strange way of speaking, suggests that the matter must have its own inner coherence, so that already a certain transformation of attitude and mind is necessary just to become aware of what the discourse is about.

Let us begin with a little thought-experiment. If a lover had done something for the beloved that, humanly speaking, was so extraordinary, so magnanimous, so self-sacrificing, that we human beings were obliged to say, "This is absolutely the highest that one human being can do for another"—this certainly would be beautiful and good. But suppose he added, "See, now I have paid my debt"—would this not be speaking unlovingly, coldly, and harshly? Would it not be, if I may say so, an impropriety that ought never to be heard and ought never to be heard in the good company of true love either! If, however, the lover had done this magnanimous and self-sacrificing thing and then added, "But I have one request—please let me remain in debt," would not this be speaking lovingly! Or if the lover at great sacrifice complies with the beloved's wish and now says, "It is a joy to me to apply this as a small installment on the debt—in which I still wish definitely to remain," would this not be speaking lovingly! Or if he remained absolutely silent about its having cost him sacrifice simply in order to avoid the confusion of its seeming for a moment to be an installment payment on the debt—would this not be thinking lovingly! If this is so, it does indeed express that an actual bookkeeping arrangement is inconceivable, is the greatest abomination to love. An accounting can take place only where there is a finite relationship, because the relationship of the finite to the finite can be calculated. But one who loves cannot calculate. When the left hand never finds out what the right hand is doing,[215] it is impossible to make an accounting, [216]and likewise when the debt is infinite. To calculate with an infinite quantity is impossible, because to calculate is to make finite.

Thus, for his own sake the lover wishes to remain in debt; he does not wish exemption from any sacrifice, far from it. Ready, indescribably ready, as love's prompting is, he wants to do everything and fears only one thing, that he could do everything in such a way that he would get out of debt. Understood properly, this is the fear; the wish is to remain in debt, but it is also the duty,

the task. If the love in us human beings is not so perfect that this wish is our wish, then the duty will help us to remain in debt.

When it is a duty to remain in the debt of love to one another, IX 171
there must be eternal vigilance, early and late, so that love never begins to dwell on itself, or to compare itself with love in other people, or to compare itself with the deeds that it has accomplished.

In the world we often hear enthusiastic and inflamed talk about love, about faith and hope, about goodness of heart, in short, about all the specifications of the spirit, talk that in the most glowing expressions and with the most glowing colors describes and enraptures. Yet such talk is actually a painted backdrop; on closer and more earnest inspection, it is a deception, since it must either flatter the listener or mock him. Sometimes we also hear a Christian address of which, considered as discourse and guidance, the whole secret is this deceitful enthusiasm. To be specific, if a person hears such talk and quite simply and honestly (since it is just plain honesty to will to act according to what is said to one, to will to shape one's life accordingly) asks, "What shall I do? How will I get love to flame in me this way?"—the speaker really must reply, "That is an odd question. The one in whom there are love and faith and hope and goodness of heart has these qualities in the manner described, and to one in whom they are not it is useless to speak." How odd! One would think it would be especially important that it be said to those who are not like that—in order that they might become such. But right here is the deceit in the mirage: to speak as if one wanted to guide people and then to have to admit that one can speak only *about* those who need no guidance because they are, after all, so perfect, as the speech indicates. But *to* whom, then, does one speak, who is it, then, who is to have benefit from this discourse, which at most has a few individuals *about* whom it speaks—provided that any such individuals do exist at all?

But would such fiction and trumpery also be Christianity? Then it is a mistake on the part of original Christianity that in speaking about righteousness and purity it continually addresses sinners and publicans, who certainly are not righteous! Then, instead of speaking so sarcastically about the righteous who need no conversion,[217] Christianity more properly should have dressed

itself up as a eulogy of—the righteous! But if this is supposed to be done, then Christianity not only will have no one to speak *to*, but it also will have no one to speak *about*—that is, then Christianity is reduced to silence. No, least of all has Christianity announced itself as a eulogy and has never engaged in describing or dwelling on how a person *is*. It has never made a *distinction* among persons, so that it could speak only about those who *are* now so fortunate as to be very loving. Christianity begins immediately with what *every* person *should become*. That is why Christianity calls itself a guide and rightfully so, because no one will futilely ask Christ, who is the Way, or Scripture, which is the guide, about what he must do—the questioner will find out immediately—if he himself *wants* to know.

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This is in order to prevent misunderstanding. Anyone who is unwilling to understand the discourse about what we are to do with regard to love, that there truly is much or, more correctly, everything to do both to acquire it and to keep it, has placed himself outside of Christianity. He is a pagan who admires good fortune, that is, the accidental, but for that very reason fumbles in darkness—I wonder if it does indeed become lighter around one, no matter how many will-o'-the-wisps flit about!

So, then, there is something to do. What, then, must be done in order to remain in the debt of love to one another? When a fisherman has caught a fish and wants to keep it alive, what must he do? He must put it in water immediately; otherwise it becomes exhausted and sooner or later dies. Why must he put it in water? Because water is the fish's element, *and everything that is to be kept alive must be kept in its element*; but love's element is infinitude, inexhaustibility, immeasurability. Therefore, if you want to maintain your love, you must see to it that love, caught for freedom and life, continually remains in its element by means of the infinitude of the debt; otherwise it wastes away and dies—not sooner or later, because it dies immediately, which is precisely a sign of its perfection, that it can live *only* in infinitude.

That love's element is infinitude, inexhaustibility, immeasurability, surely no one will deny—indeed, it is easy to see. Assume—we can at least assume it—that a servant or someone for whose work and inconvenience you can pay does exactly the

same for you as one who loves, and as a result there is not the slightest difference to be detected between the sums of their deeds and services; yet, yet there remains an infinite difference, a difference of immeasurability. That is to say, in the one case there is continually something extra that, strangely enough, is worth *infinitely* much more than that to which it is connected as an extra. This is exactly the concept "immeasurability"! In everything done for you by the one who loves, in the least little triviality as well as in the greatest sacrifice, there is always love along with it; and thereby the smallest service, which in the case of the hired servant you would scarcely find worth taking into account, becomes immeasurable. IX 173

Or suppose that a person had the notion of wanting to test [*forsøge*] whether he, without loving the other person but just because he wanted to do it (hence for the sake of the experiment and not for the sake of duty), could be, as we say, just as inexhaustible in his sacrifices, services, and expressions of devotion as the one who loved this same person—you easily see that he will not be able to accomplish it. On the contrary, between the two there will be a difference of immeasurability. The one who actually loves continually has a head start, and an infinite head start, because every time the other has come up with, figured out, invented a new expression of devotion, the one who loves has already carried it out, because the one who loves needs no calculation and therefore does not waste a moment in calculating.

But to be and to remain in an infinite debt is an expression of the infinitude of love; thus by remaining in debt it remains in its element.[218] There is a reciprocal relationship here, but infinite from both sides. In the one case, it is the beloved, who in every manifestation of the lover's love lovingly apprehends the immeasurability; in the other, it is the lover, who feels the immeasurability because he acknowledges the debt to be infinite—it is one and the same thing that is infinitely great and infinitely small. The object of love confesses in love that with the least little thing the lover does infinitely more than all the others do with the greatest sacrifices; and the lover confesses to himself that in making every possible sacrifice he is doing infinitely less than he perceives the debt to be. What marvelous like for like in this infini-

tude! Oh, the scholars are proud of the calculations of the infinite, but here is the philosophers' stone: the least little expression of love is infinitely greater than all sacrifices, and all sacrifices are infinitely less than the least little bit in part-payment on the debt!

But what, then, is able to take love out of its element? *As soon as love dwells on itself, it is out of its element.* What does dwelling on itself mean? It means that love itself becomes an object. But an *object* is always a dangerous matter when one is supposed to move forward; an *object* [*G j e n stand*][219] is like a finite fixed point, like a boundary and a halting, a dangerous matter for infinitude. That
IX 174 is to say, love itself cannot *infinitely* become an object; nor is there danger in that. *Infinitely* to be itself its object is to remain in infinitude and thus only to exist or to continue to exist, since love is a redoubling in itself, as different as the particularity of natural life is from the redoubling of the spirit. Thus, when love *dwells* on itself, it must be in its particular expression that it becomes itself an object, or that another separate love becomes the object—love in the one person and love in the other person. When the object is a finite object in this way, love dwells on itself, inasmuch as *infinitely* to dwell on itself is indeed to move. But when love dwells finitely on itself, all is lost. Think of an arrow flying, as is said, with the speed of an arrow. Imagine that it for an instant has an impulse to want to dwell on itself, perhaps in order to see how far it has come, or how high it is soaring above the earth, or how its speed compares with the speed of another arrow that is also flying with the speed of an arrow—in that same second the arrow falls to the ground.

So it is also with love when it *finitely* dwells on itself or itself becomes an object, which more accurately defined is *comparison.* Love cannot *infinitely* compare itself with itself, because it infinitely resembles itself in such a way that this only means that it is itself. In the *infinite* comparison there is no third factor; it is a redoubling, and therefore it is no comparison. All comparison requires the third factor, as well as likeness and unlikeness. When there is no dwelling, there is no comparison; when there is no comparison, there is no dwelling either.

But what can comparison's third factor be? Love in the individual person can compare itself with love in others. Then he

discovers or thinks he discovers that love in him is greater than in others, or that love is greater in some and less again in others. At first he perhaps even thought that it was merely a casual sidelong glance in passing that required neither time nor effort. Alas, comparison's sidelong glance all too easily discovers a whole world of relationships and calculations. This is the halting; at the very same moment he is starting to get out of the debt or perhaps is already out of it—that is, out of love. Or comparison's third factor can be the deeds previously done out of love. At the very same moment, counting and weighing, he is starting to get out of the debt, or in immense self-satisfaction perhaps is already more than out of the debt—that is, more than out of love. IX 175

In comparison, everything is lost, love is made finite, the debt is made something to repay—exactly like any other debt. Unlike the debt of honor, which has the characteristic of having to be settled at once, the sooner the better, love's debt has the characteristic of being infinite. What does comparison always lose? It loses the moment, the moment that ought to have been filled with an expression of love's life. *But to lose the moment is to become momentary.* A moment lost, then the chain of eternity is broken; a moment lost, then the connectedness of eternity is disturbed; a moment lost, then the eternal is lost—but to lose the eternal is indeed simply to become momentary. A moment wasted on comparison, then everything is forfeited. The moment of comparison is, namely, a selfish moment, a moment that wants to be *for itself*; this is the break, is the fall—just as dwelling on itself is the fall of the arrow.

In comparison, everything is lost, love is made finite, the debt is made something to repay, regardless of which position, even if it is the top, love *by way of comparison* thinks it occupies in relation to others' love or in relation to its own achievements. Let us understand each other. Suppose it is true—we can of course assume it for a moment—that it is undignified and unseemly for the king's son to associate with the common man. Suppose that he does it just the same and in defense says, "I am by no means giving up my dignity. I shall certainly know how to assert myself as supreme among these people also." I wonder if the patrician courtier would not say, "Your Highness, this is a misunderstand-

ing; the unseemliness lies in associating with such people. Your Highness will of course himself sense that it sounds like mockery if it is said of you, the prince, that you rank first among these common people. There is nothing to be gained by comparison, almost less by ranking first within it, because the relationship itself, the possibility of comparison, is the false move, and only by remaining outside is royal dignity maintained."[220] But this, of course, is only a jest. But if what is and ought to be infinite seeks the bad company of familiarity and comparison with the finite, then it is unseemly, undignified; then the debasement is deserved, even if within the comparison one thinks it ranks first. Even if it were true, *by way of comparison* to love more than all
IX other people is—not to love. To love is to remain in infinite
176 debt; the debt's infinitude is perfection's bond.

Let me illustrate the same thing by mentioning another relationship of infinitude. Imagine an enthusiast who enthusiastically wills only one thing and enthusiastically wants to sacrifice everything for the good. Imagine that it now happens (something that does not happen *accidentally* but unconditionally will happen as long as the world is the world) that to the same degree as he works more and more unselfishly, more and more self-sacrificingly, more and more strenuously, to the same degree the world works more and more against him. Imagine him at this pinnacle—if for one single moment he missteps and compares his effort with the world's reward or compares his effort with the prior accomplished achievement, or missteps and compares his lot with the distinction of those who do not seem to be burning with enthusiasm—alas, then he is lost. But the tempter approaches him and says, "Stop your work, slow down, take it easy, enjoy life in comfort, and accept the flattering situation that is offered to you, to be one of the most enthusiastic"—the tempter does not speak ill of enthusiasm; he is too sagacious for that, and neither are people so easily tricked into abandoning it.

Meanwhile he is unwilling to give in to the tempter, and he renews his effort. Then the tempter approaches him again and says, "Stop your work, slow down, take it easy, enjoy life in comfort by accepting the unconditionally most flattering situation that can indeed be offered only to you, to be the most en-

thusiastic, a situation that makes your life easier and brings you, the enthusiast, the world's admiration, whereas you only make your life strenuous and in that way gain the world's opposition." Alas, to be the most enthusiastic person *by way of comparison* is precisely not to be enthusiastic. Woe to the person who has so corrupted his soul by the defilement of comparison that he cannot understand the next thing except as enormous pride and vanity.

The enthusiast says to the tempter, "Get out, and take comparison with you." And that is just the right thing. That is why we call out to an enthusiast, "Shut your eyes, stop up your ears, hold to infinity's requirement; then no comparison will sneak in to assassinate your enthusiasm by making you the greatest enthusiast—by way of comparison! Before infinity's requirement even your greatest effort is but child's play, by means of which you will not be able to become self-important, since you learn to understand how infinitely much more is required of you."

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177 We warn the person who stands on a ship rushing ahead with the speed of the storm not to look into the waves, because then he will become dizzy; in the same way comparison between finitude and infinitude makes a person dizzy. Therefore beware of comparison, which the world wants to force on you, because the world has no more knowledge of enthusiasm than a financier has of love, and you will always find that indolence and obtuseness are primarily intent upon comparing and upon entrapping everything in comparison's muddied "actuality." Therefore do not look around; "greet no one along the way" (Luke 10:4); listen to no cry or shout that wants to trick you out of your enthusiasm and trick its power into working on the treadmill of comparison. Do not let it disturb you that the world calls your enthusiasm madness, calls it self-love—in eternity everyone will be compelled to understand what enthusiasm and love are. Do not accept the situation offered to you—the total admiration of the whole world for half the work. Remain in the debt of infinitude, happy about the situation—the world's opposition because you refuse to bargain. Do not listen, because it is already too late not to believe it. Do not listen to what is mendaciously said about enthusiasm at second hand; do not listen, lest you be harmed also

in another way by believing it, as if every person who *wills* it were not just as close to infinitude and thus just as close to becoming enthusiastic. What is enthusiasm? Is it not simply to be willing to do and to suffer everything? Is it not also to be continually willing to remain in the debt of infinitude? Every time the arrow is to speed ahead, the bowstring must be tightened, but every time enthusiasm revives or in rejuvenation maintains its momentum, the infinitude of the debt must be considered.[221]

So it is also with love. If you wish to maintain love, you must maintain it in the infinitude of the debt. Therefore beware of comparison! The one who guards the most costly treasure in the whole world does not need to watch so carefully lest someone find out something about it; you must also see to it that you yourself do not find out something about love by means of comparison. Beware of comparison! Comparison is the most disastrous association that love can enter into; comparison is the most dangerous acquaintance love can make; comparison is the worst of all seductions. No seducer is as readily on hand and no seducer is as omnipresent as comparison is as soon as your sidelong glance beckons—yet no seduced person says in his defense, "Comparison seduced me," because, indeed, it was he himself who discovered the comparison. It is well known how anxiously, how ineffectively, and yet how fearfully laboriously a person walks when
IX 178 he knows he is walking on smooth ice, but it is equally well known that a person walks confidently and firmly on smooth ice if because of darkness or in some other way he has remained unaware that he is walking on smooth ice. Therefore beware of discovering comparison! Comparison is the noxious shoot that stunts the growth of the tree; the cursed tree becomes a withered shadow, but the noxious shoot flourishes with noxious luxuriance. Comparison is like the neighbor's swampy ground; even if your house is not built upon it, it sinks nevertheless. Comparison is like the secret consumption's hidden worm, which does not die, at least not until it has eaten the life out of love. [222]Comparison is a loathsome rash that turns inward and is eating at the marrow. Therefore beware of comparison in your love!

But if comparison is the only thing that could take love out of debt or make a start on getting out of debt, and if comparison is

avoided, then love, healthy and alive, remains—in the infinite debt. To remain in debt is an infinitely cunning and yet infinitely satisfactory expression for the infinitude of love. When it is said, for example, of a natural force that it rushes forward with an infinite speed or that it bursts forth with an infinite power and copiousness, it always seems still possible that it would at some time have to stop or become exhausted. But something intrinsically infinite that also has an infinite debt behind it is made infinite a second time; it has within itself the sentinel that continually makes certain that it does not stop—the debt is the propelling force a second time.

When it is a duty to remain in the debt of love to one another, *then to remain in debt is not a fanatical expression, is not an idea about love, but is action; thus love, with the help of duty, continues Christianly in action, in the momentum of action, and thereby in the infinite debt.*

To love is to have incurred an infinite debt. The wish to remain in debt could seem to be merely a view of, an idea about love, an ultimate, the most extreme, expression that belongs to it—like the garland to festivity. Even the costliest goblet filled with the most precious wine still lacks something—that the goblet be wreathed with a garland! Even the most lovable soul in the form of the loveliest woman still lacks something—the garland that gives the finishing touch! This is also the way we must speak if we are to speak in a purely human way about love. This wish to remain in debt is the ultimate of festivity, is the crowning garland on the festivity, something that in a certain sense neither adds nor detracts (because one surely does not drink the garlanded goblet, nor does the garland blend with the bride), and for this very reason it is the expression of beautiful fanaticism. Only in a human sense is beautiful fanaticism the ultimate. IX 179

But Christianity does not speak fanatically about love; it says it is a duty to remain in love's debt and does not say this for the last time as a dizzy and very intoxicated thought—even though the wish to remain in debt is an extreme expression, and yet it would seem to become even more extreme, if possible, by being a duty. Yet even the extreme expression has, against its will, the appearance of paying an installment on the debt, but if it is a duty to remain in debt, the impossibility has soared even higher. It

might seem to be like a state of intoxication when suddenly becoming sober for a moment is an increase of the intoxication, inasmuch as something fanatical becomes even more fanatical when it is said calmly and collectedly, and the fanciful becomes even more fanciful when it is told quite simply as an ordinary event.

But Christianity does not speak this way. It says exactly the same thing about remaining in debt as a noble human love says ardently, but it says it in a totally different way. Christianity does not make a big fuss about it at all; unlike the purely human view of love, it does not become overwhelmed by the vision. No, it speaks just as earnestly about it as about what seems totally heterogeneous to purely human enthusiasm. It says it is a duty and thereby removes from love everything that is inflamed, everything that is momentary, everything that is giddy.

Christianity says it is a duty to remain in the debt, which means that it is an *action* and not an expression about, not a reflective view of, love. In the Christian sense, no human being has accomplished the highest in love, and even if this were so, this impossibility, there would at the very same moment still be, in the Christian sense, a new task. But if at the very same moment there is a new task, then it is impossible to find out whether one has done the highest; because the moment in which one would find that out is engaged in the service of the task and as a result the person is prevented from finding out anything about the previous moment. He has no time for that; he is occupied *at the speed of action*, whereas in fanaticism even at its highest there is an element of dwelling.

Christianity knows what it means to act and what it means to be able to occupy love incessantly in action. The purely human
IX 180 view of love admires love, and thus there so easily comes a stagnation, moments when there is nothing to do, idle moments, fanaticism's moments. In the purely human view, love is as the unusually gifted child for the simple parents—the child finishes the task so quickly that the parents finally are at a loss to know what they should think of to keep the child occupied. In the purely human view, love is like the fiery, snorting steed that

quickly rides the rider weary instead of the rider's being able, if necessary, to ride the horse weary. Christianity is able to do this. Its intention is not to work love weary, far from it, but Christianity, by virtue of its eternal nature and with the earnestness of eternity, knows that it is able to manage love, and for this reason it speaks very simply and is very earnest about the matter—just as the iron-willed riding master who knows that he can manage the horse does not admire its fieriness but says that it is supposed to be fiery. He does not take the fieriness away from the horse but by controlling the fieriness only refines it. In the same way Christianity knows how to control love and to teach it that there is a task at every moment. It knows how to persevere with love so that this humbled love will learn that wanting to remain in the debt is no platitude, no fanaticism but earnestness and truth.

The danger, as has been pointed out, is that love would begin to dwell on itself by way of comparison. This must be prevented, but when it is prevented *with the help of duty* something else happens also. Love begins to be related to the Christian conception or *Christianly* to God's conception; the debt-relationship is carried over to the relationship between the individual and God. It is God who, so to speak, lovingly assumes love's requirement; by loving someone, the lover incurs an infinite debt—but in turn to God as guardian for the beloved. Now comparison is made impossible, and now love has found its master. There is no more mention of a festive mood and splendid achievements; love will no longer play, if I may say so, on humanity's childish stage, which leaves in doubt whether it is jest or earnestness.

Although love in all its expressions turns outward toward people, where indeed it has its object and its tasks, it still knows that here is not the place where it is to be judged, but that deep within, where love relates itself to God, there is the judgment. The situation is like that of a child away from home with strangers—the child acts as it has been brought up. But whether or not the strangers think well of the child, whether or not it occurs to IX
the child that it is behaving better than the other children, the 181
earnestly brought up child never forgets that the judgment is at home, where the parents do the judging. Yet the upbringing is

of course not predicated on the child's remaining at home with the parents; on the contrary, it is predicated on the child's going out into the world. So also with love in the Christian sense. It is God who, so to speak, brings up love in a person. But God does not do it in order to find diversion, so to speak, in the sight; on the contrary, he does it in order to send love out into the world, continually engaged in the task. Yet the earnestly brought up love, Christian love, never for a moment forgets where it is to be judged; that is, morning or evening or whenever it may be—in short, every time it returns home for a moment from all its tasks, love is examined in order promptly to be sent out again. Even in the highest fanaticism, love is still able to dwell for a little before it goes out again, but with God there is no dwelling.

Understood in this way, there is earnestness and truth in remaining in the debt of love to one another. Even the most honestly intended and, humanly speaking, most noble fanaticism, even the most ardent and unselfish enthusiasm is still not earnestness, even if it accomplishes amazing things and even if it also wishes to remain in debt. The deficiency in even the most noble human enthusiasm is that, as merely human, in the ultimate sense *it is not powerful itself, because it has no higher power over itself.* Only the God-relationship is earnestness; the earnestness is that the task is pressed to its highest because there is one who controls with the power of eternity; the earnestness is that the enthusiasm has a power over itself and a control upon itself. The single individual is committed in the debt of love to other people, but it is neither this individual himself nor other people who should judge his love. If this is so, the individual must remain in the infinite debt. God has truth's and infallibility's infinite conception of love; God is Love. Therefore the individual must remain in the debt—as surely as God judges it, or as surely as he remains in God, because only in the infinitude of the debt can God remain in him.

He remains in the debt, and he also acknowledges that it is his duty to remain in the debt, his duty to make this confession, which in the Christian sense is not the confession of a fanatic but of a humble, loving soul. The humility consists in making the confession, and the loving consists in being infinitely willing to

do it because it belongs to love, because there is the significance and coherence of eternal blessedness in this confession. What is Christian consists in making no fuss at all over it, because it is duty. IX 182

"Therefore owe no one anything, except to love one another"; no, "pay to all everything that you owe them, taxes to the one you owe taxes, customs duty to the one you owe customs duty, fear to the one you owe fear, honor to the one you owe honor."[223] So, then, owe no one anything, not what you have borrowed from him, not what you have promised him, not what he can legitimately demand from you in return. If possible, owe no one anything, no courtesy, no service, no sympathy in joy or in sorrow, no leniency in judging, no help in life, no advice in danger, no sacrifice, not even the hardest—no, in all this owe no one anything. But along with all this still remain in the debt that you certainly have not wished and before God have certainly not been able to pay off, the debt to love one another!

Oh, do this! And then just one more thing! "Remember in good time that if you do this or at least strive to act accordingly, you will fare badly in the world." It is especially important to call this to mind particularly at the end of this discourse and generally at the conclusion of this little book, lest the discourse falsely have a fascinating effect. This is why the world will find this conclusion completely mistaken, which in turn has its significance in making evident that the conclusion is—correct.

At times we read and hear with sadness Christian addresses that actually leave out the final danger. What is said there about faith, about love, and about humility is entirely correct and entirely Christian; yet a discourse such as that is bound to mislead a young person instead of guiding him, because the discourse leaves out what later happens in the world to the essentially Christian. The discourse requires that a person shall with self-denial work on developing a Christian disposition in himself—but then, then, yes, then no more is said, or the most precarious and more precise specifications are suppressed, whereas there are talk and assurances that the good has its reward and that it is loved both by God and by people. When this Christian disposition is lauded, and

rightfully so, as the highest, the young person is bound to believe that if he accomplishes what is required or at least honestly works
IX to accomplish it, then it will also go well with him in the world.
183 You see, this suppression of the final difficulty (namely, that humanly speaking it will go badly with him in the world and the more so as he develops a Christian disposition in himself) is a deception that leads the young person either to despair over himself (as if it were all his fault because he was not a true Christian) or [224]despondently to give up his striving, as if something altogether unusual had happened to him, whereas what happens to him is only what the Apostle John speaks of as something altogether ordinary when he says (I John 3:13), "Do not let this surprise you." Thus the speaker has deceived the young person by suppressing the true connectedness, by letting it seem as if Christianly there is struggle in only one place instead of pointing out that[225] the truly Christian struggle always involves a double danger because there is struggle in two places: first in the person's inner being, where he must struggle with himself, and then, when he makes progress in this struggle, outside the person with the world. Alas, such a speaker may be afraid to recommend the essentially Christian and the good in this admittedly strange but truthful way, that it has no reward in the world, yes, that the world simply works against it. To the speaker it perhaps seems as if he is contradicting his own eloquent words if, after having praised the good in the most commendatory and especially well chosen phrases and expressions and having brought the listener as close as possible to go even today and do likewise[226]—it perhaps seems to him as if he is contradicting himself, yes, that it is too bad for the impression of his elegant masterpiece of eloquence if he should insert among the recommendations that the good is rewarded with hate, contempt, and persecution. If this is the case, it certainly seems more natural to warn against the good, or, even more accurately, one indeed does that by recommending it in this manner. The speaker is undoubtedly in an awkward position. With perhaps the best of intentions, he is eager to attract people and thus omits the last difficulty, that which makes the recommendation very difficult—and now the thrilling address flows on, both uplifting and tear-producing. Ah, but this, as indi-

cated, is to deceive. If, however, the speaker is to make use of the difficult recommendation, he "frightens his listeners away"; perhaps he himself would almost be frightened by the discourse, he, the very popular, esteemed, and beloved speaker who indeed demonstrates that good Christianity has its reward in the world. That he has his reward cannot be denied, even though eternity thinks ten times over that he has already received his reward,[227] but it still seems somewhat worldly and is not the remuneration that Christianity *in advance* promised its followers and by which it *immediately* has recommended itself. IX 184

We are truly reluctant to make a young person arrogant and prematurely teach him to get busy judging the [228]world. God forbid that anything we say should be able to contribute to developing this malady in a person. Indeed, we think we ought to make his life so strenuous inwardly that from the very beginning he has something else to think about, because it no doubt is a morbid hatred of the world that, perhaps without having considered the enormous responsibility, wants to be persecuted.[229] But on the other hand we are also truly reluctant to deceive a young person by suppressing the difficulty and by suppressing it at the very moment we endeavor to recommend Christianity, inasmuch as that is the very moment to speak. We put our confidence in boldly daring to praise Christianity, also with the addition that in the world its reward, to put it mildly, is ingratitude. We regard it as our duty continually to speak about it *in advance*, so that we do not sometimes praise Christianity with an omission of what is essentially difficult, and at other times, perhaps on the occasion of a particular text, hit upon a few grounds of comfort for the person tried and tested in life. No, just when Christianity is being praised most strongly, the difficulty must simultaneously be emphasized.

It is, namely, un-Christian sniveling for anyone to think: Let us in every way win people for Christianity, and if they are ever hit with adversities, then of course we have advice, then it is time to talk about it. But right here is the fraud—would it not still be possible that a Christian could avoid these adversities in exactly the same way as one fortunately is not tried and tested in poverty or sickness? That means the world's opposition is looked upon as

being in an accidental, not in an essential, relationship to Christianity; opposition can perhaps come but also perhaps not arise. This point of view, however, is totally un-Christian. It is quite possible for a pagan at his death to be right to consider himself lucky in having slipped through life and even past all adversities, but a Christian is obliged to be a bit dubious about this joy at the moment of death—because Christianly the world's opposition stands in an *essential* relationship to the inwardness of Christianity. Moreover, the person who chooses Christianity should at that very moment have an impression of its difficulty so that he can know what it is that he is choosing. A young person should not be promised anything other than what Christianity can keep, but Christianity cannot keep anything other than what it has promised from the beginning: the world's ingratitude, opposition, and derision, and continually to a higher degree the more
IX 185 earnest a Christian one becomes. This is the final difficulty related to Christianity, and this least of all may be suppressed when one praises Christianity.

No, if the last difficulty is suppressed, there actually can be no talk of Christianity. If the world is not as Christianity originally assumed it to be, then Christianity is essentially abolished. What Christianity calls self-denial specifically and essentially involves *a double danger*; otherwise the self-denial is not Christian self-denial. Therefore if anyone can demonstrate that the world or Christendom has now become essentially good, as if it were eternity, then I will also demonstrate that Christian self-denial has been made impossible and Christianity abolished, just as it will be abolished in eternity, where it will cease to be *militant*. *The merely human idea of self-denial* is this: give up your self-loving desires, cravings, and plans—then you will be esteemed and honored and loved as righteous and wise. It is easy to see that this self-denial does not attain to God or the relationship with God; it remains worldly within the relationship among human beings.

The Christian idea of self-denial is: give up your self-loving desires and cravings, give up your self-seeking plans and purposes so that you truly work unselfishly for the good—and then, for that very reason, put up with being abominated almost as a criminal, insulted and ridiculed. For that very reason, if it is required of

you, put up with being executed [230]as a criminal or, more accurately, do not put up with it, since one can scarcely be forced into this but chooses it freely. Christian self-denial knows in advance that this will happen to it and freely chooses it. Christianity has eternity's idea about what it is to give up one's self-seeking purposes; therefore it does not let the Christian off at half price. It is easy to see that Christian self-denial makes its way to God and has its only abode in God. But to be abandoned in this way—in double danger—only this is Christian self-denial. The second danger, or the danger in second place, is the very assurance that the relationship with God is in order, that it is a genuine relationship to God.

Even if there were no other double danger, just to be willing to be abandoned in this way is regarded by the world as obtuseness or lunacy, therefore something it is far from honoring and admiring. The world has only a sagacious understanding of self-denial and therefore honors only the self-denial that sagaciously remains within worldliness. Therefore the world continually sees to it that there is a sufficient number of forged notes of counterfeit self-denial in circulation. Alas, the crisscrossing of relations and thoughts is often so tangled that it takes a more expert eye to IX
recognize the counterfeit note immediately. Thus we can also 186
include God in a worldly way within worldliness and thereby obtain a self-denial that bears the God-mark and yet is counterfeit. Indeed, at times it can in a worldly way make a good show, as the saying goes, of denying oneself for the sake of God, though not in that double danger's trustworthy, confidential relationship with God, but in such a way that the worldliness understands this person and honors him for it.

Yet it is easy to recognize the forgery, because as soon as the double mark is missing the self-denial is not Christian self-denial. It is human self-denial when the child denies himself while the parents' embrace, encouraging and prompting, opens to it. It is human self-denial when a person denies himself and the world now opens to him. But it is Christian self-denial when a person denies himself and, thrust back by the world precisely because the world shuts itself to him, he must now seek the confidential relationship with God. The double danger is in encountering

opposition precisely where he had expected to find support; thus he has to turn around twice, whereas the merely human self-denial turns around only once. Therefore all self-denial that finds support in the world is not Christian self-denial. It was in this sense that the ancient Church Fathers said that the virtues of paganism are glittering vices.[231]

Merely human self-denial is: without fear for oneself and without regard for oneself to venture into danger—into the danger where honor beckons to the victor, where the admiration of contemporaries and onlookers already beckons to the one who simply ventures. It is easy to see that this self-denial does not attain to God but remains in transit, within humanity. *Christian self-denial is:* without fear for oneself and without regard for oneself to venture into the danger in connection with which the contemporaries, blinded, prejudiced, and conniving, have or want to have no idea that there is honor to be gained; therefore it is not only dangerous to venture into the danger but is doubly dangerous, because the derision of the onlookers awaits the courageous one whether he wins or loses.

In the one case the idea of danger is a given; the contemporaries agree that there is danger, danger in venturing, and honor to be gained with the victory, since the idea of the danger already
IX 187 makes them willing to admire the one who simply ventures. In the other case the courageous one must, so to speak, discover the danger and struggle to get permission to call something danger that the contemporaries are unwilling to call that; even though they admit that it is possible to lose one's life in this danger, they still deny that it is a danger, since according to their idea it is ludicrous and therefore doubly ludicrous to lose one's life for something that is ludicrous. Thus Christianity discovered a danger called eternal damnation. This danger seemed ludicrous to the world.

[232]Let us now think of a Christian witness. For the sake of this doctrine, he ventures into battle with the powers that be who have his life in their hands and who must see in him a troublemaker—this will probably cost him his life. At the same time his contemporaries, with whom he has no immediate dispute but who are onlookers, find it ludicrous to risk death for the sake of

such fatuousness. Here there is life to lose and truly no honor and admiration to gain! Yet to be abandoned in this way, only in this way to be abandoned, is Christian self-denial! —Now, if the world or Christendom has become essentially good, this self-denial would be made impossible, because in that case the world, as essentially good, would honor and praise the person who denied himself and would always have the right idea of where and what the true danger is.

[233]Therefore, we wish to conclude this discourse—as we conclude all our discourses, which according to the capacities granted us praise Christianity—with this scarcely ingratiating recommendation: Beware of beginning to do this if you are not truly in earnest about truly willing to deny yourself. We have too earnest a conception of Christianity to want to entice anyone; we almost prefer to warn. The one who truly wants to appropriate Christianity will inwardly experience terrors entirely different from the little dramatic playacting of terror in an address; outwardly he must be committed in a way entirely different from what is possible with the help of a little prinked-up falsity of eloquence. We leave it up to each individual to test whether our earnest conception seems cold, comfortless, and without enthusiasm. It would be a different matter if a person were to talk about his own relationship to the world; then it is a duty to speak as gently and as extenuatingly as possible, and even if he does this it is a duty to remain in the debt of love.

But when we speak instructively, we dare not suppress what perhaps is scarcely suited to win favor for the discourse in the aspiring conception of an enthusiastic youth. Nor do we dare to recommend that one should rise above the world's opposition and foolishness with a smile, because even if it can be done, as it is done in paganism, it can be done only in paganism, because the pagan does not have Christianity's true, earnest, eternally concerned conception of the truth—since to this it is by no means ludicrous that others lack it. In the Christian sense, the essential foolishness of the world is by no means ludicrous, no matter how ludicrous it is. If there is salvation to win or lose, then it is neither a jest if I win it, nor is it ludicrous if someone forfeits it. IX 188

There is, however, a ludicrousness we certainly should guard

ourselves against—speaking ingratiatingly about the essentially Christian. I wonder if someone in handing another person a very sharply honed two-edged instrument would hand it over with the air, gestures, and expressions of someone handing over a bouquet of flowers? Would this not be insane? What does one do, then? Convinced of the excellence of the dangerous instrument, one no doubt unreservedly recommends it, but in such a way that in a certain sense one warns against it. So also with the essentially Christian. If it is necessary, we should not hesitate either, under the highest responsibility, to preach **against** Christianity in *Christian*—yes, precisely in *Christian* sermons. We know full well where the trouble lies these days. By means of foolish, ingratiating Sunday sermons, Christianity has been tricked into an illusion, and we human beings into the delusion that we as such are Christians. Yet if someone thought he was holding a flower in his hand, a flower with which he had more or less emptily and thoughtlessly amused himself by looking at it, and then someone, truthfully, note well, shouted to him, "Confound it, man, don't you see that it is a very sharply honed two-edged instrument you are holding in your hand"—would he not be terrified for a moment! But, but—did the person who truthfully said this deceive him or the truth? Then, again, it would only establish a person more firmly in his misapprehension if someone reminded him that the flower he held in his hand was no plain, ordinary flower but an extremely rare one. No, Christianity is not an extremely rare flower in the human sense, nor is it the rarest of flowers—that kind of talk is pagan and worldly and does not go beyond the merely human conception. In the *divine* sense Christianity is the highest good and therefore also, in the human sense, an extremely dangerous good, because, understood in a merely human way, it is so far from being a rare flower
IX 189 that it is an offense, a foolishness,[234] now as in the beginning and as long as the world lasts.

Wherever the essentially Christian is, there is the possibility of offense, but offense is the greatest danger. Anyone who has truly appropriated the essentially Christian or something of the essentially Christian has also had to pass by the possibility of offense in such a way that he has seen it and with that before his eyes has

chosen the essentially Christian. If the discourse is to be about the essentially Christian, it must continually hold open the possibility of offense, but then it can never reach the point of *directly* recommending Christianity. Then discourses would differ only in that one would recommend it in stronger, another in weaker, a third in the strongest possible expressions of praise. Christianity can be praised only when at every point the danger is incessantly made evident—how to the merely human conception the essentially Christian is foolishness and offense. But to make this clear and evident is indeed to forewarn. That is how earnest Christianity is. Whatever needs the approval of people promptly makes itself palatable to them, but Christianity is so sure of itself and knows with such earnestness and rigor that it is people who need it that for this very reason it does not recommend itself directly but first [235]startles people—just as Christ recommended himself to the apostles by predicting in advance that for his sake they would be hated[236]—yes, that someone who put them to death would think he was doing God a service.[237]

When Christianity came into the world, it did not itself need to point out (even though it did do so) that it was an offense, because the world, which took offense, certainly discovered this easily enough. But now, now when the world has become Christian, now Christianity above all must itself pay attention to the offense. Therefore if it is true that many "Christians" in these times miss out on Christianity, how does it happen except through their missing out on the possibility of offense, this, note well, terrifying thing! No wonder, then, that Christianity, its salvation and its tasks, can no longer satisfy "the Christians"—indeed, they could not even be offended by it!

When Christianity came into the world, it did not itself need to point out (even though it did do so) that it was contending with human reason, because the world discovered this easily enough. But now, now when Christianity for centuries has lived in protracted association with human reason, now when a fallen IX 190
Christianity (just like those fallen angels who married mortal women[238]) has married human reason, now when Christianity and reason have a *Du*[239] relationship—now Christianity must above all itself pay attention to the obstacle. If Christianity is to

be preached out of the enchantment of illusion and deformed transmogrification (alas, it is like the fairy tale about the castle enchanted for a hundred years), then first of all the possibility of offense must be thoroughly preached back to life again. Only the possibility of offense (the antidote to the sleeping potion of apologetics) is able to rouse the one who has fallen asleep, is able to revoke the enchantment so that Christianity is itself again.

If, then, Holy Scripture says, "Woe to the one by whom the offense comes,"[240] we have the confidence to say: Woe to the one who first hit upon the idea of preaching Christianity without the possibility of offense. Woe to the one who ingratiatingly, panderingly, [241]commendingly, convincingly preached to people some unmanly something that was supposed to be Christianity! Woe to the one who could make the miracle comprehensible or at least open up to us bright prospects of its imminent accomplishment! Woe to the one who betrayed and broke the secret of faith and perverted it into public wisdom because he took away the possibility of offense! Woe to the one who could comprehend the secret of the Atonement without perceiving anything of the possibility of offense, and once again woe to him for thinking that thereby he would do God and Christianity a service. [242]Woe to all those unfaithful stewards who sat down and wrote false IOUs[243] and in that way gained friends for Christianity and [244]themselves when they deducted from Christianity the possibility of offense and added to it follies by the hundreds!

Oh, what lamentably wasted learning and acumen! What lamentably wasted time in this enormous work of defending Christianity! Truly, if Christianity will just again rise up formidable with the possibility of offense so this horror can again startle people—then Christianity will need no defense. On the other hand, the more learned, the better the *defense*, the more Christianity is distorted, abolished, deprived of its powers like a eunuch. The defense simply out of kindness wants to remove the possibility of offense. But Christianity must not be defended. It is the people who must see to it whether they are able to defend themselves and justify to themselves what they choose when Christianity
IX 191 terrifyingly, as it once did, offers them the choice and terrifyingly compels them to choose: either to be offended or to accept

Christianity. Therefore, take away from the essentially Christian the possibility of offense, or take away from the forgiveness of sins the battle of the anguished conscience (to which, according to Luther's excellent explanation,[245] this whole doctrine is to lead), and then close the churches, the sooner the better, or turn them into places of amusement that stand open all day!

But while in this way the whole world has been made Christian by taking away the possibility of offense, the curious thing continually occurs—that the world is offended by the actual Christian. Here comes the offense, the possibility of which, after all, is inseparable from the essentially Christian. But the confusion is more lamentable than ever. At one time the world was offended by Christianity—there was meaning in that. But now the world imagines that it is Christian, that it has appropriated Christianity without perceiving anything of the possibility of offense—and then is offended by the actual Christian. It is truly difficult to get out of such an illusion. Woe to the swift pens and the busy tongues, woe to this whole busyness, which, because it knows *neither* the one *nor* the other, is therefore able with infinite ease to reconcile *both* the one *and* the other!

The Christian world is still continually offended by the actual Christian. But now the passion of offense is usually not so intense that it wants to exterminate him—no, it sticks to mockery and derision. This is easily explained. At the time when the world was itself conscious of not being Christian, there was something to struggle over; then it was a matter of life and death. But now when the world is proudly and calmly sure of being itself Christian, the true Christian's exaggeration is, of course, worth no more than to be laughed at. The confusion is more lamentable than in the first period of Christianity. It was lamentable then, but there was meaning in it when the world was engaged in a life-and-death struggle with Christianity; but the world's present lofty equanimity in its consciousness of being itself Christian, its, if you please, cheap bit of mockery at the actual Christian—all this borders almost on madness. Never in its earliest period was Christianity made the object of mockery in this way.

[246]Thus if someone in this Christian world merely wants to strive in some measure to fulfill the duty of remaining in love's

debt to one another, he, too, will be led out into the final difficulty and will have the world's opposition to contend with. Alas,
IX 192 the world thinks very little or never of God; that is why it must misunderstand any life whose most essential and constant thought is the thought of God, the thought of where, in the divine sense, the danger is, and the thought of what is required of a person! In this regard the Christian world will therefore say of the actual Christian, "He is laying himself wide open; even where he obviously is the injured party, he almost seems to be the one who is begging for forgiveness." The world will Christianly (since the world, after all, is Christian) miss in him the necessary Christian hardness of heart that busily maintains its rights, asserts itself, repays evil with evil, or at least with the proud consciousness of doing good. The world does not discern at all that such a person has an entirely different criterion for his life and that from this the whole thing can be explained quite simply, whereas it really becomes quite meaningless when explained by means of the world's criterion.

But since the world actually does not know and presumably does not want to know of the existence of this criterion (the God-relationship), it cannot explain such a person's behavior except as an eccentricity—that it is Christianity can naturally never occur to the world, which, as Christian, itself presumably knows best what Christianity is. It is eccentric that a person is not self-interested; it is eccentric that he does not chide in return; it is eccentric and stupid that he forgives his enemies and is almost afraid that he is not doing enough for his enemy; it is eccentric that he is always in the wrong place, never where it shows up to advantage to be courageous, noble, unselfish—this is eccentric, affected, and half idiotic, in short, something to be laughed at a little if one, in being oneself the world, as a Christian is certain of being in possession of the truth and blessedness both here and hereafter. The world at best has nothing but a very remote high-festival conception that the God-relationship exists, not to mention that it should daily determine a person's life—that is why it must judge this way. The invisible law for such a person's life, for its suffering and its blessedness, does not exist at all for the world: ergo it must explain such a life most leniently as an eccentricity,

just as we explain it as madness when a person is continuously looking around for a bird that none of the rest of us can see, or when a person dances to music that no one else, even with the best intentions, can hear, or when a person by his walk indicates that he is stepping out of the way of something—invisible. This is indeed madness, because a bird, if it is actually present, cannot be invisibly present any more than actual music can be inaudible, any more than an actual obstacle on one's path that makes it necessary to step out of the way can be invisible—but God can be present only invisibly and inaudibly; therefore, that the world does not see him does not prove very much.

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Let me illustrate this situation by a simple metaphor that I have frequently used, although in a different way—it is very fruitful, instructive, and suggestive. When a strictly brought-up child is together with naughty or less well behaved children and is unwilling to join them in their misbehavior, which they themselves, for the most part, do not regard as misbehavior—the naughty children know of no other explanation for this than that the child must be a queer and daft child. They do not see that the situation can be explained in another way, that the strictly brought-up child, wherever it is, is continually accompanied by its parents' criterion for what it may and may not do. If the parents were visibly present so the naughty children saw them, they would better be able to understand the child, especially if the child also looked unhappy at having to obey the parents' injunctions, because then it would of course be obvious that the child would rather be like the naughty children, and it would be easy enough to realize, indeed, to see what it was that held the child back. But when the parents are not present, the naughty children would not be able to understand the strictly brought-up child. They think like this: *Either* this kid must not like the same kinds of fun the rest of us kids like and is daft and queer, *or* it does like them but doesn't dare. But why not? After all, the parents aren't here—see, again the kid must be daft and queer. Therefore we can by no means promptly call it malice or malignity on the part of the less well behaved children that they judge the strictly brought-up child in this way—oh no, in their way they perhaps even mean well by it. They do not understand the strictly

brought-up child; they think well of their misbehavior, and therefore they want him to join them and be a plucky boy—just like the others.

The application of this metaphor is easy to make. That a Christian would not have the same desires and passions that the world has the world cannot get into its head at all (and then it is not true either). But if he does have them, then the world can even less get it into its head why he, out of fear of someone invisible, is so daft as to want to control these, in the world's view innocent and permissible, desires that it is even "a duty to acquire"; why he wants to control the self-love that the world calls not only innocent but laudable; why he wants to control the
IX 194 anger that the world not only regards as natural but as the mark of a man and a man's honor; why he then wants to make himself doubly unhappy: first by not satisfying the desires and next, for his reward, by being ridiculed by the world.

It is easy to see that self-denial here is properly marked: it has the double mark. Because this is the way it is, because quite rightly the one who wants in earnest to comply with this will get into double danger,[247] for this very reason we say that it is the duty of Christians to remain in the debt of love to one another.

WORKS OF LOVE

SOME CHRISTIAN DELIBERATIONS
IN THE FORM OF DISCOURSES

by Søren Kierkegaard

SECOND SERIES

These Christian deliberations, which are the fruit of much deliberation, will be understood slowly but then also easily, whereas they will surely become very difficult if someone by hasty and curious reading makes them very difficult for himself. *That single individual* who first deliberates with himself whether or not he will read, if he then chooses to read, will lovingly deliberate whether the difficulty and the ease, when placed thoughtfully together on the scale, relate properly to each other so that what is essentially Christian is not presented with a false weight by making the difficulty or by making the ease too great.

They are *Christian deliberations*, therefore not about *love* but about *works of love.*

They are about works of love, not as if hereby all its works were now added up and described, far from it; not as if even the particular work described were described once and for all, far from it, God be praised! Something that in its total richness is *essentially* inexhaustible is also in its smallest work *essentially* indescribable just because essentially it is totally present everywhere and *essentially* cannot be described.

Autumn 1847

S. K.

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Love Builds Up[1]

I Corinthians 8:1. But love builds up.

All human speech, even the divine speech of Holy Scripture, about the spiritual is essentially metaphorical [*overført*, carried over] speech. And this is quite in order or in the order of things and of existence, since a human being, even if from the moment of birth he is spirit, still does not become conscious of himself as spirit until later and thus has sensately-psychically acted out a certain part of his life prior to this. But this first portion is not to be cast aside when the spirit awakens any more than the awakening of the spirit in contrast to the sensate-psychical announces itself in a sensate-psychical way. On the contrary, the first portion is taken over [*overtage*] by the spirit and, used in this way, is thus made the basis—*it becomes the metaphorical.* Therefore, in one sense the spiritual person and the sensate-psychical person say the same thing; yet there is an infinite difference, since the latter has no intimation of the secret of the metaphorical words although he is using the same words, but not in their metaphorical sense. There is a world of difference between the two; the one has made the transition [*Overgang*] or let himself be *carried over* [*føre over*] to the other side, while the other remains on this side; yet they have the connection that both are using the same words. The person in whom the spirit has awakened does not as a consequence abandon the visible world. Although conscious of himself as spirit, he continues to remain in the visible world and to be visible to the senses—in the same way he also remains in the language, except that his language is the metaphorical language! IX 202
But the metaphorical words are of course not brand-new words but are the already given words. Just as the spirit is invisible, so

also is its language a secret, and the secret lies in its using the same words as the child and the simpleminded person but using them metaphorically, whereby the spirit denies being the sensate or the sensate-psychical but does not deny it in a sensate-psychical way. The difference is by no means a noticeable difference. For this reason we rightfully regard it as a sign of false spirituality to parade a noticeable difference—which is merely sensate, whereas the spirit's manner is the metaphor's quiet, whispering secret—for the person who has ears to hear.

One of the metaphorical expressions that Holy Scripture frequently uses, or one of the phrases that Holy Scripture frequently uses metaphorically, is: "to build up." And it is already upbuilding [*opbyggelig*]—indeed, it is very upbuilding to see how Holy Scripture does not become weary of this simple phrase, how it does not ingeniously strive for variety and new turns of phrase but, on the contrary and in keeping with the true nature of spirit, renews the thought in the same words! And it is—indeed, it is very upbuilding to see how Scripture manages to describe the highest with this simple word and to do it in the most inward way; it is almost like the miracle of that feeding with the limited supply that by being blessed stretched out so exceedingly that there were leftovers![2] And it is—indeed, it is very upbuilding when someone humbly manages to be satisfied with the scriptural word instead of busily making new discoveries that will busily displace the old, when someone gratefully and inwardly appropriates what has been handed down from the fathers and establishes a new acquaintance with the old and familiar. As children we no doubt have often played the game of Stranger[3]: this is precisely the earnestness, to be able to continue in earnest this upbuilding jest, to play Stranger with the old and familiar.

"To build up" is a metaphorical expression; yet with this secret of the spirit in mind, we shall now see *what this word signifies in ordinary speech*. "To build up" is formed from "to build" and the adverb "up," which consequently must receive the accent. Everyone who builds up does build, but not everyone who builds does build up. For example, when a man is building a wing on his house we do not say that he is building up a wing but that he is building *on*. Consequently, this "up" seems to indicate

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the direction in height, the upward direction. Yet this is not the case either. For example, if a man builds a sixty-foot building twenty feet higher, we still do not say that he *built up* the structure twenty feet higher—we say that he built *on*. Here the meaning of the word already becomes perceptible, for we see that it does not depend on height. However, if a man erects a house, be it ever so small and low, from the ground up, we say that he built up a house.[4] Thus to build up is to erect something *from the ground up*. This "up" does indeed indicate the direction as upward, but only when the height inversely is depth do we say "build up." Therefore if a man builds upward and from the ground but the depth does not correspond properly to the height, we do say that he built up but also that he built it up poorly, whereas by "build poorly" we understand something else. With regard to building up, then, the emphasis rests especially on building from the ground up. We certainly do not call building into the ground building up; we do not say that we are building up a well. If there is to be any talk of building up, then no matter how high or low the building becomes, the work must be *from the ground up*. Thus we may say of someone: He began to build up a house, but he did not finish. However, we can never say of someone who added ever so much to the building in height that he built it up if he did not do it from the ground up. How strange! This "up" in "build up" indicates height, but it indicates height inversely as depth, since to build up is to build from the ground up. This is why Scripture also says of the foolish man that he "built without a foundation";[5] but of the person who hears the word to his true upbuilding or, according to Scripture, the person who hears the word and does accordingly, of him it says that he is like a person who built a house and "dug deep" (Luke 6:48). Therefore when the floodwaters came and the storm beat upon this soundly built-up house,[6] we all rejoiced at the upbuilding sight, that the storm was unable to shake it. As we said, when it comes to building up, the point is to build a foundation. It is commendable that before beginning a man calculates "how high he can erect the tower,"[7] but if he is going to build up, then by all means have him be careful to dig deep, because even if the tower reached the sky, if this were possible,

if it lacked a foundation, it would not actually be built up. To
IX 204 build up without a foundation at all is impossible—it is building in the air. Therefore, one is linguistically correct in speaking of "building air castles"; one does not say "build up air castles," which would be careless and incorrect use of language. Even in a phrase denoting something insignificant there must be congruity between the separate words; there is none between "in the air" and "to build up," since the former takes away the foundation and the latter refers to this "from the ground up." The combination, therefore, would be a false overstatement.

So it is with the expression "to build up" in the literal sense; let us now bear in mind that it is a metaphorical expression and proceed to the subject of this deliberation:

Love builds up.

But is "to build up," in the spiritual sense, a predicate so characteristic of love that it is suitable solely and only for it? Ordinarily it is the case with a predicate that there are many objects that all equally, even though in varying degrees, have a claim to one and the same predicate. If this is the case with "to build up," it would be wrong to emphasize it so particularly in relation to love as this deliberation does. It would be an endeavor based on a misunderstanding to impute arrogance to love, as if it wanted to monopolize or usurp what it shared with others—and to share with others is precisely what love is willing to do since it "never seeks its own" (I Corinthians 13:5). Yet it is truly so that "to build up" is exclusively characteristic of love. On the other hand, this quality of building up has in turn the characteristic of being able to give itself in everything, be present in everything—just as love has. Thus we see that love, in this its characteristic quality, does not set itself apart and alongside another; neither does it plume itself on any independence and being-for-itself but completely gives itself; the characteristic is that it exclusively has the quality of giving itself completely.

There is nothing, nothing at all, that cannot be done or said in such a way that it becomes upbuilding, but whatever it is, if it is upbuilding, then love is present. Thus the admonition, just where love itself admits the difficulty of giving a specific rule,

says, "Do everything for upbuilding."[8] It could just as well have said, "Do everything in love," and it would have said the very same thing. One person can do exactly the opposite of what another person does, but if each one does the opposite—in love—the opposite becomes upbuilding. There is no word in the language that in itself is upbuilding, and there is no word in the language that cannot be said in an upbuilding way and become upbuilding if love is present. Thus it is so very far from being the case that the upbuilding would be something that is an *excellence* of a few gifted individuals, similar to brains, literary talent, beauty, and the like (alas, this is just an unloving and divisive error!) that on the contrary it is the very opposite—every human being by his life, by his conduct, by his behavior in everyday affairs, by his association with his peers, by his words, his remarks, should and could build up and would do it if love were really present in him. IX 205

We, too, notice this ourselves, since we use the word "upbuilding" in the widest range, but what we perhaps do not explain to ourselves is that we still use it only wherever love is present. Yet this is the correct usage of language: to be scrupulous about not using this word except where love is present and in turn, by this limitation, to make its range limitless, since everything can be upbuilding in the same sense as love can be everywhere present. For example, when we see a solitary person managing by commendable frugality to get along thriftily with little, we honor and praise him, we are cheered, and we are confirmed in the good by this sight, but we do not actually say that it is an upbuilding sight. When, however, we see how a housewife, one who has many to care for, by means of frugality and wise thriftiness lovingly knows how to confer a blessing on the little so that there still is enough for all, we say that this is an upbuilding sight. The upbuilding consists in this, that we see the housewife's loving solicitude at the same time as we see the frugality and thrift, which we honor. On the other hand we say that it is a scarcely upbuilding, a dismal sight to see someone who in a way is starving in abundance and who still has nothing at all left over for others. We say that it is a revolting sight; we are disgusted at his luxury; we shudder to think of self-indulgence's

dreadful revenge—to starve in abundance—but our seeking in vain for the slightest expression of love is decisive for us when we say that it is scarcely upbuilding.

When we see a large family packed into a small apartment and yet see it inhabiting a cozy, friendly, spacious apartment—we say it is an upbuilding sight because we see the love that must be in each and every individual, since of course one unloving person would already be enough to occupy the whole place. We say it because we see that there actually is room where there is heart-
IX 206 room. On the other hand, it is scarcely upbuilding to see a restless soul inhabit a palace without finding rest in a single one of the many spacious rooms, and yet without being able to spare or do without the smallest cubbyhole.

Indeed, what is there that cannot be upbuilding in this way! We would not think that the sight of a person sleeping could be upbuilding. Yet if you see a baby sleeping on its mother's breast—and you see the mother's love,[9] see that she has, so to speak, waited for and now makes use of the moment while the baby is sleeping really to rejoice in it because she hardly dares let the baby notice how inexpressibly she loves it—then this is an upbuilding sight. If the mother's love is not visible, if in vain you search her face and countenance for the slightest expression of maternal joy or solicitude for the baby, if you see only apathy and indifference that is happy to be free of the child so long—then the sight is not upbuilding. Just to see the baby sleeping is a friendly, benevolent, soothing sight, but it is not upbuilding. If you still want to call it upbuilding, it is because you see love present, it is because you see God's love encompass the baby. To see the great artist finishing his masterpiece is a glorious and uplifting sight, but it is not upbuilding. Suppose this masterpiece was a marvelous piece; if, now, the artist, out of love for a person, smashed it to pieces—then this sight would be upbuilding.

Wherever upbuilding is, there is love, and wherever love is, there is upbuilding. This is why Paul declares that a person without love, even if he spoke in the tongues of men and of angels, is like a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.[10] What, indeed, can be less upbuilding than a tinkling cymbal! The things of this world, however glorious they are and however acclaimed, are

without love and therefore are not upbuilding; the most insignificant word, the slightest action with love or in love is upbuilding. Therefore knowledge puffs up.[11] Yet knowledge and the communication of knowledge can indeed also be upbuilding, but if they are, then it is because love is present. To commend oneself hardly seems upbuilding, and yet this, too, can be upbuilding. Does not Paul at times do it? But he does it in love and therefore, as he himself says, "for upbuilding."[12] A discourse about what can be upbuilding would therefore be the most interminable discourse of all discourses, inasmuch as everything can be that; it would be the most interminable discourse, just as it is the most grievous charge that can be made against the world—that we see and hear so little that is upbuilding. If it is rare to see riches, it makes no difference; we wish and prefer to see ordinary prosperity. If it is rare to see a masterpiece, in a certain sense it makes no difference, and to the majority of people it makes no difference. Not so with the upbuilding. At every moment there lives this countless throng of people; it is possible that everything that any human being undertakes, everything that any human being says, can be upbuilding—and yet it is very rare to see or hear anything upbuilding! IX 207

[13]Love builds up. Let us now consider what was developed in the introduction, by which we promptly made sure that the discourse would not go astray by choosing an insuperable task, inasmuch as everything can be upbuilding. To build up is to erect something from the ground up. In ordinary talk about a house, a building, everyone knows what is meant by the ground and the foundation. But what, in the spiritual sense, is the ground and foundation of the spiritual life that is to bear the building? It is love. Love is the source of everything and, in the spiritual sense, love is the deepest ground of the spiritual life. In every human being in whom there is love, the foundation, in the spiritual sense, is laid. And the building that, in the spiritual sense, is to be erected is again love, and it is love that builds up. Love builds up, and this means it builds up love. In this way the task is circumscribed. The discourse does not spread itself out in particulars and multiplicities, does not confusedly begin something that it must arbitrarily break off somewhere in order to have an ending. No,

it concentrates itself and its attention on the essential, on the one and the same thing in all the multiplicity. From the beginning to the end, the discourse is about love because building up is love's most characteristic specification. Love is the ground, love is the building, love builds up. To build up is to build up love, and it is love that builds up. To be sure, we do at times speak in a more ordinary sense about building up; in contrast to the corruption that only wants to tear down, or in contrast to the confusion that can only tear down and disrupt, we say that the capable person builds up, is one who knows how to guide and to lead, one who knows how to teach effectively in his field, one who is a master in his art. Any such person builds up in contrast to tearing down. But all this building up, in knowledge, in insight, in expertness,
IX 208 in integrity, etc., insofar as it does not build up love, is still not upbuilding in the deepest sense. This is because, spiritually, love is the *ground*, and to build up means to erect from *the ground up.*

Therefore when the discourse is about the work of love in building up, *either* this must mean that the one who loves implants love in another person's heart, *or* it must mean that the one who loves presupposes that love is in the other person's heart, and by this very presupposition he builds up love in him—from the ground up, provided, of course, that in love he indeed presupposes its presence in the ground. To build up must be one of the two. But can one human being implant love in another human being's heart? No, this is a suprahuman relationship, an inconceivable relationship between human beings; in this sense human love cannot build up. It is God, the Creator, who must implant love in each human being, he who himself is Love. Thus it is specifically unloving and not at all upbuilding if someone arrogantly deludes himself into believing that he wants and is able to create love in another person; all busy and pompous zeal in this regard neither builds up love nor is it itself upbuilding. The first relationship of building up would then be inconceivable; hence we must think about the second. In this way we have achieved the explanation of what it is that love builds up, and it is on this that we shall dwell: *The one who loves presupposes that love is in the other person's heart and by this very presupposition builds up*

love in him—from the ground up, provided, of course, that in love he presupposes its presence in the ground.

The discourse, then, cannot be about what the loving person, who wants to build up, is to do now in order to transform the other person or in order through the exercise of control to produce love in him, but it is about how the loving one upbuildingly controls himself. As you see, it is already upbuilding to bear in mind that the one who loves builds up by controlling himself! Only the unloving person fancies that he should build up by controlling the other; the one who loves presupposes continually that love is present and in just that way he builds up. A builder gives little thought to the stones and the gravel he is to use for the building; a teacher presupposes that the pupil is ignorant; a disciplinarian presupposes that the other person is corrupted—but someone who loves and builds up has only one course of action, to presuppose love. What is to be done in addition can continually be only to control himself in order continually to presuppose love. In this way he draws out the good, he loves forth [*opelske*] love, he builds up. Love can and will be treated in only one way, IX 209
by being loved forth; to love it forth is to build up. But to love it forth is indeed to presuppose that it is present in the ground. A person can be tempted to be a builder, a teacher, a disciplinarian because this seems to be ruling over others; but to build up the way love does cannot tempt, because this means to be the one who serves; therefore, because it is willing to serve, only love has the desire to build up.

The master builder can point to his work and say, "This is my work"; the teacher can point to his pupil; but love that builds up has nothing to point to, since its work consists only of presupposing. This is again very upbuilding to consider. Suppose that someone who loves succeeded in building up love in another person. Then when the building is standing there, the loving one stands off by himself and, abashed, he says, "I presupposed it all the time." Ah, the one who loves has no merit at all. The building is not like a monument to the builder's craft or, like the pupil, a memento of the teacher's instruction; after all, the one who loves has done nothing but presuppose that love was present in

the ground. The one who loves works very quietly and very solemnly, and yet the forces of eternity are in motion. Love humbly makes itself inconspicuous just when it is working the hardest—indeed, its work seems as if it did nothing at all.

Alas, to busyness and worldliness this is the greatest foolishness: that in a certain sense doing nothing at all should be the most difficult work. Yet this is the case. It is more difficult to control one's temper than to capture a city,[14] and it is more difficult to build up the way love does than to complete the most amazing undertaking. If in regard to oneself it is difficult to control one's temper, how difficult then in regard to another person to make oneself absolutely nothing and yet do everything and suffer everything! If it is usually difficult to begin without presuppositions,[15] it is truly most difficult of all to begin to build up with the presupposition that love is present and to end with the same presupposition—in that case one's entire work is made into almost nothing beforehand, inasmuch as the presupposition first and last is self-denial, or the builder is concealed and is as nothing.

Therefore we can compare this upbuilding of love only with the secret working of nature. While people sleep, the forces of nature sleep neither at night nor by day;[16] no one gives a thought
IX 210 to how they continue—while everyone delights in the beauty of the meadow and the fruitfulness of the field. Love acts in the same way; it presupposes that love is present, like the germ in the grain of wheat, and if it succeeds in bringing it to fruition, love conceals itself just as it was concealed while it worked early and late. Yet the upbuilding in nature is this: you see all this glory, and then it grips you in an upbuilding way when you begin to ponder the amazing fact that you do not see the one who brings it forth. If you could see God with the physical eye, if he, if I dare say this, stood alongside and said, "It is I who have brought forth all this," the upbuilding would vanish.

Love builds up by presupposing that love is present. In this way the one who loves builds up the other, and it is easy enough to presuppose love where it is obviously present. Alas, but love is never completely present in any human being, inasmuch as it is indeed possible to do something else than to presuppose it, to discover some fault and weakness in it. If someone has unlov-

ingly discovered this, he perhaps wants, as we say, to remove it, to pull out the splinter[17] in order to build up love properly. But love builds up. [18]To him who loves much, much is forgiven;[19] but the more perfect the loving one presupposes the love to be, the more perfect a love he loves forth. Among all the relationships in the world, there is no other relationship in which there is such a like for like, in which the result so accurately corresponds to what was presupposed. One raises no objection, does not appeal to experience, because this is indeed unloving, arbitrarily to set a day when the result will now be manifest. Love has no understanding of such things; it is eternally confident of the fulfillment of the presupposition; if this is not the case, then love is on the way to being exhausted.

Love builds up by presupposing that love is present in the ground; therefore love also builds up where, in the human sense, love seems to be lacking and where, in the human sense, it seems first and foremost necessary to tear down, yet not for the sake of desire but for the sake of salvation. The opposite of building up is tearing down. This contrast never appears more clearly than when the theme of the discourse is that love builds up, for in whatever other connection building up is discussed, it still has a similarity to tearing down—that it is doing something to someone else. But when the one who loves builds up, it is the very opposite of tearing down, because the one who loves does something to himself—he presupposes that love is present in the other person—which certainly is the very opposite of doing something to the other person. To tear down satisfies the sensate person only all too easily; to build up in the sense of doing something to the other person can also satisfy the sensate, but to build up by conquering oneself satisfies only love; yet this is the only way to build up. But in the well-intentioned zeal to tear down and to build up we forget that ultimately no human being is capable of laying the ground of love in the other person. IX 211

Right here we see how difficult is the art of building that love practices and that is described in that renowned passage by the Apostle Paul (I Corinthians 13); what is said *there* about love is simply more precise specifications of how love acts in building up. "*Love is patient*"; it builds up in this way, because patience is

after all simply perseverance in presupposing that love is indeed present in the ground. The one who judges, even if he goes at it slowly,[20] the one who judges that the other person lacks love—he takes away the foundation; he cannot build up, but love builds up by patience. Therefore "*it is not jealous*" or "*resentful*" because jealousy and resentment would deny love in the other person and thereby lay waste, if it were possible, the foundation. But love, which builds up, bears the other person's misunderstanding, his ingratitude, his anger—that is already enough to bear; how then should love be able to be jealous and resentful! This is how things are divided in the world: the person who is jealous and resentful does not in turn bear another person's burdens, but the one who loves is not jealous and resentful—he bears the burdens. Each one bears his burden, the one who is jealous and the one who loves. In a certain sense they both become martyrs, for as a pious man has said: The jealous person is also a martyr—but the devil's.[21]

"*Love does not seek its own*"; therefore it builds up. The one who seeks his own must of course push everything else to the side, must tear down in order to make room for his own, which
IX 212 he wants to build up. But love presupposes that love is present in the ground and therefore it builds up.

"*It does not rejoice at wrong*," but one who wants to tear down or at least wants to become important through the idea that it is necessary to tear down must be said to rejoice at wrong—otherwise there would not be anything to tear down. Love, however, rejoices in presupposing that love is present in the ground; therefore it builds up.

"*Love bears all things*," for what is it to bear all things—it is ultimately to find in all things the love that is presupposed in the ground. When we say of a very healthy person that with regard to eating and drinking everything agrees with him, we mean that his health draws its nourishment even from something unhealthful (just as the sickly person is harmed even by healthful food); we mean that his health draws nourishment out of what seems to be least nourishing. This is how love bears all things, by continually presupposing that love is at least present in the ground—and it builds up in this way.

"*Love believes all things*," because to believe all things means to presuppose that love, even though it is not seen—indeed, even though the opposite is seen—is still present in the ground, even in the misguided, even in the corrupted, even in the most hateful. Mistrust takes away the very foundation by presupposing that love is not present—therefore mistrust cannot build up.

"*Love hopes all things*," but to hope all things indeed means to presuppose that love, even though it is not seen—indeed, even though the opposite is seen—is still present in the ground, and that it is bound to show itself in the erring person, in the misguided, even in the lost. See, the prodigal son's father was perhaps the only one who did not know that he had a prodigal son, because the father's love hoped all things.[22] The brother knew immediately that he was hopelessly prodigal. [23]But love builds up, and the father won back the prodigal son simply because he, who hoped all things, presupposed that love was present in the ground. Despite the son's aberrations, there was no break on the father's side (and a break, of course, is just the opposite of building up); he hoped all things, and therefore he truly did build up through his fatherly forgiveness just because the son very vividly perceived that the fatherly love had persevered with him and thus there had been no break.

"*Love endures all things*," because to endure all things is simply to presuppose that love is present in the ground. When we say that the mother puts up with all her child's naughtiness, are we saying that as a woman she is patiently suffering evil? No, we are saying something else, that as a mother she is continually remembering that this is a child and thus is continually presupposing that the child still loves her and that this will surely show itself. Otherwise we would talk about how patience endures all things, not about how love endures all things. Patience endures all things and is silent; and if the mother endured the child's naughtiness in that way, then we would actually say that the mother and the child had become strangers to each other. Love, however, endures all things, is patiently silent—but quietly presupposes that love is still present in the other person. IX 213

This is how love builds up. "*It is not arrogant, it is not impetuous, it is not irritable*." It is not arrogant in the opinion that it should

create love in the other person, it is not irritable and impetuous, impatient, almost hopelessly busy with what it must first tear down in order to build up again; no, it continually presupposes that love is present in the ground. Therefore it is unconditionally the most upbuilding sight to see love build up, a sight that is upbuilding even for the angels; and therefore it is unconditionally the most upbuilding if someone succeeds in speaking properly about how love builds up. There is many a friendly, many a benevolent, many a charming, many a gripping, many an uplifting, many a captivating, many a convincing sight and so on, but there is only one upbuilding sight—to see love build up. Therefore, whatever of the horrible or detestable you have seen in the world, which you wished you could forget because it will destroy your courage, your confidence, give you a distaste for life and a disgust with living, just bear in mind how love builds up and you are built up to live! There are many different subjects to speak about, but there is only one that is upbuilding—how love builds up. Therefore whatever may have happened to you, something so embittering that you could wish to have never been born and to become silent in death, the sooner the better—just bear in mind how love builds up and you will again be built up to speak! There is only one upbuilding sight and only one upbuilding subject; yet everything can be said and done in an upbuilding way, because wherever the upbuilding is, love is there, and wherever love is, the upbuilding is there, and as soon as love is present, it builds up.

Love builds up by presupposing that love is present. Have you not experienced this yourself, my listener? If anyone has ever spoken to you in such a way or treated you in such a way that you really felt built up, this was because you very vividly perceived how he presupposed love to be in you. Or what kind of person do you
IX 214 think one would be who could truly build you up? Is it not true that you would desire him to have insight and knowledge and talent and experience? But you still would not consider that it depended crucially on this, but rather on his being a trustworthy, loving person—that is, truly a loving person. Therefore you consider that to build up depends crucially and essentially upon being loving or having love to such a degree that one can rely upon it.

But what, then, is love? Love is to presuppose love; to have love is to presuppose love in others; to be loving is to presuppose that others are loving. Let us understand each other. The qualities a person may have must be either qualities he has for himself, even if he uses them against others, or qualities for others. Wisdom is a being-for-itself quality; power, talent, knowledge, etc. are likewise being-for-itself qualities. To be wise does not mean to presuppose that others are wise; on the contrary, it may be very wise and true if the truly wise person assumes that far from all people are wise. Indeed, because "wise" is a being-for-itself quality, there is nothing in the thought to prevent assuming that there could be living or there has lived a wise person who dared to say that he assumed all others to be unwise. There is no contradiction in the thought (to be wise—and to assume that all others are unwise). In the actuality of life, such an expression would be arrogance, but in the thought simply as such there is no contradiction. If, however, someone were to think that he was loving, but also that all others were not loving, we would say: No, stop, here is a contradiction in the thought itself, because to be loving is to assume, to presuppose, that other people are loving.

Love is not a being-for-itself quality but a quality by which or in which you are for others. In summing up a person's qualities, we do in fact say in everyday speech that he is wise, sensible, loving—and we do not notice what a difference there is between the last quality and the first ones. His wisdom, his experience, his sensibleness he has for himself, even though he benefits others with them; but if he is truly loving, then he does not have love in the same sense as he has wisdom, but his love consists precisely in this, to presuppose that the rest of us have love. You praise him for being loving; you think that it is a quality he possesses, as it indeed is; you feel built up by him just because he is loving, but you do not perceive that the explanation is that his love signifies that he presupposes love in you and that you are built up by this, that the love in you is built up by this. If it actually were the case that a person could be loving but this love did not signify the presupposing of love in others, then in the deepest sense you would not feel built up, however trustworthy it was that he was loving; you would not in the deepest sense feel built up any more

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than you are in the deepest sense built up, however trustworthy it is that he is wise, sensible, experienced, learned. If it were possible that he could be truly loving but this did not signify the presupposing of love in others, then you could not completely depend on him either, because the trustworthiness of one who loves is this—that even when you doubt yourself, doubt that there is love in you, he is loving enough to presuppose it, or, more correctly, he is the loving one who presupposes it.

But you were insisting that a person, in order truly to build up, must truly be loving. It has now become manifest that to be loving means: to presuppose love in others. So you are saying exactly the same thing that has been developed in the discourse.

So, then, the deliberation goes back to its beginning. To build up is to presuppose love; to be loving is to presuppose love; only love builds up. To build up is to erect something from the ground up—but, spiritually, love is the ground of everything. No human being can place the ground of love in another person's heart; yet love is the ground, and we can build up only from the ground up; therefore we can build up only by presupposing love. Take love away—then there is no one who builds up and no one who is built up.

II

Love Believes All Things—and Yet Is Never Deceived

I Corinthians 13:7. Love believes all things.

"So faith, hope, and love abide, these three, but the greatest among these is love,"[24] which therefore is also the ground of all things, is before all things, and remains when all else is abolished. Love is therefore "the greatest" among "these," but the one that in the sense of perfection (and what greater perfection is there for comparison than faith and hope!) is the greatest must also be able to take upon itself the function of the subordinates, if I may put it this way, and make it even more perfect. In a worldly way someone may at times be the most prominent without being the greatest in the sense of perfection, but this is the imperfection of worldliness. It does in truth hold that the greatest must be able to do what the lesser are able to do, and love is in truth able to take upon itself faith's and hope's work and make it even more perfect.

We shall now bear this in mind as we consider:

Love believes all things—and yet is never deceived.

We shall first consider how we are to understand that love believes all things and then how the one who loves, just by believing everything, can be secured against every deception. Truly, not everyone who believes all things is therefore one who loves, and not everyone who believes all things is on that account secured against every deception—not even faith if it will believe all things. And if it might even seem that to be secured against every deception is a good for love, an advantage it has, then this view actually would not be appropriate as a subject for deliberation in

a book about the *works* of love—but this is not so. To be secured against every deception is a work, is a task, completely synonymous with believing all things. Thus we can unconditionally just as well say that love believes all things as that it never is deceived, since it is one and the same thing. It is not as is usually the case, that to act is one thing and the sagacity, which sees to it one is not deceived, is something else. Nor is it the case, according to the understanding of sagacity, that love is never deceived, since to love in such a way that one is never deceived is in the opinion and the language of sagacity the most obtuse and fatuous thing one can do—indeed, it is an offense to sagacity and therefore is clearly identifiable as belonging essentially to Christianity.

Love believes all things. —Light-mindedness, inexperience, naiveté believe everything that is said; vanity, conceit, complacency believe everything flattering that is said; envy, malice, corruption believe everything evil that is said; mistrust [*Mistroiskhed*] believes [*tro*] nothing at all; experience will teach that it is most sagacious not to believe everything—but love believes all things.

Therefore mistrust believes nothing at all; it does exactly the opposite of what love does. Ordinarily mistrust is not well regarded by people, but from this it does not necessarily follow either that they are fully agreed to abhor all mistrust or that they are fully agreed to praise unconditionally the love that believes all things. Strangely enough, they perhaps prefer to make a compromise—that is, a contentious compromise between mistrust, which is only slightly loving and yet believes something, and love, which is only slightly mistrustful and yet has a misgiving or two. Indeed, if one wanted to render mistrust's shrewd secret properly, in supranatural magnitude to attire it in the dazzling appearance of sagacity, cunning, and ingenuity, it certainly would tempt many. Perhaps there would be someone who would sagaciously have us understand that this was exactly what he had discovered—and be proud of his discovery. In contrast to this, love, which believes all things, would certainly make a very poor showing, as happens very often with the good; then many a one would not even have the courage to admit that he could want to be so simpleminded.

What, specifically, is mistrust's shrewd secret? It is a misuse of knowledge, a misuse that summarily, in one breath, wants to attach its "ergo" to what as knowledge is entirely true and becomes something entirely different only when, upside down, it is believed by virtue of that which is just as impossible as it is upside-down, since one does not believe by virtue of knowledge. What mistrust says or presents is really only knowledge; the secret and the falsity lie in this, that it summarily converts this knowledge into a belief and pretends that nothing has happened, pretends that it is something that does not even need to be noticed, "since everyone who has the same knowledge must *necessarily* come to the same conclusion," as if it were therefore eternally certain and entirely decided that when knowledge is given then how one concludes is also given. IX 218

The deception is that *from* knowledge (the pretense and the falsity are that it is by virtue of knowledge) mistrust concludes, assumes, and believes what it concludes, assumes, and believes *by virtue* of the disbelief inherent in mistrust, whereas *from* the same knowledge, *by virtue* of belief, one can conclude, assume, and believe the very opposite. Mistrust says, "Deception extends unconditionally just as far as the truth, falsity unconditionally just as far as honesty; there is no unconditional mark of truth or of honesty and integrity. So it is also with love. In deceiving, hypocrisy and trickery and wiliness and seduction extend unconditionally just as far as love does, and they can resemble true love so deceptively that there is no unconditional mark, because along with every expression of the truth, or here of true love, there is also the possibility of a deception that corresponds to it exactly." So it is, and so it must be.

Just because existence [*Tilværelse*] has to test *you*, test *your* love, or whether there is love in you, for this very reason and with the help of the understanding existence confronts you with the truth and the deception in the equilibrium of the opposite possibilities so that as *you* now judge, that is, as you now in judging *choose*, what dwells in you must become disclosed. Alas, many think that judgment is something reserved for the far side of the grave, and so it is also, but they forget that judgment is much closer than that, that it is taking place at all times, because at every moment

you live existence is judging you, since to live is to judge oneself, to become disclosed. This is why existence must be arranged in such a way that you do not, with the aid of a reliability of knowledge, sneak out of disclosing yourself in judging or in the way you judge.

When deception and truth are then placed in the equilibrium
IX 219 of opposite possibilities, the decision is whether there is mistrust or love in you. See, someone says, "Even what appears to be the purest feeling could still be a deception." Well, yes, that is possible; it must be possible. "Ergo I choose mistrust or choose to believe nothing." That is, he discloses his mistrust. Let us reverse the conclusion: "Truth and falsity reach unconditionally just as far; therefore it is possible that even something that appears to be the vilest behavior could be pure love." Well, yes, it is possible, it must be possible. Ergo the one who loves chooses to believe all things—that is, he discloses his love. A confused person no doubt believes that existence is a rather muddied element—ah, the sea is not so transparent! If, then, someone can demonstrate on the basis of the possibility of deception that one should not believe anything at all, I can demonstrate that one should believe everything—on the basis of the possibility of deception. If someone thinks that one should not believe even the best of persons, because it is still possible that he is a deceiver, then the reverse also holds true, that you can credit even the worst person with the good, because it is still possible that his badness is an appearance.

Love is the very opposite of mistrust, and yet it is initiated into the same knowledge. In knowledge they are, if you please, indistinguishable (in the infinite sense, knowledge is indeed indifferent); only in the conclusion and in the decision, in *faith* (to believe all things and to believe nothing) are they the very opposite. In other words, when love believes everything, it is by no means in the same sense as light-mindedness, inexperience, and naiveté, which believe everything on the basis of ignorance and inexperience. No, love is as knowledgeable as anyone, knows everything that mistrust knows, yet without being mistrustful, knows everything that experience knows, but also knows that what we call experience is actually that mixture of mistrust and love.

"How much that is hidden may still reside in a person, or how

much may still reside hidden! How inventive is hidden inwardness in hiding itself and in deceiving or evading others, the hidden inwardness that preferred that no one would suspect its existence, modestly afraid of being seen and mortally afraid of being entirely disclosed! Is it not so that the one person never completely understands the other? But if he does not understand him completely, then of course it is always possible that the most indisputable thing could still have a completely different explanation that would, note well, be the true explanation, since an assumption can indeed explain a great number of instances very well and thereby confirm its truth and yet show itself to be untrue as soon as the instance comes along that it cannot explain—and it would indeed be possible that this instance or this somewhat more precise specification could come even at the last moment. Therefore all calm and, in the intellectual sense, dispassionate observers, who eminently know how to delve searchingly and penetratingly into the inner being, these very people judge with such infinite caution or refrain from it entirely because, enriched by observation, they have a developed conception of the enigmatic world of the hidden, and because as observers they have learned to rule over their passions. Only superficial, impetuous, passionate people, who do not know themselves and for that reason naturally are unaware that they do not know others, judge precipitously. Those with insight, those who know, never do this. IX 220

"An inexperienced youth, who may never have sat on a horse before, promptly leaps on the first horse that comes along, but the tough and yet very practiced riding master—notice how carefully he examines the strange horse the first time he is to mount it, how dubiously and cautiously he goes about it, how he scarcely dares to mount it but first lets it run on a line in order to study its disposition, and on the other hand, how long he keeps on checking, long, long after the inexperienced person has quit. The inexperienced person, who does not know horses at all, thinks 'One horse is just like another—ergo I know them all.' Only the riding master has a developed conception of what a great difference there can be, of how one can be mistaken about a horse in the most varied and opposite ways, and of how dubi-

ous any criteria are because each horse has its own distinctive characteristics.

"And now the differences between human beings! How infinite! If it were not so, then humanity would be degraded, because humanity's superiority over animals is not only the one most often mentioned, the universally human, but is also what is most often forgotten, that within the species each individual is the essentially different or distinctive. This superiority is in a very real sense the human superiority; the former is the superiority of the race over the animal species. Indeed, if it were not so that one human being, honest, upright, respectable, God-fearing, can under the same circumstances do the very opposite of what another human being does who is also honest, upright, respectable, God-fearing, then the God-relationship would not essentially exist, would not exist in its deepest meaning. If we were able with unconditioned truth to judge every human being according to a universally given criterion, then the God-relationship would be essentially abolished, then everything would be oriented exIX teriorly and find its completion paganly in political or social life,
221 then living would become too easy but also exceedingly empty, then the effort as well as the self-deepening that develop the God-relationship in a human being in the most difficult collision of infinite misunderstanding would be neither possible nor necessary, and yet precisely in the most difficult collision of infinite misunderstanding the God-relationship develops in a person."

Now, can you tell me who said this? No, it is an impossibility. It is completely equivocal; in the capacity of a knower, the most mistrustful and the most loving person could equally well have said it. No human being has said it; it is nonhumanly spoken; it is a consonant that becomes human speech only in the aspiration of the differentiating personality who articulates it by providing a voice. [25]It is knowledge, and knowledge as such is impersonal and is to be communicated impersonally.[26] Knowledge places everything in possibility and to that extent is outside the actuality of existence in possibility. The individual first begins his life with "ergo," with *belief.* But most people live so negligently that they do not notice at all that in one way or another, every minute they live, they live by virtue of an "ergo," of a belief. There is no

decision in knowledge; the decision, the determination, and the firmness of personality are first in the "ergo," in belief. Knowledge is the infinite art of equivocation, or infinite equivocation; at most it is simply a placing of opposite possibilities in equilibrium. To be able to do this is to be knowing, and only the one who knows how to communicate opposite possibilities in equilibrium to another, only he communicates knowledge.

To communicate decision in knowledge or knowledge in decision is an upside-downness, as it certainly has become in these times—indeed, it is and remains upside-downness, but in these times it has become the genuinely profound, the genuine profundity of thinking in depth. Knowledge is not mistrust, since knowledge is infinitely equal [*ligelig*], is the infinite indifference [*Ligegyldighed*] in equilibrium [*Ligevægt*]. Nor is knowledge love, since knowledge is infinitely equal, is the infinite indifference in equilibrium. Neither is knowledge defilement, since it is infinite indifference. The mistrustful person and the loving person have knowledge in common, and neither is the mistrustful person mistrustful through this knowledge nor is the loving person one who loves through this knowledge. But when knowledge in a person has placed the opposite possibilities in equilibrium and he is obliged or wills to judge, then who he is, whether he is mistrustful or loving, becomes apparent in what he believes about it. Only half-experienced[27] and very confused people think of judging another person on the basis of knowledge. This is due to their not even knowing what knowledge is, to their never having taken the time and effort to develop the infinite, equal sense for possibilities or with the infinite art of equivocation to grasp the IX
possibilities and bring them into equilibrium or to ponder them 222
in transparency. In a kind of ferment, they have a sluggish or vehement preference for a certain kind of possibility; a little of it is enough, so they judge, and they call this a judging on the basis of knowledge and smugly think that by—believing—in this way on the basis of knowledge (sheer contradiction) they are secured against making mistakes—something that is supposed to pertain only to belief (a new contradiction).

[28]It is very common to hear people express a great fear of making a mistake in judging, but if you listen more closely to what

they say, alas, there is very often a sad misunderstanding in this—solemn fear. See, that noble, simple, wise man of ancient times, he became what he became—well, it was not anything great, neither a great financier nor a high-ranking public official in this best of worlds. Impoverished, ridiculed, scorned, accused, condemned, he became the noble, simple, wise man of old, yet the rarity, almost the only one who actually made a distinction between what he understood and what he did not understand, and he became that just because he "feared most to be in error."[29]

Is it this loftiness, this equilibrium of loftiness, that people have in mind when they are afraid of making a mistake in judging? Perhaps. Yet it is of course also possible that the fear is at times somewhat one-sided. We human beings have a natural fear of making a mistake—by thinking too well of another person. On the other hand, the error of thinking too ill of another person is perhaps not feared, or at least not in proportion to the first. But then we do not fear most to be in error, then we are still in error by having a one-sided fear of a certain kind of error. It offends vanity and pride to think or to have thought too well of the swindler, to have been fatuous enough to believe him—because it is a competition between sagacity and sagacity. One is vexed with oneself or at least finds it "so stupid" to have been made a fool of (yes, this is how we talk, and indeed, it is of little use or, more correctly, it is a deception to use a more solemn, an alienating expression in the upbuilding discourse). But, to put it mildly, should it not seem just as stupid to us to have believed the evil or mistrustingly to have believed nothing—where there was good! Will it not sometime in eternity become even more than "stu-
IX pid"; let us use only the word continually used in the world—it
223 looks so good in connection with eternity! But here in the world it is not "stupid" to believe ill of a good person; after all, it is an arrogance by which one gets rid of the good in a convenient way. But it is "stupid" to believe well of an evil person; so one safeguards oneself—since what one so greatly fears is being in error. On the other hand, the loving person truly fears being in error; therefore he believes all things.

The world tempts in many ways, among them by making it appear that *lovingly* to believe all things would be very shallow,

very fatuous. But this is a misunderstanding. We draw a line over love (instead, alas, of underlining it!) and thus put the emphasis on the fatuous phrase: believes all things—whereas the whole emphasis lies rather on the fact that it is *love* that believes all things. Truly it is not knowledge that defiles a person—far from it. Knowledge is like sheer transparency when most perfect and purest, just as the perfection of water is to have no taste. The servant of justice is not defiled because he is better informed about all shady dealings than the criminal. No, knowledge does not defile a person; it is mistrust that defiles a person's knowledge, just as love purifies it.

As far as judging another person is concerned, knowledge at best leads to the equilibrium of the opposite possibilities—thereupon the difference becomes apparent in what is now decided. Scripture warns against judging and adds, "that you be not judged in return";[30] thus it seems as if at times one could judge without being judged in return. But this is not the case. In the very same minute when you judge another person or criticize another person, you judge yourself, because when all is said and done, to judge someone else is to judge yourself or to be disclosed yourself. Perhaps it escapes your attention; perhaps you do not notice how earnest existence is, how by showing you all these many people it is prompting you, as it were, to judge. Thus you even count yourself fortunate to be among those—undeservedly favored fortunate people who are nobodies and therefore in all nonchalance have the comfortable task of judging others—and then it is existence that is sufficiently polite or rigorous not to regard you as nothing; then it is existence that judges you. How avid a person can be to judge—if he knew what it is to judge, how slow he would become! How greedily he can snatch at even the least little crumb in order to have an opportunity to judge—it is an opportunity to catch himself! Through knowledge you come only to the equilibrium, especially when the art is practiced perfectly; but the conclusion turns back into the nature of the judge and discloses—that he is one who loves, because he concludes: ergo I believe all things. IX 224

Mistrust, on the other hand, has a preference for evil (not, of course, through its knowledge, which is the infinite indifference,

but through itself, through its *unbelief*). To believe nothing at all is the very border where believing evil begins; in other words, the good is the object of belief, and therefore someone who believes nothing at all begins to believe evil. To believe nothing at all is the beginning of *being* evil, because it shows that one has no good in oneself, since belief is the good in a person that does not come with much knowledge, nor is it necessarily lacking because the knowledge is meager. Mistrust cannot maintain knowledge in equilibrium; it defiles its knowledge and therefore verges on envy, malice, and corruption, which believe all evil.

But now what about the person who was so avid to judge, to vent his resentment, his powerful or powerless indignation, upon someone else without really knowing anything about what he was judging; what if in eternity he discovers, and is compelled to admit, that the person he judged was not only to be excused but that he was a most noble, unselfish, and magnanimous person! It has been said that some day in eternity we (hoping, alas, that we ourselves will not be excluded) shall with amazement miss this one and that one whom we had definitely expected to find there; but will we not with amazement also see this one and that one whom we would have summarily excluded and see that he was far better than we ourselves, not as if he had become that later, but precisely in that which made the judger decide to exclude him. Yet the person who loves believes all things. With the blessed joy of amazement, he will someday see that he was right; and if he made a mistake by believing too much of the good—to believe the good is in itself a blessing. Lovingly to believe the good is certainly no defect—but then one does not make a mistake by it either.

Mistrustingly to *believe* nothing at all (which is entirely different from *knowledge* about the equilibrium of opposite possibilities) and lovingly to *believe* all things are not a cognition, nor a cognitive conclusion, but a choice that occurs when knowledge
IX 225 has placed the opposite possibilities in equilibrium; and in this choice, which, to be sure, is in the form of a judgment of others, the one judging becomes disclosed. That light-mindedness, inexperience, and naiveté believe all things is a cognition, that is, a fatuous cognition; *lovingly to believe* all things is a choice on the

basis of love. Instead of using its acumen to safeguard itself in believing nothing, as mistrust does, love uses its acumen to discover the same thing, that deception and truth unconditionally extend equally far, and now concludes—on the basis of the faith it has within itself—ergo I believe all things.

Love believes all things—and yet is never deceived. Wonderful! It seems to make more sense to believe nothing at all in order never to be deceived, since how would one be able to deceive a person who believes nothing at all! But, by believing all things, to throw oneself away, as it were, a prey to all deceptions and all deceivers, and thus to secure oneself infinitely against every deception—this is strange. And yet, even though one is not deceived by others, is one not deceived, most terribly deceived, by oneself, to be sure, through believing nothing at all, deceived out of the highest, out of the blessedness of giving of oneself, the blessedness of love! No, there is only one way to safeguard oneself against never being deceived, and that is lovingly to believe all things.[31]

Let us say it this way: Can a human being deceive God? No, in relation to God a person can deceive only himself, because the God-relationship is the highest good in such a way that the one who deceives God deceives himself in the most terrible way. Or let us take a relationship between human beings: Can a child deceive his parents? No, the child deceives himself; it is only an appearance (that is, a deception), an illusion due to shortsightedness, that it seems to the child, and to someone who has no better understanding than a child, as if it were the child who deceived the parents, whereas the poor child, alas, essentially deceives himself. We may reasonably assume that in relation to the child the parents have such a superiority in wisdom and insight and therefore also such a superiority in true love for the child, who has only a poor notion of how to love himself, that to deceive the parents would be the worst misfortune that could befall the child, the worst misfortune—if it were not his own fault. But then—in truth—it is indeed not the parents who are deceived but rather the child, and it is an appearance (a deception) that the child deceived the parents. In a *childish* and *poor* sense, *it is true* that the child deceived the parents, but *then again* it is *not true*, since it is

true only in a "childish and poor sense." On the other hand,
IX 226 would it not be a pitiful, a disgusting sight to see a father or mother who in relation to the child did not have the true, earnest, concerned conception of superiority, grounded in truly willing, with eternal responsibility, the best for the child—would it not be a pitiful and disgusting sight to see a father or mother who therefore could sink into unseemly wrangling with the child, on their own account become irritated and indignant, because the father or mother had the childish and poor opinion that it was the child who deceived them! Such a relationship between parents and child is unseemly, indeed, almost insane, as if slapping a child would mean fighting with the child and thus, in disregard of all dignity, nobility, and authoritative superiority, simply and solely show only that the father or the mother was the stronger in the physical sense.

Therefore true superiority can never be deceived if it remains faithful to itself. But in relation to everything that is not love, therefore in relation to every deception, true love is unconditionally the superior; consequently it can never be deceived if through believing all things it remains true to itself or continues to be true love.

This certainly is very easy to perceive; therefore the difficulty is something else, that there is a lower conceptual sphere that has no intimation of true love, of love in itself, and of its intrinsic blessedness. The difficulty is that a great multitude of illusions will hold a person down in this lower conceptual sphere where deception and being deceived signify exactly the opposite of what they signify *in the infinite conception of love. In this conception, to be deceived simply and solely means to refrain from loving, to let oneself be so carried away as to give up love in itself and to lose its intrinsic blessedness in that way.* In the infinite sense, only one deception is possible—self-deception. We need not infinitely fear those who are able to kill only the body[32]; to be killed is no danger infinitely, nor is there any danger in the kind of deception the world talks about. This again is not difficult to understand. The difficulty is to accomplish the task, to acquire the true conception of love or, more correctly, to become the truly loving one, since he defends himself against illusion precisely by believing all things,

fights to keep himself in the true love. But illusion continually wants to thrust itself in, somewhat like the illusion that believes that the sun moves, although we know that it is the earth.

There is a lower view of love, therefore a lower love that has no view of love in itself. This view regards loving as a demand (reciprocal love is the demand) and being loved (reciprocal love) as an earthly good, as temporal—and yet, alas, as the highest bliss. Yes, when this is the case, the deception is certainly able to play the master, just as in the commercial world. A person pays out money in order to purchase some convenience; he has paid out the money, but he did not get the convenience—well, then he has been duped. He makes a love deal; he barters his love, but he did not receive reciprocal love in exchange—well, then he has been deceived. Therefore the deception must consist in the deceiver's having won the love of the deceived person so that he perhaps cannot even refrain from loving the deceiver, because the one deceived was loving to such a degree that he could love only one person, and that one person was the deceiver. IX 227

It is not the intention of this deliberation to deny that the person who loved was deceived or that the deceiver was, yes, that he was a wretched deceiver, but it is its intention to deny that this person who loved was the truly loving one. The one who is so extraordinarily loving that he can love only one person is not the truly loving person but one who has fallen in love, and one who has fallen in love is a self-lover, as has already been shown.[33] But that a self-lover can be deceived this discourse has never wished to deny.

Here, as everywhere, there is something very profound in existence. At times one hears the loud complaint over having been deceived in love. The complainant simply wants to demonstrate what a rare loving person he himself is and in turn how extraordinarily shabby the deceiver is and was, and this he demonstrates by giving assurances that he can and could love only one person. He does not perceive that the more vehement his complaint becomes, the more it becomes a complaint against himself, which denounces him as having been and being a self-lover who therefore could of course love only one (the truly loving person loves all and without demanding reciprocal love) and therefore could

of course be deceived, something that cannot happen to one who truly loves. This means that anyone who essentially and decisively maintains that he has been so deceived in love that he has lost the best, not to speak of everything, thereby denounces himself as a self-lover, because the best is love in itself, and one can always keep that if one will be the truly loving person. Therefore anyone who wants to have only the lower conception, deception's idea of what love is—may he take good care that he is not deceived; may he learn from the financiers or from
IX 228 those who trade in commodities what precautions they use against deceivers. Alas, despite all these precautions—indeed, even if through them he succeeds in safeguarding himself against every deception—he and all like-minded persons are still essentially deceived by having their lives in the world, which is the deception, in the world, where all are essentially deceived, whether one person grumbles against another because of having been deceived or the other boasts about not having been deceived. The difference is no greater than if one mentally deranged person in a madhouse were to imagine himself not to be mentally deranged in the same way as someone else, whereas they both would still be essentially mentally deranged.

The lower conception and the illusion that on its errands and in its service visits people are the temptation. The difficulty is to defend oneself actively against it; it is easy enough in a quiet hour to perceive that the truly loving one who believes all things cannot be deceived. "But still it is so stupid to be deceived." If you yourself are the truly loving one who believes all things, you would indeed easily perceive that to be deceived is an impossibility, would perceive that you were not deceived. But is there anything stupid about being conscious that one is not deceived? No, "but it still is so stupid that it must seem that way to others." See, here is the illusion. To be conscious, and truly so, that one is not deceived and yet find it stupid that it seems as if one had been deceived—what is this called? It is called vanity or, what here amounts to the same thing, it is called not being completely the truly loving one. Alas, and if vanity could gain power over the truly loving one, he would certainly be deceived, because then it draws him out of love, down into the low world of small-

mindedness and wrangling, where one tricks others and is tricked, is vain over being able to trick others, is stupid to be tricked, and therefore vain over having been able to avoid it.

When we see a truly loving person being deceived by the wily, the shady, the hypocritical, we are shocked, and why is that at times? Because in the external world we do not see the punishment and retribution, that is, because we insist on seeing the sense-gratifying drama of imperfection and externality, where retribution is in the external world, that is, because we sink down into the lower conceptual sphere, that is, because, sluggish and thoughtless, we forget that one who truly loves cannot be deceived. We are justified in crying woe upon someone who leads a blind person astray; it is quite appropriate here to demand to see punishment in the external world, because a blind person can be deceived; to be blind does not secure one against every deception, but the one who truly loves, who believes all things, cannot be deceived. In other words, in one sense the one who loves is well aware if someone deceives him, but by refusing to believe it, or by believing all things, he keeps himself in love and in this way is not deceived—thus we see here an example of how fatuous it is, how unwise is the busyness that thinks knowing is superior to believing, since that which secures the one who loves, who in a certain sense knows that he is being deceived, against being deceived is believing all things. IX 229

The truly loving one, who believes all things, cannot be deceived, *because to deceive him is to deceive oneself.* What, namely, is the highest good and the greatest blessedness? Certainly it is truly to love, and next, truly to be loved. But then it is indeed impossible to deceive the one who loves, who by believing all things remains in love. If it were possible to deceive someone in money matters in such a way that the so-called deceived one kept his money, would he then be deceived? But this is exactly the case here. The deceiver becomes contemptible through his attempt, and the one who loves preserves himself in love, remains in love, and hence in possession of the highest good and the greatest blessedness, and therefore is certainly not deceived! The deceiver, however, deceives himself. He does not love, and in this way he has already deceived himself out of the highest good and

the greatest blessedness. Next after this comes being loved by someone who truly loves—otherwise, of course, being loved could become a great misfortune for one. Again the deceiver is on the way to deceive himself out of this, insofar as he prevents himself from having the true benefit of it and insofar as he succeeds, when in all probability his deception is discovered, in losing the other person's love, in making the loving one unhappy by his having ceased truly to love—instead of remaining in love, secured against deception by believing all things.

With a view to having it become really clear how miserable the deceiver looks in comparison with the truly loving person, let us imagine that it is happening before our eyes—since much is said about seducers and seductions, about deception and deceivers, but very rarely does one speak about or describe the one who truly loves. Therefore I picture to myself a sly, shady fellow, a hypocrite; I take pleasure in endowing with all the seductive gifts this fellow who is initiated into all the secrets of deception. Now, what does he want? He wants to deceive the one who truly loves; by means of his slyness, he wants to become loved (despite his corruption, he has enough sense to perceive what a great good it is to be loved). But why all this fuss, this totally unnecessary arsenal of slyness and underhanded dealings? It is the truly loving one IX 230 he wants to deceive, but the truly loving one loves all—thus the deceiver can in a much simpler way achieve being loved. Yes, if the discourse were about someone who has fallen in love (a self-lover), there at least would be some meaning in the deception, because someone who has fallen in love can love only the one and only, and it is now a matter of becoming this one and only, if possible, by means of the deceptive art of slyness and cunning. But in relation to the one who truly loves, the deception is meaningless from the very beginning; from the very beginning the deceiver is placed in the most miserable light.

But to go on—the deceiver naturally succeeds in becoming loved, naturally—yes, the deceiver thinks and must naturally think that this is due to his slyness, his underhanded dealings and artifice. The poor deceiver, he does not perceive that he is dealing with one who truly loves, who loves him because the true lover loves all. In what meaninglessness the deceiver's miserable-

ness is now trapped, not as if the deception failed—no, the punishment is much too slight; no, the deception succeeds and the deceiver is proud of his deception! But in what does the deception consist; what kind of deception is he talking about? It naturally must consist in this, that he enjoys the good of being loved while the loving person loves him, and in addition, cold and proud and mocking, he enjoys the self-satisfaction of not loving in return. Naturally it completely escapes him (for how would it occur to a deceiver that true love was present) that he is dealing with one who truly loves, who loves without making any demand for reciprocal love, who grounds love and its blessedness precisely in not requiring reciprocal love. So the deceiver has slyly gotten the loving person to love him—but that is exactly what the loving person infinitely wants. By not loving in return, the deceiver has presumably tricked the one who loves—but the one who truly loves regards demanding reciprocal love simply as a defilement, a degradation, and regards loving without the reward of reciprocal love as the highest blessedness.

Who, then, is the deceived? What kind of deception are we talking about? The deceiver talks in a fog and does not himself know what he is saying, just like that man we all laugh at, the man who lay in the ditch and yet thought that he was riding. To deceive in this way—is it not like sticking money in a person's pocket and calling it stealing! The one who truly loves has become richer, because for every additional person he gets to love and for every additional time he gives out his love and relinquishes his right to reciprocal love, he becomes richer. Or is the one who truly loves deceived if he does not find out what an unworthy object of love the deceiver is? To love is indeed the highest good, but in that case only the love that demands reciprocal love, that is, the false love, can be deceived by remaining ix
ignorant of the unworthiness of the object. Or is the one who 231
truly loves deceived if he does find out what an unworthy object the deceiver is and was? To love is indeed the highest good and the greatest blessing. In money matters, for example, someone who in order to obtain money for himself applies to a man on whom he had depended and who he believed had money is duped if the man is then insolvent and has no money. But some-

one who wants to give his money away and does not in the slightest way wish or demand to get it back again is certainly not duped—because the recipient has no money.

But the sly deceiver moves with the shrewdest, most ingratiating inflections of cunning; he does not perceive how clumsily he is conducting himself. He thinks he is the superior one and smugly smiles to himself (alas, as if you were seeing the smug smile of an insane person, which is both to be laughed at and wept over!); he does not suspect that the one who loves is the infinitely superior one. The deceiver is blinded; he does not even notice his appalling powerlessness. His deception succeeds—and he does a good deed; his deception succeeds—and he makes the truly loving one even richer; his deception succeeds, he succeeds—and yet he himself is the very one who is deceived. The poor deceived one, even this road of rescue, that his deception fails, is cut off for him. If a mentally deranged person wants to convince a reasonable person of the correctness of his insane thoughts and now in a certain sense he succeeds, is this not the most appalling of all, is this not almost merciless of existence, because if he had failed, then perhaps the mentally deranged person could have become aware that he was mentally deranged, but now it is hidden from him and his mental derangement is probably incurable. The situation of the deceiver is like that; but it is not merciless, it is the just punishment upon him that his deception succeeds—and thereby his damnation.

What, then, in truth is the conflict between the deceiver and the one who loves? The deceiver wants to trick him out of his love. This cannot be done. Just by unconditionally not requiring the slightest reciprocal love, the one who truly loves has taken an unassailable position; he can no more be deceived out of his love than a man can be tricked out of the money he tenders as a gift and gives to someone. Hence the conflict is actually about something else, about whether it could be possible that the deceiver would become the occasion for the lover's downfall (something he by no means intends or considers), so that the lover would fall
IX 232 from love and sink down into the world of illusion, into childish wrangling with the deceiver because the loving one abandoned the love that loves without requiring reciprocal love. But the one

who truly loves safeguards himself by believing all things, that is, by loving the deceiver. If the deceiver could understand this, he might lose his mind. Someone who has fallen in love (the self-lover) thinks himself deceived when the deceiver has duped him into loving him, while he does not love in return—and the truly loving one thinks himself saved when, by believing all things, he succeeds in loving the deceiver. One who has fallen in love regards it as misfortune to go on loving the deceiver; the one who truly loves regards it as a victory if only he succeeds in continuing to love the deceiver. Wonderful!

The deceiver in his way must become more and more conceited because his deception has succeeded for him so extraordinarily; ultimately it probably ends with his regarding the one who truly loves as a shallow poor fish. Yet it is by this very means that the one who truly loves is eternally and infinitely secured against being deceived! Do you, my listener, know any stronger expression for superiority than this, that the superior one also appears to be the weaker? The stronger person who appears to be the stronger provides a criterion for his superiority, but the person who, although superior, appears to be the weaker declines criteria and comparison—that is, he is infinitely superior. Have you never seen in life this relationship of infinite superiority, which admittedly is not directly visible, because the infinite is never directly visible? Take someone who is infinitely superior to others in understanding, and you will see that he appears to be a simple soul. Only the person who thinks he has more understanding than others but is not quite sure of it, or is shallow and foolish enough to boast of a relationship by comparison—only he strives to appear to be the one superior in understanding.

So it is with the one who loves, who believes all things. This can very easily be confused with shallowness, and yet there is the depth of wisdom in this simplicity; this can very easily be confused with weakness, and yet the powers of eternity are in this powerlessness; he can very easily appear to be a poor forsaken person whom anyone can deceive, and yet he is the only one who is eternally and infinitely secured against being deceived. But this is not directly visible; humanly speaking, the confusion is quite natural, especially in these sagacious times, which have

become too *sagacious to believe* in *wisdom*. The confusion is natural enough, because the one who loves, who believes all things, is not directly manifest. He is like those plants whose propagation is hidden—he breathes in God; he draws nourishment for his
IX 233 love from God, he is strengthened by God. In a certain sense he himself perceives that, humanly speaking, he is deceived; but he knows that deception and truth extend equally far and that it therefore was still possible that the deceiver was not a deceiver, and therefore he believes all things. The one who loves has courage for this, courage to believe all things (truly the highest courage!), courage to bear the world's contempt and insults (truly the greatest victory, greater than any won in the world, because it overcomes the world!), courage to endure the world's finding this so indescribably fatuous, although it understands his premise very well but not his conclusion any more than the *mistrustful* world can understand the blessedness that the truly loving one has within himself.

But suppose that sometime in eternity it turned out that the one who loves *actually* had been deceived! How? —should it really be necessary to repeat once more? If to love is the highest good and the greatest blessedness, if the one who loves, just by believing all things, remains in the blessedness of love—how then would he be deceived in time or in eternity! No, no, in connection with true love, there is only one deception possible in time and in eternity—self-deception, or giving up love. Therefore the one who truly loves will not even be able to understand the objection. Alas, but the rest of us, I regret, are able to understand it all too easily. It is very difficult to extricate oneself from the lower conceptual sphere and the pact of earthly passions with the illusions. Just when one has understood the truth best, the old suddenly crops up again. The infinite, the eternal, hence the true, is so alien to the natural man that with him it is as with the dog, which can indeed learn to walk upright for a moment but yet continually wants to walk on all fours. [34]One can almost compel someone's thought to admit that, since deception extends unconditionally just as far as truth, one person cannot actually judge another, but the one judging only becomes disclosed himself—just as when someone hits a strength-testing

machine with all his might and, not knowing that it is a strength-testing machine, therefore thinks that he actually is hitting something, although it is really only his strength that is being tested. When he has understood this, he can still seek a way out; he can relate himself inquisitively to eternity, counting on it to make manifest whether it *actually* was a deceiver. But what does this demonstrate? It demonstrates that one neither is the one who truly loves, who has the blessedness of love within oneself, nor IX 234
has the conception of eternity that true earnestness has. If a person succumbs to this impulse, it straightway drags him down into the low domain of small-mindedness, where the ultimate and the highest are not the blessedness of love within oneself, but rather the wrangling of obstinacy. —But the one who truly loves believes all things—and yet is never deceived.

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III

Love Hopes All Things—and Yet Is Never Put to Shame[35]

I Corinthians 13:7. Love hopes all things.

In many metaphors and by many representations, Holy Scripture seeks in various ways to give, through the relationship to the eternal, festivity and solemnity to this earthly life of ours, to provide air and a prospect. And this is certainly needful. When the God-forsaken worldliness of earthly life shuts itself in with itself in complacency, the confined air develops poison in itself and by itself. And when in temporality time in a certain sense drags on so slowly and yet so slyly swiftly that one never with concentrated attentiveness becomes aware of its vanishing, or when the moment gets stuck and stands still, when everything, everything is mustered to turn the mind and powers upon the moment—then the prospect is lost, and this detached, God-forsaken moment of temporality, whether longer or shorter, becomes a falling away from the eternal. See, this is why so often at various times a need is felt for a refreshing, enlivening breeze, a mighty gale, that could cleanse the air and dispel the poisonous vapors, a need for the rescuing movement of a great event that rescues by moving what is standing still, a need for the enlivening prospect of a great expectancy—lest we suffocate in worldliness or perish in the oppressing moment!

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Yet Christianity knows only one way [*Vej*] and one resource [*Udvej*], but it does always know the way and the resource. It is with the help of the eternal that Christianity at every moment creates fresh air and a prospect. When busyness increases just because the moment expands, when it incessantly hustles around in the moment, which, in the eternal sense, does not move from

the spot, when the busy people sow and harvest and again sow and harvest (busyness harvests over and over again), when the busy people store the barns full of what they harvested[36] and rest upon their gains—alas, while the person who truly wills the good in the same span of time does not see even the smallest fruit of his labors and he becomes the object of ridicule as someone who does not know how to sow, as someone who labors in vain and is merely shadowboxing,[37] then Christianity provides a prospect by speaking metaphorically of this earthly life as the time of sowing and of eternity as the time of harvest.[38] When the moment, simply because it is standing still, becomes like a vortex (vortexes never move forward), when there is struggling and winning and losing and once again winning, now at one point, now at another—but the person who truly wills the good is the only one who is losing and losing everything, as it seems, then Christianity provides a prospect by speaking metaphorically of this life as a life of hardship and struggle, and of eternity as a life of victory.[39] When the moment comes to a standstill in the wretched tangle of pettymindedness, which by mimicking resembles in miserable diminution even the holiest, the good, and the true, by mimicking plays the game of awarding honor and dishonor; when everything is vitiated by being dragged down into this wretched, confused commotion—then Christianity provides air and a prospect, provides life with solemnity and festivity by presenting in metaphorical language that scene in eternity where it will be eternally decided who won the wreath of honor and who was put to shame.[40]

What solemn, earnest festivity! Indeed, what are honor and dishonor when the setting that gives honor and dishonor infinite meaning is not secured! Even if a person deservedly won honor here in the world, what solemnity does the world have to give it meaning! Suppose the pupil is deservedly reprimanded or deservedly singled out for distinction—what if the solemn occasion were to take place on a stairway? What if the teacher who awards honor and dishonor were a wretched fellow? What if not one, almost no one, of those esteemed gentlemen who honor the festivity with their presence was invited, but an even greater crowd of casuals with dubious reputations—what, then, are honor and

dishonor? But eternity! Do you know any festival hall that is as
IX 237 loftily arched as eternity? Do you know of any house, even any house of God, where there is this holy stillness as in eternity? Do you know of any circle, even the most select circle of venerables, that is as secure against the presence of anyone to whom honor in the slightest, the very slightest way could object, as secure against the presence of anyone who does not do honor to honor as eternity is? Do you know of any festival hall, even though all its walls were of mirrors, that reflects the claim of honor as infinitely and as exclusively as eternity does, that as infinitely denies to dishonor even the most unnoticed crevice to hide in if you should be put to shame there!

With regard to honor and dishonor, this is the way Christianity at every moment provides a prospect with the help of eternity, if you yourself will assist by hoping. Christianity does not lead you up to some loftier place from which you can still only survey a somewhat wider circuit; this is still only an earthly hope and a worldly prospect. No, Christianity's hope is eternity, and therefore there are light and shadow, beauty and truth, and above all the distance of transparency in its diagram of existence. Christianity's hope is eternity, and Christ is the Way; his debasement is the Way, but he was also the Way when he ascended into heaven.[41]

But love, which is greater than faith and hope,[42] also takes upon itself the work of hope, or takes upon itself hope, hoping for others, as a work. It is itself built up and nourished by this hope of eternity and then in turn deals lovingly with others in this hope, which we shall now consider:

Love hopes all things—and yet is never put to shame.

Indeed not everyone who hopes all things is therefore the loving one, nor is everyone who hopes all things therefore secured against never being put to shame; but lovingly to hope all things is the opposite of despairingly to hope nothing at all, either for oneself or for others.

To hope all things or, what is the same thing, *to hope always.* At first glance it certainly seems as if to hope all things is something that could be done once and for all, since "all things" indeed

collects the multiplicity into one, and to that extent into what could be called an eternal moment, as if hope were at rest, in repose. Yet this is not so. In other words, to hope is composed of the eternal and the temporal, and this is why the expression for hope's task in the form of eternity is to hope all things, and in the IX 238
form of temporality to hope always. The one expression is no truer than the other; on the contrary, each of the expressions becomes untrue if it is contrasted to the other instead of being united to express the same thing: at every moment always to hope all things.

To hope relates to the future, to possibility, which in turn, unlike actuality, is always a duality, the possibility of advance or of retrogression, of rising or falling, of good or of evil. The eternal *is*, but when the eternal touches the temporal or is in the temporal, they do not meet each other in the *present*, because in that case the present would itself be the eternal. The present, the moment, is over so quickly that it actually does not exist; it is only the boundary and therefore is past, whereas the past is what was present. Therefore, when the eternal is in the temporal, it is in the future[43] (because it cannot get hold of the present, and the past indeed is past) or in possibility. The past is the actual, the future is the possible; eternally, the eternal is the eternal; in time, the eternal is the possible, the future. This, of course, is why we call tomorrow the future, but we also call eternal life the future. The possible as such is always a duality, and in possibility the eternal always relates itself equally to its duality.

On the other hand, when a person to whom the possible pertains relates himself equally to the duality of the possible, we say: He *expects*. [44]To expect contains within itself the same duality that the possible has, and to expect is to relate oneself to the possible purely and simply as such. Then the relationship divides according to the way the expecting person chooses. To relate oneself expectantly to the possibility of the good is to *hope*, which for that very reason cannot be any temporal expectancy but is an eternal hope. To relate oneself expectantly to the possibility of evil is to *fear*. But both the one who hopes and the one who fears are expecting. As soon, however, as the choice is made, the possible is changed, because the possibility of the good is the eternal.

It is only in the moment of contact that the duality of the possible is equal; therefore, by the decision to choose hope, one decides infinitely more than it seems, because it is an eternal decision. Only in mere possibility, that is, only for the merely or indifferently [*Ligegyldig*] expecting person, are the possibilities of the good and of the evil equal [*ligelig*]; in the differentiation (and the choice is indeed differentiating) the possibility of the good is more than a possibility, because it is the eternal. That is why the
IX 239 person who hopes can never be deceived, because to hope is to expect the possibility of the good, but the possibility of the good is the eternal.

So we must define more accurately what it is to hope. In ordinary speech we often call something hope that is not hope at all but a wish, a longing, a longing expectation now of one thing, now of another, in short, an expectant person's relationship to the possibility of multiplicity. When hope is understood in that way (when hope actually means only expectation), it is easy enough for the youth and the child to hope, because the youth and the child themselves are still a possibility. On the other hand, it is quite in order when one sees how possibility and hope, or the sense for the possible, usually decline in people over the years. This in turn explains why experience speaks deprecatingly about hope, as if it were merely something for youthfulness (which the child's and the youth's hope certainly is also), as if hoping, like dancing, were a youthful something for which older people have neither the liking nor the lightness. Well, yes, to hope is indeed to make oneself light with the help of the eternal, that is, with the help of the possibility of good. And even though the eternal is far from being youthfulness, it has still much more in common with youthfulness than with the moroseness that is frequently honored with the name of seriousness, the slackness of old age that in moderately fortunate circumstances is moderately calm and contented, but above all has nothing to do with providing hope, and in unfortunate circumstances would rather grumble peevishly than hope. In one's youth a person has plenty of expectation and possibility; they develop by themselves in the youth just like the precious myrrh that drips down from the trees of Arabia. But when a person has become older, his life usually remains what it

has now become, a dull repetition and paraphrasing of the same old thing; no possibility awakeningly frightens; no possibility rejuvenatingly enlivens. Hope becomes something that belongs nowhere, and possibility something just as rare as green in winter. Without the eternal, one lives with the help of habit, sagacity, aping, experience, custom, and usage. Indeed, take all this, put it all together, cook it over the slow or the merely earthly blazing fire of passions, and you will see that you will get all kinds of things out of it, a variously concocted tough slime that is called practical sagacity. But no one ever got possibility out of it, possibility, this marvelous thing that is so infinitely fragile (the most delicate shoot of spring is not so fragile!), so infinitely frail (the finest woven linen is not so frail!), and yet, brought into being and shaped with the help of the eternal, stronger than anything else, if it is the possibility of the good! IX 240

People think that they are speaking with ample experience in dividing a person's life into certain periods and ages and then call the first period the age of hope or of possibility. What nonsense! Thus, in talk about hope they completely leave out the eternal and yet speak about hope. But how is this possible, since hope pertains to the possibility of the good, and thereby to the eternal! On the other hand, how is it possible to speak about hope in such a way that it is assigned to a certain age! Surely the eternal extends over the whole of life and there is and should be hope to the end; then there is no period that is the age of hope, but a person's whole life should be the time of hope! And then they think they are speaking with ample experience about hope—by abolishing the eternal.

Just as in a drama, by shortening the time and condensing the events, one is enabled to see the content of many years in the course of a few hours, so also one wants to arrange oneself dramatically within temporality. God's plan for existence is rejected, so that temporality is entirely development, complication—eternity the denouement. Everything is arranged within temporality, a score of years devoted to development, then ten years to the complication; then the knot is tightened for a few years, and then the denouement follows. Undeniably death is also a denouement, and then it is over, one is buried—yet not before the de-

nouement of decomposition has begun. But anyone who refuses to understand that the whole of one's life should be the time of hope is veritably in despair, no matter, absolutely no matter, whether he is conscious of it or not, whether he counts himself fortunate in his presumed well-being or wears himself out in tedium and trouble. Anyone who gives up the possibility that his existence could be forfeited in the next moment—provided he does not give up this possibility because he *hopes* for the possibility of the good—anyone who lives without possibility is in despair. He breaks with the eternal and arbitrarily puts an end to possibility; without the consent of eternity, he ends where the end is not, instead of, like someone who is taking dictation, continually having his pen poised for what comes next, so that he does not presume meaninglessly to place a period before the meaning is complete or rebelliously to throw away his pen.

If one wants to help a child with a very big task, how does one go about it? Well, one does not set out the whole task at one time, because then the child despairs and gives up hope. One
IX 241 assigns a small part at a time, but always enough so that the child at no point stops as if it were finished, but not so much that the child cannot manage it. This is the pious fraud in upbringing; it actually suppresses something. If the child is deceived, this is because the instructor is a human being who cannot vouch for the next moment.

But now eternity, surely this is the greatest task ever assigned to a human being, and on the other hand it surely is able to vouch for the next moment; and temporality's child (the human being) relates to the infinite task as a little child! If eternity were to assign the human being the task all at once and in its own language, without regard for his capacities and limited powers, the human being would have to despair. But then this is the wondrous thing, that this the greatest of powers, eternity, can make itself so small that it is divisible in this way, this which is eternally one, so that, taking upon itself the form of the future, the possible, with the help of hope it brings up temporality's child (the human being), teaches him to hope (to hope is itself the instruction, is the relation to the eternal), provided he does not arbitrarily choose to be severely disheartened by fear or brazenly choose to despair—that

is, to withdraw from the upbringing by possibility. The eternal, in the proper sense, continually assigns in possibility just a small part at a time. By means of the possible, eternity is continually *near* enough to be available and yet *distant enough* to keep the human being in motion forward toward the eternal, to keep him going, going forward. [45]This is how eternity lures and draws a person, in possibility, from the cradle to the grave—provided he chooses to hope. Possibility, as stated previously, is a duality and for that very reason is the true upbringing. Possibility is just as rigorous, or can be just as rigorous, as it can be gentle. Hope is not implicit in possibility as a matter of course, because in possibility there can also be fear. But with the help of hope, possibility will bring up to hope the person who chooses hope. Yet the possibility of fear, the rigorousness, remains secretly present as a possibility, if it should come to be needed, for the sake of the upbringing, in order to awaken, but it remains hidden, while the eternal lures with the help of hope. To lure is continually to be just as *near* as *distant*; in this way the one who hopes is always kept hoping, hoping all things, is kept in hope for the eternal, which in temporality is the possible.

This is what it is to hope all things. But *lovingly* to hope all things signifies the relationship of the loving one to other people, so in relation to them, hoping for them, he continually holds possibility open with an infinite partiality for the possibility of the good. That is, he lovingly hopes that at every moment there is IX 242
possibility, the possibility of the good for the other person. This possibility of the good signifies ever more glorious progress in the good, from perfection to perfection, or rising from a falling, or a rescue from being lost, etc.

It is easy to see that the loving one is right, that at every moment there is possibility. Alas, but many would perhaps more easily understand it if we let despair say the same thing, since in a certain sense despair does say the same thing. The person in despair also *knows* what lies in possibility, and yet he gives up possibility (to give up possibility is to despair) or, even more correctly, he is brazenly so bold as to *assume* the impossibility of the good. Here again it is manifest that the possibility of the good is more than possibility, because when someone is so bold as to

assume the impossibility of the good, possibility dies for him altogether. The person who fears does not *assume* the impossibility of the good; he fears the possibility of evil, but he does not conclude, he is not so bold as to assume the impossibility of the good.

"It is possible," says despair, "it is possible that even the most sincere enthusiast would at some time become weary, give up his struggle, and sink into the service of baseness. It is possible that even the most fervent believer would at some time give up faith [*Tro*] and choose unbelief [*Vantro*]. It is possible that even the most burning love would at some time cool off and freeze. It is possible that even the most upright person could still go astray and be lost. It is possible that even the best friend could be changed into an enemy, even the most faithful wife into a perjurer. It is possible; therefore despair, give up hope, above all do not hope in any human being or for any human being!"

Yes, it certainly is possible, but then the opposite is also possible. "Therefore never unlovingly give up on any human being or give up hope for that person, since it is possible that even the most prodigal son could still be saved, that even the most embittered enemy—alas, he who was your friend—it is still possible that he could again become your friend. It is possible that the one who sank the deepest—alas, because he stood so high—it is still possible that he could again be raised up. It is still possible that the love that became cold could again begin to burn. Therefore never give up on any human being; do not despair, not even at the last moment—no, hope all things."

So, then, *it is possible*. To this extent the one who despairs and the one who loves are united in the same thing, but they are eternally separated because despair hopes nothing at all for others and love hopes all things. Despair collapses and now sometimes
IX 243 uses possibility as a diverting stimulant, that is, if one can be diverted by the inconstant, futile, weird phantasmal flashes of possibility. It is quite remarkable and shows how deeply hope is grounded in a human being that precisely among people who have frozen in despair one finds a dominant tendency to play and flirt with possibility, a wanton misuse of the powers of the imagination. Coldly and defiantly the person in despair refuses to hope with regard to the other person, even less to work for the

possibility of good in him; but it amuses the person in despair to have the other person's fate flutter in possibility before him, no matter whether it is the possibility of hope or of fear. It amuses him to play with the fate of the other person, to imagine one possibility after another, to seesaw him in the air, so to speak, while he himself, haughty and unloving, scorns the whole affair.

Yet with what right do we say that someone who gives up on another person is in despair? After all, it is one thing to despair oneself and something else to despair over someone else. Ah, yes, but if what the loving person understands is indeed true, and if it is true that someone, if he is a loving person, understands what the loving person understands, that at every moment there is the possibility of the good for the other one—then to give up on another as hopelessly lost, as if there were no hope for him, is evidence that one is not oneself a loving person and thus is the one who despairs, who gives up possibility. No one can hope unless he is also loving; he cannot *hope for himself* without also being loving, because the good has an infinite connectedness; but if he is loving, he also hopes for others. In the same degree to which he hopes for others, he hopes for himself, because in the very same degree to which he hopes for others, he is one who loves. And in the very same degree to which he hopes for others, he hopes for himself, because this is the infinitely accurate, the eternal like for like that is in everything eternal.

Oh, wherever love is present, there is something infinitely profound! The one who truly loves says, "Hope all things: give up on no human being, since to give up on him is to give up your love for him—in other words, if you do not give it up, then you hope; but if you give up your love for him, then you yourself cease to be one who loves." Ordinarily we speak in another way, in a domineering and unloving way about our relation to the love within us, as if we ourselves were the masters and autocrats over our love in the same sense as we are over our money. When someone says, "I have given up my love for this person," he thinks that it is this person who loses, this person who was the object of his love. The speaker is of the opinion that he himself retains his love in the same sense as someone who has assisted another person with money and says, "I have stopped giving this

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assistance to him"—so now the giver keeps the money himself that the other received previously, he who is the loser, since the giver is of course far from losing by this financial shift.

But it is not this way with love. Perhaps the one who was the object of love loses, but the one who has "given up his love for this person," he is the loser. He perhaps does not detect this himself, perhaps does not even notice that the language mocks him, since he says, "I have given up my love." But if he has given up his love, then he has of course given up being loving. Admittedly he adds: my love "for this person," but this does not help. With money it can be done this way without loss to oneself, but not with love. I am not entitled to the adjective "loving" if I have given up my love "for this person," although, alas, I may even imagine that he was the one who lost.

It is the same with despairing over another person—it means to be in despair oneself. Yes, it is somewhat detaining, this observation. Unfortunately it is a quick and easy matter to despair over another person—and presumably to be sure of oneself, full of hope for oneself; and the very people who in complacency are most sure as far as they are concerned are usually the quickest to despair over others. But however easily it may go, it cannot actually be done—except in thoughtlessness, which no doubt is easiest for many people. No, here again is eternity's like for like—to despair over another person is to be in despair oneself.

The one who loves hopes all things. Moreover, what is said by the one who loves is true, according to his understanding, that at the last moment there is still the possibility of the good, even for the most lost—therefore still hope. It is true, and it will be true for everyone in his relationship with other people if he will keep his powers of imagination quiet, undisturbed, and unbefuddled by unloving passions, with the eternal sight upon the reflection of the eternal in possibility. Therefore, if someone cannot understand what is understood by the one who loves, it must be because he is not one who loves; it must be because there is something that prevents him from keeping the possibility pure (because if possibility is kept pure, everything is possible) while
IX 245 he lovingly chooses the possibility of the good or hopes for the other person; it must be because there is something that weighs

him down and gives him a tendency to expect the other person's discouragement, downfall, perdition. This weighing down is the worldly and thus the earthly passion of the unloving disposition, because worldliness is in itself heavy, ponderous, sluggish, slack, despondent, and dejected and cannot involve itself with the possible, least of all with the possibility of the good, neither for its own sake nor for the sake of another.

There is a *sagacity* that, almost with pride, thinks that it has a special elemental acquaintance with the seamy side of existence, that everything indeed ends in wretchedness—how should one who already early in the day begins to look forward to and prepares for the downfall of another person be able even at the last moment to hope lovingly for him!

There is an *anger* and a *bitterness* that, even if it does not get a murder on its conscience, hopelessly gives up on the detested person, that is, it takes possibility away from him. But is this not murdering him spiritually, hurling him spiritually into the abyss—insofar as anger and bitterness have their way!

There is an *evil eye*. How would an *evil eye* be able lovingly to catch a glimpse of the possibility of the good!—There is *envy*. It is quick to give up on a person, and yet it does not actually give him up as if to let him go—no, it is on the go very early to assist in his downfall. And as soon as that is certain, envy hurries home to its murky hole and calls to its even more loathsome relative that goes by the name of *malice* [*Skadefryd*] so that they are able to rejoice together—to their own detriment [*Skade*].

There is a *cowardly, timorous small-mindedness* that has not had the courage to hope for anything for itself; how could it hope for the possibility of the good for others—it is too small-minded and too closely related to envy for that! There is a *worldly, conceited mentality* that would die of disgrace and shame if it were to experience making a mistake, being fooled, becoming ludicrous (the most terrible of all horrors!) by having hoped something for another person that did not come about. The worldly, conceited mentality protects itself by hoping nothing at the outset and finds hoping everything in love to be infinitely fatuous and infinitely ludicrous. But in this the world's vanity makes a mistake, because what is fatuous is never infinite. Indeed, it was the very consola-

tion of the one who, while he lived, had to put up with a great deal of the world's fatuousness, that he could always say: Infinite it is not—no, praise God, it will end. Neither is experience right in saying that the most sagacious thing is not to hope all things for another person—and yet, of course, experience is right, otherwise it would have to learn over again and learn how foolish it is
IX 246 to love others for the sake of one's own advantage; and only to the extent that one does this is it ill-advised to hope all things.

When all this, this sagacity, this anger and bitterness, this envy and malice, this cowardly, timorous small-mindedness, this worldly, conceited mentality, when all this or some of this is in a person and to the same degree in which this is present—then love is not present and to the same degree is less in him. But if there is less love in him, there is also less of the eternal in him; but if there is less of the eternal in him, then there is also less possibility, less of a sense of possibility (because possibility indeed appears in this way, that in time the eternal touches the eternal in a human being; if there is nothing eternal in this person, the eternal's touching is in vain, there is no possibility). But if there is less possibility, there is also less hope, just because and to the same degree as there is less love that could lovingly hope for the possibility of the good.[46] In contrast, the loving one hopes all things. No indolence of habit, no pettiness of mind, no hairsplitting of sagacity, no quantities of experience, no slackness of the years, no bitterness of evil passions corrupt for him his hope or counterfeit the possibility for him; every morning, yes, every moment, he renews his hope and refreshes possibility, while love abides and he in it.[47]

Even if the one who loves was unable to do the slightest additional thing for others, was unable to bring any other gift at all, he still brings the best gift, he brings hope. There where everything seems so hopeful and is so rich in expectation for the promising youth, love still brings the best gift—hope—but also there where people for a long time already feel that they have held out to the limit, there, too, love hopes to the limit, yes, to the "last day," for not until then is hope over. If you have seen a physician going around among the sick, then you no doubt have noticed that he brings the best gift, better than all his medications and

even better than all his care, when he brings hope, when people say, "The physician has hope." Yet a physician deals only with the temporal; therefore it must happen again and again that the moment comes when it would be untruthful for him to deny that he has given up the patient, that the sickness is unto death. But one who loves—what a joy for the one who loves that he always dares to hope; what a joy for him that eternity vouches to him that there always is hope. The one who loves, the one who truly loves, does not hope *because* eternity authenticates it to him, but he hopes *because* he is one who loves, and he thanks eternity that he dares to hope. In this way he always brings the best gift, better IX 247
than congratulations on the best of luck, better than any human help in the worst of luck, because hope, the possibility of good, is eternity's help.

When all misfortunes befell the human race, hope still remained.[48] In this paganism and Christianity agree; the difference is this, and it is an infinite one, that Christianity has an infinitely smaller conception of all these misfortunes and an infinitely more blessed conception of hope. But the hope that did remain remained only with the one who loved. If there is no love, hope would not exist either; it would just remain lying there like a letter waiting to be picked up. If there is no love, hope would be like a letter whose contents are—yes, they are blessed—but there would be no one to carry the letter away. Then love, although greater than hope, would take it upon itself, as its service and its work, to bring hope.

But is there not something obscure, something unclear, in this entire deliberation, so that one cannot really grasp what the subject is, since "Love hopes all things" can mean that the loving one hopes all things for himself, and it can mean that the loving one lovingly hopes all things for others? But these are indeed one and the same; and this obscurity is the clarity of the eternal, if someone fully understands that they are altogether one and the same. If love alone hopes all things (and Paul does not say that hope hopes all things but that love hopes all things, simply because, as he says, love is greater than hope), then it follows (from its being love and from what love is) that the one who loves hopes all things for others, since his love indeed conditions his

hope for himself. Only earthly understanding (and its clarity is certainly not to be recommended), only earthly understanding, which is no judge of what either love or hope is, thinks that they are two entirely different things, to hope for oneself and to hope for others, and that in turn love is a third thing by itself. Earthly understanding thinks that one can very well hope for oneself without hoping for others and that one does not need love in order to hope for oneself, whereas one certainly needs love in order to hope for others, for the people one loves—and why should one hope for others than these. Earthly understanding does not perceive that love is by no means a separate third thing but is the middle term: without love, no hope for oneself; with
IX 248 love, hope for all others—and to the same degree one hopes for oneself, to the same degree one hopes for others, since to the same degree one is loving.

Blessed is the one who loves—he hopes all things. Even in the final moment he hopes for the possibility of the good for the worst reprobate! He learned this from eternity, but only because he was the loving one could he learn from eternity, and only because he was the loving one could he learn this from eternity. Woe to the one who has given up hope and possibility with regard to another person; woe to him, because he himself has thereby lost love!

Love hopes all things—and yet is never put to shame. In connection with hope and expectancy, we speak of being put to shame; we think that someone is put to shame if his hope or expectancy is not fulfilled. In what is the shame supposed to lie? Presumably in this, that one's calculating sagacity has not calculated accurately and that it has become apparent (to one's shame) that one has injudiciously miscalculated. But, good heavens, then the shame would not be so perilous; after all, it actually is so only in the eyes of the world, whose conceptions of honor and shame one should still not honor by making them one's own. What the world admires most and honors exclusively is sagacity, or acting sagaciously; but to act sagaciously is the most contemptible of all. If a person is sagacious, in a certain sense he cannot help it; nor should he be ashamed of developing his sagacity, but he should be all the more ashamed of acting sagaciously. If people do not

learn to scorn acting sagaciously (it is especially necessary to speak of this in these sagacious times when sagacity has actually become something that has to be conquered with the help of Christianity, just as brutishness and savagery once were), if they do not learn to scorn it as much as we despise stealing and bearing false witness, then the eternal is ultimately abolished altogether and with it everything that is sacred and worthy of honor—because acting sagaciously is bearing false witness against the eternal with one's whole life, is simply stealing one's existence from God. Acting sagaciously is, actually, a *halfway approach*, whereby one undeniably gets furthest ahead in the world, wins the world's goods and advantages and the world's honor, because, in the eternal sense, the world and the world's advantages are half-measures. But neither the eternal nor Holy Scripture has taught anyone to aspire to get ahead or furthest ahead in the world; on the contrary, it warns against getting too far ahead in the world in order, if possible, to keep oneself unstained by the defilement of the world.[49] But if this is so, then aspiring to get ahead or furthest ahead in the world does not seem commendable.

If we are to speak with truth about being put to shame in connection with hope and expectancy, then the shame must lie deeper, must lie in what one hopes. Therefore one is essentially put to shame just as much whether one's hope is fulfilled or not; the difference will be only that if the hope is not fulfilled it perhaps will become apparent in one's bitterness and despair how firmly one was attached to that for which it was a shame to hope. If the hope were fulfilled, this perhaps would not become apparent, but the shame would remain essentially the same. IX 249

Yet if one hopes for something for which it is a shame to hope, regardless of whether the hope is fulfilled or not, one does not really hope. It is a misuse of the noble word "hope" to bring it into connection with something like that, because to hope relates essentially and eternally to the good—therefore one can never be put to shame by hoping.

One can be put to shame by hoping (to employ wrong language usage for a moment) for some earthly advantage—if it does not materialize. But the shame is actually not that it did not come to pass, that one's hope was not fulfilled; the shame is that it now

becomes apparent, on the basis of the disappointed expectancy, how important such an earthly advantage was to one. Therefore this is not hoping either—it is wishing, craving, expecting, and therefore one can be put to shame. One can be put to shame by giving up hope for another person—if it now becomes apparent that he nevertheless is saved or perhaps even that his downfall was in our imagination. Here one is actually put to shame, because to give up on another person, regardless of the outcome, is a dishonor. —One can be put to shame by hoping evil for someone—if it becomes apparent that everything turns out for the good for him. The vindictive person sometimes says that he hopes to God that vengeance will fall upon the hated one. But truly this is not hoping, this is hating, and it is brazen to call it a hope and blasphemous to want to make God one's collaborator in hating. The vindictive person is not put to shame because things do not happen as he expected, but he is and would be put to shame no matter what happens.

But the one who loves hopes all things and yet is never put to shame. Scripture speaks of a hope that shall not be made ashamed.[50] This suggests most immediately the hope that pertains to the hoping one himself, his hope for the forgiveness of sins and becoming blessed someday, his hope for a blessed reunion with those from whom life or death has separated him. Only in connection with this hope, which is the hope, could there be any question of being put to shame, since truly one would not have shame by having this hope, but rather honor, and therefore it could seem that the shame would come if the hope is not fulfilled. Holy Scripture is very consistent in its use of language. It does not name as hope any and every expectancy, the expectancy of a multitude of things; it knows only one hope, the hope, the possibility of the good; and of this hope, the only one that *could* be put to shame because to have it is an honor, of this hope Scripture says that it shall not be made ashamed.

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But when the hope of the one who loves is for another, would it then not be possible that the one who loves could be put to shame if this hope is not fulfilled? Is it not possible for a person to be eternally lost? But then if the one who loves had hoped all things, had hoped the possibility of the good for this person, then he would indeed be put to shame by his hope.

How, then? If the prodigal son[51] had died in his sins and therefore was buried with shame—and the father, who even at the very last moment hoped all things, stood [*stod*] there: would he not be put to shame [*stod i skamme*]? I should think that it was the son who had the shame, the son who disgraced the father—but in that case the father, indeed, must have the honor, because it is impossible to disgrace someone who is put to shame. Alas, surely the concerned father is thinking least of all about honor, but he indeed stood there truly with honor! If there were no salvation for the prodigal son beyond the grave, if he were eternally lost—and the father who as long as he lived continued to hope all things and even in his hour of death hoped all things—would he then be put to shame in eternity? In eternity! No, eternity certainly has eternity's conception of honor and shame; eternity does not even understand, it purges as something disgraceful the sagacity that wants to talk only about the extent to which one's expectancy was fulfilled but does not at all consider what the expectancy was. In eternity everyone will be compelled to understand that it is not the outcome that determines the honor or the shame, but the expectancy in itself. In eternity, therefore, it is the unloving one, who perhaps turned out to be right in what he small-mindedly, enviously, hatefully expected of another person, it is he who will be put to shame—although his expectancy was fulfilled. But honor belongs to the loving one. Moreover, in eternity there will be no busy gossip about his having made a mistake—perhaps it was also making a mistake to become blessed; no, in eternity there is only one mistake: to become shut out from salvation along with one's fulfilled small-minded, envious, hateful expectancy! And in eternity no mockery will wound the loving one for being fatuous enough to make himself ludicrous by hoping all things, since in eternity the cry of the mocker is not heard, even less than in the grave, since only blessedly happy voices are heard in eternity! And in eternity no envy will tamper with the wreath of honor that the loving one wears with honor—no, however far it extends, envy does not extend that far; it does not extend from hell to paradise!

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Love Does Not Seek Its Own

I Corinthians 13:5. Love does not seek its own.

No, love does not seek its own, because to seek its own is simply self-love, selfishness, self-seeking, or whatever other names the unloving disposition has. And yet, is God not Love? But he who created man in his image[52] so that he might be like him, might become perfect as he is perfect,[53] and thus attain the perfection that is God's own, be like the image that is God's own—does he not seek his own? Indeed, he seeks his own, which is love; he seeks it by giving all things. God is good, and there is only one who is good[54]—God, who gives all things. Or was Christ not Love? But he did, after all, come to the world to become the prototype,[55] to draw human beings to himself so that they might be like him and truly become his own: did *he* not, then, seek his own? Yes, he sought his own by giving himself for all so that they might be like him in what was his own, in sacrificial giving of himself. But to seek one's own in this sense is something entirely different and not at all what we think of when we speak of seeking or not seeking one's own. Love is a giving of oneself; that it seeks love is again love and is the highest love. That is, this is the
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way it is in the relationship between God and humanity. When a human being seeks another human being's love, seeks to be loved himself, this is not a giving of oneself; that would consist in helping the other person to seek God. To be able to seek love and oneself to become the object of love, yet without seeking one's own, is reserved for God alone. But no human being *is love.* Therefore, if a human being seeks to become the object of another human being's love, he is deliberately and fraudulently seeking his own, inasmuch as the only true object of a human

being's love is *love*, which is God, which therefore in a more profound sense is not any object, since he is Love itself.

Therefore, with the work of sacrificially giving of oneself in mind (and it is then actually not a work, *not* doing this or that), let us speak about:

Love does not seek its own.

Love does not seek its own, for there are no mine *and* yours *in love. But* "mine" *and* "yours" *are only relational specifications of* "one's own"*; thus, if there are no* mine *and* yours, *there is no* "one's own" *either. But if there is no* "one's own" *at all, then it is of course impossible to seek one's own.*

Justice is identified by its giving each his own, just as it also in turn claims its own. This means that justice pleads the cause of its own, divides and assigns, determines what each can lawfully call his own, judges and punishes if anyone refuses to make any distinction between *mine* and *yours*. The individual has the right to do as he pleases with this contentious and yet legally entitled *mine*; and if he seeks his own in no other way than that which justice allows, justice has nothing with which to reproach him and has no right to upbraid him for anything. Thus each one keeps his own. As soon as someone is defrauded of his own, or as soon as someone defrauds another of his own, justice intervenes, because it safeguards the common security in which everyone has his own, what he rightfully has. —But sometimes a change intrudes, a revolution, a war, an earthquake, or some such terrible misfortune, and everything is confused. Justice tries in vain to secure for each person his own; it cannot maintain the distinction between *mine* and *yours*; in the confusion it cannot keep the balance [*Ligevægt*] and therefore throws away the scales [*Vægt*]—it despairs!

Terrible spectacle! Yet does not love in a certain sense, even if in the most blissful way, produce the same confusion? But love, it too is an event, the greatest of all, yet also the happiest. Love is a change, the most remarkable of all, but the most desirable— in fact we say in a very good sense that someone who is gripped by love is changed or becomes changed. Love is a revolution, the most profound of all, but the most blessed! So, then, with love

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there is confusion; in this blissful confusion there is for the lovers no distinction between *mine* and *yours*. Wonderful! There are a *you* and an *I*, and there is no *mine* and *yours*! For without a *you* and an *I*, there is no love, and with *mine* and *yours*, there is no love; but "mine" and "yours" (these possessive pronouns) are, of course, formed from a "you" and an "I" and as a consequence seem obliged to be present wherever there are a *you* and an *I*. This is indeed the case everywhere, but not in love, which is a revolution from the ground up. The more profound the revolution, the more completely the distinction "*mine* and *yours*" disappears, the more perfect is the love. Its perfection essentially depends upon its not becoming apparent that hidden at the bottom there has lain and still lies a distinction between *mine* and *yours*; therefore it depends essentially on the degree of the revolution. The more profound the revolution, the more justice shudders; the more profound the revolution, the more perfect is the love.

[56]Is the distinction "*mine* and *yours*" then entirely canceled in erotic love and friendship? A revolution of self-love does occur in erotic love and friendship, which are shaken by self-love and by its contentious *mine* and *yours*. The person who has fallen in love therefore feels outside himself, outside what is his own, carried away in the blissful confusion, so that for him and the beloved, for him and the friend, there is no distinction *mine* and *yours*, "because," declares the lover, "all that is mine is his . . . . . and what is his . . . . . is mine!" How? Is, then, the distinction "*mine* and *yours*" canceled? If mine has become yours, and yours has become mine, there are still a *mine* and a *yours*, except that the exchange that took place signifies and assures that it is no longer the initial, the immediate *mine* of self-love that stands contentiously against a *yours*. Through the exchange, the contentious *mine* and *yours* have become a communal *yours and mine*. Thus there is community, perfect community in *mine and yours*. By being exchanged, *mine and yours* become *ours*, in which category erotic love and friendship have their strength; at least they are strong in it. But *ours* is for the community exactly the same as *mine* is for the solitary one, and *ours* is indeed formed—not from the contentious *mine* and *yours*, because no union can be formed

from that—but is formed from the joined, the exchanged *yours* and *mine*.

See, therefore erotic love and friendship *as such* are only enhanced and augmented self-love, although erotic love is undeniably life's most beautiful happiness and friendship the greatest temporal good! In erotic love and friendship, the revolution of self-love is by no means profound enough from the ground up; therefore self-love's original contentious distinction between *mine* and *yours* still lies dormant within as a possibility. The exchanging of rings between lovers is regarded as a very expressive symbol of erotic love; it is truly very expressive, but it is a poor symbol of love—it is, after all, an exchange. And an exchange by no means abolishes the distinction "*mine* and *yours*," because that for which I exchange myself then becomes mine again. When friends mix their blood together, this is admittedly like a fundamental change, because a confusion arises when the blood is mixed. Is it my blood that runs in my veins? No, it is the friend's. But then in turn it is my blood that flows in my friend's veins. That is, the *I* is no longer primary, but the *you*—yet the situation, reversed, is really the same. IX 255

How, then, is the distinction "*mine* and *yours*" entirely canceled? The distinction "*mine* and *yours*" is an antithetical relation; they exist only in and with each other. Therefore, take one distinction away altogether, and then the other also disappears entirely. Let us first try to take away entirely the distinction "yours" from the distinction "*mine* and *yours*." What do we have then? Then we have crime and misdeeds, because in the distinction "*mine* and *yours*" the thief, the robber, the swindler, the assailant will acknowledge no *yours* at all. But for this very reason the distinction "mine" also disappears entirely for him. Even if the criminal does not understand it, even if he hardens himself against the understanding, justice understands that a criminal actually has no *mine*. As a criminal he is set outside this distinction, and in another way the richer the criminal becomes by the stolen *yours*, the less *mine* he has.

Now take away entirely the distinction "mine" from the distinction "*mine* and *yours*." What, then, do we have? Then we

have the self-sacrificing, the self-denying-in-all-things, the true love.[57] But then in turn the specification "yours" disappears entirely, which is understandable to reflection, even if for a moment it seems to be a strange thought. It is the curse resting on the criminal that his *mine* disappears because he wants to do away entirely with *yours*. It is a blessing resting upon the truly loving one that the specification "yours" disappears; thus everything becomes the true lover's. As Paul says, "All things are yours,"[58] and as the truly loving one in a certain divine sense says: All is mine. And yet this happens simply and solely by his having no *mine* at
IX 256 all; therefore: "All things are mine—I, who have no *mine* at all." But the fact that all things are his is a divine secret, since humanly speaking the truly loving one, the sacrificing, the self-giving one who loves, totally self-denying in all things, is humanly speaking the injured one, the most injured of all, even if he himself makes himself that by continually giving himself. Thus he is exactly the very opposite of the criminal, who is the injuring one. Someone in love is not the very opposite of the injuring one, however different he is from him, since someone in love is still seeking, in a certain, most often unconscious way, his own and thus has a *mine*.

Only for self-denying love does the specification "mine" disappear entirely and the distinction "*mine* and *yours*" become entirely canceled. In other words, if I know of nothing as mine, if nothing at all is mine, then of course all things are yours, which in a certain sense they are, and this is the way self-sacrificing love thinks of it; yet all things, unconditionally all things, cannot be yours, since "yours" is an antithetical relation, and there is no antithesis in all things. Then the wondrous thing occurs that is heaven's blessing upon self-denying love—in salvation's mysterious understanding all things become his, his who had no *mine* at all, his who in self-denial made yours all that was his. In other words, God is all things, and by having no *mine* at all self-denial's love won God and won all things. The person who loses his soul will gain it,[59] but the distinction "*mine* and *yours*," or the "*yours* and *mine*" of erotic love and friendship, is a keeping of the soul. Only the spirit's love has the courage to will to have nothing at

all, the courage to cancel entirely the distinction "*yours* and *mine*"; therefore it gains God—by losing its soul. Here again we see what the early fathers understood in saying that the virtues of paganism are glittering vices.[60]

The one who truly loves does not seek his own. With regard to his "own," he knows nothing about the claims of strict law or of justice, not even the claims of equity; neither does he know anything about an exchange that erotic love makes, which also knows how to watch out lest it be tricked (therefore knows how to watch out for its own). Neither does he know about community as friendship does, which also knows how to watch out whether like is now given for like, so that the friendship can be maintained (therefore knows how to watch out for its own). No, the one who truly loves knows how to do only one thing: how to be tricked, to be deceived, to give everything away without getting the least in return—see, this is what it is not to seek one's own. Ah, the poor fool, what a laughingstock he is—in the eyes IX
of the world! The truly loving person becomes the uncondition- 257
ally injured one—which he in a certain sense makes himself by self-denial. But then the overturning of *mine* and *yours* has reached its highest point; and therefore love also has reached its highest blessedness within itself. No ingratitude, no misjudgment, no unappreciated sacrifice, no mockery as thanks, nothing, neither things present nor things to come,[61] is able to bring him sooner or later to understand that he has any *mine*, or make it appear that he had only for a moment forgotten the distinction "*mine* and *yours*," because he has eternally forgotten this distinction and has eternally been conscious of loving sacrificially, been conscious of being sacrificed.

Love does not seek its own. The truly loving one does not love his own distinctiveness but, in contrast, loves every human being according to his distinctiveness; but "his distinctiveness" is what for him is ***his own****; that is, the loving one does not seek his own; quite the opposite, he loves what is the other's own.*

Let us for a moment look at nature. With what infinite love nature or God in nature encompasses all the diverse things that have life and existence! Just recollect what you yourself have so

often delighted in looking at, recollect the beauty of the meadows! There is no difference in the love, no, none—yet what a difference in the flowers! Even the least, the most insignificant, the most unimpressive, the poor little flower disregarded by even its immediate surroundings, the flower you can hardly find without looking carefully—it is as if this, too, had said to love: Let me become something in myself, something distinctive. And then love has helped it to become its own distinctiveness, but far more beautiful than the poor little flower had ever dared to hope for. What love! First, it makes no distinction, none at all; next, which is just like the first, it infinitely distinguishes itself in loving the diverse. Wondrous love! For what is as difficult as to make no distinction at all in loving, and if one makes no distinction at all, what is as difficult as making distinctions! Just suppose nature were like us human beings—rigid, domineering, cold, partisan, small-minded, capricious—and imagine, yes, just imagine what would happen to the beauty of the meadow!

So it is also in the relationships of love among human beings; only true love loves every human being according to the person's
IX 258 distinctiveness. *The rigid, the domineering person* lacks flexibility, lacks the pliability to comprehend others;[62] he demands his own from everyone, wants everyone to be transformed in his image, to be trimmed according to his pattern for human beings. Or he does what he regards as a rare degree of love, on a rare occasion he makes an exception. He seeks, so he says, to comprehend a particular human being, that is, in an altogether definite, specific—and arbitrary—way he thinks of something definite about this person and then insists that the other shall fulfill this idea. Whether this is exactly the other person's distinctiveness or not makes no difference, because this is what the domineering person has supposed about him. If the rigid and domineering person cannot ever create, he wants at least to transform—that is, he seeks his own so that wherever he points he can say: See, it is my image, it is my idea, it is my will. Whether the rigid and domineering person is assigned a large sphere of activity or a small one, whether he is a tyrant in an empire or a domestic tyrant in a little attic room essentially makes no difference; the nature is the same: domineeringly refusing to go out of oneself, domineeringly

wanting to crush the other person's distinctiveness or torment it to death. The nature is the same—the worst tyrant who ever lived and had a world to tyrannize became bored with it and ended up tyrannizing flies,[63] but he really remained the same!

Just as the rigid and domineering person seeks only his own, so also does *small-mindedness*, enviously imperious, cowardly timorous small-mindedness. What is small-mindedness? Is small-mindedness a distinctiveness, that is, is any human being originally, from God's hand, small-minded? No! Small-mindedness is the creature's own miserable invention when it, neither truly proud nor truly humble (humility before God is true pride[64]), creates itself and also distorts God, as if he were also small-minded, as if he could not bear distinctiveness—he who lovingly gives *all things* and yet gives all things distinctiveness. Thus small-mindedness must not be confused with limited talents or with what we human beings small-mindedly call insignificance. Take such an insignificant person: if he has had the courage to be himself before God, then he has distinctiveness, but truly, such an insignificant person—but what am I saying—no, such a noble person is not small-minded either. One would guard carefully IX 259
against this confusion, and in that way one would not confuse unsophisticated, noble simplicity that does not understand much with a small-minded shallowness that cravenly and stubbornly wants to understand only its own.

The small-minded person has never had the courage for this God-pleasing venture of humility and pride: *before God* to be oneself—the emphasis is on "before God," since this is the source and origin of all distinctiveness. The one who has ventured this has distinctiveness; he has come to know what God has already given him, and in the same sense he believes completely in everyone's distinctiveness. To have distinctiveness is to believe in the distinctiveness of everyone else, because distinctiveness is not mine but is God's gift by which he gives being to me, and he indeed gives to all, gives being to all. This is the unfathomable fountain of goodness in God's goodness that he, the *Omnipotent One*, yet gives in such a way that the receiver acquires distinctiveness, that he who creates out of nothing yet creates distinctiveness, so that the creature in relation to God does not be-

come nothing even though it is taken from nothing and is nothing but becomes a distinctive individuality.[65]

Small-mindedness, on the other hand, which is an *assumed nature*, has no distinctiveness, that is, it has not believed in its own and therefore it cannot believe in anyone else's either. The small-minded person has clung to a very specific shape and form that he calls his own; he seeks only that, can love only that. If the small-minded person finds this, then he loves. Then small-mindedness holds together with small-mindedness; they grow together, which, in the spiritual sense, is just as pernicious as an ingrown toenail. This small-minded alliance is then praised as the highest love, as true friendship, as true, loyal, honest harmony. One refuses to understand that the more they hold together in this way, the further they distance themselves from true love, the greater becomes the untruth of small-mindedness—and the more pernicious when to boot it claims God in support of its jumbling together so that small-mindedness presumably must be the sole object of God's love, the only object that pleases him.

This petty alliance is equally petty in both directions: equally petty in idolizing a very particular person, who is one of small-mindedness's "own," perhaps its inventor, or at least someone who under the most petty scrutiny is found to have completely, down to the slightest petty detail, the face, demeanor, voice, way of thinking, way of speaking, and cordiality of small-mindedness; and it is equally petty in wanting to displace everything else. Just because small-mindedness is an assumed nature and therefore false, just because it has not on the deepest level and never with
IX bold confidence become involved with God but, narrow-
260 hearted, has made a miserable mess itself and has falsified God, for this very reason it has a bad conscience. For someone who has distinctiveness, no strange distinctiveness is a refutation but rather a confirmation or one more demonstration; it cannot disturb him to have it become manifest that everyone, as he believes, has distinctiveness. But for small-mindedness every distinctiveness is a refutation; therefore it feels a clammy, uncomfortable anxiety upon seeing an unfamiliar distinctiveness, and nothing is more important for it than to get rid of it. Small-mindedness demands

of God, as it were, that every such distinctiveness be destroyed so that small-mindedness will be shown to be in the right and God to be a jealous God—jealous for small-mindedness.

It may at times serve as an excuse that small-mindedness itself actually imagines that its miserable invention is the truth, so that it is even honest friendship and genuine sympathy to want to muddle and mess everyone into a likeness to oneself. When this is the case, small-mindedness is usually fulsome in hearty platitudes and assurances. But actually, although this is most often kept quiet, it is self-defense, self-preservation that makes small-mindedness so active in order to get rid of everything else but its own. In its asthmatic tightness that gasps for relief, we hear how it would perish if it did not get rid of this discomfort, this anxiety. One sees in its glance how basically unsure it is of itself deep down, and therefore how sneakily and also how rapaciously it lies in wait for its prey—in order that it may become apparent that small-mindedness nevertheless is right and has the victory. Just as someone in mortal danger allows himself everything because it is a matter of life and death, so also does small-mindedness, but naturally all the means it uses to defend its life and deprive the distinctive individuality of life—well, they naturally are extremely petty. Although it allows itself everything, one can still be sure that the everything it allows itself is everything petty.

"But do not erotic love and friendship love the beloved and the friend according to his distinctiveness?" Yes, it is true, and yet it is not always entirely true. Erotic love and friendship have a limit; they can give up all things for the other's distinctiveness but not themselves, love and friendship, for the other's distinctiveness. Suppose, now, that the other's distinctiveness required this very sacrifice! Suppose the lover saw, to his delight, that he was loved, but he also saw that it would be extremely damaging to the beloved's distinctiveness, would warp it, however much it was desired—well, then erotic love as such is unable to make this sacrifice. Or suppose the beloved saw that the relationship would become the lover's ruin, would completely shake his distinctiveness—well, then erotic love as such does not have the power to make this sacrifice. IX 261

But the true love, the self-sacrificing love, which loves every human being according to his distinctiveness, is willing to make every sacrifice—it does not seek its own.

Love does not seek its own; it rather gives in such a way that the gift looks as if it were the recipient's property.

When in a civic setting we speak about the circumstances of people, we distinguish between those who are their own masters and those who are dependent, and we wish that everyone might at some time be in a position to become his own master, as it is called. But also in the world of spirit, precisely this, to become one's own master, is the highest—and in love to help someone toward that, to become himself, free, independent, his own master, to help him stand alone—that is the greatest beneficence. What, then, is the greatest beneficence? Yes, it is the one we have mentioned, if, note well, the one who loves also knows how to make himself unnoticed so that the person helped does not become dependent upon him—by owing to him the greatest beneficence. This means that the greatest beneficence is specifically *the way* in which the one and only true beneficence is done. Essentially it can be done in only one way, even though in another sense it can be done in a multiplicity of ways. If the beneficence is not done in this way, it is very far from being the greatest beneficence—indeed, even far from being a beneficence. Therefore one cannot directly say which is the greatest beneficence, since the greatest beneficence, to help the other to stand alone, cannot be done directly.

Let us understand this. If I say, "This person is standing by himself through my help" and what I say is true, have I then done the highest for him? Let us see! What am I saying by this? I am saying, "He stands simply and solely through my help"—but then, of course, he is not standing by himself, then he has indeed not become his own master; then, after all, it is to my help that he owes all this—and he is aware of it. To help a human being in that way is really to deceive him. Yet this is the way in which the greatest beneficence is most often done in the world—that is, in the way in which it cannot be done. Yet this is the way that is especially appreciated in the world—as is natural, inasmuch as the true way makes itself invisible and thus is not seen and in this

way exempts from all dependence the world as well as the persons involved. But the one who is helped in the wrong way, the meaningless way, is inexhaustible in praising and thanking me for the greatest beneficence (that he stands by himself through the help of his dependent relationship to me). He and his family and all of them together honor and praise me as his greatest benefactor for having in love made him dependent upon me, or—yes, it is strange, they express their gratitude in an utterly meaningless way, since instead of saying that I have made him independent of me, they declare that I have helped him to stand by himself.[66] IX 262

The greatest benefaction, therefore, cannot be done in such a way that the recipient comes to know that it is to me that he owes it, because if he comes to know that, then it simply is not the greatest beneficence. On the other hand, if someone says, "This person is standing by himself—through my help" and what he says is true, well, then he has done for this person the highest that one human being can do for another, has made him free, independent, himself, his own master, and just by hiding his help has helped him to stand by himself. Therefore: to stand by oneself—through another's help!

[67]Many authors use the dash [*Tankestreg*, thought-line] on every occasion of thought-failure; there are also authors who use the dash with insight and taste; but a dash has truly never been used more significantly and never can be used more significantly than in this little sentence—if used, note well, by someone who has accomplished it, if there is such a person—because in this little sentence infinity's thought is contained in a most ingenious way, and the greatest contradiction is surmounted. He is standing by himself—that is the highest; he is standing by himself—more you do not see. You see no help or support, no awkward bungler's hand holding on to him, any more than it occurs to the person himself that someone has helped him. No, he is standing by himself—through another's help. But this other person's help is hidden from him—the one who was helped? No, from the eyes of the independent one (for if he knows that he has been helped, then in the deepest sense he of course is not the independent one who helps and has helped himself); it is hidden behind the dash.

There is a noble wisdom that nevertheless in a good sense is infinitely crafty and cunning. It is well known; if I were to mention the foreign word used for it, there would scarcely be anyone
IX 263 in these times who would fail to recognize it—by name; perhaps there may not be very many who recognize it if one describes it without mentioning its name. This wisdom and its name are often berated in the world, which is not very strange at all, because the world is a very confused thinker who, on account of many thoughts, has neither the time nor the patience to think one thought. That noble, simple soul of ancient times[68] was a master in this wisdom. Truly that noble man was by no means exactly a bad or evil person. He was also, if I may express myself a bit roguishly, he was, and this cannot really be denied him, he was a kind of thinker, although not as profound as the manner of speaking in the modern way of thinking, although not as admirable as that in being able to explain—because it was impossible for him to explain more than he understood.[69]

This noble rogue had understood in the profound sense that the highest one human being can do for another is to make him free, help him to stand by himself[70]—and he had also understood himself in understanding this, that is, he had understood that if this is to be done the helper must be able to make himself anonymous, must magnanimously will to annihilate himself. In the spiritual sense he was, as he called himself, a midwife,[71] and he unselfishly worked in this service with every self-sacrifice—because the unselfishness consisted simply and specifically in this, that it remained hidden from the person helped that he was helped and how. The unselfishness consisted in this, that the world could not understand and consequently could not appreciate his unselfishness, something it can never do, because it simply cannot grasp why someone does not want to be selfish, but rather that a selfish person even more selfishly can wish to be regarded as unselfish.

In this understanding of what it is to help another human being, the one who truly loves and that noble rogue agree. The latter was conscious, and it is true, that he had done the other person the greatest beneficence; he was conscious of how he had worked for just this, of what time and industry and art it had

taken to deceive the other into the truth, of how much misunderstanding he had had to endure from the one he helped by taking away from him his fatuities and tricking him into the truth. The art of depriving someone of his fatuities is a dangerous one to practice. That noble one himself says "that people could become so angry with him that they positively wanted to bite him every time he deprived them of a foolish notion"[72]—inasmuch as strengthening them in their fatuousness they call love. No wonder, then, that they become angry when someone wants to take that, their greatest treasure, away from them! In this way he worked; and when the work was completed, he said very softly to himself: Now this individual is standing by himself. But then we come to the dash, and with the dash a smile comes upon the lips of that noble, yet roguish one, and he says, "Now this individual is standing by himself—through my help." He keeps to himself the secret of this indescribable smile. Truly, there is not a trace of evil in this smile; he is conscious that what he has done is well intentioned; he is conscious that it truly is a beneficence and is truly the only way in which it can be done—but the smile, that is still the self-consciousness of ingenuity. IX 264

It is different with the one who loves. He also says: Now this individual is standing by himself. Then comes the dash. Oh, but for the loving person this dash means something different from a smile; however noble and magnanimous and unselfish that rogue was, he still did not in the sense of concern love the one he wanted to help. Whereas that rogue makes himself infinitely light precisely in the cunning of the dash, and just this is the art, to have been able to do everything for the other person and pretend as if one had done nothing at all, then for the loving person the dash, even though in the sense of thought an infinite lightness, in another sense (but please note that it is not noticeable) is like a heavy breath, almost like a deep sigh. In this dash are hidden the sleeplessness of anxiety, the night watch of work, the almost desperate exertion; in this dash is hidden a fear and trembling that has never found any expression and for that very reason is all the more terrible. The one who loves has understood that it truly is the greatest, the only beneficence one human being can do for another, to help him to stand by himself, to

become himself, to become his own master; but he has also understood the danger and the suffering in the midst of the work, and above all the terribleness of the responsibility. Therefore, giving thanks to God, he declares: Now this individual is standing by himself—through my help. But there is no self-satisfaction in the last phrase, because the loving one has understood that essentially every human being indeed stands by himself—through God's help—and that the loving one's self-annihilation is really only in order not to hinder the other person's God-relationship, so that all the loving one's help infinitely vanishes in the God-relationship. He works without reward, since he makes himself nothing, and in the very moment when there could be any question of the possibility that he still could keep the reward
IX 265 of proud self-consciousness, God enters in, and he is again annihilated, which nonetheless is for him his salvation.

A royal courtier has the power to make himself important to someone for whom it is very important to speak with His Majesty. But now if this situation is conceivable, that simply by staying in the background a royal courtier could help the seeker to speak with His Majesty at any time, I wonder if in his joy over being able to speak with His Majesty at any time the seeker would not completely forget the poor courtier—the poor royal courtier, who would have had the power *unlovingly* to make the seeker especially obliged to him, to make the seeker love him for his love by occasionally obtaining for him admittance to His Majesty, the poor courtier, who instead chose *lovingly* to stay in the background and in just that way to prepare for the seeker admittance to His Majesty at every moment, to help the seeker to the independence that at every moment finds admittance to His Majesty!

So it is with all the work of the one who loves. Truly, he does not seek his own, because he gives in precisely such a way that it looks as if the gift were the recipient's property. Insofar as the loving one is able, he seeks to encourage a person to become himself, to become his own master.[73] But in this way nothing at all is changed in existence, except that the loving one, the hidden benefactor, is shoved aside, since it is every human being's destiny to become free, independent, oneself. If the one who loves

in this respect has been God's co-worker, everything has indeed become—as it was according to the destiny. If it is noticed that the one who loves has helped, then the relationship is disturbed, or else the helper has not lovingly helped, the one who loves has not helped properly.

What a wonderful remembrance the one who loves acquires as thanks for all his work! In a way he can pack his whole life into a dash. He can say: I have worked as much as anyone, worked early and late, but what have I accomplished—a dash! (That is, if what he had accomplished could be seen directly, he would have worked less lovingly.) I have suffered as heavily as anyone, as deeply as only love can suffer, but what have I gained—a dash! I have proclaimed the truth as clearly and well thought through as anyone, but who has appropriated it—a dash! In other words, if he had not been one who loves, he would have loudly and directly proclaimed the truth, less well thought through, and promptly had adherents who would have appropriated the truth—and hailed him as master.

Has, then, the life of the one who loves been wasted, has he lived entirely in vain, since there is nothing, nothing at all that witnesses to his activities and efforts? Answer: Is it wasting one's life not to seek one's own? No, in truth this life is not wasted. The one who loves is with blessed joy conscious of this and God is his confidant. In a certain sense his life is completely squandered on existence, on the existence of others. Unwilling to waste any time or energy on asserting himself, on being something for himself, in his self-sacrifice he is willing to perish, that is, he is completely and wholly transformed into simply being an active power in the hands of God. This is why his activity cannot be visible. His activity, after all, consisted in helping another or other persons to become their own masters, something they in a certain sense were already. But if someone *actually* has become his own master through the other's help, it is utterly impossible to see that it is through the other's help, because if I see the other's help, then I indeed see that the person helped has not become his own master. IX 266

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Love Hides a Multitude of Sins[74]

The temporal has three periods and therefore does not ever actually exist completely or exist completely in any of them; the eternal *is*. A temporal object can have many various characteristics, in a certain sense can be said to have them simultaneously insofar as it is what it is in these specific characteristics. But a temporal object never has redoubling [*Fordoblelse*] in itself;[75] just as the temporal vanishes in time, so also it is only in its characteristics. When, however, the eternal is in a human being, this eternal redoubles in him in such a way that every moment it is in him, it is in him in a double mode: in an outward direction and in an inward direction back into itself, but in such a way that this is one and the same, since otherwise it is not redoubling. The eternal is not only in its characteristics but is in itself in its characteristics. It not only has characteristics but is in itself in having the characteristics.

So also with love. What love does, that it is; what it is, that it does—at one and the same moment. At the same moment it goes out of itself (the outward direction), it is in itself (the inward direction); and at the same moment it is in itself, it goes out of itself in such a way that this outward going and this returning, this returning and this outward going are simultaneously one and the same.

When we say, "Love gives bold confidence," we are saying that the one who loves by his nature makes others boldly confident. Wherever love is present, it spreads bold confidence. We
IX like to be near someone who loves, because he casts out fear.[76]
268 Whereas the mistrustful person scares everyone away, whereas the crafty and cunning spread anxiety and painful disquietude around them, whereas the presence of a domineering person is as oppressive as the heavy pressure of sultry air—love gives bold

confidence. But when we say, "Love gives bold confidence," we are at the same time saying something else, that the one who loves has bold confidence, as in "Love gives bold confidence on the Day of Judgment"[77]—that is, it makes the loving one boldly confident in the judgment.

When we say, "Love saves from death," the redoubling in the thought is immediate: the one who loves saves another person from death, and in quite the same or yet in another sense he saves himself from death. This he does all at once; it is one and the same. He does not save another person at one moment and at another moment save himself, but at the moment he saves the other he saves himself from death. But love never thinks of the latter, of saving itself, of getting bold confidence itself; the one who loves thinks only of lovingly giving bold confidence and saving another from death.

Yet the one who loves is not therefore forgotten. No, the one who in love forgets himself, forgets his suffering, in order to think of someone else's, forgets all his misery in order to think of someone else's, forgets what he himself loses in order lovingly to bear in mind someone else's loss, forgets his advantage in order lovingly to think of someone else's—truly, such a person is not forgotten. There is one who is thinking about him: God in heaven, or love is thinking about him. God is Love, and when a person out of love forgets himself, how then would God forget him! No, while the one who loves forgets himself and thinks of the other person, God is thinking of the one who loves. The self-lover is busy; he shouts and makes a big noise and stands on his rights in order to make sure he is not forgotten—and yet he is forgotten. But the one who loves, who forgets himself, is recollected by love. There is one who is thinking of him, and that is why the one who loves receives what he gives.

Note the redoubling here: the one who loves is or becomes what he does. He has or rather he acquires what he gives—amazing, like "out of the eater came something to eat."[78] Yet perhaps someone says, "It is then not so strange that the one who loves has what he gives; it is indeed always the case; one certainly does not give what one does not have." Well, yes, but then is it always the case also that one retains what one gives, or that one acquires

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for oneself what one gives to another, that by giving one acquires and receives just the same as one gives, so that this giving and this receiving are one and the same? As a rule, however, this is not the case, but it is the very opposite, that what I give the other receives, not that I myself receive what I give to another.

In this way love is always redoubled in itself. This holds true also when it is said that love hides a multitude of sins.

In Scripture we read, and these are *Love's* own words, that many sins are forgiven one who loved much[79]—because the love in him hides a multitude of sins. But we shall not discuss that now. In this little book we are continually dealing with the works of love; therefore we are considering love in its outward direction. In this sense we shall now discuss:

Love hides a multitude of sins.

Love hides a multitude of sins. It does not discover sins; but not to discover what still must be there, insofar as it can be discovered—that is hiding.

The term "multitude [*Mangfoldighed*]" is in itself indefinite. For example, we speak of the multiplicity [*Mangfoldighed*] of creation; yet this same expression means something very different, depending on who the speaker is. Someone who has lived his whole life in a remote place and in addition has had only slight interest in getting to know nature—how little he knows, he who also speaks of the multiplicity of creation. A natural scientist, on the other hand, who has traveled around the world, who has been all over, both above and under the surface of the earth, has seen the abundance that he has seen, and moreover with armed eyes he has at a distance discovered otherwise invisible stars and at extraordinarily close range has discovered otherwise invisible creeping things—how amazingly much he knows; yet he uses the same phrase, "multiplicity of creation." And further, although the natural scientist is happy about what he has succeeded in observing, he willingly admits that there is no limit to discoveries since there is not even any limit to discoveries regarding the instruments used for discovery; therefore the multiplicity, as it is discovered or as new instruments of discovery are discovered, continually becomes greater and greater and can continually be-

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come even greater, that is, proves to be even greater—yet all in all it is still comprehended in the phrase "the multiplicity of creation."—The same is true of the multitude of sins. The phrase means something very different, depending on who the speaker is.

Therefore one *discovers* the multitude of sins to be continually greater and greater; that is, through discovery it continually proves to be greater and greater, of course also by means of the discoveries one makes with regard to how craftily, how mistrustingly one must conduct oneself in order to make the discoveries. Accordingly, the one who does *not discover* hides the multitude, because for him the multitude is smaller.

But to discover is indeed something praiseworthy, something admired, even though this admiration is at times constrained in a strange way to bring the somewhat heterogeneous together. We admire the natural scientist who discovers a bird, and then we presumably also admire the dog that discovered purple.[80] Be that as it may, one thing is sure: discovering is praised and admired in the world. On the other hand, one who does not discover something or who discovers nothing is rated very low. In order to designate as eccentric someone who goes around lost in his own thoughts, one often says, "You can just bet that he doesn't discover anything." And if one wants to single out someone as especially shallow and obtuse, one says, "He for sure didn't invent gunpowder," which of course hardly needs to be done in our day, since it has already been invented; so it would be even more dubious if someone in our time were to think that he was the one who had invented gunpowder. Oh, but to discover something is so admired in the world that it is impossible to forget the enviable fate of having invented gunpowder!

So, then, it is certainly easy to see that the one who loves, who discovers nothing, makes a very poor showing in the eyes of the world. To make discoveries even with regard to evil, with regard to sin and the multitude of sins, to be the shrewd, sly, foxy, perhaps more or less corrupt observer who can really make discoveries—this is highly regarded in the world. Even a youth upon first stepping out into life is very eager to divulge how he knows and has discovered evil (because he is reluctant to have the world call

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him a simpleton). Even a woman in her earliest youth is very eager to divulge; she is vain about being a judge of human nature, naturally with regard to evil (because she is reluctant to have the world call her a silly little goose or a small-town beauty). Yes, it is incredible how the world has changed compared with ancient times; then there were only a few who knew themselves, and now everyone is a judge of human nature. And this is the remarkable thing: if someone has discovered how fundamentally good-natured almost every human being is, he would hardly dare to acknowledge his discovery, and he would fear becoming ludicrous, perhaps even fear that humanity would feel insulted by it. If, however, someone pretends that he had discovered how fundamentally shabby every human being is, how envious, how selfish, how faithless, and what abomination can lie hidden in the purest, that is, in the one regarded by simpletons and silly geese and small-town beauties as the purest—that person conceitedly knows that he is welcome, that it is the yield of his observing, his knowledge, his story that the world longs to hear. Thus sin and evil have one power more over people than we ordinarily think of: that it is so stupid to be good, so shallow to believe in the good, so small-townish to betray ignorance or that one is an uninitiated person—uninitiated into the innermost secrets of sin. Here we see quite clearly how evil and sin in large part consist in a conceited comparison-relationship to the world, to other people. We can be very sure that the same people who, just because in their vanity they fear the world's judgment, in their association with others seek to be attractive and entertaining by divulging a special acquaintance with evil—we can be very sure that the same people have an entirely different view when they are alone, in their heart of hearts, where they do not need to be ashamed of the good. But in public, in company, when there are many or at least several together, and hence comparison, the comparison-relationship, is a member of the party, something vanity cannot possibly be unaware of—there the one tempts the other to divulge what he has discovered.

Yet even completely worldly-minded people sometimes make an exception and judge a bit more leniently of this: to discover nothing. Suppose two sly fellows had something to de-

cide together and they did not wish to have witnesses, but it could not be otherwise; they had to come to a decision in a room where a third was present—and this third, as they knew, was very much in love, happy in the first days of being in love—is it not true that one of the sly persons would say to the other, "Well, he can just as well be present; he will discover nothing." They would say it with a smile and with this smile honor their own sagacity. Yet they would still have a kind of respect for the one in love, who discovers nothing. IX 272

And now the one who loves! Whether he is laughed at, whether he is mocked, whether he is pitied, and no matter what the world says about him, it is certain that with regard to the multitude of sins he *discovers* nothing, not even that laughter, that mockery, that pity; he *discovers* nothing, and he sees only very little. He discovers nothing. We do of course distinguish between discovering that is the conscious and deliberate effort to find and seeing or hearing that can occur against one's will. He discovers nothing. Yet whether he is laughed at or is not laughed at, whether he is mocked or is not mocked, deep down inside we have a respect for him because he, resting in and absorbed in his love, discovers nothing.

The one who loves discovers nothing; therefore he hides the multitude of sins that could be found through discovery. The life of the one who loves expresses the apostolic injunction to be a child in evil.[81] What the world actually admires as sagacity is knowledge of evil—whereas wisdom is knowledge of the good. The one who loves does not have and does not want to have knowledge of evil; in this regard he is and remains, he wants to be and wants to remain, a child. Put a child in a den of thieves (but the child must not remain there so long that it is corrupted itself); that is, let it remain there only for a very brief time. Then let it come home and tell everything it has experienced. You will note that the child, who is a good observer and has an excellent memory (as does every child), will tell everything in the greatest detail, yet in such a way that in a certain sense the most important is omitted. Therefore someone who does not know that the child has been among thieves would least suspect it on the basis of the child's story. What is it, then, that the child leaves out,

what is it that the child has not discovered? It is the evil. Yet the child's story about what it has seen and heard is entirely accurate. What, then, does the child lack? What is it that so often makes a
IX 273 child's story the most profound mockery of the adults? It is knowledge of evil, that the child lacks knowledge of evil, that the child does not even feel inclined to want to be knowledgeable about evil. In this the one who loves is like the child.

But at the basis of all *understanding* lies first and foremost an *understanding* between the one who is to understand and that which is to be understood. Therefore knowledge of evil (however much it wants to fool itself and others into thinking that it can keep itself pure, that it is a pure knowledge of evil) still has an *understanding* with evil. If this understanding did not exist, if the knowledgeable one found no pleasure in understanding evil, he would abhor understanding it and then would not understand it either. If this understanding does not mean anything else, it still is a malignant curiosity about evil, or it is cunning's reconnoitering for an excuse for one's own faults by means of an intimate acquaintance with the extent of evil, or falsity's scheme to jack up its own worth by means of acquaintance with the depravity of others. But watch out, because if one in curiosity gives evil a little finger, it soon takes the whole hand, and excuses are the most dangerous of all to have in stock. To become better or seem to be better by means of comparison with the badness of others is, after all, a bad way to become better. Yet if this understanding already discovers the multitude of sins, what discoveries may not an even more intimate understanding that actually is in league with evil be able to make! Just as one who is jaundiced sees everything yellow, in the same way, then, such a person, as he himself sinks deeper and deeper, discovers the multitude of sins as greater and greater around him. His eyes are sharpened and armed, alas, not in the sense of truth but rather in the sense of untruth; therefore his outlook becomes more and more prejudiced so that, infecting, he sees evil in everything, impurity even in the purest—and this outlook is a kind of consolation to him (what a terrible thought!), because it is a matter of urgency for him to discover the multiplicity to be as limitless as possible. Finally there is no limit to his discovery. Now he discovers sin

even where he himself knows it does not exist; he discovers it with the aid of the fabrication of slander, of defamation, and of lies, which he practices for such a long time that he himself finally believes it. Such a person has discovered the multitude of sins!

But the one who loves discovers nothing. There is something so infinitely solemn and yet also so childlike, something that is reminiscent of a child's game, when the one who loves in this way, by discovering nothing at all, hides the multitude of sins—something that is reminiscent of a child's game, because this is IX 274
indeed the way we play with a child. We play that we do not see the child who is standing right in front of us, or the child plays that it cannot see us, which is indescribably amusing to the child. The childlikeness, then, is that, as in a game, the one who loves with his eyes open cannot see what is taking place right in front of him; the solemnity is that it is the evil that he cannot see. It is well known that Orientals honor a deranged person; but this one who loves, who is worthy of honor, is indeed like one who is deranged. It is well known that in ancient times a great distinction was made, and quite rightly so, between two kinds of madness.[82] The one was a lamentable illness, and people felt sorry for such an unfortunate; the other was called divine madness. To use for once the pagan word "divine," it is a divine kind of madness to be lovingly unable to see the evil that takes place right in front of one. Truly, these sagacious times, which have such a great understanding of evil, certainly make it necessary to do something to teach how to honor this madness. Unfortunately, in these times much is done so that such a loving person, who has a great understanding of the good and does not want any understanding of evil, looks like a deranged person.

Just imagine, to mention the highest example, imagine Christ in that moment when he was brought before the Council; imagine the raging crowd; imagine the circle of dignitaries—and then imagine how many a glance was directed at him, aimed at him, only waiting for him to look in that direction so that its glance could also convey its mockery, its contempt, its pity, its scorn for the accused! But he discovered nothing; lovingly he hid the multitude of sins. Imagine how many insults, how much derision, and how many mocking taunts were shouted, and for the one

who shouted them it was urgent that his voice be heard, so that above all it would not seem as if he had been remiss, which would be indescribably stupid, as if he had not been actively participating here where the main thing was that all jointly, therefore as the instrument of the true, the public opinion, deride, injure, and mistreat an innocent person! But he discovered nothing; lovingly he hid the multitude of sins—by discovering nothing.

IX 275 He is the prototype; the one who loves has learned from him when he discovers nothing and in this way hides the multitude of sins, when he as a worthy follower, "forsaken, despised, bearing his cross,"[83] walks between mockery and pity, between derision and wails of woe, and yet lovingly discovers nothing—truly more wondrous than when the three men walked unscathed in the fiery furnace.[84] Yet mockery and derision actually do no harm if the one derided is not damaged by *discovering*, that is, by becoming embittered; if he becomes embittered, he discovers the multitude of sins.

If you really want to make clear for yourself how the one who loves hides the multitude of sins by discovering nothing, then consider love once again. Imagine that this loving one had a wife who loved him. See, just because she loved him she would discover how he had been sinned against in a multitude of ways. Injured and with bitterness in her soul, she would discover every mocking glance; with broken heart she would hear the derision—while he, the one who loves, discovered nothing. Then when the one who loves, insofar as he could not avoid seeing or hearing something, still had the excuse in readiness for the attackers that he himself no doubt was at fault—then the wife would be unable to discover any fault at all in him but would discover, but all the more, how he had been sinned against in a multitude of ways. Do you now see, as you consider what the wife discovered, and indeed with truth, do you see how true it is that the one who loves, who discovers nothing, hides the multitude of sins? Now imagine this applied to all of life's relationships, and you will admit that the loving one actually does hide the multitude!

Love hides a multitude of sins; what it cannot avoid seeing or hearing, it hides by silence, by a mitigating explanation, by forgiveness.

By silence it hides the multitude.

It is sometimes the case that two lovers wish to keep their relationship hidden. Suppose, then, the moment they declared their love to each other and promised each other secrecy that a third person was present quite accidentally, but this outsider was an honest and loving person to be depended upon, and he promised them secrecy—would not the lovers' love be and remain hidden? But this is the way the one who loves conducts himself when he inadvertently, quite accidentally, never because he himself has sought an opportunity for it, becomes aware of a person's sin, his fault, of what he has committed or of how he has been carried away by a weakness—the loving one keeps silent about it and hides a multitude of sins. IX 276

Do not say, "A multitude of sins still remains just as great whether it is concealed or told, since silence certainly does not subtract anything, because one can conceal only something that exists." Instead, answer the question: Does not the one who tells his neighbor's faults and sins increase the multitude of sins? Even though it is true that the multitude remains just as great whether or not I conceal some of it, when I conceal it, I am still doing my part to hide it. Furthermore, do we not say that rumor usually increases? We mean thereby that rumor usually makes the guilt greater than it actually is. But I am not thinking of that now. In an entirely different sense, one may say that the rumor that tells the neighbor's faults increases the multitude of sins. Do not deal too light-mindedly with this knowledge of the neighbor's faults, as if everything were all right if only it is definite that what is being told is true. Truly, not all private knowledge of what is true about the neighbor's faults is therefore without guilt, and one can oneself easily become guilty by becoming privy to it. In this way rumor, or the one who tells the neighbor's faults, increases the multitude of sins. It corrupts people to become accustomed through rumor or gossip to finding out, inquisitively, frivolously, enviously, perhaps maliciously, about the neighbor's faults. It would certainly be desirable if people would again learn to be

silent; but if there is to be chatter, and inquisitive and frivolous chatter at that, then let it be about nonsense and trivialities. The neighbor's fault is and ought to be too serious a matter; therefore to chatter inquisitively, frivolously, and enviously about it is a sign of corruption. But the one who by telling the neighbor's faults helps to corrupt people is of course increasing the multitude of sins.

It is only all too certain that every human being, unfortunately, has a great inclination to see his neighbor's faults and perhaps an even greater one to want to tell them. If there is nothing else, there is, alas, to use the mildest term, a kind of nervous debility that makes people very weak in this temptation, in this enticement to be able to tell something evil about the neighbor, to be able momentarily to obtain an attentive audience by means of such an entertaining story. But what in this way is already pernicious enough as the urge of a nervous debility that cannot
IX keep silent sometimes is developed in a person as a dreadful de-
277 monic passion on the most terrible scale. Is indeed any robber, any thief, any assailant, in short, any criminal, as fundamentally depraved as such a person who has made it his task, his contemptible means of livelihood, to proclaim on the greatest possible scale, as loudly as no word of truth is heard, as far-reaching across the entire country as something beneficial seldom reaches, penetrating into every nook where God's Word hardly penetrates—to proclaim the neighbor's faults, the neighbor's weaknesses, the neighbor's sins, to force upon everyone, even unstable youth, this defiling knowledge—is any criminal as fundamentally depraved as such a person, even if it were the case that the evil he told was true! Even if it were so—but then it is inconceivable that someone with the earnestness of eternity could be rigorous about seeing to it that the evil he told was unconditionally true and then could wish to devote his life to this service of nauseating truth, to report evil.

In the Lord's Prayer we pray that God will not lead us into temptation;[85] but if it should happen, indeed, if it should happen that I fall into temptation—merciful God, yet one favor, that my sin and my guilt might be such that the world rightly sees it as abominable and shocking! But the most terrible of all must be

to incur guilt, heinous guilt, to incur guilt upon guilt and new guilt day in and day out—and not become aware of it at all because one's whole environment, because existence itself had turned into an illusion that strengthened one in the opinion that it was nothing, that it not only was not guilt but was almost meritorious.

Ah, there are crimes that the world does not call crimes, that it rewards and almost honors—and yet, yet I would rather, God forbid, arrive in eternity with three repented murders on my conscience than as a retired slanderer with this dreadful, incalculable load of crime that had piled up year after year, that may have spread on an almost inconceivable scale, put people into their graves, embittered the most intimate relationships, violated the most innocent sympathizers, defiled the immature, led astray and corrupted both young and old—in short, spread on a scale of which the most vivid imagination cannot form a conception—this dreadful load of crime of which I never had the time to begin to repent because the time had to be used for new crimes, and because the innumerability of those crimes had secured for me money, influence, almost esteem, and above all a pleasurable life! IX 278
In connection with arson, we make a distinction if someone who sets fire to a house knows that it has many occupants or that it is unoccupied; but by means of slander to set fire, as it were, to a whole society—that is not even regarded as a crime! We quarantine against the plague—but to the plague that is even worse than the Asiatic plague, slander, which corrupts the soul and mind, to that we all open our houses; we pay money to be infected; we greet as a welcome guest the one who brings the infection!

Say, then, whether it is not true that by being silent about the neighbor's faults the one who loves hides the multitude of sins, if you consider how by telling his faults one increases the multitude of sins.

By a *mitigating explanation* the one who loves hides a multitude of sins.

It is always the explanation that makes something what it now becomes. The fact or the facts are basic, but the explanation is the decisive factor. Every event, every word, every act, in short, everything can be explained in many ways. Just as it is untruthfully

said that clothes make the man, so can one truthfully say that the explanation makes the object of the explanation what it becomes. With regard to another person's words, acts, and modes of thought, there is no certainty that to accept does not actually mean to choose. Therefore the view, the explanation, is a choice, just because a diversity of explanations is possible. But if it is a choice, it is always in my power, if I am one who loves, to choose the most lenient explanation. If, then, this more lenient or mitigating explanation explains what others light-mindedly, hastily, harshly, hardheartedly, enviously, maliciously, in short, unlovingly explain summarily as guilt, if the mitigating explanation explains this in another way, it removes now one and now another guilt and in this way reduces the multitude of sins or hides it.

Ah, if people would rightly understand what beautiful use they could make of their imagination, their acumen, their inventiveness, their power to put things together, by using it to find, if possible, a mitigating explanation—then they would gain more and more of a taste for one of the most beautiful joys in life; it would become for them a passionate desire and need that could make them forget everything else. Do we not see this in other situations, how, for example, the hunter with each year becomes more and more passionately devoted to hunting. We do not praise his choice, but neither are we speaking of that; we are
IX 279 speaking only about how with each year he more and more passionately devotes himself to this activity. And why does he do this? Because with each year he gains experience, becomes more and more inventive, overcomes more and more difficulties, so that he, the old experienced hunter, now knows resources no one else knows, now knows how to track the game when no one else knows how, now discerns signs that no one else understands how to use, now has worked out a more ingenious way to set his snares, so he is always fairly sure of success in having a good hunt even when all others are unsuccessful.

We regard it as an onerous but yet in another regard also a satisfying and fascinating task to be a servant of justice who discovers guilt and crime. We are amazed at such a person's acquaintance with the human heart, with all the evasions and fabrications, even the most sophistical: how he is able to remember

from year to year the most insignificant things merely in order to secure, if possible, a clue; how he, just by looking at the circumstances, seems to be able to conjure them into giving evidence against the guilty one; how nothing is too trivial for his attention, provided it could clarify his construction of the crime. We admire it when such a servant of justice, by persevering with what he calls a really inveterate and foxy dissembler, succeeds in tearing off his disguise and exposing his guilt. Should it not be just as satisfying, just as fascinating, to discover by really persevering with what we call unusually dastardly behavior that it was something totally different, something well intentioned!

Let the judge appointed by the state, let the servant of justice work at discovering guilt and crime; the rest of us are called to be neither judges nor servants of justice, but on the contrary are called by God to love, that is, with the aid of a mitigating explanation to hide a multitude of sins. Imagine such a loving person, equipped by nature with the most magnificent capacities, for which every judge is bound to envy him; but with a zeal and energy that would do honor to a judge all these gifts are used in the service of love in order to practice the art and to carry on the art, the art of interpretation that with the help of the mitigating explanation hides the multitude of sins! Imagine his rich, his in the noblest sense blessed experience, how acquainted he is with the human heart, how many remarkable and also moving instances he knows about in which, no matter how complicated they seemed, he still succeeded in discovering the good or at least the better because he had suspended his judgment for a long, long time until, sure enough, a little circumstance came to light IX
that gave him the clue; how by quickly and boldly concentrating 280
all his attention on a totally different view of the matter he had the good fortune to discover what he was looking for; how he finally was victorious with his explanation by really immersing himself in a person's life situation, by securing the most accurate information about his circumstances. So "he found the clue," "he had the good fortune to find what he was looking for," "he was victorious with his explanation"—alas, is it not strange that when these words are read out of context almost everyone will involuntarily think that the discourse is about discovering a crime—we are all much more inclined to think of discovering

evil than of discovering good. See, the state appoints judges and servants of justice to discover and punish evil. In other matters people unite, and this is indeed praiseworthy, to alleviate poverty, to bring up orphan children, to rescue the fallen, but for this beautiful enterprise, with the aid of the mitigating explanation to get a little power, be it ever so little, over the multitude of sins—for this no association has as yet been organized!

Here, however, we shall not develop further how the one who loves hides a multitude of sins through a mitigating explanation, since in two previous deliberations we have considered that love believes all things and love hopes all things. But believing all things in love and hoping all things in love are the two chief means that love, this lenient interpreter, uses for the mitigating explanation that hides a multitude of sins.

By *forgiveness* love hides a multitude of sins.

Keeping silent does not actually take away anything from the generally known multitude of sins. The mitigating explanation wrests something away from the multitude by showing that this and that were not sin. Forgiveness removes what cannot be denied to be sin. Thus love strives in every way to hide a multitude of sins; but forgiveness is the most notable way.

Earlier we alluded to the expression "the multiplicity of creation"; let us once again use it for illustration. If we say that the researcher *discovers* multiplicity, whereas the uninformed person, who to be sure also speaks of the multiplicity of creation, knows very little in comparison with him, then the ignorant person does not know that this or that exists, but it does still exist. It is not removed from nature by his ignorance; in his ignorance it simply
IX 281 does not exist for him. It is different with the relation of forgiveness to the multitude of sins; forgiveness takes the forgiven sin away.

This is a wonderful thought, therefore also faith's thought, because faith always relates itself to what is not seen.[86] I *believe* that what is seen has come into existence from what is not seen; I see the world, but what is not seen I do not see; that I believe. Similarly, in *forgiveness—and sin*—there is also a relation of faith of which we are rarely aware. What, then, is the unseen here? The unseen is that forgiveness takes away that which does indeed

exist; the unseen is that what is seen is nevertheless not seen, for if it is seen, it obviously is unseen that it is not seen. The one who loves sees the sin he forgives, but he believes that forgiveness takes it away. This cannot be seen, whereas the sin can indeed be seen; on the other hand, if the sin did not exist to be seen, it could not be forgiven either. Just as one by faith *believes* the *unseen* ***into*** what is seen, so the one who loves by forgiveness *believes* ***away*** what is seen. Both are faith. Blessed is the believer, he believes what he cannot see; blessed is the one who loves, he believes away that which he indeed can see!

Who can believe this? The one who loves can do it. But why is forgiveness so rare? Is it not because faith in the power of forgiveness is so meager and so rare? Even a better person, one who is not at all inclined to bear malice or rancor and is far from being irreconcilable, is not infrequently heard to say, "I would like to forgive him, but I do not see how it can help." Ah, it is not seen either! Yet if you yourself have ever needed forgiveness, then you know what forgiveness is capable of—why, then, do you speak so naively and so unlovingly about forgiveness? There is actually something unloving in saying: I do not see what help my forgiveness can be to him. We do not say this as if a person should become self-important by having in his power the ability to forgive another—far from it, because this also is unloving. Indeed, there is a way of forgiving that discernibly and conspicuously increases the guilt instead of diminishing it. Only love has—yes, it seems so jesting, but let us say it this way—only love has sufficient dexterity to take away the sin by means of forgiveness. If I encumber forgiveness (that is, I am reluctant to forgive or make myself important by being able to forgive), no miracle happens. But when love forgives, the miracle of faith happens (and every miracle is then a miracle of faith—no wonder, therefore, that along with faith miracles also have been abolished!): that what is seen is, by being forgiven, not seen. IX 282

It is blotted out, it is forgiven and forgotten, or, as Scripture says of what God forgives, it is hidden behind his back.[87] But of course one is not ignorant of what is forgotten, since one is ignorant only of what one does not and never has known; what one

has forgotten, one has known. Forgetting in this highest sense is therefore not the opposite of recollecting but of hoping. To hope is in thinking to give being; to forget is in thinking to take away being from that which nevertheless exists, to blot it out. Scripture teaches that faith pertains to the unseen, but it also says that faith is the constancy of what is hoped for.[88] This is why what is hoped for, just like the unseen, is something that does not exist, to which hope in thinking indeed gives existence. Forgetting, when God does it in relation to sin, is the opposite of creating, since to create is to bring forth from nothing, and to forget is to take back into nothing. What is hidden from my eyes, that I have never seen; but what is hidden behind my back, that I have seen. The one who loves forgives in this way: he forgives, he forgets, he blots out the sin, in love he turns toward the one he forgives; but when he turns toward him, he of course cannot see what is lying behind his back. It is easy to understand that it is impossible to see what lies behind one's back, hence also that this metaphor has appropriately been invented by love; but on the other hand it is perhaps very difficult to become the loving one who with the help of forgiveness puts another's guilt behind his back. Ordinarily people find it easy to place a guilt, even if it is a murder, upon the conscience of another; but by way of forgiveness to place another's guilt behind one's back—that is difficult. But not for the one who loves, because he hides a multitude of sins.

Do not say, "But the multitude of sins still is actually just as great whether or not the sin is forgiven, because forgiveness neither subtracts nor adds." Rather answer the question: Does not the one who unlovingly denies forgiveness increase the multitude of sins—and not only because his irreconcilability becomes one more sin, which it indeed is and to that extent ought to be
IX taken into account? Yet we shall not emphasize this now. But is
283 there not a secret relationship between sin and forgiveness? When a sin is not forgiven, it requires punishment, it cries to people or to God for punishment; but when a sin cries for punishment, it looks entirely different, much greater than when the same sin is forgiven. Is this merely an optical illusion? No, it is actually so. To use an inadequate metaphor, it is no optical illusion that the wound that looked so appalling looks much less

appalling the moment the physician has washed and taken care of it, and yet it is the same wound. What, then, does the one do who denies forgiveness? He enlarges the sin, makes it seem greater. Furthermore, forgiveness deprives the sin of life, but to deny forgiveness provides the sin with sustenance. Therefore even if no new sin was added, if the same sin continues the multitude of sins is enlarged. If a sin continues, a new sin is actually added, because sin grows through sin; that a sin continues is a new sin.[89] And this new sin you could have prevented by forgiving in love and taking away the old sin, just as does the one who loves, who hides a multitude of sins.

Love hides a multitude of sins, because love prevents the sin from coming into existence, smothers it at birth.

Even if one has everything ready with regard to one or another undertaking, some work one wishes to accomplish, one still must wait for one thing, the occasion. It is the same with regard to sin; when it is in a person, it still waits for the occasion.

Occasions can be very diverse. Scripture says that sin takes its occasion from the commandment [*Bud*] or the prohibition [*Forbud*].[90] The very fact that something is commanded or prohibited becomes the occasion, but not as if the occasion produced the sin, inasmuch as the occasion never produces anything. The occasion, like a middleman, a broker, is only helpful in the transaction, merely prompts the bringing about of what in another sense already existed as possibility. The commandment, the prohibition, tempts because it wants to constrain the evil; and now sin takes the occasion, it *takes* it; the prohibition *is* the occasion. Thus the occasion is, so to speak, a nothing, a swift something that comes between the sin and the prohibition, in a certain sense belongs to both, while in another sense it is as if it did not exist, although yet again nothing that actually has come into existence has done so without an occasion. IX 284

The commandment, the prohibition, is the occasion. In an even more lamentable sense, the sin in others is the occasion that occasions the sin in the one who comes in touch with them. Oh, how often a thoughtlessly, frivolously tossed-off remark has been sufficient to provide the sin an occasion! How often a wanton glance has been the occasion for an enlargement of the multitude

of sins! Not to mention what a rich occasion there is for sin in a person, how easy the transaction between giving occasion and taking occasion, when one lives in daily surroundings where one sees and hears nothing but sin and ungodliness! When the sin in a person is surrounded by sin, it is in its element. Nourished by the incessancy of occasion, it thrives and grows (that is, if one can speak of thriving in connection with evil). It becomes more and more malignant; it gains a more and more definite shape (that is, if one can speak of gaining more definite shape in connection with evil, since evil is a lie and deception and thus without shape); it attaches itself more and more, even if its life is suspended over the abyss and has no foothold.

Yet everything that is occasion, provided the occasion to sin is taken, contributes to enlarging the multitude of sins.

But there is one environment that unconditionally does not give and is not occasion for sin—that is love. When the sin in a person is surrounded by love, it is outside its element. It is like a besieged city cut off from every connection with its compatriots; it is like someone who has been addicted to drink, is placed in reduced circumstances, and now, when he loses his powers, waits in vain for an occasion to become stimulated by intoxication. Quite true, it is possible (what cannot a depraved person misuse to his own depravity!) that sin can take love as an occasion, can become furious at it, can rage against it. Yet in the long run sin cannot hold out against love; therefore such scenes are usually only at the beginning, just as the alcoholic has the strength of debilitation to rage furiously in the first days before the medical treatment has had sufficient time to be effective. Furthermore, if there were indeed such a person, whom even love would have to give up—no, love never does that—but who, uninterrupted by love, took occasion to sin, it does not follow that because there is one incorrigible there are not many who are
IX 285 healed. Thus it remains just as completely true that love hides a multitude of sins.

The authorities frequently have to devise very ingenious ways to keep a criminal imprisoned, and the physician often uses great inventiveness in working out coercive means to control an insane person, but in connection with sin there are no surroundings

as controlling, but also there are no controlling surroundings as redeeming, as love. How often has not the anger that smoldered within, only waiting for an occasion, how often has it not been smothered because love gave no occasion! How often has not the evil desire perished that was continually on the lookout in the lustful anxiety of curiosity, spying for an occasion, how often has it not perished at birth because love gave no occasion whatever and lovingly took care that no occasion whatever was given! Has not the vexation in the soul often been stilled that was so sure of and so prepared, yes, so poised for finding ever new occasions to be vexed by the world, by people, by God, by everything, has it not often been stilled by a more lenient mood, because love gave no occasion whatever to be vexed! Has not in turn that conceited and defiant attitude often passed away that considered itself wronged and unappreciated and then took the occasion to become even more conceited, while it merely craved new occasions to show that it was right; has it not in turn often passed away because love, so soothing and so gently resolvent, provided no occasion whatever for the sick conceit! Has not something contemplated, if only it could succeed in finding an occasion as an excuse, often drawn back into itself because love provided no occasion whatever for finding an excuse—for the evil! Oh, have not many crimes been averted, many evil intentions frustrated, many desperate resolutions consigned to oblivion, many sinful thoughts halted on the way to becoming action, many rash words suppressed in time because love did not give the occasion!

Woe to the person by whom the offense comes;[91] blessed be the loving one who by withholding the occasion hides a multitude of sins!

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Love Abides

I Corinthians 13:13. So . . . love abides

Yes, praise God, love abides! Then whatever the world may take away from you, though it be the most cherished, then whatever may happen to you in life, however you may come to suffer in your striving for the good that you will, if people turn indifferently away from you or against you as enemies, if everyone disowns you or is ashamed to admit what he owed to you, if even your best friend were to deny you—yet if in any of your strivings, in any of your actions, in any of your words you truly have had love as your confidant, take comfort, because love abides. What you know with love as your confidant is recollected to your comfort—oh, more blessed than any achievement any human being may have accomplished, more blessed than if the spirits had been subject to him,[92] more blessed to be recollected by love! What you know with love as your confidant is recollected to your comfort. Neither things present nor things to come,[93] neither angels nor devils, nor, praise God, your own troubled mind's fearful thoughts will be able to take it away from you, neither at the stormiest and most difficult moment of your life nor at the last moment of your life—because love abides.

When despondency at first wants to make you weak, so that you lose the desire to will rightly, in order then in turn to make you strong, alas, as despondency does that, strong in the defiance of forsakenness; when despondency wants to make everything
IX 287 empty for you, to transform all life into a monotonous and meaningless repetition, then you do indeed see all of it, but with such indifference, see the fields and forests become green *again*, see the teeming life in the air and water stirring *again*, hear the singing of

the birds begin *again*, *again* and *again* see the busy activity of people in all kinds of work, and you do indeed know that God is, but it seems to you as if he had withdrawn into himself, as if he were far off in heaven, infinitely far away from all this triviality that is scarcely worth living for; when despondency wants to deaden all of life for you, so that you do indeed know, but very faintly, that Christ has existed, but with a troubled clarity know that it was eighteen hundred years ago, as if he, too, were infinitely far away from all this triviality that is scarcely worth living for—oh, then bear in mind that love abides! If love abides, it is equally certain that it is in the future, if this is the comfort you need, and that it is in the present, if this is the comfort you need. Meet all the terrors of the future with this comfort: love abides; meet all the anxiety and listlessness of the present with this comfort: love abides. Ah, if it is comforting for a desert dweller that he knows definitely that there was a spring and would be a spring however far he travels, what spring would be so missed, what manner of death would be so languishing as would be the case if love did not exist and did not exist eternally![94]

See, this is a very upbuilding thought, that love abides. When we speak this way, we are speaking of the love that sustains all existence, of God's love. If for one moment, one single moment, it were to be absent, everything would be confused. But love does not do that, and therefore, however confused everything is for you—love abides. Therefore we are speaking of God's love, of its nature to abide.

But in this little work we are continually dealing only with the works of love, and therefore not with God's love but with human love. Naturally no human being is love; he is, if he is in love [*Kjerlighed*], one who loves. Yet love is everywhere present where there is one who loves. One would think, and probably most often does, that love between human beings is a relationship between two. This is indeed true, but untrue, inasmuch as this relationship is also a relationship among three. First there is the one who loves, next the one or the ones who are the object; but love itself is present as the third. Thus when with regard to human love we say that love abides, it is readily apparent that this is a work or that it is not an inactive characteristic that love has IX 288

as such, but a characteristic that acquired at every moment, and also, at every moment it is acquired, is an active work. The one who loves abides, he abides in love, preserves himself in love; what he accomplishes by this is that his love for people abides. He becomes the one who loves by abiding in love; by abiding in love his love abides; it abides, and it is this we now wish to consider:

Love abides.

"Love never falls away"—it abides.

When a child has been out all day among strangers and thinks that it ought to go home but is afraid of going alone and yet would like to stay as long as possible, it says to an older one, who perhaps wanted to leave earlier, "Wait for me," and the older one does as the child asks. When one of two peers is somewhat more advanced than the other, the latter says, "Wait for me," and the more advanced one does as asked. When two people have planned and eagerly anticipated a journey together but one of them becomes ill, the sick one says, "Wait for me," and the other does as asked. When the one who owes another person money cannot pay, he says, "Wait for me," and the other does as asked. When a girl in love foresees that there will be great and perhaps prolonged difficulties in the way of her union with her beloved, she says to him, "Wait for me," and her beloved does as asked.

It is indeed very beautiful and praiseworthy to wait in this way for another, but whether it is exactly love that does it, we have not yet seen. Perhaps the time of waiting is too brief for it to become really clear to what extent that which determines one to wait in this way deserves to be called love in a decisive sense. Alas, perhaps the time of waiting became so long that the older one said to the child, "No, now I cannot wait for you any longer." Perhaps the slower one proceeded so slowly that the more advanced one said, "No, now I cannot wait for you any longer without being delayed too much myself." Perhaps the sickness dragged on so long that the friend said, "No, now I cannot wait for you any longer; now I must travel alone." Perhaps the time went on so long with the one who could not pay

his debt that the other said, "No, now I cannot wait for you any longer; now I must have my money." Perhaps the prospects for union with the young girl became so remote that her beloved said, "No, now I cannot wait for you any longer; I owe it to myself and to my life not to put it off this way year after year in uncertainty." —But love *abides.* IX 289

That love abides, or perhaps more correctly, whether it actually abides in this and that case or whether it ceases, is something that occupies people's thoughts in very many ways, is often the subject of their conversation, and is most often the principal content of all the poets' tales. That love abides is then represented as praiseworthy, but as disgraceful that it does not abide, that it ceases, that it changes. Only the first is love; the second proves by the change not to be love—and therefore not to have been love either. The point is that one cannot cease to be loving; if one is truly loving, then one remains that; if one ceases to *be* that, then one never *was* that. So, with regard to love, ceasing has a retroactive power. Yes, I can never become weary of saying this and of pointing out that wherever love is present there is something infinitely profound. For example, a man may have had money, and when it is gone, when he no longer has money, it still remains just as certain and true that he *has had* money. But when one ceases to be loving, he *has never been loving either.* What, after all, is as gentle as love, and what is as rigorous, as jealous for itself, as chastening as love!

And further. When love ceases, when in erotic love, in friendship, in short, when in the loving relationship between two people something comes between them so that love ceases, then the two, as we human beings say, break up. Love was the bond, was in a good sense between them; then when something comes between them, love is displaced, it ceases; the connection between them is broken, and the break enters divisively between them. Therefore it comes to a break.

Christianity, however, does not know this use of language, does not understand it, refuses to understand it. When one says it comes to a break, this is because one is of the opinion that in love there is only a relationship between two, rather than that it is a relationship among three, as has been shown. This talk of a

break between the two is much too irresponsible; by this it is made to appear as if the relationship of love were a matter between these two, as if there were no third at all whom it concerned. If the two agree about breaking with each other, then of
IX 290 course there would be no objection whatever to it. Furthermore, that these two break this relationship with each other does not necessarily mean that the same two could not be loving in relation to other people. They retain the characteristic of being loving, but now their love finds a place only in relation to others. Furthermore, the one who was guilty of causing the break would have the upper hand, and the innocent one would be defenseless. But it would indeed be miserable if an innocent one were to be the weaker. It certainly is that way in this world, but in the eternal sense it can never be that way.

So what does Christianity do? Its earnestness promptly concentrates eternity's attention upon the single individual, upon each single one of the two. That is, as the two in love relate themselves to each other, they relate themselves, each one of them separately, to *love*. Now it does not go at all easily with the break. Before it comes to the break, before one of them comes to the point of breaking his or her love in relation to the other, that one must first *fall away from* ***love***. This is the important point; therefore Christianity does not speak about the couple's breaking with each other but only about what the single individual is always able to do—to fall away from *love*. A break between two people savors far too much of the busyness of temporality, as if the matter were then not very important; but to fall away from *love*—these words have the earnestness of eternity. See, now everything is as it should be; now eternity can maintain discipline and order; now the innocent sufferer in and through the break will surely become the stronger, if he, then, does not also fall away from *love*. If love were simply and solely a relationship between two, each one would of course be continually in the power of the other insofar as this other is a base person who would break the relationship. When a relationship is only between two, each one always has the upper hand in the relationship by being able to break it, because as soon as one of them has made the break, the *relationship* is broken. But when there are

three, no one of them can do it. The third, as stated, is *love* itself, to which the innocent sufferer in the break can then hold—then the break has no power over him. And the guilty party must not exactly boast of having gotten out of the affair at a bargain price; because to fall away from *love*, well, that is the highest price; it has an earnestness different from this hasty breaking with a particular person—and then otherwise being a good and loving person in all respects.

But the one who truly loves never falls away from *love*; for him, therefore, it can never come to a break, because love abides. Yet, in a relationship between two can one of them prevent the break when the other makes the break? It would indeed seem that one of the two is enough to break the relationship, and if the relationship is broken then there of course is a break. In a certain sense this is indeed the case, but if the one who loves still does not fall away from *love*, he can prevent the break, can do this wondrous thing, because if he abides the break can never really take place. IX 291

By abiding (and in this abiding the one who loves is in covenant with the eternal), he maintains the upper hand over the past; then he transforms what in and through the past is a break into a possible relationship in the future. Seen from the angle of the past the break becomes more and more obvious with each day and each year; but the loving one, who abides, indeed belongs, by his abiding, to the future, the eternal, and from the angle of the future the break is not a break but a possibility. But that requires the powers of eternity, and therefore the loving one, who abides, must abide in *love*; otherwise the past gradually acquires the power and then little by little the break comes into view. Ah, it requires the powers of eternity to transform the past into the future immediately at the decisive moment! But abiding has this power.

How shall I now describe this work of love? Would that I might be inexhaustible in describing what is so indescribably joyful and so upbuilding to consider!

So it came to a break between the two. It was a misunderstanding; yet one of them broke the relationship. But the one who loves says, "I abide"—thus there still is no break. Think of

a compound word with the last word missing; there is only the first word and the hyphen (the one who breaks the relationship still cannot take the hyphen with him; the loving one naturally keeps the hyphen on his side). So think of the first word and the hyphen of a compound word, and now suppose that you do not know any more about how it hangs together—what will you say then? You will say that the word is not finished, something is lacking. It is the same with the one who loves. That the relationship came to a break cannot be directly seen; it can be known only in the sense of the past. But the one who loves does not want to know the past, because he abides, and to abide is in the direction of the future. Therefore the one who loves expresses that the relationship, which the other calls a break, is a relationship that has not yet been finished. But it is still not a break because something is missing. Therefore it depends on how the relationship is viewed, and the one who loves—abides.

So it came to a break. It was a quarrel that separated the two; yet one of them made the break, saying, "It is all finished between us." But the one who loves abides, saying, "It is not all
IX 292 finished between us; we are still in the middle of the sentence; it is only the sentence that is not finished." Is this not the way it is? What is the difference between a fragment and an unfinished sentence? In order to call something a fragment, one must know that nothing more is coming; if one does not know this, one says that the sentence is not yet finished. When from the angle of the past it is settled that there is no more to come, we say, "It is a fragment"; from the angle of the future, waiting for the next part, we say, "The sentence is not finished; something is still missing."

So it came to a break. It was dejection, coldness, indifference, that separated them, yet one of them made the break, saying, "I am not speaking with that person anymore; I do not see him." But the one who loves says, "I abide; in this way we are still speaking with each other, since silence also belongs in conversation at times." Is this not so? But suppose now that it was three years since they last spoke with each other. See, here it comes again. That it was three years ago can be known only in the sense of the past, but over the one who loves, who is renewed every

day by the eternal and abides, the past has no power at all. If you saw two people sitting silent together and you knew nothing else, would you from that conclude that it was three years since they had spoken with each other? Can anyone determine how long the silence must last before it can be said that now there is no more conversation; and if that can be determined, one can still know whether it is so in the particular case only in the sense of the past, since the time must indeed be past. But the one who loves, who abides, continually emancipates himself from his knowledge of the past. He knows no past; he is only waiting for the future.

Does the dance end because one of the dancers has gone away? In a certain sense. But if the other remains standing in the position that expresses bowing toward the one who is not seen, and if you know nothing about the past, you will say, "The dance will surely begin just as soon as the other one, who is awaited, comes."

Get rid of the past, drown it in the oblivion of eternity by abiding in love—then the end is the beginning, and there is no break! When the faithless one abandoned the girl, but every evening "in the gloaming time of sunset glow"[95] she sits by the window and waits, she is expressing every evening: Now he is coming; he is coming very soon. Every evening it seems as if there was no break, because she abides. She does not, of course, express on a particular evening that she has sat this way every evening for three years; therefore the passerby does not discover it either, any more than she herself is aware of it if she actually is abiding in love. But perhaps the girl actually loved herself. She desired the union with the beloved for her own sake; it was her only desire, her soul was as one in this desire. In gratitude for its fulfillment, she would do everything possible to make her beloved's life as beautiful as possible. Yes, this is true, but yet, yet it was for her own sake that she desired the union. If that is so, she is sure to become weary, she becomes attentive to the past, to the length of time—now she no longer sits at the window; she expresses that the break exists—but love abides. IX 293

So it came to a break, whatever the occasion was; one of them

broke the relationship. It was terrible; hate, endless, irreconcilable hate would fill his soul in the future. "I will never see that person anymore; our paths are forever separated; the chasmic abyss of hate is between us." He presumably admits that, inasmuch as life is a pathway, they are on the path together, but in no other sense. He carefully dodges so that his path and that of the hated one do not cross. For him the world is almost too small to hold both of them. For him it is agony to breathe in the same world where the hated one breathes. He shudders at the thought that eternity will again hold both of them. But the one who loves abides. "I abide," says he, "and thus we are still on the path together." Is this not indeed so? When two balls strike each other in such a way that the one simply by the power of repulsion takes the other along in its course (something anyone can try), are they then not on the path together? That it happened by the power of repulsion is not seen; that is something past that must be known. But the one who loves does not want to know the past; he abides, he abides on the path with the one who hates him; thus there is still no break.

What marvelous strength love has! The most powerful words spoken, indeed, they are God's creator-words, are "Let there be [*blive*]."[96] But the most powerful words any human being has spoken are "I abide [*blive*]"[97] when said by one who loves. Reconciled with himself and his conscience, God's friend, in covenant with all good angels, the one who loves goes defenseless into the most dangerous battle, saying only, "I abide." As truly as he is the one who loves, he will certainly be victorious, be victorious through his abiding, be victorious even more gloriously than that Roman was with his delaying,[98] because love's abiding is in itself far more glorious. As truly as he is the one who loves,
IX 294 there is no misunderstanding that sooner or later will not be overcome by his abiding; there is no hate that finally will not be obliged to give up and yield to his abiding—if not before, then in eternity. See, the one who has underhandedly acquired another person's love and therefore is in possession of it must at every moment be afraid of losing it. But the one who became hated for his love is forever certain of winning love. If time cannot do it, then at least eternity will wrest the hate from the other,

open his eyes to *love*, and in that way also to the love that abided all through life and now abides in eternity. —So love never falls away—it abides.

Love abides—it never wastes away

That a certain natural good disposition, a certain kindly sympathy and helpfulness that has some time to devote to abiding lovingly (something we do gladly appreciate), becomes weary in the course of time or when things drag on and become protracted—this is only all too certain. Duration, the duration of time, is no doubt the demand that brings most people to declare bankruptcy. In the business world it is more common that a firm fails because suddenly in a single stroke too great a demand is made upon it, but in the world of spirit it is the duration that does away with so many. People have strength enough for a moment, but over the duration of time they become insolvent. Yet love abides. Ah, how poets and orators know how to describe the changeableness of everything, to show time's power over everything that came into existence in time, over the greatest, the mightiest, the most glorious undertakings, over the wonders of the world, which in time became almost unrecognizable ruins, over the most immortal names, which in time ended in the vagueness of the fabulous!

But while love abides, cannot something happen to it, even though it abides, so that it nevertheless is changed in time, except that this is not its fault but is a suffering? Thus the relationship would be: love abides; no circumstance changes it or gets it to give up itself, yet it is changed in a change we call *wasting away* [*Affældighed*], although we must say of this same love [*Kjerlighed*] that it never fell away [*affalde*].

For a moment let us speak of something that occupies people very much, erotic love [*Elskov*], or that girl who, in the words of the poet, every evening sits at the window "in the gloaming time of sunset glow"[99] and waits for the beloved, "alas," while "time comes and time goes." Now, this was long ago, for it was, so the IX
poet says, "in days of yore." The girl did not mark how time 295
came and time went while she waited—and while time marked her. Usually we say only that "time goes." Ah, it goes so rapidly

for the happy one, so indescribably slowly for the sad. Or we say that "the time will come." Ah, it comes so slowly for the hopeful, but all too swiftly for the fearful. But here the poet says, and felicitously, that time comes and time goes, because he wants to describe someone who is expecting, and for such a person it does not only go nor does it only come; it comes and goes. Out of sympathy for the expectant girl, time undertook, as it were, to do what the faithless one should have done. When the time came when *he* should come, time came, but *he* did not come; then time went again until the time came when it was the time *he* should come who did not come. In this way time lulled the expectant girl by coming and going, until she, rocked in this movement, rested in expectancy. Amazing! One would think that expectancy above all would be what might keep a person awake; yet expectancy, if one gives oneself to it completely, is very lulling, and this is not so amazing. If you have lain down to sleep and while you were sleeping someone suddenly turned on a powerful high-gushing fountain, you would wake up terrified. But if you lie down to rest by a fountain—never have you slept more sweetly, never more cooly, never more deliciously than when lulled by the splashing of this fountain!

So time came and time went. The girl truly did not fall away from her love, but she did fade away—for it was not time that passed away; no, it came and went, but the girl faded away. All honor to this faithful soul! She does indeed have the honor, the greatest human honor: that a poet has celebrated her, not for money as an occasional poet does it, nor because a girl was perhaps from a distinguished family, nor because the poet perhaps had known her. No, her name is not known, only her beautiful work, which inspired the true poet. Let us never forget that to remain true to oneself in one's love in this way is a noble womanly deed, a great and glorious work. Despite all the talk about diligent domesticity, this will be held in high honor as long as there is a poet in the world; and if the world has become so wretched that there is no poet anymore, the race will learn to
IX 296 despair over the lack of poets, and then there will once again come a poet who holds her in honor.

She faded away—a sacrifice to erotic love. Yet this is the high-

est thing that can be said of any human being: one is sacrificed. The only question is whether it is the highest for which one is sacrificed. But, in the eternal sense, to be sacrificed is and continues to be, as long as the world remains the world, a far greater achievement than being victorious, because the world truly is not so perfect that to be victorious *in the world*, simply through uniformity with the world, does not have a dubious additive of the world's paltriness. Being victorious in the world is like becoming something great in the world; usually it is a dubious matter to become something great in the world,[100] because the world is not so excellent that its judgment of greatness has especially great meaning—except as unconscious sarcasm.

So the girl was sacrificed to erotic love [*Elskov*]. Alas, but in the highest sense erotic love is not love [*Kjerlighed*] and not the highest. See, this is why she faded away—lovely in death as she had been in life, but marked by this, that erotic love had still been her highest. Erotic love is a desire for this life; therefore time had power over her, and therefore she faded away in love until it, too, faded away, although she still showed that she had power over time, for she did not fall away from her erotic love.

But love [*Kjerlighed*] abides—it never wastes away. In spiritual love itself is the spring that flows into an eternal life. That the one who loves also ages over the years and dies in time demonstrates nothing, because his love still remains eternally young. In his love he does not relate himself to temporality, is not dependent upon temporality, as is the relationship in erotic love; eternity is the proper season for his love. When he dies, he is right at his goal; when he dies, it simply becomes apparent that he did not wait in vain. Alas, when the young girl died, we simply said: Unfortunately it appears that she waited in vain. After all, how would the love that abides waste away? Can immortality waste away? But what is it that gives the human being immortality, what else but the love that abides? Erotic love is temporality's invention, temporality's most beautiful but nonetheless frail invention. Hence there is a more profound contradiction here. There was no fault in the girl; she was and remained faithful to her erotic love. Yet her love changed somewhat over the years. That is the nature of erotic love. The contradiction, then, is this:

one with the most honest will, willing to be sacrificed, still cannot be unconditionally faithful in a more profound sense or abide in what does not itself eternally abide—and erotic love does not
IX 297 do that. The girl may not have understood how this hangs together, but this connectedness of self-contradiction constituted the sadness at her death. That she is sacrificed does not have the solemnity of the eternal and therefore the inspiration and elevation, but it has the sadness of temporality and thus the inspiration for the poet.

The young girl faded away. Even if *he* had come, that is, had come before her death, it still would have been too late. She did abide, but time had weakened in her the desire by which she lived, while the same desire still consumed her. In contrast, the one who loves in the most profound sense, who abides, does not waste away; his love does not corrode. If someone who misunderstood him, if someone who became cold toward him, if someone who hated him returns, he will find him unchanged, unchanged with the same longing for the eternal and with the same quiet composure in the temporal. His love is eternal, relates itself to eternity, rests in the eternal. Therefore *at every moment* he is waiting for the same thing he is waiting for *eternally*, and therefore without restlessness, because in eternity there is time enough.

If a love's expectancy is to be able to make a human being waste away in the essential sense, it must be because his expectancy stands in a dependent relation to time, so that time has the power to decide whether the expectancy becomes fulfilled or not. That is, then the expectancy is principally a temporal expectancy, but the love that abides does not have such an expectancy. That an expectancy is essentially only temporal makes for restlessness in expectancy. Without restlessness time does not really exist; it does not exist for the animal, which is completely devoid of restlessness; and the clock that tells the time cannot do so when the restlessness ceases. But when the restlessness, as in the case of the merely temporal expectancy, oscillates between fulfillment and nonfulfillment in such a way that the movement becomes swifter in time because the vanishing of time, the fact that time is passing, accelerates the restlessness, then of course the fulfill-

ment, if it does not come in time, cannot come at all—when this is the case, the expectancy corrodes. Finally the restlessness apparently passes away; alas, this is precisely when the sickness has taken the form of consumption. But the one who loves, who abides, has an eternal expectancy, and this eternal element provides evenness in the restlessness, which in time does indeed oscillate between fulfillment and nonfulfillment but independently of time, inasmuch as the fulfillment is by no means made impossible because time is over—this one who loves does not wither away.

What faithfulness in the love [*Kjerlighed*] that abides! It is far from our intention to want to disparage the loving girl, as if it were a kind of unfaithfulness on her part (alas, an unfaithfulness—to a faithless one!) that she had weakened over the years and had faded away, so that her erotic love [*Elskov*] had changed in the change that is the change in erotic love itself over the years. And yet, yet—yes, it is a curious crisscrossing of self-contradicting thoughts, but it cannot be otherwise with even the highest faithfulness in erotic love than that it almost seems to be unfaithfulness, since erotic love itself is not the eternal. The contradiction does not lie in the girl—she remained faithful. The contradiction, which the girl herself suffered, lies in this, that erotic love is not the eternal and that therefore it is impossible to relate oneself with *eternal* faithfulness to what in itself is *not* the *eternal*. But what faithfulness on the part of love [*Kjerlighed*] to remain completely unchanged, without the slightest wasting away, the same at every moment, even when, at whatever time and hour, the misunderstanding one, the unfriendly one, the hating one wants to return to this one who loves! That he who abides never wastes away is certainly an eternal gain for him, but it is also, and this is how we view it here and this is how he himself views it—it is also a work of love in faithfulness to those whom he loves. IX 298

What would indeed be as disconsolate, yes, almost to the point of despair, as this—if, at the moment when the misunderstanding one returned and sought understanding, when the unfriendly one returned and sought friendship, when the one who had hated returned and sought reconciliation—what would be as disconsolate as this: if the one who loves has then wasted away, so

that neither understanding nor the restoration of friendship nor the renewal of reconciliation in love could really take place with the blessed joy of eternity! On the other hand, what can make the moment of forgiveness, the transition of agreement so natural, so easy, as this: that the one who loves (as described earlier), by abiding, has continually cleared away the past. Then from his side the agreement is indeed in effect, as if there had been no separation at all. When two people both have an idea of the past or of how long the separation has been, forgiveness is often a difficult collision, and the relationship is perhaps never fully established again. But the one who loves knows nothing about the past; therefore he does even this last thing in love; he absorbs the jolt [*Stød*] in such a way that there can be no collision—the transition of forgiveness cannot be made easier. How frequently has agreement been close to taking place between two people, but the one continued to feel hurt [*stødt*], as we say. When that is the case, then something from the past must have unlovingly emerged again. It is impossible, after all, to be offended by something that is softer than the softest, by love. Truly, no boat sliding
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quietly through smooth water over the softest sandy bottom to where the reeds stop it and enclose it can be so sure of not being jolted as someone who returns and seeks agreement with the love that abides!

Such is the one who loves. That the most beautiful of all, the moment of agreement, should become a fruitless attempt, a futile round, because by that time he had become changed—this he *prevents*, because he abides and never wastes away. And that the transition of forgiveness may be as easy as meeting a person one saw a while ago, that the conversation of love might flow as naturally as with someone with whom one is in conversation, that the pace of the common journey might be in rhythm as quickly as it is between two people beginning a new life for the *first* time—in short, that there might be no stopping at all that could jolt, not for a second and not for a split second—the one who loves *accomplishes* this, because he abides and never wastes away.

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Mercifulness, a Work of Love Even If It Can Give Nothing and Is Able to Do Nothing

"Do not forget to do good and to share"[102]—but do not forget either that this incessant talk by worldliness about beneficence and benevolence and generosity and charitable donations and gift upon gift is almost merciless. Ah, let the newspaper writers and tax collectors and the parish beadles talk about generosity and count and count; but let us never ignore that Christianity speaks *essentially* of mercifulness, that Christianity would least of all be guilty of mercilessness, as if poverty and misery not only needed money etc. but also were excluded from the highest, from being able to practice mercifulness, because they are excluded from being able to be generous, beneficent, benevolent. But people prattle and prate ecclesiastically-worldly and worldly-ecclesiastically about generosity, beneficence—but forget, even in the sermon, mercifulness. From the Christian point of view, this is an impropriety. The poor person who sits in church must sigh. And why must he sigh? Is it so that his sigh, together with the pastor's sermon, could help to get the rich man's purse opened? Ah, no, he must sigh, he must in the biblical sense "grumble against"[103] the pastor, because just when one is so
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eager to help him the greatest wrong is done to him. Woe to him who devours the inheritance of widows and the fatherless,[104] but woe also to the preacher who is silent about mercifulness in order to talk about generosity! Preaching should indeed be solely and only about mercifulness. If you know how to speak effectually [*tilgavns*] *about this*, then generosity [*Gavmildhed*] will follow of itself and come by itself accordingly as the individual is capable of it. But bear this in mind, that if a person raised money, money,

money by speaking about generosity—bear this in mind, that by being silent about mercifulness he would be acting mercilessly toward the poor and miserable person for whom he procured relief by means of the money of wealthy generosity. Bear this in mind, that if poverty and misery disturb us with their pleas, we can of course manage to get help for them through generosity; but bear this in mind, that it would be much more appalling if we constrained poverty and misery "to hinder our prayers," as Scripture says (I Peter 3:7), by grumbling against us to God—because we were atrociously unfair to poverty and misery by not telling that *they* are able to practice mercifulness.

We shall now adhere to this point in this discourse about mercifulness and guard ourselves against confusing mercifulness with what is linked to external conditions, that is, what love as such does not have in its power, whereas it truly has mercifulness in its power just as surely as it has a heart in its bosom. It does not follow that because a person has a heart in his bosom he has money in his pocket, but the first is still more important and certainly is decisive with regard to mercifulness. Truly—if a person does not have money but knows how to encourage and inspire the poor, the miserable, by speaking about mercifulness—would he not do just as much as someone who throws some money to poverty or preaches charitable donations out of the rich man's pocket!

So we shall now consider:

mercifulness, a work of love even if it can give nothing and is able to do nothing.

We shall endeavor according to the capacities granted to us to make as clear as possible, as inviting as possible, to bring as close as possible to the poor person what comfort he has in being able
IX 302 to be merciful. We shall speak about this by removing some worldly illusions. But we wish also to contribute something by what we say, insofar as it is necessary, in order, if possible, to make ashamed in a God-pleasing way the person capable of generosity and beneficence, to make him blush in that holy modesty that is becoming to a Christian, to make him willing to give and yet unwilling to make the confession that it is charity, as is the

person who averts his face in order not to have the shame of having *others see* that he has honor from it, or as is the person whose left hand actually does not know what his right hand is doing.[105]

Mercifulness has nothing to give. It follows of itself that if the merciful person has something to give he gives it more than willingly. But it is not on this that we focus attention, but on this, that one can be merciful without having the least thing to give. This is of great importance, since *being able* to be merciful certainly is a far greater perfection than to have money and then *to be able* to give.

If that man well known for eighteen hundred years, the merciful Samaritan,[106] had come not riding but walking along the road from Jericho to Jerusalem, where he saw the unfortunate man lying, if he had been carrying with him nothing with which he could bind up his wounds, if he had then lifted up the unfortunate man, laid him on his shoulders, and carried him to the nearest inn, where the innkeeper refused to receive either him or the unfortunate one because the Samaritan did not have a penny, could only beg and beseech this hard-hearted man to be merciful since a man's life was involved—would he not therefore . . . . . [107]but, no, the story is not yet finished—if now the Samaritan, far from losing patience over this, had gone away carrying the unfortunate man, had sought a softer resting place for the wounded one, had sat by his side, had done everything to stanch the flow of blood—but the unfortunate one died in his hands—would he not have been equally as merciful, just as merciful as that merciful Samaritan, or is there some objection to calling this the story about the merciful Samaritan?

Take the story about the woman who laid the two pennies in the temple box,[108] but let us make a slight poetic change. For her IX
the two pennies were a huge sum that she had not acquired all at 303
once. She had saved for a long time in order to accumulate them; then she had set them aside, wrapped in a little cloth, in order to bring them when she herself went up to the temple. But a swindler had detected that she possessed this money, had tricked her out of it and put instead an identical cloth in which there was nothing—but the widow did not know this. So she went up to

the temple, placed, as she thought, the two pennies, that is, nothing, into the temple box—would not Christ still have said what he said of her, that "she gave more than all of the rich people gave?"

But a mercifulness without money, what can it accomplish? Well, finally the worldly-minded brazenness of generosity and beneficence goes so far that it even laughs in scorn at a mercifulness that owns nothing! This is already unjust and revolting enough, the mercilessness of this earthly existence, that when a poor person gives her last penny and the rich one comes along and gives hundreds of dollars, that then all look at the hundreds of dollars, that is, then the rich one with his gifts completely overshadows the poor one's—mercifulness. But what madness, if what Christ says is still true, that the poor person gave **the most**; what madness that the one who gives less (the rich—and the huge sum) overshadows the one who gives more (the poor—and the little mite), indeed, even overshadows the one who gives the most! But of course the world does not say this; it says that the rich man gave the most, and why does the world say that? Because the world understands only about money—and Christ only about mercifulness. And just because Christ understood only about mercifulness he was so precise about its being only two pennies the widow gave, and for that very reason he would say that it did not need to be even that much, or that one could give even less and yet by giving even less give even more. What a wonderful arithmetic problem, or rather what a wonderful kind of arithmetic; it is not to be found in any arithmetic textbook! A remarkable expression is used about this widow, that "she gave out of her poverty." But if the greatness of the gift increases in proportion to the greatness of the poverty, thus the very opposite of what the world thinks (that the greatness of the gift is proportionate to the wealth), then someone who is even poorer than that widow, by giving one penny out of his poverty, gives more than the widow, who still gave the most in comparison with all the rich.

Yes, the world certainly must think this the most annoying kind of arithmetic, in which one penny can become so significant, the most significant gift of all. The world and the world's

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generosity would rather deal with large sums that amaze; and one penny certainly does not amaze—any more than mercifulness is one of the glittering virtues. From the point of view of eternity, however, this kind of arithmetic is the only true kind and is learned only from eternity and by renouncing the illusions of worldliness and temporality. Eternity has the sharpest eye for, and the most developed understanding of, mercifulness but has no understanding at all about money, any more than eternity is in a financial predicament or has, according to the Word, the slightest use for money. Yes, this is both a laughing and a crying matter. It would undeniably be a superb invention by laughter to imagine eternity in a financial predicament—ah, but then let us weep a little because temporality has so completely forgotten eternity and forgotten that from the eternal point of view money is less than nothing! Alas, many are of the opinion that the eternal is a delusion and that money is reality, whereas in the understanding of eternity and of truth money is a delusion! Think of eternity in whatever way you want to; only admit that many of the temporal things you have seen in temporality you wished to find again in eternity, that you wished to see the trees and the flowers and the stars again, to hear the singing of birds and the murmuring of the brook again—but could it ever occur to you that there would be money in eternity? No, then the kingdom of heaven itself would again become a land of misery, and therefore this cannot possibly occur to you, just as it cannot possibly occur to someone who believes money is reality that there is an eternity. Of all the things you have seen, there is nothing of which you can be so sure that it will never enter heaven as—money. On the other hand, there is nothing of which heaven is so sure as mercifulness. So you see that mercifulness is infinitely unrelated to money.

Yet money, money, money! That foreign prince is supposed to have said as he turned his back on mighty Rome, "Here lies a city for sale and only awaits a buyer."[109] Ah, how often might not one have been tempted despondently to turn one's back on all existence and say, "Here lies a world for sale and only awaits a buyer"—provided one does not want to say that the devil has already bought it!

What is the earnestness of life? If you have in truth put this earnest question to yourself, then recall how you answered it, or let me remind you how you answered it. Earnestness is a person's
IX 305 God-relationship. Wherever the thought of God accompanies what a person does, thinks, and says, earnestness is present; in that there is earnestness. But money is the world's god; therefore the world thinks that everything that involves money or is connected to money is earnestness. Behold that noble, simple, wise man of old; he would not take money for his instruction,[110] and the Apostle Paul preferred to work with his own hands rather than defile the Gospel and debase his apostolic service and falsify the proclamation of the Word by taking money for it.[111] What does the world judge of such things? Well, let us not fatuously ask what the world judges of that noble, simple man and the sainted apostle, inasmuch as the world has now learned by rote to eulogize them. But suppose someone today at this moment would do as those two did, what is the judgment of his contemporaries? They judge that this is eccentricity, that this is an exaggeration; they judge that such a person "lacks earnestness." To make money is earnestness; to make much money, even if it were by selling human beings, this is earnestness. To make a lot of money by contemptible slander—this is earnestness. To proclaim some truth—provided one also makes much money (it does not depend on its being true but on one's making money)—this is earnestness. Money, money—this is earnestness. This is how we are brought up; from earliest childhood we are disciplined in the ungodly worship of money.

Let me cite an example, the first the best among the thousands and thousands suffices—since there are not more herring in front of the boat that is working its way through a shoal of herring than there are examples in actuality of being brought up in money-worship. Think of a household in which the command has come from the head of the family that tomorrow (since it is Sunday) all are to go to church together. But what happens? Sunday morning, when it is time to go, the girls are found not to have finished with their dressing. What does the father say—the earnest father who earnestly is bringing up his children to worship money? Well, he of course says nothing, or as good as nothing, because

here there is no occasion for an admonition or reprimand. He probably says, "If the girls are not ready, they will have to stay home; that is all there is to it." But imagine, imagine how terrible it would have been if the girls were to have gone to the theater and were not ready at the specified time—just imagine how this earnest father would carry on then—and why? Because considerable money was wasted, whereas by staying at home on Sunday even the offering money was saved. Now the girls will get a stern, earnest, fatherly reprimand; now it is an offense, a great shame not to have been ready—and therefore this earnest father who is bringing up his children with earnestness must not, for the sake of the next time, allow this to go unpunished. That it is lack of orderliness on the part of the girls is the least of it—in that case the fault would be just as great on Sunday—no, the earnestness is that the money has been lost. See, this is called being a father; this is called having fatherly dignity and making responsible use of his fatherly dignity; this is called upbringing! Well, it may be upbringing, except that in this way it is not human beings who are brought up but fools and monsters instead! IX 306

But if one has this conception of money, what conception can one then have of the mercifulness that is without money? A mercifulness such as that must be regarded as a kind of lunacy, a delusion. But then eternity and Christianity must also be regarded as a kind of lunacy, a delusion! A pagan emperor is supposed to have said that one should not sniff at money.[112] Christianity, however, teaches quite rightly to sniff at money. It teaches that money in itself smells bad. Therefore, as always, it takes some strong fragrance to eliminate bad odors. Have mercifulness; then money can be given—without it money smells bad. See, a beggar can also say this, and he ought to become just as immortal through his utterance as that emperor—and financier. Mercifulness is the strong fragrance. If prayer is an offering of the lips and pleasing to God, then mercifulness is actually the heart's offering and is, as Scripture says, a sweet fragrance in God's nostrils.[113] Oh, when you think of God, never forget that he does not have the least understanding about money.

My listener, if you were a speaker, what assignment would you choose: to speak to the rich about practicing generosity or to

speak to the poor about practicing mercifulness? I am quite sure which one I would choose or, rather, which one I have chosen—if only I were a speaker. Oh, there is something indescribably
IX 307 reconciling in speaking to the poor man about *practicing* mercifulness! And how necessary it is, if not for the sake of the poor then for your own sake, you can easily find out for yourself. Just try it, and you will immediately see the conception reverse itself for you, as if it could be of no help to speak to the poor about mercifulness since, after all, they do not have anything to give, and therefore one must speak to the rich about mercifulness toward the poor. In this way the poor person is needy in his poverty, then in turn is abandoned by the world's conception of his ability to practice mercifulness and therefore is singled out, given up, as the pitiable object of mercifulness, who at most is able to bow and thank—if the rich person is so kind as to practice mercifulness. Merciful God, what mercilessness!

So the discourse addresses itself to you, you poor and wretched! Oh, be merciful! Keep within your bosom this heart that despite poverty and misery still has sympathy for the misery of others, this heart that before God has the bold confidence to know that one can be merciful, indeed, that to the highest degree one can then be most merciful in the eminent and excellent sense when one has nothing to give. "Oh, be merciful!" See, here it comes again! Who does not immediately and involuntarily think here of the cry of the poor, of the beggar, to the rich, "Be merciful"—however wrong this use of the language is, since it is generosity that is being invoked. Therefore we speak that language more correctly, we who say to the poor, the poorest of all: Oh, be merciful! Do not let the envious pettiness of this earthly existence finally corrupt you so that you could forget that you are able to be merciful, corrupt you so that a false shame would stifle the best in you! A false shame, yes, because the true shame comes first—would that it would always come—but in any case it ought to come with the money. If you acquire money and are able to give, then, only then, do you have something to be ashamed about. Be merciful, be merciful toward the rich! Remember what you have in your power, while he has the money! Do not misuse this power; do not be so merciless as to call down

heaven's punishment upon his mercilessness! Yes, we know it well, what does the world care about the poor person's sigh to God when it complains about the rich? This sigh vanishing in thin air, this disregarded word, is indeed the most insignificant thing of all; but yet, yet, though not unfamiliar as I am with the screaming of stridency—I shrug off all such things, if only no poor person could with cause accuse me secretly before God. Oh, be merciful! If the rich person is stingy and close-fisted, or even if he is close-fisted not only with money but just as stingy with words and repelling—then you be rich in mercifulness! Mercifulness works wonders. It makes the two pennies into a large sum when the poor widow gives them, it makes the stingy gift into a larger sum if the poor person mercifully does not upbraid the rich for it, makes the morose giver less guilty if the poor man mercifully hides it. How many there are whom money has made merciless! If money is also to have the power to make merciless those who have no money, then the power of money has indeed conquered completely! But if the power of money has conquered completely, then mercifulness is completely abolished also. IX 308

Mercifulness is able to do nothing.

The sacred stories have among other qualities also this remarkable characteristic, that in all their simplicity they nevertheless always get everything said that ought to be said. This is also the case with the Gospel about the rich man and the poor man.[114] Neither Lazarus's misery nor the rich man's luxury is elaborated and described, yet one incident is added that is worth noting. It is told that Lazarus, full of sores, was laid at the rich man's door, but the dogs came and licked his sores. What is this supposed to portray in the rich man? Mercilessness, or, more exactly, inhuman mercilessness. In order to illustrate mercilessness, one can use a merciful person who is placed alongside. This is the way it is done in the story of the merciful Samaritan, who by contrast illuminates the Levite and the priest. But the rich man was inhuman, and therefore the Gospel makes use of the dogs. What a contrast! Now, we shall not exaggerate and say that a dog can be merciful, but in contrast to the rich man it seems as if the dogs were merciful. What is shocking is that when the human being

had abandoned mercifulness, the dogs had to be merciful. —But there is something else in this comparison between the rich man and the dogs. The rich man had it abundantly enough in his power to do something for Lazarus, the dogs were able to do nothing, and yet it is as if the dogs were merciful.

See, this is just what we are speaking about in this deliberation. It follows naturally of itself that if the merciful person is able to do something, he is only too glad to do it. But that is not what we wanted to focus attention upon, but rather upon this, that one can be merciful without being able to do the least thing. This is of great importance, since being able to be merciful is certainly a far greater perfection than to be able to do something.

Suppose that it was not one man who traveled from Jericho to Jerusalem, but there were two, and both of them were assaulted
IX 309 by robbers and maimed, and no traveler passed by. Suppose, then, that one of them did nothing but moan, while the other forgot and surmounted his own suffering in order to speak comforting, friendly words or, what involved great pain, dragged himself to some water in order to fetch the other a refreshing drink. Or suppose that they were both bereft of speech, but one of them in his silent prayer sighed to God also for the other—was he then not merciful? —If someone has cut off my hands, then I cannot play the zither, and if someone has cut off my feet, then I cannot dance, and if I lie crippled on the shore, then I cannot throw myself into the sea in order to rescue another person's life, and if I myself am lying with a broken arm or leg, then I cannot plunge into the flames to save another's life—but I can still be merciful.

I have often pondered how a painter might portray mercifulness, but I have decided that it cannot be done.[115] As soon as a painter is to do it, it becomes dubious whether it is mercifulness or it is something else. Mercifulness manifests itself most definitely when a poor person gives two pennies and yet all that he has, when the helpless one is able to do nothing and yet is merciful. But art prefers to portray the gift, therefore generosity, and prefers to depict what looks best artistically, the great deed. Try to paint this: a poor woman who gives another the only bread she has—and you will very easily perceive that you cannot express

the most important thing. You can express that it is one piece of bread but not that it is the only one she has. The Danish people are very familiar with dangers at sea. There is a work that depicts a brave sailor[116] because of whom the pilot boat so frequently saves human lives. His picture is drawn, and beneath it on one side is a wreck and on the other a pilot boat. This, you see, can be depicted. It is indeed glorious to steer through the waves like a saving angel and to do it bravely, courageously, and, if you will, also mercifully. Ah, but if you have never seen it, then you have at least imagined the misery, or the misery of those who perhaps from childhood or from some time later in life have been so tragically devastated, so badly ravaged, that they are unable to do anything at all, perhaps are even scarcely able to express sympathy in clear words—should we now be so merciless as to add this new cruelty to all their misery, to deny them the capacity to be merciful—because it certainly cannot be portrayed, since a person like that could not be properly portrayed except as an object of mercifulness! And yet it is certain that the mercifulness of such a person is the most beautiful and the truest and has the added value that he has not been deadened by his own suffering so that he had lost his sympathy for others. IX 310

Think of a widow in poverty. She has only one daughter, but nature has stepmotherly denied this daughter almost every gift for being able to alleviate her mother's condition. Imagine this unfortunate girl, who sighs under the heavy burden, that she still, according to the slight capacity granted to her, is inexhaustibly inventive in order to do the little bit, the nothing she is able to do, to alleviate her mother's life. See, this is mercifulness! No rich man will waste thousands of dollars to have an artist paint this, because it cannot be painted. But every time the prominent protector who is her mother's support comes to visit, the poor girl is put to shame, because *he*, he can do so much—his mercifulness overshadows the girl's mercifulness! Well, yes, in the eyes of the world, perhaps even in the eye of an artist and of an art connoisseur.

So, then, the discourse addresses itself to you, you wretched one who are able to do nothing at all: Do not forget to be merciful! Be merciful. This comfort, that you are able to be merciful,

to say nothing of the comfort that you are merciful, is far greater than if I were able to assure you that the most powerful will show you mercifulness. Be merciful to us more fortunate ones! Your care-filled life is like a dangerous protest against the loving Governance; therefore you have it in your power to alarm the rest of us—so be merciful! Truly, how much mercifulness is shown toward the powerful and fortunate by such an unfortunate! Indeed, which is more merciful: powerfully to remedy the needs of others or quietly to suffer and patiently to watch mercifully lest one disturb the joy and happiness of others? Which of these two loves more: the fortunate one who has sympathy for the suffering of others, or the unfortunate one who has true sympathy for the joy and happiness of others?

"*But the main thing is still this, that need be remedied in every way, and that everything possible be done to remedy all need.*" This is the way temporality, well intentioned, talks, and it cannot even talk in any other way. Eternity, on the other hand, says: There is only
IX 311 one danger, that mercifulness is not practiced; even if all need were remedied, it still is not settled that it was done through mercifulness, and if this was not the case, this wretchedness, that mercifulness was not practiced at all, would be greater than all temporal need.

The point is that the world does not understand eternity. Temporality has a temporal and hence a bustling conception of the need, and also a sensate conception of the size of the gift and of the ability to do something to remedy the need. "The poor one, the wretched one could in fact die—therefore the most important thing is that help be given." No, answers eternity, the most important thing is that mercifulness be practiced, or that the help is the help of mercifulness. "Provide money for us, provide hospitals for us, that is the most important!" No, says eternity, the most important is mercifulness. From the point of view of eternity, that someone dies is no misfortune, but that mercifulness is not practiced certainly is.

[117]Remarkably enough, there is also inscribed under that picture, which on one side depicts a wreck and a pilot boat on the other: Poverty—and Violent *Death*; Prosperity—and Natural *Death*—therefore death on both sides. Eternity maintains inflexi-

bly that mercifulness is the most important. No thinker can be as obstinate as eternity is with regard to its thought. No thinker is as calm and undisturbed by the pressures of the moment and the dangers of the moment, which seem to enforce the view that it is still most important that help be furnished in every way; no thinker is as calm and undisturbed as eternity. And no thinker is as sure that ultimately people will have to give in and think his thoughts as eternity is. It says: Just wait; we will talk about this in eternity, and there we will talk simply and solely about mercifulness, and simply and solely about the distinction merciful—not merciful.

Would that I could depict the countenance eternity will assume when the rich man answers the question whether he has been merciful and says: I have given a hundred thousand to the poor! Eternity will look at him in amazement, like someone who cannot comprehend what he is talking about, and will once again put the question to him: Have you been merciful? Imagine that a man went to a mountain to discuss his affairs with it, or that someone had dealings with the wind about his exploits—eternity will understand no more of what the rich one says about the hundred thousand and of what the powerful one says about having done everything.

Is it mercifulness to give a hundred thousand to the poor? No. IX
Is it mercifulness to give two pennies to the poor? No. Mercifulness is **how** it is given. But in that case the hundred thousand and the two pennies are unimportant—that is, I can perceive mercifulness just as well in one as in the other—that is, mercifulness can be and can be fully as apparent in the two pennies as in the hundred thousand that are given. But if I can perceive mercifulness in the two pennies just as well as in the hundred thousand, then I can actually see it best in the two pennies, because the hundred thousand have an accidental significance that easily draws sensate attention to itself and thereby disturbs me in seeing the mercifulness. 312

Is it mercifulness when someone who is able to do everything does everything for the wretched? No. Is it mercifulness if someone who is able to do what amounts to nothing does this nothing for the wretched? No. Mercifulness is **how** this everything and

this nothing are done. But then I can indeed just as well see mercifulness in this everything and in this nothing; and if this is so, then I can actually see it best in this nothing, because being able to do everything is a glittering externality that has an accidental kind of significance that powerfully affects the sensate in me, easily draws attention to itself, and disturbs me in seeing mercifulness.

Let me illustrate this again and again. If you wished to observe the movements, the circles, that a stone produces and forms when it is thrown into the water, would you then travel to that far country where the mighty waterfall plunges down turbulently and there throw out the stone, or would you throw it out into the rough sea? No, you would not. Although the stone here as everywhere would produce movements and form circles, you would be disturbed in seeing them properly. Therefore you would do just the opposite and seek a quiet little pond, the smaller almost the better, throw out the stone, and now, undisturbed by all irrelevancies, properly focus your attention upon observing the movements.

What do you understand by a significant person? A person, I am sure, who has significant intrinsic worth? If you were in earnest about really wanting to devote yourself to the observation of such a person, would you want to see him surrounded by immense wealth or fitted out with medals and ribbons, or would you not feel that this would disturb your full concentration of mind on contemplating his significant inner being? So also with mercifulness. Mercifulness is the truly *significant*; the hundred
IX 313 thousand or doing everything in a worldly way is the *significant* gift, the *significant* help. But the one significance is that which is to be looked *at*; the other significance is that which is to be looked *away from*. Therefore, out of mistrust of yourself, you want to get rid of that from which you are to look away—alas, whereas the world thinks it far easier to be able to become aware of mercifulness when it gives the hundred thousand than when it gives two pennies, and consequently thinks it easiest to become aware of mercifulness by looking at that which is to be looked away from if one is really to see mercifulness.

Let us not forget, however, that mercifulness can be seen in

both instances, in the two pennies and in the hundred thousand, in the everything the powerful one does and in the nothing the wretched one does. But even if it is granted that mercifulness is present, you will easily ascertain that the greater, the more spectacular the gift is, the more wonderful the help is, the more there will be something that will prevent you from dwelling wholly on the mercifulness. It is told of the Apostle Peter that one day on his way to the temple he met a cripple who begged him for alms. But Peter said to him, "Silver and gold I do not have, but I give you what I have; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth stand up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up. But immediately his feet and ankles became strong, and he leaped up, stood, and walked around.[118] Who would dare doubt that this is a work of mercifulness, and yet it is indeed a miracle. But a miracle immediately draws attention to itself and thereby to a degree away from the mercifulness, which never becomes clearer than when it is able to do nothing at all, because then there is nothing whatever to prevent seeing very definitely and accurately what mercifulness is.

Eternity understands only mercifulness; therefore if you want to learn to understand mercifulness, you must learn it from eternity. But if you are to have an understanding of the eternal, there must be stillness around you while you concentrate your attention completely on inwardness. The hundred thousand—it makes a noise; at least it could very easily come to make a noise. You become bewildered at the thought of being just as able to give a hundred thousand as to give two dimes; your mind is distracted; you begin to think of the glorious situation of being able to do good on such a scale. But then, of course, the eternal is disturbed—that the glorious, the blessed, the most blessed situation is to practice mercifulness. And now power and might! IX
This again so easily disturbs the mind; you become amazed at the 314
externals. But if you are amazed, then you can be sure that it is not mercifulness you are seeing, because mercifulness does not arouse amazement. What indeed is there to be amazed at if even the poorest wretch, and he best of all, can practice mercifulness? Mercifulness, if you in truth do perceive it, does not arouse amazement; it stirs you; just because it is inwardness, it makes the

deepest inward impression upon you. But when is inwardness more clear than when there is nothing external at all, or when the external by its very lowliness and insignificance is rather like an opposition and from the sensate point of view is actually a hindrance to seeing the inwardness? And when this is the case with regard to mercifulness, we do indeed have the mercifulness that this discourse has been about, the mercifulness that is a work of love even if it has nothing to give and is able to do nothing.

VIII

The Victory of the Conciliatory Spirit in Love, Which Wins [*vinde*] the One Overcome [*Overvundne*]

[119]"To continue to stand after having overcome everything" (Ephesians 6:13)! But is this not rather easy; does it not follow as a matter of course that one continues to stand, or remains standing, when one has overcome everything? When one actually has overcome everything, what then would be able to pull one down? If one actually has overcome everything, then is there anything more against which one has to continue to stand? Ah, the tried and tested apostle certainly knows what he is talking about! It is self-evident that someone who cowardly and fearfully never ventures out into danger never conquers either, never overcomes anything; that he, on the contrary, is one who has been overcome is a foregone conclusion because he himself gave up.

But on the other hand, just when a person has overcome everything, he is perhaps closest to losing everything—if he loses something at that moment, he easily loses everything, which is indeed possible only for someone who won everything. The very moment of victory is perhaps the most difficult, more difficult than any moment during the battle. The very shout of victory, "It is all settled," is perhaps the most ambiguous of expressions if at the instant it is expressed it means, "Now it is settled that all is lost." So there can still be a question of standing after having overcome everything; indeed, it is actually only from this moment on that there can really be any question of it. This is already implied in the idea. When you say that someone overcomes something, you picture him leaning forward to advance

IX 316 against what is the opposition. Thus in the deepest sense there cannot yet be any question of standing, for although the opposition stands against him, in another sense it is, as it were, holding onto him, onto him who is leaning forward. But now, now everything is overcome; now it is a matter of his stopping and remaining standing, so that he does not in the momentum of victory lose the victory. Is this not the way it is? The weak person, the fearful person succumbs before the opposition. But the courageous one who bravely ventures into danger, if he falls, he usually falls, as we say, over his own feet—as the courageous one, he overcomes the opposition, and yet he falls. He does not fall in the danger but in his own momentum, because he did not continue to stand.

Paul says in another place that in faith we more than conquer.[120] But then can one more than conquer? Yes, one can, if one stands after having conquered, if one preserves the victory, remains in the victory. How frequently it is seen that someone who had conquered had also so exerted himself that, unlike that commander,[121] he did not need even one more victory like this—because this one was enough for his downfall! How often it is seen that someone who has lifted a weight could not carry the weight because of having lifted it, or that someone who advanced victoriously against the storm without weakening was too exhausted to endure the dead calm that came with the victory, or that someone who was so tough that he could stand all the changes of weather, heat and cold, could not bear the troublesome breeze in the moment of victory! And how often a victory has been made empty when the victor became proud, conceited, arrogant, and self-satisfied and lost by having conquered!

If, then, we were to express in a category of thought what lies in those apostolic words (to continue to stand after having overcome everything), we would have to say: In the spiritual sense, there are always two victories, a first victory and then the second one in which the first victory is preserved! Surely the difference between the religious and the worldly cannot be expressed more exactly than to say: The worldly speaks continually of only one victory, the religious continually of two. The worldly mentality

can also get into its head that no human being should count himself happy before he is dead[122] (and has thereby left it up to his survivors), but on the other hand the worldly mentality will become impatient if it hears talk about the second victory.

If there is to be any effectual discourse about this or about standing after having conquered, a person misses out on what the worldly mentality naturally prizes most, misses out on *that* for the sake of which one has endured all the hardships of battle, since in that case a person never becomes proud of his victory; not even one moment is granted him for that. On the contrary, the moment he has conquered and now wants to make preparations for the triumphal celebration, at that very moment religious consideration leads him into a new battle, into the most difficult of all because it is the most inward, because in this battle he is battling with himself and with God. If he falls in this battle, he falls by his own hand. In the physical and the external sense, I can fall by the hand of another, but in the spiritual sense there is only one person who can slay me, and that is myself. In the spiritual sense, a murder is inconceivable—after all, no assailant can murder an immortal spirit; spiritually, only suicide is possible. IX 317

If a person is victorious in this second battle, it specifically means that he does not receive the honor of the first victory, because to be victorious means in this context to give God the honor. In the first conflict the battle is against the world for the victory that is won; in the second conflict the battle is with God about that victory. Only when a person in the very moment of victory relinquishes [*afstaa*] the victory to God, only then does a person continue to stand [*bestaa*] after having overcome everything. As long as he was fighting, the opposition in a certain sense helped him to stand [*staa*]; but when he has given God the honor of the victory, God is the support with whose help he continues to stand. It is certainly possible that it was also through God's support that he was victorious (although in the external sense the victory can also be won without God's support), but God's support first becomes really clear when the person has conquered. Oh, what foolishness in the eyes of the world—to need God's support most when one has won the victory!

We shall now make this kind of double conflict or double victory the subject of our deliberation in greater detail as we speak of:

the victory of the conciliatory spirit in love,
which wins the one overcome.

Therefore, since the discussion is about *one who has been overcome*, a first victory that has been won is presupposed. What is this victory? It is to overcome evil with good.[123] The conflict may have been quite long and hard, because, if the loving one is to overcome evil with good, this is not settled all at once or in one fight; on the contrary, the battle often becomes more and more strenuous and, if you will, more dangerous—provided one understands what the danger is. The more good the one who loves has done for the unloving person, the longer he has persevered in repaying evil with good, the closer in a certain sense the danger comes that finally the evil overcomes the one who loves, if in no
IX other way than by making him cool and indifferent toward such
318 an unloving person. Oh, it takes an immense wealth of goodness, which only the loving one has, the constant heat of an unquenchable purified fire, to persevere in repaying evil with good over a long period of time! —But this victory is won, and the unloving person is one who has been overcome.

What, how, was the relationship in that conflict? On the one side stood the one who loves (or what we could also call him: the good, the noble, since in this first conflict it is not yet altogether clear that he is the one who loves), and he had the good on his side. On the other side stood the unloving one, fighting with the help of evil. So they fought. The one who loves had the task of maintaining himself in the good so that the evil would not get power over him. Therefore he was dealing not so much with the unloving person as with himself; he was not fighting to win this battle for the sake of the unloving one but for the sake of the good, and also, in the noble sense, for his own sake. Thus the two are related combatively to each other, but externally to each other, in a certain sense irreconcilably contending, since the conflict is between good and evil. The one was battling with the help

of the good and the other in league with evil, and the latter became the one overcome.

Now the relationship is changed; from now on it becomes altogether clear that it is the loving one who is engaged in the conflict, because he is not only fighting so that the good may abide within himself, but he is fighting *conciliatingly* for the good to be victorious in the unloving person, or he is struggling *to win the one overcome.* Thus the relationship between the two is no longer an outright conflict-relationship, because the loving one is fighting on the side of the enemy for his benefit; he wants to fight the cause of the unloving one to victory.

This is the *conciliatory spirit in love.* When the enemy or someone who has wronged you comes to you and seeks an agreement—that you are willing to forgive is indeed beautiful and laudable, and also loving. Ah, but what slowness! Do not say "that you did it *at once, as soon* as he asked you about it"—instead, bear in mind what swiftness to reconciliation the true love has in comparison with this, or in comparison with a swiftness that by depending on another's swiftness or slowness to ask for forgiveness is *essentially* slowness, even if it happens to come very swiftly. Long, long before the enemy thinks of seeking agreement, the loving one is already in agreement with him; and not only that, no, he has gone over to the enemy's side, is fighting for his cause; IX 319
even if he does not understand it or is unwilling to understand it, he is working here to bring it to an agreement. See, this can be called a battle of love or a battle in love! To fight with the help of the good *against* the enemy—that is laudable and noble; but to fight *for* the enemy—and against whom? Against oneself, if you will—this, yes, this is loving, or this is the conciliatory spirit in love!

[124]This is also the way the conciliatory spirit is represented in Holy Scripture. The words read, "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember"—well, what should we now expect would and must follow? Would it not be that you have something against someone? But it does not continue that way. It reads, ". . . and you there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar (be-

cause, if this is so, there is no hurry about the gift) and go; be reconciled with your brother (because there is an urgency about reconciliation, also for the sake of the gift that is waiting at the altar) and then come and offer your gift."[125]

But is this not asking too much? Who is it, then, who is in need of forgiveness, the one who did wrong or the one who suffered the wrong? Certainly it is the one who did wrong who needs forgiveness, but the loving one who suffered the wrong needs to forgive or needs agreement, reconciliation, words that, unlike the word "forgiveness," which reminds us of right and wrong, do not make such a distinction but lovingly make a mental note that both are in need. In the absolute sense, to forgive is not the conciliatory spirit if forgiveness is asked for; but it is the conciliatory spirit to need to forgive already when the other perhaps has not had the slightest thought of seeking forgiveness. This is why Scripture says, "Agree quickly with your adversary."[126] But one certainly cannot be more kindly disposed than when one is oneself the needy one; and one cannot be quicker to forgive than when one forgives before forgiveness is requested—indeed, fights to come to the point of giving it while resistance is still made, not against giving but against accepting forgiveness.

Do pay attention to what the relationship is, because the essentially Christian is always exactly the opposite of what the natural man most readily and naturally understands. "To fight for forgiveness"—who does not immediately understand this as fighting to get forgiveness—alas, humanly speaking, this is often hard enough. Yet this is not at all what we are speaking about; we are speaking about fighting in love so that the other will accept forgiveness, will allow himself to be reconciled. Is this not Christianity? It is indeed God in heaven who through the apostle says, IX 320 "Be reconciled";[127] it is not human beings who say to God, "Forgive us." No, God loved us first;[128] and again the second time, when it was a matter of the Atonement, God was the one who came first—although in the sense of justice he was the one who had the furthest to come. So it is also in the relationships among human beings; the true conciliatory spirit is this: when the one who does not, note well, need forgiveness is the one who offers reconciliation.

So the one who loves fights in a conciliatory spirit to win the one overcome. *To win one who has been overcome!* What a beautiful use of language with the word "win"! Just listen! When we say "to win" a victory, you immediately hear the intensity of the conflict; but when we say to win someone, to win someone for oneself, what infinite gentleness there is in that! What is indeed so ingratiating as the thought and the phrase "to win someone"; how could there now be any thought of conflict! It of course takes two for all conflict, and now there is only one, the unloving one, since in a conciliatory spirit the one who loves is his best friend, who wills to win the one overcome. To win the one overcome. What a wonderful inversion there is in the whole matter! One would think that to win [*vinde*] would be inferior to *over*come [*o v e r vinde*], because "over" indeed suggests something that surpasses winning; and yet here the discourse actually is ascending, is about the higher, although it still is about winning one who has been overcome. From the standpoint of pride, it perhaps is greater to overcome; but from the standpoint of love, this lesser, "to win the one overcome," is the greater. What a beautiful conflict (more beautiful than a lovers' quarrel) when the one who loves must be alone, and therefore so much more loving when he must be alone in fighting through to the reconciliation! What a beautiful victory, the most beautiful of all victories, when the one who loves succeeds in winning the one overcome!

To win one who has been overcome. Do you now see the double victory that the discourse is about! When the one who loves wants only to wage the one battle, to overcome evil with good, and he has conquered, he surely sees to it that he continues to stand after having overcome everything. Ah, his fall is only all too close at hand if he does not permit love and religious consideration to lead him immediately into the next battle, to win the one overcome. When this is done, then the piloting has been correct, past the dangerous reefs where one becomes proud of having persevered in repaying evil with good, where one becomes self-important by having repaid evil with good.

When you promptly enter the next battle, who then becomes more important? Is it not the one you are striving to win? You, IX 321

then, are not the more important. But precisely this is the humiliating, which only love is able to endure, that one seems to be going backward as one goes forward, that it is inverted—when one has oneself overcome everything, the one overcome has become more important. Let us suppose that the prodigal son's brother had been willing to do everything for his brother—yet one thing he could never have gotten into his head: that the prodigal brother should be the more important. Now, it is also difficult to get this into one's head—it does not enter into a person by that road.

But to win one who has been overcome is always difficult and in the relationship of which we speak has a peculiar difficulty. To be one who has been overcome is a humiliating feeling. Therefore one who has been overcome prefers to avoid the one who overcame him, since by contrast his defeat becomes greater, but no one makes his defeat as obvious as the one who overcame him. Yet here it is the victor who is to win the one overcome; therefore they must be brought together. Furthermore, the relationship here has a peculiar difficulty. In matters of minor importance, it of course could be done in such a way that the victor concealed from the one overcome that he was the one overcome, piously deceived him as if it were he who was right, conciliatingly yielded by even acknowledging that he was right where he was actually wrong. We shall not decide to what extent this is ever permissible, but in the relationship under discussion the one who loves would least of all dare to do that. It would be a weakness, not love, to make the unloving one believe that he was right in the evil he did; it would not be the conciliatory spirit but a treachery that would strengthen him in the evil. No, it is of importance, it is part of love's work, that with the help of the loving one it becomes entirely clear to the unloving one how irresponsibly he has acted so that he deeply feels his wrong. This the loving person must do, and then he wants also to win the one overcome—but no, it is not an "also," because it is one and the same thing, since he truly wishes only to win him for himself, or to win him for the truth and himself, and does not wish to win him for himself by deceiving him. But the more deeply the one overcome feels his wrong and in that way also his defeat, the

more he of course must feel repelled from the one who lovingly deals him this merciful blow. What a difficult task: at one and the same time to thrust away from oneself and to win for oneself, at one and the same time to be as rigorous as truth requires and yet as gentle as love desires in order to win the one against whom the severity is employed! Truly a miracle if it succeeds, since like IX 322 everything essentially Christian it contradicts the proverb that one cannot do two things at the same time. It is easy to understand that one who has been overcome seeks the place where he falsely finds the most lenient interpretation; but to win someone by the help of truth's rigorous interpretation—that is difficult.

The deliberation now pauses in the task. Consider what would have happened if the unloving one had collided with another unloving one who had fed and incited all his evil passions. Consider this as *you pause in order to see properly how the loving one behaves.*

The unloving person is one who has been overcome. But what does this mean, that he is overcome? It means that he is overcome by the good, by the true. And what is it the loving one wants? He wants to win him for the good and the true. But if being overcome means to be won for the good and the true—is this so humiliating? Watch love and the conciliatory spirit now. The one who loves does not give the impression at all, nor does it occur to him, that it is he who has conquered, that he is the victor—no, it is the good that has conquered. In order to take away the humiliating and the insulting, the one who loves introduces something higher between himself and the unloving one and in that way removes himself. When there is not a third party in the relationship between human beings, every such relationship becomes unhealthy, either too ardent or embittered. This third party, what thinkers would call the idea, is the true, the good, or more accurately, the God-relationship. In certain relationships this third party is the cooling, in others, the soothing factor. Truly, the one who loves is too loving to face the one overcome directly and be himself the victor who savors the victory—while the other is the one overcome. It is indeed simply unloving to want to master another person in this way. With the aid of the third that the loving one has introduced between them,

they are both humbled. The one who loves humbles himself before the good, whose lowly servant he is, and, as he himself admits, in frailty; and the one overcome does not humble himself before the loving one but before the good. But when in a relationship between two people both are humbled, then there of course is nothing humiliating for either one of them. How dexterous love can be, what a jack-of-all-trades!

Perhaps you would rather, as you say, that I speak more earnestly. Oh, you can be sure that the one who loves prefers to have me speak this way, because even in connection with something that engrosses one with the earnestness of eternity there is
IX 323 a joy over its succeeding that makes it preferable to speak in this way. There is also a kind of modesty in speaking this way, and thus in turn a solicitude for the person who is in the wrong. Alas, perhaps an agreement in love often miscarries because it is done too earnestly; this happens because one had not oneself learned from God the art of being sufficiently earnest (and one learns this from God) to be able to do it as lightly as truth can still allow. Never believe that earnestness is moroseness; never believe that the contorted countenance it pains one to look at is earnestness—no one has ever been earnest who has not learned from earnestness that one can also appear too earnest. When it really has become second nature for you to want to win your enemy, you will also have become so familiar with these kinds of tasks that they will be able to engage you as works of art. When there is continually a fresh influx of love within you, when this supply is as it should be, then there is also time to be dexterous. But when there is resistance within a person, when in consideration of the Law's rigorous commandment he must force himself to go ahead in order to come to an agreement with his enemy, then the matter easily becomes too earnest and fails just because of—much earnestness. But however worthy it may be, especially in contrast to irreconcilability, this "much earnestness" is still not something we should strive for. No, the one who truly loves is indeed dexterous.

Thus the one who loves also hides something from the one overcome. But not in the way a weak indulgence does, which hides the truth—the one who loves hides himself. Lest he dis-

turb, he is, as it were, only covertly present, while that which is really present is the exalted majesty of the good and the true. If one only pays attention to this, there is also present something so exalted that the little bit of difference between two individuals easily disappears. Indeed, this is the way love always conducts itself. The one who truly loves, who could not find it in his heart at any price to let the beloved girl feel his superiority, communicates the truth to her in such a way that she does not notice that he is the teacher; he lures it out of her, places it upon her lips, and thus hears not himself say it but her, or he helps the truth forward and hides himself. Now, is it humiliating to learn the truth in this way?

It is the same with the one we are speaking about, the one overcome. Expressions of grief over the past, sorrow over his wrong, pleas for forgiveness—in a certain sense the loving one accepts all this, but in a holy abhorrence he promptly lays it aside, just as one lays aside something that is not one's due—that is, he intimates that this is not his due; he assigns it all to a higher category and gives it to God as the one to whom it is due. This is the way love always conducts itself. IX 324

If the girl, indescribably joyous over the happiness she finds in association with the beloved, wanted to thank him for it, would he not, if he is a proper lover, prevent this dreadful thing and say, "No, my dear, this is a slight misunderstanding, and there must be no misunderstanding between us. If it is as great as you think it is, then you must not thank me, but you must thank God. If you do that, you are then also secured against every mistake. Suppose that your happiness were not that great, it would still be a great happiness that you thanked God for it."

This is *holy* modesty, which is inseparable from all true love. Woman's modesty is about earthly things; and in this modesty she feels superior, although the contradiction hurts. But the holy modesty originates because there is a God, and in modesty one feels one's lowliness. As soon as the slightest hint brings to mind what chasteness is ignorant of, then there is modesty in woman; but as soon as a person in relation to another person takes into account that there is a God, then the holy modesty is present. One is not modest before the other person, but before the third

one who is present, or one is modest before the other person, insofar as one considers what the presence of the third one makes the other person. This is the way it is even in human relationships. When two people are conversing and the king is present as the third, but known only to one of the two, then this one is somewhat different, because he is somewhat modest—before the king. The thought of God's presence makes a person modest in relation to another person, because the presence of God makes the two essentially equal. Whatever difference there otherwise may be between two people, even if it were, humanly speaking, very conspicuous, God has it in his power to say, "When I am present, surely no one will presume to be aware of this difference; indeed, that would be standing in my presence and speaking with each other as if I were not present."

But if the one who loves is himself the modest one, if he hardly dares to lift his eyes to look at the one overcome, how then can it be humiliating to be the one overcome! A person is indeed shy when another person looks at him, but if this other person, who by looking at him would make him shy, is himself ashamed to do it, then of course there is no one who looks at him. But if there
IX is no one looking at him, there of course cannot be anything
325 humiliating either in humbling oneself before the good or before God.

Therefore the one who loves does not look at the one overcome. This was the first thing; this was to prevent humiliation. *But in another sense the one who loves does look at him. This is the next thing.*

Would that I could describe how the one who loves looks at the one overcome, how joy beams from his eyes, how this loving look rests so gently on him, how it seeks, alluring and inviting, to win him! For it is indescribably important to the loving one that nothing disturbing should intervene, that no inauspicious word should inadvertently fall between them, that no fatal glance should accidentally be exchanged that might spoil everything again for a long time. This is the way the loving one looks at him and besides is as calm as only the eternal can make a person. True, the one who loves wishes to win this one who has been overcome, but his wish is too holy to have the kind of passion a wish

ordinarily has. The wish of mere passion very often makes a person a little bewildered, whereas the purity and holiness of this wish gives the one who loves an elevated calmness that in turn helps him to be able to win the victory of the conciliatory spirit, the most beautiful and the most difficult victory, since strength is not enough here; the strength must be in weakness.

But then is there something humiliating in feeling that one is so important to another person? Is there something humiliating for the girl in the lover's seeking to gain her love; is there something humiliating for her in the obviousness of how much he is concerned to win her; is there something humiliating for her in foreseeing his joy if he succeeds? No, there certainly is not. But the loving person who in a conciliatory spirit wants to win the one overcome is in the situation of seeking to gain the other person's love in a far higher sense. And the loving one knows only all too well how difficult it is to woo [*frie*] in this way, to free [*frie*] someone from evil, to free him from being humiliated by being the one overcome, to free him from thinking sadly of the forgiveness that he needs—that is, despite all these difficulties, to win his love.

Yet the one who loves succeeds in winning the one overcome. Everything disturbing, every conceivable hindrance is removed as if by magic: while the one overcome seeks to receive forgiveness, the loving one seeks to gain the love of the one overcome. Oh, it is not really true that one always gets a reply according to what one asks. This saying Christianity has also IX 326
rendered false, like all the sayings of human sagacity! When the one overcome asks, "Have you really forgiven me now?" the one who loves answers, "Do you truly love me now?" But then he certainly is not replying to what is asked. No, that he does not do; he is too loving for that. He does not even want to answer the question about forgiveness, because this word, especially if emphasis is laid on it, could easily make the matter too earnest in a damaging sense. What a wonderful conversation! There seems to be no sense to it; they seem to be speaking at cross-purposes, and yet they are speaking about the same thing, as love indeed understands.

But the one who loves has the last word. For some time they will exchange remarks, and the one will say, "Have you now really forgiven me?" And the other will answer, "Do you now really love me?" But see, no one, no one can hold out against one who loves, not even the one who begs for forgiveness. Finally he will be broken of the habit of asking about forgiveness.

Thus he, the one who loves, has conquered, because he won the one overcome.

IX

The Work of Love in Recollecting[129] One Who Is Dead

If in one way or another a person is afraid of being unable to maintain an overview of something that is multifarious and prolix, he tries to make or acquire a brief summary of the whole for the sake of a full view. For example, death is the briefest summary of life, or life traced back to its briefest form.[130] This is also why it has always been very important to those who truly think about human life to test again and again, with the help of the brief summary, what they have understood about life. No thinker grasps life as death does, this masterful thinker who is able not only to think through every illusion but is able to think it to pieces, think it to nothing. If, then, you are bewildered as you consider the multiple paths of life, then go out to the dead, "where all paths meet"[131]—then a full view is easy. If you are dizzy from continually looking at and hearing about life's dissimilarities, then go out to the dead; *there* you have mastery over the dissimilarities—among "the kin of clay" there is no distinction, but only the close kinship. That all human beings are blood relatives, that is, of one blood, this kinship of life is so often disavowed in life; but that they are of one clay, this kinship of death, this cannot be disavowed.

Yes, go out to the dead once again, in order *there* to take an aim at life. Indeed, this is the way the rifleman acts; he seeks a place where the enemy cannot hit him but from which he can hit the enemy, and where he can have perfect quiet for taking aim. Do not choose an evening hour for your visit, because the quiet in the evening and in an evening spent among the dead is often not far from a certain excitement that fatigues and "satiates with restlessness," raises new riddles instead of explaining the ones proposed. No, go out there early in the morning when the

sun is peeking through the branches with shifting lights and shadows, when the beauty and friendliness of the garden, when the chirping of the birds and the profusion of life out there almost make you forget that you are among the dead. It will seem to you as if you had entered a foreign country that had remained unacquainted with the confusion and fragmentation of life, in the state of childhood, consisting only of small families. Out here is attained what is futilely sought in life: equal distribution. Each family has its own little piece of ground, approximately the same size. The view is just about the same for all of them; the sun shines equally over all of them; no building rises so high that it takes away the sun's rays or the refreshing rain or the fresh air of the wind or the reverberations of bird songs from the neighbor or the neighbor across the way. No, here there is equal distribution.

In life it certainly does happen sometimes that a family who has lived in prosperity and abundance must limit itself, but in death all families have had to limit themselves. There may be a slight difference—perhaps a foot in the size of the plot, or one family may have a tree that another lodger does not have on his plot. Why do you think there is this difference? By its smallness it is a profoundly teasing reminder to you of how great the difference was. That is how loving death is! It is simply love on the part of death that by means of this little difference it calls to mind, in an inspiring jest, the great difference. Death does not say, "There is no difference whatever"; it says, "There you can see what the difference was: half a foot." If this little difference did not exist, then death's summary would not be completely reliable either. Thus in death life returns to childlike simplicity. In childhood the big difference was also that one person had a tree, a flower, a stone. And this difference was an intimation of what would manifest itself in life on a completely different scale. Now life is over, and among the dead this little intimation of the difference remains as a recollection, mitigated in a jest, of how it was.

See, out here is the place to think about life, to get a full view with the aid of the brief summary that abbreviates the prolixity of all the complicated relationships. In writing about love, how
IX 329 then could I leave unused this occasion to make a test of what

love really is? Truly, if you want to ascertain what love there is in you or in another person, then pay attention to how he relates himself to one who is dead. If one wishes to observe a person, it is very important for the sake of the observation that one, in seeing him in a relationship, look at him alone. When one actual person relates himself to another actual person, the result is two, the relationship is constituted, and the observation of the one person alone is made difficult. In other words, the second person covers over something of the first person; moreover, the second person can have so much influence that the first one appears different from what he is. Therefore a double accounting is necessary here; the observation must keep a special account of the influence the second person has on the person who is the object under observation through his personality, his characteristics, his virtues, and his defects. If you could manage to see someone shadowboxing in dead earnest, or if you could prevail upon a dancer to dance solo the dance he customarily dances with another, you would be able to observe his motions best, better than if he were boxing with another actual person or if he were dancing with another actual person. And if, in conversation with someone, you understand the art of making yourself *no one*, you get to know best what resides in this person.

But when a person relates himself to one who is dead, there is only one in this relationship, inasmuch as one who is dead is no actuality; no one, no one can make himself *no one* as well as one who is dead, because he is *no one*. Thus there can be no mention here of any irregularities in the observing. Here the one who is living is disclosed; here he must show himself exactly as he is, because one who is dead (he is indeed a cunning fellow) has withdrawn himself completely, and he has not the slightest influence, neither disturbing nor accommodating, on the one living who relates himself to him. One who is dead is no actual object; he is only the occasion that continually discloses what resides in the one living who relates himself to him or that helps to make manifest the nature of the one living who does not relate himself to him.

We certainly do have duties also to the dead. If we are to love the persons we see, then also those we have seen but see no more

because death took them away. We ought not to disturb the dead by wailing and crying. We ought to treat one who is dead as we treat one who is sleeping, whom we do not have the heart to awaken because we hope that he will wake up by himself.
IX 330 "Weep very softly over one who is dead, for he has attained rest," says Sirach (22:11); and I know of no better way to describe true recollection than by this soft weeping that does not burst into sobs at one moment—and soon subsides. No, we are to recollect the dead, weep softly, but weep long. How long cannot be determined in advance because no one recollecting can know for sure how long he will be separated from the one dead. But the one who lovingly recollects one who is dead can use some words from David's psalm in which there also is mention of recollection: "If I forget you, then forget my right hand; let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not set you above my highest joy."[132] May he only recollect that the task is not to say it immediately on the first day but to remain true to himself and the dead one in this state of mind even if one is silent about it, which may be preferable for the sake both of safety and of a certain decorum.

It is a task, and one need not have seen much in life to have seen enough to be assured that it may very well be necessary to emphasize that it is a task, a duty, to recollect the dead. The untrustworthiness of human feelings left to their own devices perhaps never manifests itself more than in this very relationship. Yet this feeling or its vehement expression is not therefore untrue. That is, a person means what he says, he means it the moment he says it, but he satisfies himself and the passion of his undisciplined feeling by using expressions that bind in such a way that rare perhaps is the person who by his later expression does not render the first untrue, although it was true at the time.

One often speaks of what a completely different view of human life one would have if everything that life conceals were made manifest—alas, if death were to come out with what it knows about the living, what a terrible contribution to the knowledge of human nature, a contribution that does not in the least promote love of humanity!

Therefore, among the works of love, let us not forget this one, let us not forget to consider:

the work of love in recollecting one who is dead.

The work of love in recollecting one who is dead is a work of the ***most unselfish*** love.

When one wants to make sure that love is completely unselfish, one can of course remove every possibility of repayment. But this is exactly what is removed in the relationship to one who is dead. If love still abides, then it is truly unselfish. IX 331

Repayment in connection with love can be quite varied. For that matter, one can have direct profit and gain; and this is indeed always the common way, this *pagan* way: "loving those who can make repayment." In this sense repayment is the heterogeneous, is something different from the love itself. But there is also a repayment for love that is homogeneous with love: reciprocal love. And presumably there is still so much good in the majority of people that as a rule they will regard this repayment of gratitude, of appreciation, of devotion, in short, the repayment of reciprocal love, as the most significant, although in another sense they perhaps will not admit that it is a repayment and therefore are of the opinion that one cannot call love selfish insofar as it aspires to this repayment. —But in no sense does the one who is dead make repayment.

In this regard there is a similarity between lovingly recollecting one who is dead and parents' love for their children. Parents love the children almost before they come into existence and long before they become conscious beings, therefore as nonbeings. But a dead person is also a nonbeing, and the two greatest good works are these: to give a human being life and to recollect one who is dead; yet the first work of love has a repayment. If parents had no hope whatever, no prospect at all, of ever receiving joy from their children and reward for their love—well, there would indeed still be many a father and mother who still would lovingly do everything for the children—ah, but there certainly would also be many a father and mother whose love would grow cold. By this it is not our intention to declare out-

right that such a father and mother are unloving; no, but the love in them would still be so weak, or self-love so strong, that this joyous hope, this encouraging prospect would be *needed.* And with this hope, this prospect, everything is all right. The parents could say to each other: "It is true that our little child has many years ahead of him, but during all that time we will also have the joy of him, and above all we have the hope that he someday will reward our love, will, if he does nothing else, will in repayment make our old age happy."

But one who is dead makes no repayment. The one who lovingly recollects can perhaps also say, "I have a long life ahead of
IX 332 me, devoted to recollection, but from the first to the last moment the prospect is the same; in a certain sense there is no obstacle at all in the prospect, since there is no prospect whatever." Ah, in a certain sense it is so hopeless, such a thankless work, or in the sense in which the farmer says it, such a discouraging job, to recollect one who is dead! One who is dead does not thrive and grow toward the future as a child does; one who is dead merely crumbles away more and more into certain ruin. One who is dead does not give joy to the one recollecting as the child gives joy to the mother, does not give joy to him as the child gives joy to her when to her question about whom it loves most it answers, "Mother." One who is dead loves no one best; he seems to love no one at all. Oh, it is so disheartening that he remains quiet this way down there in the grave, while the longing for him intensifies, so disheartening that there is no thought of any change except the change of decomposition, more and more! It is true, of course, that neither is he difficult the way the child can be at times; he does not cause sleepless nights, at least not by being difficult—oddly enough, the good child does not cause sleepless nights, whereas one who is dead causes more sleepless nights the better he was. Oh, but even with the most difficult child there is still the hope and the prospect of the repayment of reciprocal love, but one who is dead makes no repayment whatever; whether you are sleepless and expectant because of him or you completely forget him, it seems to make no difference at all to him.

If, then, you wish to test yourself as to whether you love un-

selfishly, just pay attention to how you relate yourself to one who is dead. Much love, doubtless most, would surely upon closer examination prove to be self-love. But the point is that in the love-relationship between living persons there usually is still the hope and the prospect of repayment, at least the repayment of reciprocal love, and ordinarily this repayment does come. But this hope and this prospect, together with the coming of the repayment of it, make one unable to see with complete clarity what is love and what is self-love, because one cannot see with complete clarity whether repayment is expected and in what sense. But in the relationship to one who is dead, the observation is very easy. Ah, if human beings were accustomed to love unselfishly, one would surely also recollect the dead differently from the way one ordinarily does when the first sometimes rather brief period is over, in which one loves the dead inordinately enough with crying and clamor.

The work of love in recollecting one who is dead is a work of the freest love.

In order to test properly whether love is entirely free, one can of course remove everything that could in any way extort from one a work of love. But this is absent in the relationship to one who is dead. If love still continues, then this is the freest love. IX 333

What can extort from one a work of love can be extremely varied and thus cannot be enumerated. The child cries, the pauper begs, the widow pesters,[133] deference constrains, misery compels, etc. But any love in work that is extorted in this way is not free.

The stronger the compelling, the less free is the love. Usually we also take this into account with reference to parents' love for their children. If one really wants to depict helplessness and depict it in its most compelling form, one usually draws attention to the infant that lies there in all its helplessness, by which it seemingly extorts love from the parents—*seemingly* extorts, because it actually extorts love only from the parents who are not what they ought to be. The infant, then, in all its helplessness! And yet, when an individual first lies in his grave with six feet of earth over him, he is more helpless than the child!

But the child cries! If the child could not cry—well, despite

this there would probably be many a father and mother who would tend to it with much love; oh, but there would probably also be many a father and mother who then would, at least many times, forget the child. It is not our intention to declare outright that such a father and mother are therefore unloving; but the love in them would still be so weak, so self-loving, that they would need this reminder, this compelling.

One who is dead, however, does not cry as the child does; he does not call attention to himself as the needy do, he does not beg as the beggar does, he does not constrain by means of deference, he does not compel by means of visible misery, he does not pester you as the widow pesters the judge—the one who is dead is silent and says not a word; he remains absolutely still and does not stir from the spot—and perhaps does not suffer hardship! There is no one who inconveniences the living less than one who is dead, and there is no one easier for the living to avoid than one who is dead. You can leave your child with strangers in order not to hear its crying; you can refuse to see anybody in order to avoid
IX 334 the beseeching of the beggar; you can go around in disguise so that no one will recognize you—in short, in connection with the living you can use many precautions, which perhaps will still not entirely protect you, but in connection with one who is dead you do not need the slightest precaution and you are still entirely protected.

If someone is so inclined, if it best suits his purpose to be rid of one who is dead, the sooner the better, he can, without being challenged at all and without becoming the object of any lawsuit, turn cold at approximately the same moment the one dead has become cold. If merely for the sake of common decency (certainly not for the sake of the dead) [134]he remembers to weep a little in the newspaper on the day of the funeral, if he merely takes care to show the one dead the last honor—for the sake of common decency—then he can for that matter laugh at the one dead right before his—no, not before his eyes, because they are now closed. One who is dead of course has no rights in life; there is no public authority who deals with whether you recollect one who is dead, no public authority who becomes involved in this relationship as sometimes in the relationship between parents and children—and one who is dead certainly does not himself take

any step to inconvenience or compel in any way. —Therefore, if you want to test whether you love freely, just watch how over a period of time you relate yourself to one who is dead.

If it did not seem so much like jesting (which it assuredly is not except to someone who does not know what earnestness is), I would suggest that over the gate to the garden of the dead there be placed as an inscription: "No Compulsion Here" or "With Us No Compulsion." Yet I do want to say it; I do also want to have said it and also to stand by having said it. I have thought too much about death not to know that someone who does not know how to use the subtlety, all the roguishness of profundity that resides in death—for awakening, note well—that such a person cannot speak earnestly about it. Death is not earnest in the same way as the eternal is. To the earnestness of death belongs that remarkable capacity for awakening, this resonance of a profound mockery that, detached from the thought of the eternal, is an empty, often brazen, jest, but together with the thought of the eternal is just what it should be and is utterly different from the insipid earnestness that least of all captures and holds a thought that has the tension the thought of death has.

There is so much talk in the world about the necessity for love to be free, that one cannot love as soon as there is the slightest compulsion, that with regard to love there must be no constraint at all. Well, let us see, when it gets down to brass tacks, how it stands with this free love—how the dead are recollected in love, since one who is dead in no way compels anyone. Yes, in the moment of separation, when one cannot get along without the one who is dead, then there is crying. Is this the much-discussed free love, is this love for the one who is dead? Then, little by little, as the one dead gradually crumbles away, so also does the recollection crumble away between the fingers. One does not know what becomes of it; little by little one becomes free of this—burdensome recollection. But to become free in this way, is this the free love, is this love for the one who is dead? The proverb says: Out of sight, out of mind. We can always be sure that proverbs speak truthfully about how things go in the world; it is quite another matter that in the Christian sense every proverb is untrue. IX 335

If everything that is said about loving freely were true—that is,

if it happened, if it were carried out, if people were accustomed to love in this way, then people would also love the dead differently from the way they do. But the point is that in connection with other human love there usually is something compelling, daily sight and habit if nothing else, and therefore one cannot definitely see whether it is love that freely holds its object firm or it is the object that in some way compellingly lends a hand. But in the relation to the dead, everything becomes clear. Here there is nothing, nothing compelling at all. On the other hand, the loving recollection of the dead has to protect itself against the actuality around one, lest through ever-new impressions it acquire full power to wipe out the recollection, and it has to protect itself against time—in short, it has to guard its freedom in recollection against that which wants to compel one to forget.

The power of time is great. In time we may not perceive this, because time slyly steals from one a little at a time; perhaps we will really find this out for the first time in eternity, when we will once more and in retrospect examine what we with the help of time and the forty years have managed to pack up.

Yes, time is a dangerous power. In time it is so easy to begin over again from the beginning and then forget where one left off. Therefore even when one begins to read a very big book and does not quite trust one's memory, one puts marks in the book. Ah, but with regard to one's whole life, how often a person forgets to put in marks [*lægge Mærker*] in order to be able to take notice [*lægge Mærke*] properly! And now through the years to have to recollect one who is dead—alas, while he does nothing at all to help but instead, if he does anything, or by doing nothing at all, does everything to show one how indifferent he is to it!

IX 336 Meanwhile life's multiple invitations beckon to one; the living beckon to one and say: Come to us; we will like you. The one dead, however, cannot beckon; even if it were his desire, he cannot beckon, he can do nothing at all to bind us to himself, he cannot move a finger; he lies there and crumbles away—how easy for the powers of life and of the moment to overcome such a weakling! Ah, there is no one as helpless as one who is dead, while in his helplessness he exerts unconditionally not the slightest compulsion! Therefore no love is as free as the work of love

that *recollects* one who is dead—because to recollect him is something different from not being able to forget him at first.

The work of love in recollecting one who is dead is a work of the most faithful love.

In order to test properly whether a person's love is faithful, everything can of course be removed whereby the object could in any way help him to be faithful. But all this is absent in the relationship to one who is dead, who is no *actual* object. If love then continues, this love is the most faithful.

Not infrequently there is talk about lack of faithfulness in love between people. So the one blames the other and says, "It was not I who changed; it was he who changed." Well, what happened then? Did you remain unchanged? "No, of course it was natural and a necessary consequence that I changed too."At this point we shall not explain how meaningless this presumably necessary consequence is, whereby it necessarily follows that I change *because* another changes. No, we are speaking of the relationship to someone who is dead, and here it is out of the question that it was the one dead who changed. If a change occurs in this relationship, I must be the one who has changed. Therefore, if you want to test whether you love faithfully, just observe how you relate yourself to one who is dead.

But this is the issue: it is truly a difficult task to maintain oneself unchanged in time; the situation is also this: people love to deceive themselves in all kinds of delusions more than they love both the living and the dead. Oh, how many go on living in the firm conviction, which they would stake their lives on, that if the other one had not changed they, too, would have remained unchanged. But if this is so, is everyone who is living then actually unchanged in the relationship to one who is dead? Oh, perhaps in no relationship is the change as noticeable and as great as in the relationship between one who is living and one who is dead—although the one who is dead is certainly not the one who changes. IX 337

When two who are living hold together in love, the one holds on to the other and the alliance holds on to both of them. But no alliance is possible with one who is dead. Afterward he may at first still be said to be holding on to one, a consequence of the

alliance, and therefore it is also most frequently the case, the common occurrence, that he is recollected during this time. In the course of time, however, he does not hold on to the one living and the relationship ends if the one who is living does not hold on to him. But what is faithfulness? Is it faithfulness that another holds on to me?

When death separates two people, the surviving—faithful—one at first declares that he "will never forget the departed one." Oh, how uncircumspect! One who is dead is truly a cunning man to talk with, except that his cunning is unlike that of someone of whom it is said, "You can't start with him again where you left him," because the cunning of one who is dead consists in this, that one does not get him away from where one left him. One is often tempted to think that people have the notion that one can say almost anything one pleases to one who is dead inasmuch as he is indeed dead, hears nothing, and answers nothing. But, but above all take care about what you say to one who is dead. You perhaps can quite calmly say to someone who is living, "You I will never forget." Then after a few years have passed, you both have, it is to be hoped, safely forgotten the whole thing—at least it would more rarely happen that you would be unfortunate enough to meet someone less forgetful. But take care with everyone who is dead! The one who is dead is a resolute and determined man; he is not like the rest of us still in search of adventures in which we will be able to have many droll experiences and seventeen times forget what we have said. When you say to one who is dead, "You I will never forget," it is as if he answered, "Fine! Rest assured that I will never forget that you said it." And even if all your contemporaries were to assure you that he has forgotten it, you will never hear this from the lips of the dead. No, he goes his own way—but he is not *changed.*

You will not be able to say to one who is dead that it was he who has grown older and that this explains your changed relationship to him—because one who is dead does not grow older. You will not be able to say to one who is dead that it was he who in the course of time became cold—because he has not become colder than he was when you were so warm. Nor will you be able to say that it was he who has become uglier and that is why

you could not love him anymore—because essentially he has not become uglier than when he was a beautiful corpse, which surely is not suitable as the object of erotic love. Nor will you be able to say that it was he who has become involved with others—because one who is dead does not become involved with others. Whether or not you want to begin where you two left off, one who is dead begins again with the most scrupulous accuracy where you left off. IX 338

Although he does not show it, one who is dead is a strong man—he has the strength of changelessness. And one who is dead is a proud man. Have you not noticed that the proud person, particularly in relation to the one he most deeply scorns, does his best to give no hint, to seem completely unchanged, to pretend that nothing has happened, in order thereby to consign the scorned one to sinking deeper and deeper—only to the one he likes will he kindly point out the wrong, the error, in order to set him right. Oh, but one who is dead—who is as proudly able as he to give no hint at all, even if he scorns the one living who forgets him and his farewell words—after all, one who is dead does everything to make himself forgotten! One who is dead does not come to you and remind you; he does not look at you in passing. You never meet him, and if you did meet him and see him, there would be nothing involuntary in his countenance that against his will could give a hint of what he thought and judged of you, because one who is dead has his face under control. [135]Truly, one should be very careful about poetically conjuring up the dead in order to call attention to oneself; the most dreadful thing is just this, that one who is dead gives no hint of anything at all. Therefore fear one who is dead, fear his ingenuity, fear his firmness, fear his strength, fear his pride! But if you love him, then recollect him lovingly and you have no reason to fear. From one who is dead, and precisely from him as one who is dead, you will learn the ingenuity in thought, the firmness in expression, the strength in changelessness, the pride in life that you would not be able to learn in this way from any other person, not even the most highly gifted.

One who is dead does not change—there is no thought of any possibility of excuse by putting the blame on him—he is faithful.

Yes, it is true, but he is no actuality, and he therefore does nothing, nothing at all, in order to hold on to you, but he is not changed. If, then, any change takes place between one living and one dead, it is indeed clear that it must be the one living who has changed. On the other hand, if no change takes place, then it is the one living who has truly been faithful, faithful in lovingly
IX 339 recollecting him—whereas he, alas, could do nothing to hold on to you, whereas he, alas, did everything to make it seem as if he had completely forgotten you and what you had said to him. The one who actually has forgotten what has been said to him cannot express more definitely that it is forgotten, that the whole relationship to him, the whole affair with him, is forgotten, than can the one who is dead.

The work of love in recollecting one who is dead is thus a work of the most unselfish, the freest, the most faithful love. Therefore go out and practice it; recollect the one who is dead and just in this way learn to love the living unselfishly, freely, faithfully. In the relationship to one who is dead, you have the criterion by which you can test yourself. The one who uses this criterion will easily be able to shorten the extensiveness of the most prolix relationship, and he will learn to loathe the whole mass of excuses that actuality usually has promptly at hand to explain that it is the other one who is selfish, the other one who is to blame for his being forgotten because he does not call attention to himself, the other one who is faithless. Recollect the one who is dead; then in addition to the blessing that is inseparable from this work of love you will also have the best guidance for rightly understanding life: that it is our duty to love the people we do not see but also those we do see. The duty to love the people we see cannot cease because death separates them from us, because the duty is eternal; but accordingly neither can the duty to those who are dead separate the living from us in such a way that they do not become the objects of our love.

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The Work of Love in Praising Love

[137]"To say it is no art, but to do it is." This is a proverbial remark that is quite true if one sensibly excludes the instances and situations in which the art actually is "to say it." It would surely be strange if someone were to deny that the poet's art is "to say it," since not everyone can say *it*, which the poet says *in such a way* that in just that way he shows that he is a poet. This is partially true also of the speaker's art.

But with regard to love, it is neither partially nor totally true that the art is to say it, or that to be able to say it is in any way essentially conditioned by the accident of talent. For just that reason it is very upbuilding to speak about love, because one must continually bear in mind and say to oneself, "This is something everyone can do or everyone ought to be able to do"—whereas it would be strange to say that everyone is or could be a poet. Love, which overcomes all dissimilarities, which dissolves all bonds in order to bind all in the bonds of love, must of course lovingly watch out lest a special kind of dissimilarity assert itself divisively here.

Because this is so, because it is no "art" to praise love, for just that reason to do it is a work. "Art" pertains to the accident of talent, and work pertains to the universally human. Therefore the proverb can be used in a special way. For example, if someone in a casually dropped remark, in a hasty suggestion (which seems especially to please this age), were to say, "It would be good if someone undertook to praise love," one might answer, "To say it is no art, but to do it is"—although in this case "to do it" would mean to say it, which with regard to love, as has been shown, is no art—that is, it is an art and yet no art but a work. The work, then, is to undertake the labor of carrying out such

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praise of love, for which both time and industry are required. If it were an art to praise love, the relationship would be different. When it is a matter of an art, it certainly is not given to everyone to practice it, even if he is willing to expend the time and industry and is willing to undertake the task. Love, on the other hand—oh, it is not like an art, jealous of itself and therefore bestowed on only a few. Everyone who wants to have love is given it, and if he wants to undertake the task of praising it, he will succeed in that also.

So let us now consider:

the work of love in praising love.

It is a work, and of course a work of love, because it can be done only in love or, more accurately defined, in the love of truth. We shall try to illustrate how this work may be carried out.[138]

The work of praising love must be done ***inwardly*** *in self-denial.*

[139]If praising love is to be done effectually, one must persevere for a long time in thinking one thought, persevere in it with the strictest abstemiousness, spiritually understood, in regard to everything heterogeneous, foreign, irrelevant, and intrusive, persevere in it with the most punctilious and obedient renunciation of every other thought. But this is very strenuous. By this route it is easy enough to leave meaning, coherence, and understanding behind, and this will indeed be the case if the one preoccupying thought is a particular finite idea, not one infinite thought. But if it is indeed one thought, which saves and preserves the understanding, it is still very strenuous. Therefore, to think one thought directed inwardly away from all distraction, step by step, from month to month, to make stronger and stronger the hand that tightens the string of thought, and then from the other side step by step continually to learn ever more obediently, ever more humbly, to make the hand lighter and more supple in the joints, the hand with which at every instant, if necessary, the tension for
IX a moment can be relaxed and eased, then with increasing passion
342 to grasp ever more firmly, ever more securely, and with growing humility to be able, if for a moment it is made necessary, to let go ever more readily—this is very strenuous. And yet it cannot be concealed from a person that this is the requirement, nor can it

be concealed from him if he is doing it, because when a person thinks only one thought the direction is inward.

It is one thing to think in such a way that one's attention is continually only outward, in the direction of the object that is something external; it is something else to be so turned in thought that continually, every moment, one is conscious, conscious of one's own state during the thinking or of what is happening in oneself during the thinking. But only the latter is essential thinking—it is, namely, transparency;[140] the former is unclear thinking, which suffers from the contradiction that that which, thinking, clarifies something else is itself basically unclear. Such a thinker explains something else by his thinking and, behold, he does not understand himself. In an outward direction toward the object, he perhaps makes a very penetrating use of his natural abilities, but in an inward direction, a very superficial use, and therefore all his thinking, however penetrating it seems, is still basically superficial.[141] But when the object of a person's thinking is extensive in the external sense, or when he transforms what he is thinking about into a learned object, or when he leaps from one object to another, then he does not discover this last discrepancy: at the bottom of all the clarity there lies an unclarity, but true clarity can be only in transparency. When, on the other hand, a person thinks only one thought, then one does not have an external object, then one has an inward direction in self-deepening, then he must make a discovery concerning his own inner state, and this discovery is first very humbling.

The powers of the human spirit are not like the powers of the body. If someone works his physical powers overtime—well, then he is overtaxed and nothing is gained by it. But if someone does not, precisely by choosing the inward direction, strain his spiritual powers as such, he does not discover at all, or he does not discover in the deeper sense, that God is; and when that is the case he has certainly lost what is most important, or what is most important has essentially escaped him. In the physical powers as such there is nothing selfish, but in the human psyche as such there lies a selfishness that has to be broken if the God-relationship is truly to be won. The person who thinks only one thought must learn this, must experience that there comes a halt in which

everything seems to be taken away from him; he must come to
IX know the mortal danger in which it is a matter of losing one's life
343 in order to gain it.[142] It is along this path that he must go ahead if he is to bring something deeper to light; if he shies away from this difficulty, his thinking becomes superficial—although it is certainly true in these sagacious times that it is assumed among people, yet without making inquiries of God or of the eternal, that such exertion is not needed, indeed, that it is an exaggeration. Now, of course it is not needed either in order to be comfortable in a thoughtless life or in order to satisfy one's contemporaries with the admired perfection that in every jot and tittle is just like all the others. Yet it is certain that without being tested in this difficulty and without this exertion one's thinking becomes superficial. In a spiritual sense it holds true that just when a person strains his spiritual powers as such he then, and only then, becomes an instrument. From that moment on, if he honestly and faithfully perseveres, he will gain the best powers, but they are not his own; he has them in *self-denial.*

I do not know to whom I am speaking about this, whether anyone is concerned about such things; but this I know, that such people have lived, and this I know, that the very people who have praised love effectually have been experienced sailors and able seamen in these waters that nowadays are in part almost unknown. And for them I can write, comforting myself with the beautiful words: "Write!" "For whom?" "For the dead, for those whom you have loved in some past"[143]—and in loving them I shall indeed also meet the dearest among the contemporaries.

[144]When one thinks only one thought, one must in connection with this thinking discover self-denial, and it is self-denial that discovers that God is. Precisely this becomes the contradiction in blessedness and terror: to have an omnipotent one as one's co-worker. An omnipotent one cannot be your co-worker, a human being's co-worker, without its signifying that you are able to do nothing at all;[145] and on the other hand, if he is your co-worker, you are able to do everything. The strenuousness is that it is a contradiction or is simultaneous; thus you do not experience the one today and the other tomorrow. Moreover, the strenuousness is that this contradiction is not something you must

be aware of once in a while but is something you must be aware of at all times. At the same moment it seems as if you are capable of everything—and a selfish thought will sneak in as if it were you who are capable—at the same moment all can be lost for you; and at the same moment the selfish thought surrenders, you can have everything again.[146] But God is not seen, and therefore, as God uses this instrument into which a human being has made himself in self-denial, it seems as if it were the instrument that is able to do everything, and this tempts the instrument itself to understand it in that way—until he again is able to do nothing. It is hard enough to work with another human being, but to work together with the Omnipotent One! Well, in a certain sense it is quite easy, since what is he not capable of, so I can simply let him do it. The difficulty, therefore, is just that I am to work together with him, if not in any other way, then through the continual understanding that I am able to do nothing at all, something that is not understood once and for all. And it is difficult to understand this, to understand it not at the moment when one actually is unable to do anything, when one is sick, in low spirits, but to understand it at the moment when one seemingly is capable of doing everything. IX 344

There is, after all, nothing as swift as a thought, and nothing hits one as powerfully as a thought when it hits one. And now to be out on the sea of thought, out on the "70,000 fathoms deep,"[147] [148]before one learns to be able, when night comes, to sleep calmly, *away from* the thoughts, in the confidence that God, who is love, has them in abundance, and to be able to wake up confident *to* the thoughts, assured that God has not been sleeping!

The mighty Eastern emperor had a servant who reminded him daily[149] of a certain matter—but that an insignificant human being may turn the relationship around and say to God, the Omnipotent One, "Do by all means remind me of this and that"—and then that God does it! Is this not enough to make one lose one's mind, that a human being will have permission to sleep safely and sweetly if only he says to God, just as the emperor to his servant: Do by all means remind me of this and that! But then again this Omnipotent One is so jealous of himself that with

merely one selfish word in this foolhardy freedom that he permits[150] all is lost, then God not only does not remember this and that, but it seems as if he would never forget this and that, the guilt. No, then it is much safer to be capable of a little less, and then fancy in the ordinary human way that one is sure of being able to do it; this is much safer than the strenuousness of actually and literally being able to do nothing at all, and on the other hand, in a certain figurative sense, seeming to be capable of doing everything.

[151]Yet only in self-denial can one effectually praise love, because God is love, and only in self-denial can one hold fast to
IX 345 God. What a human being knows by himself about love is very superficial; he must come to know the deeper love from God—that is, in self-denial he must become what every human being can become (since self-denial is related to the universally human and thus is distinguished from the particular call and election), an instrument for God. Thus every human being can come to know everything about love, just as every human being can come to know that he, like every human being, is loved by God. The only difference is that some find this thought to be more than adequate even for the longest life (which does not seem surprising to me); so even at the age of seventy they do not think that they have marveled over it enough, whereas others find this thought so insignificant (which seems to me very strange and deplorable), since to be loved by God is no more than every human being is—as if it were therefore less significant.

Only in self-denial can one effectually praise love. No poet can do it. The poet can sing of erotic love and friendship, and to be able to do this is a rare excellence, but the "poet" cannot praise love. For the poet the relationship to his inspiring spirit is like a jest, the invocation[152] of its help like a jest (and this is supposed to correspond to self-denial and prayer), but his natural endowment is the decisive factor, and the yield from the relationship to the inspiring spirit is for him primary. The yield is of course what is written, the poetic production. But for the person who is to praise love (which anyone can do; this is no excellence), the relationship of self-denial to God, or to relate oneself to God in self-denial, ought to be everything, ought to be the

earnestness. Whether the production is finished or not ought to be a jest—that is, the God-relationship itself ought to be more important to him than the yield. In self-denial it is his utterly earnest conviction that God is the one who is helping him.

Oh, if a human being could in self-denial properly get rid of all illusion, as if he were capable of something, if he himself could rightly understand that he himself is capable of nothing, that is, if he could rightly win the victory of self-denial and then to the victory add self-denial's triumph, truly and honestly to find all his blessedness in not being capable of anything at all himself—how wonderfully such a person would be able to speak about love. To be blessed, to feel oneself blessed in the extreme exertion of self-denial, in this fainting and swooning of all one's personal powers—what else is this but truly loving God? But God is Love. Who, then, should better be able to praise love than the person who truly loves God, since he indeed relates himself to his object in the only right way: he relates himself to God and truly loves. IX 346

This is inwardly the condition or the mode in which praising love must be done. To carry it out has, of course, its intrinsic reward, although in addition, by praising love insofar as one is able, it also has this purpose: to win people to it, to make them properly aware of what in a conciliatory spririt is granted to every human being—that is, the highest. The one who praises art and science still sows dissension between the gifted and the ungifted. But the one who praises love reconciles all, not in a common poverty nor in a common mediocrity, but in the community of the highest.

The work of praising love must be done ***outwardly*** *in self-sacrificing unselfishness.*

Through self-denial a human being gains the ability to be an instrument by inwardly making himself into nothing before God. Through self-sacrificing unselfishness he outwardly makes himself into nothing, an unworthy servant.[153] Inwardly he does not become self-important, since he is nothing, and outwardly he does not become self-important either, since he is nothing, he is nothing before God—and he does not forget that right where he is he is before God. Alas, it can happen that a person makes a mistake at the last moment, in that he, though truly humble be-

fore God, becomes proud of what he is able to do as he turns toward people. It is then a temptation of comparison that becomes his downfall. He understood that he could not compare himself to God; before him he became conscious of himself as a nothing; but in comparison with people he still thought himself to be something. That is, he forgot the self-denial; he is trapped in an illusion, as if he were before God only during specific hours, just as one has an audience with His Royal Majesty at a specific hour. What lamentable confusion! With regard to a human being, it is indeed possible to speak in one way with him in his presence and in another way about him in his absence, but would it be possible to speak about God—in his absence? If this is understood correctly, self-sacrificing unselfishness is one and the same as self-denial. It would certainly be also the most appalling contradiction if one wanted to dominate others—by praising love. Thus self-sacrificing unselfishness is in a certain sense, that is, inwardly understood, an obvious consequence of self-denial, or is one with self-denial.

[154]But outward self-sacrificing unselfishness is required if love
IX 347 is truly to be praised, and to want to praise love in the love of truth is indeed a work of love. It is easy enough to gain earthly advantages and, what is most lamentable of all, win the approval of people by proclaiming all sorts of deception. But truly this is not loving. The opposite is loving: in love of the truth and of humanity to will to make every sacrifice in order to proclaim the truth and, on the other hand, to will not to sacrifice the least bit of the truth.

Truth must essentially be regarded as struggling in this world. The world has never been so good, and so good it will never become, that the majority want the truth or have the true conception of it so that its proclamation would therefore immediately win the approval of all. No, the person who wants truly to proclaim some truth must prepare himself in another way than with the aid of such a beguiling expectancy; he must essentially be willing to renounce the moment. [155]Indeed, even an apostle says that he strives "to win people," yet with the addition "but before God we are open."[156] Thus in these words there is least of all any thought of this selfish or cowardly and timorous hanker-

ing to win the approval of people—as if it were the approval of people that decides whether something is true or not. No, before God the apostle is made known as he seeks to win people; therefore he does not want to win them for himself but for the truth. As soon as he sees that he can win them in such a way that they become devoted to him but misunderstand him and distort his doctrine, he will promptly thrust them away—in order to win them. Therefore he does not want to win them in order to have some advantage from it himself, but with every sacrifice, that is, also with the sacrifice of their approval, wants to win them for the truth—if he can succeed in doing so. This is what he wants. Thus the same apostle says in another place (I Thessalonians 2:4–6): "We speak in this way, not as if we wanted to please people, but God. We used neither words of flattery, nor a cloak for greed; we did not seek glory from people, neither from you nor from others, although as Christ's apostles we could have been a burden to you." How much sacrifice is contained here! He has not sought any advantage, has not accepted payment, not even what he could rightfully have claimed as Christ's apostle; he has renounced their honors, their approval, their devotion; impoverished, he has exposed himself to their misjudgment, their mockery, and all this he has done—to win them. Yes, in this way it certainly is permissible to do everything to win people, even if IX 348
it meant losing one's life by being put to death; because this, in self-sacrifice and unselfishness, is a renunciation of all momentary means by which one wins the moment—and loses the truth! Rooted in the eternal, the apostle stands; it is he who in self-sacrifice wants to win people by the powers of the eternal; it is not the apostle who needs them in order to survive and therefore grasps the most sagacious way, the first the best, to win them—not in order to win them for the truth, because for that such methods cannot be used.

[157]And now in these times—how necessary unselfishness is in these times when everything is done to make everything momentary and the momentary everything! Is not everything being done to make the moment as preponderant as possible, superior to the eternal, to the truth? Is not everything being done to make the moment self-satisfied in almost supreme ignorance of God

and the eternal, so conceited in its presumed possession of all truth, so insolent in its notion of being itself the inventor of the truth! How many of the better ones have succumbed to the power of the moment and in so doing have made the moment even worse, because, when the very person who was one of the better ones weakly or selfishly gives in, he must seek amid the noise of the moment to forget his downfall and now he must work with all his might to make the moment even more arrogant. Alas, the age of thinkers seems to be past![158] The quiet patience, the humble and obedient slowness, the noble renunciation of momentary influence, the distance of infinity from the moment, the love devoted to one's God and to one's idea, which are necessary to think one thought—this seems to be disappearing; this is almost at the point of becoming ludicrousness to people. "Man" has once again become "the measure of all things"[159]—and completely in the sense of the moment. All communication must be adapted for convenient publication in a lightweight pamphlet or be supported by lie upon lie. Yes, it is indeed as if all communication must finally be adapted so that it can be presented in at most one hour before a gathering that in turn wastes a half hour in the noise of approval and disapproval and in the second half hour is too confused to be able to gather the ideas. Yet this is aspired to as the highest. Children are brought up to regard this as the highest: to be heard and be admired for an hour. In this way the coinage standard for being a
IX 349 human being is debased. Nothing is said anymore about the highest, about pleasing God, as the apostle says,[160] neither of pleasing those glorious ones who lived at an earlier time nor of pleasing the few of excellence who are one's contemporaries. No, to satisfy for an hour a haphazard gathering of people, the first the best, who themselves in turn have had neither the time nor the opportunity to think about the truth and therefore crave superficiality and half thoughts—if they would reward one with approval—that is the aspiration.

This means that, in order to find something at all worth aspiring to, people help along with a little lie, fool one another into thinking that those assembled are none but the wise, that every audience is composed of none but the wise. It is just as it was in

the time of Socrates, according to what his accuser pointed out: "Everyone understood how to instruct the young men; there was only one single individual who did not understand this—that was Socrates."[161] Similarly, in our day "all" are wise; only in scattered places is there a single one who is a fool. The world is so close to having achieved perfection that nowadays "all" are wise; if it were not for a few eccentrics and fools, the world would be completely perfect. During all this God is sitting, as it were, and waiting in heaven. No one longs to be away from this noise and clamor of the moment in order to find the stillness in which God dwells. While one person admires another and admires him because he is just like all the rest, no one longs for the solitude in which one worships God. No one in longing for the standard of eternity rejects this cheap exemption from the highest!

This is how important the moment itself has become. Therefore self-sacrificing unselfishness is so necessary. Would that I could portray such a truly unselfish character! But the place for that is not here, where the discourse is essentially about the work of praising love—and therefore there is another wish here: if he were presented, would that the moment would still have the time to consider him!

[162]But what holds for all love of truth with regard to the moment also holds true with regard to truly praising love. Before seeking to win the approval of the moment by praising love, one must first find out whether the moment has the true conception of love. As it is now, does the moment have or can the moment ever have the true conception of what love is? No, impossible. Love in the sense of the moment or of the momentary is simply neither more nor less than self-love. Thus it is self-loving to speak that way about love, and it is self-loving to win that approval. True love is self-denial's love. But what is self-denial? It is giving up the moment and the momentary. But in that case it is utterly impossible to win the approval of the moment—by a truthful discourse about the love that is true by giving up the moment. It is impossible, it is so impossible that the speaker, if the truth really is more important to him than the approval of the moment, is himself bound to point out the misunderstanding

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insofar as he should chance to win the approval of the moment. From what has been developed here, it is easy to see that the conclusion is by no means correct that summarily infers that the person who praises love must himself be or come to be loved—in a world that crucified the one who was Love, in a world that persecuted and exterminated so many of love's witnesses.[163]

Even if conditions in this regard have changed, even if things are no longer carried to the extreme and critical point that witnesses to the truth must sacrifice life and blood, the world has nevertheless not become essentially better; it has only become less passionate and more petty. Therefore, what the world as such ordinarily calls being loveworthy, eternity will of course regard as something censurable and culpable. [164]Someone we call a loveworthy man is a man who above all does not take too much to heart eternity's or God's requirement for an essential and essentially strenuous life. The loveworthy man is well informed about all the possible excuses and escapes and sagacious rules for higgling and haggling and discounting; and he is loving enough to lend a little of his sagacity to others, by whose help one then advantageously makes one's own life easy and comfortable. In the company of the loveworthy person we feel so safe; it never occurs to anyone to begin thinking because of him that there is something eternal, or what requirement this places on every human being's life, or that the eternal lies so close to one that the requirement could have a bearing on this day today. That is what is loveworthy. But that one is not loveworthy who, without requiring anything of others, by vigorously and earnestly requiring much of himself still recalls that there is such a requirement. In his company the excuses and the escapes look less good; everything one lives for appears in an unfavorable light. In his company one cannot really feel comfortable; even less does he help one to adjust the cushions of comfort with temporal or even pleasantly pious exemptions.

IX 351 But what is that loveworthiness? It is treason against the eternal. This is why temporality likes it so well, and this is why the world is always offended by the saying that "love of God is hatred of the world." If eternity's requirement is properly pressed home, it looks as if such a person hated everything that most people live

for. How disturbing, therefore, how eccentric, how lacking in loveworthiness! But how loveworthy and loving to strengthen and help people in their beloved error. But is it, then, love to deceive people? Is it certain that it is love just because the deceived regard it as love, because they thank the deceiver as if he were their greatest benefactor? Is it love to love in a deception and to be loved in return in a deception? I thought that love was to be willing personally to make every sacrifice in communicating the truth, but to be unwilling to sacrifice the least bit of the truth.

[165]Yet even if we wanted to forget actuality, forget how the world is, and poetically transfer the whole relation into the realm of the imagination, it lies in the very nature of the matter that *in the relation between human beings* unselfishness is required for truthfully praising love. Let us risk a poetical venture of the kind in which we have nothing at all to do with the actual world but only at the theoretical distance of thought go through the thought of praising love [*Kjerlighed*]. If in the poetical sense a person is to speak altogether truthfully about the true love, there is a double requirement: *The speaker must make himself into the self-lover, and the content of the discourse must be about loving the unlovable object.* But in that case it is impossible to have any advantage from praising love, because one can have advantage from this only if the speaker is regarded as the person who loves or the content of the discourse is the ingratiating theme of loving the lovable object. And if it is impossible to have any advantage in praising love, then it is indeed unselfish to do it.

See, that simple wise man[166] of ancient times, who of all people knew how to speak most beautifully of the love that loves beauty and the beautiful, he was, yes, he was the ugliest man in the whole nation, the ugliest man among the most beautiful nation. One would think that this would have deterred him from speaking about the love that loves the beautiful—after all, one does avoid speaking of rope in the house of a man who has been hanged, and even beautiful people avoid speaking about beauty in the presence of the strikingly ugly, to say nothing of the ugly person himself. But no, he was eccentric and strange enough to find just this appealing and inspiring, that is, eccentric and strange

enough to place himself in the most disadvantageous position
IX 352 possible. When he spoke about the beautiful, when in the longing of his thought and discourse for the beautiful he transported the listener, who now inadvertently happened to look at him, he became even twice as ugly as he already was, he who already was the ugliest man in the nation. The more he spoke, the more beautifully he spoke about the beautiful, the more ugly he himself became by contrast. He surely must have been eccentric, this wise man; he must have been not only the ugliest man but also the most eccentric in the whole nation—or what could have motivated him?

I think that if only he had had a beautiful nose (which he did not have, and thus was conspicuous among the Greeks, all of whom had beautiful noses) he would not have been willing to speak a single word about loving the beautiful. It would have been repugnant to him out of fear that someone would think that he was speaking about himself or at least about his beautiful nose. This would have grieved his spirit[167] as if he were defrauding the subject of his speech, the beauty about which he was speaking, by drawing any attention to his beauty. But in the confidence of being himself the ugliest, he believed that with a good conscience he could say everything, everything in praise of beauty without having the slightest advantage from it, he who thereby only became uglier and uglier.

[168]Yet the love that loves the beautiful is not the true love, which is self-denial's love. In relation to this, the speaker, if everything is to be as it should be and poetically perfect, must now make himself into the self-lover. To praise self-denial's love and then to want to be oneself the one who loves—that is, yes, that is a lack of self-denial. [169]If the speaker is not the self-lover, he easily becomes unsure or untruthful; either he will be tempted to gain advantage for himself from the praising, which is to defraud the object, or he will fall into a kind of embarrassment so that he does not even dare to say everything about how glorious this love is, out of fear that someone would think that he is speaking of himself. But if the speaker is a self-lover or, to imagine the ultimate, the most self-loving person among a people whom loving speakers call the people of love[170]—then, yes, then he can

freely speak about self-denial's love, happier in having made himself into the most self-loving person than that simple wise man was in being the ugliest. In an actual situation, lengthy preparation would certainly be required to be able to talk about self-denial's love. But the preparation would not consist in reading many books or in being honored and esteemed for his universally recognized self-denial (provided it is indeed possible for someone to show self-denial in doing something that *everyone* recognizes as self-denial on his part), but just the opposite—in making himself into the self-lover, in managing to become regarded as the most self-loving of persons. And this would still not be very easy to achieve. It is just about as difficult as doing superbly in an examination and getting the lowest, the very lowest, grade. For that reason there is usually an equal number of both. IX 353

So much for the speaker. But the content of the discourse should be about loving the un-lovable object. [171]See, that simple wise man of old, who knew how to talk so beautifully about the love that loves the beautiful, at times also conducted another kind of discourse [172]when he spoke about *loving the ugly*. He did not deny that to love is to love the beautiful, but he still spoke also about—indeed it was a kind of jest—loving the ugly. What then is meant by *the beautiful*? *The beautiful* is the immediate and direct object of immediate love, the choice of inclination and of passion. Surely there is no need to command that one shall love the beautiful. But the ugly! This is not anything to offer to inclination and passion, which turn away and say, "Is that anything to love!" And what, in turn, is *the beautiful* according to our conceptions of love? It is the beloved and the friend. The beloved and the friend are the immediate and direct objects of immediate love, the choice of passion and of inclination. And what is *the ugly*? It is the *neighbor*, whom one **shall** love.[173] One **shall** love him; that simple wise man knew nothing at all about this. He did not know that the neighbor existed and that one should love him; when he spoke about loving the ugly, it was only teasing. The neighbor is the un-lovable object, is not anything to offer to inclination and passion, which turn away from him and say, "Is that anything to love!" But for that very reason there is no advantage connected with speaking about having to love the

un-lovable object. Yet the true love is love for the neighbor, or it is not to find the lovable object but to find the un-lovable object lovable.

[174]Thus when the speaker, in order that the true love can be spoken about altogether truly, has had to make himself into the most self-loving of all, and the content of his discourse must be about loving the un-lovable object—then every advantage or gain is impossible. The speaker does not in recompense become loved, because how self-loving he is only becomes more apparent by contrast; and the content of the discourse is not calculated to curry favor with people, who prefer hearing about what inclination and passion so easily and gladly understand and would rather not hear what does not at all please inclination and passion.

[175]Yet this poetical venture is entirely correct and perhaps can, among other things, serve to shed light on a fraud or a misunderstanding that has appeared repeatedly in all Christendom. A person makes Christian humility and self-denial empty when he indeed denies himself in one respect but does not have the courage to do it decisively, and therefore he takes care to be understood in his humility and his self-denial; and then he becomes honored and esteemed for his humility and self-denial—which certainly is not self-denial.

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Therefore, in order to be able to praise love, self-denial is required *inwardly* and self-sacrificing unselfishness *outwardly*. If, then, someone undertakes to praise love and is asked whether it is actually out of love on his part that he does it, the answer must be: "No one else can decide this for certain; it is possible that it is vanity, pride—in short, something bad, but it is also possible that it is love."

CONCLUSION

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In this book we have endeavored "many times and in many ways"[176] to praise love. As we thank God that we have succeeded in completing the book in the way we wished,[177] we shall now conclude by introducing the Apostle John, who says, "Beloved, let us love one another."[178] [179]These words, which have apostolic authority, also have, if you consider them, an intermediate tone or an intermediate mood in connection with the contrasts in love itself. The basis of this is that they are by one who was perfected in love. You do not hear the rigorousness of duty in these words; the apostle does not say, "You *shall* love one another"; but neither do you hear the vehemence of poet-passion and of inclination. There is something transfigured and beatific in these words, but there is also a sadness that is agitated over life and mitigated by the eternal. It is as if the apostle said, "Dear me, what is all this that would hinder you in loving, what is all this that you can win by self-love! The commandment is that you *shall* love, but ah, if you will understand yourself and life, then it seems that it should not need to be commanded, because to love people is the only thing worth living for, and without this love you are not really living. Moreover, to love people is the only blessed comfort both here and in the next world; and to love people is the only true sign that you are a Christian"—truly, a profession of faith is not enough either.

From a Christian point of view, love is commanded; but the love commandment is the old commandment that always remains new. The love commandment is not like a human commandment, which becomes old and dulled over the years or is changed by the mutual agreement of those who should obey it. No, the love commandment remains new until the last day, just as new even on the last day when it has become oldest. Thus the commandment is not changed in the slightest way, least of all by an apostle. The change then can be only that the person who loves becomes more and more intimate with the commandment,

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becomes as one with the commandment, which he loves. This is why he can speak so gently, so sadly, almost as if it had been forgotten that love is the commandment. If, however, you forget that it is the apostle of love who is speaking, you misunderstand him, because such words are not the beginning of the discourse about love but are the completion. Therefore we do not dare to speak this way. That which is truth on the lips of the veteran and perfected apostle could in the mouth of a beginner very easily be a philandering by which he would leave the school of the commandment much too soon and escape the "school-yoke." We introduce the apostle speaking; we do not make his words our own but make ourselves into listeners: "Beloved, let us love one another!"

[180]Just one more thing, remember *the Christian like for like, eternity's like for like.* This Christian like for like is such an important and decisive Christian specification that I could wish to end, if not every book in which I develop the essentially Christian, then at least one book, with this thought.

Christianity is spoken about relatively less (that is, relative to what is otherwise spoken about so much) these days. [181]But in the discourse that is heard (attacks, of course, certainly are not a discourse about Christianity), Christianity is not infrequently presented in a certain sentimental, almost soft, form of love. It is all love and love; spare yourself and your flesh and blood; have good days or happy days without self-concern, because God is Love and Love—nothing at all about rigorousness must be heard; it must all be the free language and nature of love. Understood in this way, however, God's love easily becomes a fabulous and childish conception, the figure of Christ too mild and sickly-sweet for it to be true that he was and is an offense to the Jews, foolishness to the Greeks[182]—that is, as if Christianity were in its dotage.

The matter is altogether simple. Christianity has abolished the Jewish like for like: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a
IX tooth";[183] but it has replaced it with the Christian, eternity's, like
357 for like. Christianity turns our attention completely away from the external, turns it inward, and makes every one of your relationships to other people into a God-relationship—then you will

surely receive like for like in both the one and the other sense. In the Christian sense, a person ultimately and essentially has only God to deal with in everything, although he still must remain in the world and in the earthly circumstances assigned to him. But having only God to deal with in everything (thus one is never delayed along the way, midway, by the lower court, by human judgment, as if that were decisive) is simultaneously the highest comfort and the greatest strenuousness, the greatest leniency and rigorousness. This is a human being's upbringing, because the relationship to God is an upbringing and God is the educator. But the true upbringing has to be just as rigorous as it is lenient and vice versa.

When a human educator has many children to bring up at once, how does he conduct himself? There is of course no time for a lot of talking and admonishing and chattering, and if there were time the upbringing would naturally be bad because of the much talking. No, the most competent educator prefers to use his eyes. He takes the individual child's eyes away from him—that is, in everything he makes the child look at him. God does just the same. With his glance he rules the whole world and brings up these countless human beings. What is conscience? In the conscience it is God who looks at a person; so now in everything the person must look at him. This is how God brings us up. But the child who is being brought up readily imagines that his relationship to his comrades, the little world that they form, is actuality, whereas the educator teaches him with his glance that all this is being used to bring up the child. Similarly, the adult also readily imagines that his dealings with the world are actuality, but God brings him up to understand that all this is only being used for his upbringing.

Thus God is the educator; his love is the greatest leniency and the greatest rigorousness. It is just as in nature, where heaviness [*Tyngde*] is also lightness. The heavenly body soars lightly in the infinite—by gravity [*Tyngde*]. But if it gets off its course, if it becomes much too light, then the lightness becomes heaviness, and it falls heavily—by lightness. In the same way God's rigorousness is leniency in the loving and the humble, but in the hardhearted his leniency is rigorousness. This leniency, that God has

willed to save the world, becomes the utmost rigorousness to the person who refuses to accept this salvation, an even greater rigor-
IX ousness than if God had never willed it but would only judge the
358 world. See, this is the unity of rigorousness and leniency; that you relate yourself to God in everything is the greatest leniency and the greatest rigorousness.

[184]Therefore, if you listen carefully, in what most definitely must be called Gospel you yourself will hear also the rigorousness. [185]For example, what Jesus says to the centurion from Capernaum, "Be it done for you as you have believed."[186] Indeed, no more joyful tidings can be imagined, no more lenient, more merciful words! And yet, what is said there? There it is said, "Be it done for you as you have believed." If we will apply these words to ourselves, we are obliged to say, "Be it done for you as you believe; if you have faith unto salvation, then you will be saved." How lenient, how merciful! But is it also certain, then, that I have faith—I surely cannot summarily transfer to myself the fact that the centurion believed, as if I had faith because the centurion had it. Let us suppose that someone asked Christianity, "Is it also certain, then, that I have faith?" Christianity would answer, "Be it done for you as you believe." Or what would Christ have thought if, instead of coming to him believing, the centurion had come to him secretly in order to find out if he had faith! "Be it done for you as you believe"—that is, it is eternally certain that it will be done for you as you believe. Christianity guarantees you that, but whether you, precisely *you*, have faith certainly does not belong to Christianity's doctrine and proclamation, so that it should declare to you that you have faith. Then when the fearful concerns arise that you perhaps do not have faith, Christianity, unchanged, repeats, "Be it done for you as you believe." How rigorous! From the story of the centurion, you find out that he had faith; this actually does not pertain to you at all. Then you find out something essentially Christian, that it was done for him as he believed—but you, after all, are not the centurion.

Let us suppose that someone said to Christianity, "It is absolutely certain that I have been baptized; does that mean that it is indeed also absolutely certain that I have faith?" Then Christian-

ity would answer, "Be it done for you as you believe." Although not baptized, the centurion believed; therefore it was done for him as he believed; only in his faith is the Gospel a Gospel. If the centurion, although he came and asked Christ for help, had in his soul been somewhat dubious about Christ's ability to help him, and Christ had said the same thing to him, "Be it done for you as you believe"—what then? Would it then have been a Gospel? No, not for the centurion, because it would be a judgment upon him. This "Be it done for you" seems so swift, but this next part, "**as** you believe," exercises a powerful restraining influence. On this text one can preach rigorousness just as well as leniency, because this text also has rigorousness, the Christian rigorousness that certainly has not hesitated to exclude the timorous from the kingdom of God, or, perhaps more accurately, has not hesitated to teach that the timorous exclude themselves,[187] so that a person can no more bully his way into God's kingdom than he can cowardly and spinelessly whimper his way in. But these days when in the political sphere there is so much talk about security and security, we eventually carry this over into Christianity and let Baptism be the security—which it certainly is if you actually believe that "Be it done for you as you believe" is the security.

IX 359

If one were right in making Baptism into security as a matter of course, that would surely be the end of rigorousness. But God is not mocked,[188] nor does he let himself be made a fool. He is too sublimely transcendent ever to think that to him a human being's effort should have some meritoriousness. Yet he requires it, and then one thing more, that the human being himself not dare to think that he has some meritoriousness. But God is also too sublimely transcendent to play the childish game of the good God with a cowardly and slack human being. It is eternally certain that it will be done for you as you believe; but the certitude of faith, or the certitude that you, yes, you, have faith, you must at every moment gain with God's help, that is, not in any external manner. You must have God's help to believe that you are saved by Baptism; you must have God's help to believe that in the Lord's Supper you receive the gracious forgiveness of your sins. It is true that the pronouncement of the forgiveness of sins is pronounced also to you, but the pastor does not have the right

to say to you that you have faith, and yet it is pronounced to you only if you believe. Be it done for you as you believe. But everything in you that is of flesh and blood and is timorousness and attachment to things of this earth must despair, so that you cannot acquire an external certainty, a certainty once and for all, and in the easiest manner. See, this is the struggle of faith in which you can have an occasion to be tried and tested every day. The Gospel is not the Law; the Gospel will not save you by rigorousness but by leniency; but this leniency will save you, it will not deceive you; therefore there is rigorousness in it.

If this like for like holds true even in relation to what most definitely must be called Gospel, how much more, then, when Christianity itself
IX 360 *proclaims the Law.* It is said, "*Forgive, then you will also be forgiven.*"[189] Someone, however, might manage to misinterpret these words in such a way that he imagined that it was possible to receive forgiveness himself although he did not forgive. Truly this is a misinterpretation. Christianity's view is: forgiveness **is** forgiveness; your forgiveness is your forgiveness; your forgiveness of another is your own forgiveness; the forgiveness you give is the forgiveness you receive, not the reverse, that the forgiveness you receive is the forgiveness you give. It is as if Christianity would say: Pray to God humbly and trustingly about your forgiveness, because he is indeed merciful in a way no human being is; but if you want to make a test of how it is with forgiveness, then observe yourself. If honestly before God you wholeheartedly forgive your enemy (but if you do, remember that God sees it), then you may also dare to hope for your forgiveness, because they are one and the same. God forgives you neither more nor less nor otherwise than **as** you forgive those who have sinned against you. [190]It is only an illusion to imagine that one oneself has forgiveness although one is reluctant to forgive others. No, there is not a more exact agreement between the sky above and its reflection in the sea, which is just as deep as the distance is high, than there is between forgiveness and forgiveness. It is also a delusion to believe in one's own forgiveness when one refuses to forgive, for how could a person truly believe in forgiveness if his own life is an objection against the existence of forgiveness! But a person deludes himself into thinking that he himself for his

part relates himself to God and on the other hand that with regard to another person he relates himself only to the other person rather than that in everything he relates himself to God.

Therefore to accuse another person before God is to accuse oneself, like for like. If someone is actually wronged, humanly speaking, then may he take care lest he be carried away in accusing the guilty one before God. Ah, we are so willing to deceive ourselves, we are so willing to deceive ourselves into thinking that a person for his part should have a private relation to God. But the relation to God is like the relation to the authorities; you cannot speak privately with a public authority about something that is his business—but God's business is to be God. Suppose a domestic servant, to whom you perhaps are otherwise well disposed, has committed a crime, a theft, for example, and you do not know what to do about the matter. Then above all you do not privately IX 361
approach the highest public authority, because he does not know of anything private in matters of theft. He will promptly have the guilty party arrested and initiate proceedings. Similarly, if you want to pretend that you are completely outside the matter at hand and now privately want to complain to God about your enemies, God will make short shrift of it and bring charges against you, because before God you yourself are a guilty party—to accuse another is to accuse yourself. In your opinion, God should, so to speak, take your side, God and you together should turn against your enemy, against the one who did you wrong. But this is a misunderstanding. God looks impartially at all and is wholly and completely what you want to make him only in part. If you address him in his capacity as judge—yes, it is leniency on his part that he warns you to desist, because he is well aware of the consequences for you, how rigorous it will become for you; but if you refuse to listen, if you address him in his capacity as judge, it does not help that you mean he is supposed to judge someone else, because you yourself have made him into your judge, and he is, like for like, simultaneously your judge—that is, he judges you also. But if you do not engage in accusing someone before God or in making God into a judge, then God is the gracious God.

Let me illustrate this by an incident. [191]There was once a crim-

inal who had stolen some money, including a hundred-rix-dollar bill. He wanted to change this bill and turned to another criminal at the latter's house. The second criminal took the bill, went into the next room as if to change it, came out again, acted as if nothing had happened, and greeted the waiting visitor as if they were seeing each other for the first time—in short, he defrauded him out of the hundred-rix-dollar bill. The first criminal became so furious over this that in his resentment he notified the authorities of the matter, how shamefully he had been defrauded. The second criminal was of course imprisoned and charged with fraud—but alas, the first question the authorities raised in this case was: How did the plaintiff get the money? Thus there were two cases. The first criminal understood quite correctly that he was in the right in the case of the fraud; now he wanted to be the honest man, the good citizen who appeals to the authorities to obtain his rights. Ah, but the authorities do not function privately or take up any isolated matter it pleases someone to lay before them, nor do they always give the case the turn the plaintiff and the informer give it—the authorities look more deeply into the circumstances. So it is also with the relation to God. If you accuse another person before God, two actions are instituted immediately; precisely when you come and inform on the other person, God begins to think about how you are involved.[192]

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Like for like; indeed, Christianity is so rigorous that it even asserts a heightened inequality. It is written, "Why do you see the splinter in your brother's eye but do not see the log that is in your own?"[193] A pious man[194] has piously interpreted these words as follows: The log in your own eye is neither more nor less than seeing and condemning the splinter in your brother's eye. But the most rigorous like for like would of course be that seeing the splinter in someone else's eye becomes a splinter in one's own eye. But Christianity is even more rigorous: this splinter, or seeing it judgingly, is a log. And even if you do not see the log, and even if no human being sees it, God sees it. Therefore a splinter is a log! Is this not a rigorousness that makes a mosquito into an elephant! Ah, but if you bear in mind that from the point of view of Christianity and truth God is always present in everything, that it is solely around him that everything revolves, then you will

certainly be able to understand this rigorousness; you will understand that to see the splinter in your brother's eye in the presence of God (and God is indeed always present) is high treason. If only you could avail yourself, in order to look at the splinter, of a place and a moment in which God is absent. But, in the Christian sense, this is the very thing that you must learn to hold fast, that God is always present; and if he is present, he is also looking at you. At a moment when you really think God is present, it surely would not occur to you to see any splinter in your brother's eye or occur to you to apply this dreadfully rigorous criterion—you who are guilty yourself.[195] [196]But the point is, even if all better persons, as far as their own lives are concerned, do their best to have the thought of God's omnipresence present (and nothing more preposterous can be imagined than to think of God's omnipresence at a distance), they still often forget God's omnipresence as they relate themselves to other people, forget that God is present in the relationship, and are satisfied with a purely human comparison. Then one has security and quiet to discover the splinter. What then is the guilt? This, that you forget yourself, forget that God is present (and he is indeed always present), or that you forget yourself in his presence. How uncircumspect to judge so rigorously in God's presence that a splinter comes to be judged—like for like; if you want to be that rigorous, then God can outbid you—it is a log in your own eye. The authorities certainly have already regarded it as a kind of brazenness on the part of that criminal we mentioned to want to play the righteous man who pursues his rights legally and judicially, alas, a criminal who himself must be prosecuted legally and judicially—but God regards it as presumptuousness for a human being to pretend purity and to judge the splinter in his brother's eye. IX 363

[197]How rigorous this Christian like for like is! The Jewish, the worldly, the bustling like for like is: as others do unto you, by all means take care that you also do likewise unto them. But the Christian like for like is: God will do unto you exactly as you do unto others. In the Christian sense, you have nothing at all to do with what others do unto you—it does not concern you; it is a curiosity, an impertinence, a lack of good sense on your part to meddle in things that are absolutely no more your concern than

if you were not present. You have to do only with what you do unto others, or how you take what others do unto you. The direction is inward; essentially you have to do only with yourself before God. This world of inwardness, this rendition of what other people call actuality, this is actuality. The Christian like for like belongs to this world of inwardness. It turns itself away and will turn you away from externality (but without taking you out of the world), will turn you upward or inward. In the Christian sense, to love people is to love God, and to love God is to love people—what you do unto people, you do unto God, and therefore what you do unto people, God does unto you. If you are indignant with people who do you wrong, you actually are indignant with God, since ultimately it is still God who permits wrong to be done to you. But if you gratefully accept the wrong from God's hand "as a good and perfect gift,"[198] then you are not indignant with people either. If you refuse to forgive, then you actually want something else: you want to make God hard-hearted so that he, too, would not forgive—how then could this hard-hearted God forgive you? If you cannot bear people's faults against you, how then should God be able to bear your sins against him? No, like for like. God is actually himself this pure like for like, the pure rendition of how you yourself are. If there is anger in you, then God is anger in you; if there is leniency and mercifulness in you, then God is mercifulness in you. It is infinite
IX 364 loving that he will have anything to do with you at all and that no one, no one, so lovingly discovers the slightest love in you as God does. God's relation to a human being is at every moment to infinitize what is in that human being at every moment.

Echo, as you well know, lives in solitude. Echo pays very close attention, oh, so very close, to every sound, the slightest sound, and renders it exactly, oh, so exactly! If there is a word you would rather not hear said to you, then watch your saying of it; watch lest it slip out of you in solitude, because echo promptly repeats it and says it to *you*. If you have never been solitary, then neither have you discovered that God is; but if you have truly been solitary, then you also learned that God just repeats everything you say and do to other people; he repeats it with the magnification of infinity. God repeats the words of grace or of

judgment that you say about another; he says the same thing word for word about you; and these same words are for you grace and judgment. But who believes in echo if night and day he lives in the turmoil of the city; and who believes that there is such an observer, believes that like for like takes place so precisely, if from earliest childhood one is accustomed to living bewildered! If a bewildered person like that hears something that is essentially Christian, he is not in a position to listen properly. Just as the essentially Christian does not come to echo properly in his inner being, neither does he discover the echoing that is the Christian like for like. Here in the noise of life he perhaps does not notice eternity's or God's repetition of the spoken word; he perhaps deludes himself into thinking that the reciprocation should be in the external and in an external mode; but externality is too dense a body to be the echo, and the physical ear is too hard of hearing to discover eternity's repetition. But whether or not a person discovers it, the words he himself said are said about him. Such a person goes on living like someone who does not know what is being said about him. Now, if someone remains ignorant of what the town says about him, that perhaps is good; perhaps what the town says about him might be false—oh, but what good is it to remain ignorant for one moment or a few years of what eternity says about him, which is indeed the truth!

No, like for like! [199]We truly do not say this as if it were our view that when all is said and done a person deserves grace. Ah, the first thing you learn when you relate yourself to God in everything is that you have no merit whatever. Just test this out and say to eternity, "I have deserved"; then eternity answers, "You have deserved. . . .". If you want to have merit and want to IX 365
have deserved something, punishment is the only thing; if you are unwilling in faith to appropriate to yourself another's merit, then you will receive according to what you deserve. —Neither do we say this as if it were our view that it would be better if someone sat in mortal anxiety day after day in order to listen for eternity's repetition; we do not even say that it would be better than the pettymindedness that in these times uses God's love to sell exemption from every more dangerous or strenuous striving. No, but just as the well-disciplined child has an unforgettable

impression of rigorousness, so also the person who relates himself to God's love, unless in a "soft" (I Timothy 4:7) or light-minded way he takes it in vain, is bound to have an unforgettable fear and trembling, even though he rests in God's love. Such a person will surely also avoid speaking to God about the wrongs of others against him, of the splinter in his brother's eye, because such a person will prefer to speak to God only about grace, lest this fateful word "justice" lose everything for him through what he himself evoked, the rigorous like for like.

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KEY TO REFERENCES

Marginal references alongside the text are to volume and page [IX 100] in *Søren Kierkegaards samlede Værker*, I-XIV, edited by A. B. Drachmann, J. L. Heiberg, and H. O. Lange (1 ed., Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1901–06). The same marginal references are used in Søren Kierkegaard, *Gesammelte Werke*, Abt. 1–36 (Düsseldorf, Cologne: Diederichs Verlag, 1952–69).

References to Kierkegaard's works in English are to this edition, *Kierkegaard's Writings* [*KW*], I-XXVI (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978-). Specific references to the *Writings* are given by English title and the standard Danish pagination referred to above [*Either/Or*, I, *KW* III, p. 120 (*SV* I 100)].

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Søren Kierkegaards Bogsamling (Auction-catalog of Søren Kierkegaard's Book-collection), edited by H. P. Rohde (Copenhagen: Royal Library, 1967).

In the Supplement, references to page and lines in the text are given as: 100:10–20.

In the notes, internal references to the present work are given as: p. 100.

Three periods indicate an omission by the editors; five periods indicate a hiatus or fragmentariness in the text.

Kjerlighedens Gjerninger.

Nogle chriſtelige Overveielſer

i Talers Form

af

S. Kierkegaard.

Forſte Folge.

Kjøbenhavn.

Paa Univerſitetsboghandler C. A. Reitzels Forlag.

Trykt i Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri.

1847.

Works of Love

Some Christian Deliberations

in the Form of Discourses

by

S. Kierkegaard.

First Series.

Copenhagen.
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SELECTED ENTRIES FROM KIERKEGAARD'S JOURNALS AND PAPERS PERTAINING TO *WORKS OF LOVE*

All true love is grounded in this, that one loves another in a third—all the way from the lowest stage, for example, where they love one another in a third, to the Christian doctrine that the brothers should love one another in Christ. —*JP* III 2380 (*Pap.* II A 24) *n.d.*, 1837

In margin of Pap. II A 24:

If there were no higher individuality in whom the single individual rests and through whom spiritual reciprocity is realized, the same would happen with individuality in this love as happened at one time with Catholics and Protestants who disputed and persuaded one another: namely, the one would become the other, just as the Catholic became Protestant and the Protestant Catholic. —*JP* III 2381 (*Pap.* II A 25) *n.d.*, 1837

The most interesting time is the period of falling in love, when, after the first magical sweeping sensation, one fetches something home from every encounter, every glance (however fleetingly the soul hides, so to speak, behind the eyelid), just as a bird busily fetches one stick after the other to its nest, and yet always feels overwhelmed by the great wealth. —*JP* III 2382 (*Pap.* II A 273) October 11, 1838

Fear and trembling (see Philippians 2:12) is not the *primus motor* in the Christian life, for it is love; but it is what the oscillating *balance wheel* is to the clock—it is the oscillating *balance wheel* of the Christian life. —*JP* III 2383 (*Pap.* II A 370) February 16, 1839

See 17:11–16:

It is often claimed that Christianity makes no assumptions at all about humanity. It does clearly presuppose something: *self-love.* Surely Christ clearly presupposes it when he says that love for one's neighbor ought to be just as great as the love for ourselves.
June 29, 39
—*JP* III 2384 (*Pap.* II A 462) June 29, 1839

Woman's love is *yes* and *Amen*; man's love is talk-talk. Woman's consciousness is far more universal or at least far less subjectivized and therefore more a community-consciousness (an *Amen*). —Of course I do not refer to the love of a young immature girl. —*JP* III 2386 (*Pap.* II A 498) *n.d.*, 1839

By this we can see that love has overcome the world—that it repays evil with good. —*JP* I 873 (*Pap.* II A 501) *n.d.*, 1839

In the sense that true Christian love has no enemies (love your enemies[1]) and thus to that extent is all in all (as the relationship of the genitive and dative), in the same sense God is all in all as in the relationship of the nominative and accusative, but the reality of evil is not hereby denied—yet with this difference, that the element of humbly dispensing with judging the world, which is in part the basis for love for enemies, is of course not found in God. —*JP* I 874 (*Pap.* II A 502) *n.d.*, 1839

what it means to love God
. . . . . and you who feel so far removed from your God, what else is your seeking God in repentance but loving God. —*JP* III 2390 (*Pap.* III A 137) *n.d.*, 1841

From draft of Either/Or*; see 68:31–38:*

Love does not merely make one blind, it also makes one sighted, and I have often wondered at the not merely poetically true but in the deepest sense poetically true secret that in the *Marriage of Figaro* Susanne and Figaro immediately recognize

each other in the fourth act,[2] whereas the count continually remains deceived. Thus innocent love is always sighted. —*Pap.* III B 181:4 *n.d.*, 1841–42

Aristotle also represents self-love as the highest, that is, in the good sense (see 9:8, 10:7[3]): "Every man's true self resides in this part, namely, the thinking part."[4] Therefore he recommends the contemplative life as the highest happiness,[5] but happiness, again, is the goal of everything,[6] and [he] defines happiness as an intrinsically desirable *activity* (see 10:6[7]). See 10:8 about the felicity of the gods.[8] It is readily seen here that Aristotle has not understood this self deeply enough, for only in the esthetic sense does contemplative thought have an entelechy, and the felicity of the gods does not reside in contemplation but in eternal communication. —Aristotle has not perceived the specification of spirit. Therefore he recommends even external goods, although only as an accompaniment, a drapery, but at this point he lacks the category for making a consummating movement. —*JP* IV 3892 (*Pap.* IV C 26) *n.d.*, 1842–43

See 114:4–9:

Outline

IV A 76 28

Let us assume (something neither the Old Testament nor the Koran reports) that Isaac knew the purpose of the journey he was going to make with his father to Mt. Moriah, that he was going to be sacrificed—if the present age had a poet, he would be able to relate what these two men talked about along the way. I imagine that Abraham first of all looked at him with all his fatherly love, and his crushed heart and venerable countenance made what he said more urgent; he admonished Isaac to bear his fate patiently, he vaguely led him to understand that as a father he was suffering even more because of it. —But it did not help. I imagine that then Abraham turned away from him for a moment and when he turned back to him again he was unrecognizable to Isaac—his eyes were wild, his expression chilling, his venerable locks bristled like furies upon his head. He grabbed Isaac by the

chest, drew his knife, and said: "You thought I was going to do this because of God, but you are wrong, I am an idolater, and this
IV A 76 29 passion has again stirred in my soul—I want to murder you, this is my desire; I am worse than a cannibal. Despair, you foolish boy who fancied that I was your father; I am your murderer, and this is my desire." And Isaac fell on his knees and cried to heaven: "Merciful God, have mercy on me." But then Abraham whispered softly to himself, "So must it be, for it is better that he believes I am a monster, that he curses me and the fact that I was his father, and still better, that he prays to God—than that he should know that it was God who imposed the test, for then he would lose his mind and perhaps curse God."

—But where indeed is the contemporary poet who has intimations of such conflicts? And yet Abraham's conduct was genuinely poetic, noble, more noble than anything I have read in tragedies. —When the child is to be weaned, the mother blackens her breast, but her eyes rest just as lovingly on the child. The child believes that it is the breast that has changed, but the mother is unchanged. And why does she blacken her breast? Because, she says, it would be a shame for the breast to appear attractive when the child must not have it. —This collision is easily resolved, for the breast is only a part of the mother herself. Fortunate is he who has never experienced more dreadful collisions, who did not need to blacken himself, who did not need to journey to hell to find out what the devil looks like so that he could make himself look like him and in this way possibly save another human being, at least in that person's God-relationship. This would be Abraham's collision.

—He who has explained this riddle has explained my life.[9]

But who of my contemporaries has understood this? —*JP* V 5640 (*Pap.* IV A 76) *n.d.*, 1843

From final copy of Fear and Trembling*; see 91:32–93:5:*

One of the Gospels tells the parable of two sons, one of whom always promised to do his father's will but did not do it, and the other always said no but did it. The latter is also a form of irony, and yet the Gospel commends this son. The Gospel does not let

repentance enter in either, that he repented of having said no. By no means. This suggests that it is a kind of modesty that keeps the son from saying that he will do it. A man of any depth cannot be unacquainted with this modesty. It has its basis partly in a noble distrust of oneself, for as long as a person has not done what is demanded, it is still possible for him to be weak enough not to do it, and for that reason he will not promise anything. —*JP* II 1740 (*Pap.* IV B 96:13) *n.d.*, 1843

From draft of Three Upbuilding Discourses (1843):

Love conquers all—more accurately characterized: *struggling love.* IV B 146 333

(1) It struggles with itself.

Therefore a clear and definite conception of his own weakness is required of him who is to be possessed [by love]—and then to rejoice in happiness—I wonder if it is so easy.

(2) It struggles with time.

Therefore a concrete conception of time is required of him—and then to rejoice in happiness—Oh! I wonder if it is so easy.

(3) It struggles with vicissitude. IV B 146 334

Therefore he must have undergone a religious change—and then really to rejoice in his happiness—I wonder if it is so easy. —*JP* III 2398 (*Pap.* IV B 146) *n.d.*, 1843

From draft of Three Upbuilding Discourses (1843)*; see 17:11–16:*

Above All Have a Heartfelt Love for One Another IV B 148 334

Christianity has been accused of assuming too little in human beings, of making clods of them—yet it assumes that people love themselves; because it says that we must love our neighbor as we

love ourselves. This is not merely a hard truth but a profound connecting point.

IV
B 148
335

See index to Augustine,[10] first part, in the section *amor probus—improbus* [honorable love—dishonorable].

Love can express itself in many external works, but all these works can also be lacking in love. We can gain friends by unrighteous mammon, but everything disappears; this is not the love being discussed here; it must be an abiding love since it is to have power to hide a multitude of sins.

> And only that one is unhappy who is either too vain to be able to love what he must admire or whose inclination governs him so that he loves what he despises.

heartfelt: the qualification of inwardness. Whatever does not proceed from faith is of evil; the same holds for love. Romans 14:23. Psalm 15:4.

> The love that, if it has bound itself to its own detriment, nevertheless does not change it [the promise]; but if it has bound itself to another person, to detriment, it changes it.

In margin:

Intro.

When an apostle talks about love, it is something different from the frequently disappointing, frequently confusing talk we generally hear—and yet he adds: a *heartfelt* . . . . . —*JP* III 2400 (*Pap.* IV B 148) *n.d.*, 1843

From draft of Three Upbuilding Discourses (1843)*; see 150:6–21, 172:13–20:*

You Loved Us First

Father in heaven, let us never forget that you are Love, neither when joy claims to make everything comprehensible without you, nor when sorrow's dark speech . . . . . nor . . . . .

that nothing may take this assurance away from us, neither the present nor the future, nor we ourselves with our foolish desires, but let us hold on to this assurance and you in it. But then grant also that we might remain in you, convinced that he who remains in love remains in you and you in him.

[*Deleted:* And when anxieties seek to terrify us, then hasten, God, to give us a testimony.]

> that this assurance might also form our hearts, that our hearts might remain in love and thereby remain in you, convinced that he who remains in love remains in you and you in him.

might be victorious over the lust of the world, over the restlessness of the mind, over the need of the moment, over the anxiety about the future, over the terrors of the past, this full conviction

—*JP* III 2401 (*Pap.* IV B 150) *n.d.*, 1843

See 220:16–17:

. . . . . *Der Neidige ist ein Martyrer, aber des Teufels* [The envious person is a martyr, but the devil's].

See Abraham a St. Clara
Coll. Works, X, p. 392[11]
—*JP* V 5917 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 41) *n.d.*, 1846

See 381:32–382:16:

VII[1] A 87 34

When someone is eager to enter a complaint against another man before God, to initiate a case in God's court, things go with him as with a Copenhagen pickpocket. In collusion with another, he had carried out a big robbery and in the distribution had received among other things three hundred-rix-dollar bills. He took one of them to a receiver of stolen goods to get it changed. The receiver took the bill, went into another room—as if to change it. Thereupon he came out again, said "Good-bye," and acted as if nothing had happened. The event took place with

all judicial caution, just between the two, and therefore the receiver was quite safe. Presumably the pickpocket himself perceived this. In the meantime, however, he became so angry over the affair, over this deceitfulness, that he left and took the case to the police. Of course the diligent, energetic police did everything possible to help the innocent man get his rights, or the
VII¹ A 87 35 hundred rix-dollars, but they did not regard the case one-sidedly but from a higher point of view, and therefore they quite rightly asked the victim where he himself had obtained the hundred rix-dollars. Alas, the wretched dupe, because of the same hundred-rix-dollar bill, it all ended by his being arrested to boot. —*JP* II 1528 (*Pap.* VII¹ A 87) *n.d.*, 1846

See 3:7:

VII¹ A 176 112 To the Dedication
"That Single Individual"
in the occasional discourse[12]
the following piece should
really have been added.

Dear Reader,

Please accept this dedication. It is offered, as it were, blindly, but therefore in all honesty, untroubled by any other consideration. I do not know who you are; I do not know where you are; I do not know your name—I do not even know if you exist or if you perhaps did exist and are no more, or whether your time is still coming. Yet you are my hope, my joy, my pride, in the uncertainty my honor—because if I knew you personally with a worldly certainty, this would be my shame, my guilt—and my honor would be lost.

It comforts me, dear reader, that you have this opportunity, the opportunity for which I know I have honestly worked. If it were feasible that reading what I write came to be common practice, or at least pretending to have read it in hopes of getting ahead in the world, this would not be the opportune time for *my*

reader, because then the misunderstanding would have triumphed—yes, it would have beguiled me to dishonesty if with all my powers I had not prevented anything like that from happening—on the contrary, by doing everything to prevent it I have acted honestly. No, if reading what I write becomes a dubious good (—and if with all the powers granted me I contribute to that, I am acting honestly), or still better, if it becomes foolish and ludicrous to read my writings, or even better, if it becomes a contemptible matter so that no one dares to acknowledge it, that is the opportune time for *my* reader; then he seeks stillness, then he does not read for my sake or for the world's sake—but for his own sake, then he reads in such a way that he does not seek my acquaintance but avoids it—and then he is *my* reader. VII¹ A 176 113

I have often imagined myself in a pastor's place. If the crowds storm to hear him, if the great arch of the church cannot contain the great throngs and people even stand outside listening to him—well, honor and praise to one so gifted that his feelings are gripped, that he can talk as one inspired, inspired by the sight of the crowds, because where the crowd is there must be truth, inspired by the thought that there has to be a little for some, because there are a lot of people, and a lot of people with a little truth is surely truth—to me this would be impossible! But suppose it was a Sunday afternoon, the weather was gloomy and miserable, the winter storm emptied the streets, everyone who had a warm apartment let God wait in the church until better weather—if there were sitting in the empty church a couple of poor women who had no heat in the apartment and could just as well freeze in the church, indeed, I could talk both them and myself warm!

I have often imagined myself beside a grave. If all the distinguished and glorious ones were assembled there, if solemnity pervaded the whole great throng—well, honor and praise to one so gifted that he could add to the solemnity by being prompted to be the interpreter of the throng, to be the expression for the truth of sorrow—I could not do it! But if it was a poor hearse and it was accompanied by no one but a poor old woman, the widow

of the dead man, who had never before experienced having her husband go away without taking her along—if she were to ask me, on my honor I would give a funeral oration as well as anyone.

VII¹ A 176 114

I have often imagined myself in the decision of death. If there was alarm in the camp, much running in to inquire about me—I believe I could not die, my old irascible disposition would once more awaken and I would have to go out once again and contend with people. But if I lie secluded and alone, I hope to God I may die peacefully and blessedly.

There is a view of life that holds that truth is where the crowd is, that truth itself needs to have the crowd on its side. There is another view of life that holds that wherever the crowd is, untruth is, so that even if all individuals who, separately, secretly possessed truth, were to come together in a crowd (in such a way, however, that the crowd acquired any deciding, voting, noisy, loud significance), untruth would promptly be present there. But the person who recognizes this latter view as his own (which is rarely enunciated because it more frequently happens that a person believes the crowd lives in untruth, but if it only accepts his opinion everything is all right) confesses that he himself is the weak and powerless one; moreover, how could one individual be able to stand against the crowd, which has the power! And he would not possibly wish to have the crowd on his side—that would be ridiculing himself. But if this latter view is an admission of weakness and powerlessness and thus perhaps seems somewhat uninviting, it at least has the good point of being equable—it insults no one, not one single person; it makes no distinction, not of one single person.

To be sure, the crowd is formed by individuals, but each one must retain the power to remain what he is—an individual. No one, no one, not one is excluded from being an individual except the person who excludes himself—by becoming many. On the contrary, to become part of the crowd, to gather the crowd around oneself, is what makes discrimination in life. Even the most well-intentioned person talking about this can easily insult an individual. But then once again the crowd has power, influ-

ence, status, and domination—this is also a discrimination in life that, dominating, disregards the individual as weak and powerless. —*JP* V 5948 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 176) *n.d.*, 1846

See 364:2:

The whole question of the relation of God's omnipotence and goodness to evil (instead of the differentiation that God accomplishes the good and merely permits the evil) is resolved quite simply in the following way. The greatest good, after all, that can be done for a being, greater than anything else that one can do for it, is to make it free. In order to do just that, omnipotence is required. This seems strange, since it is precisely omnipotence that supposedly would make [a being] dependent. But if one will reflect on omnipotence, one will see that it also must contain the unique qualification of being able to withdraw itself again in a manifestation of omnipotence in such a way that precisely for this reason that which has been originated through omnipotence can be independent. This is why one human being cannot make another person wholly free, because the one who has power is himself captive in having it and therefore continually has a wrong relationship to the one whom he wants to make free. Moreover, there is a finite self-love in all finite power (talent etc.). Only omnipotence can withdraw itself at the same time it gives itself away, and this relationship is the very independence of the receiver. God's omnipotence is therefore his goodness. For goodness is to give away completely, but in such a way that by omnipotently taking oneself back one makes the recipient independent. All finite power makes [a being] dependent; only omnipotence can make [a being] independent, can form from nothing something that has its continuity in itself through the continuous withdrawing of omnipotence. Omnipotence is not ensconced in a relationship to another, for there is no other to which it is comparable—no, it can give without giving up the least of its power, that is, it can make [a being] independent. It is incomprehensible that omnipotence is able not only to create the most impressive of all things—the whole visible world—

VII[1] A 181 116

VII[1] A 181 117

but is able to create the most frail of all things—a being independent of that very omnipotence. Omnipotence, which can handle the world so toughly and with such a heavy hand, can also make itself so light that what it has brought into existence receives independence. Only a wretched and worldly conception of the dialectic of power holds that it is greater and greater in proportion to its ability to compel and to make dependent. No, Socrates had a sounder understanding; he knew that the art of power lies precisely in making another free. But in the relationship between individuals this can never be done, even though it needs to be emphasized again and again that this is the highest; only omnipotence can truly succeed in this. Therefore if a human being had the slightest independent existence over against God (with regard to *materia* [substance]), then God could not make him free. Creation out of nothing is once again the Omnipotent One's expression for being able to make [a being] independent. He to whom I owe absolutely everything, although he still absolutely controls everything, has in fact made me independent. If in creating man God himself lost a little of his power, then precisely what he could not do would be to make a human being independent. —*JP* II 1251 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 181) *n.d.*, 1846

See 201:4:

VII[1] A 192 129 What Luther says is excellent, the one thing needful and the sole explanation—that this whole doctrine (of the Atonement and in the main all Christianity) must be traced back to the struggle of the anguished conscience. Remove the anguished con-

VII[1] A 192 130 science, and you may as well close the churches and turn them into dance halls. The anguished conscience understands Christianity. In the same way an animal understands when you lay a stone and a piece of bread before it and the animal is hungry: the animal understands that one is for eating and the other is not. The anguished conscience understands Christianity. If we have to demonstrate the necessity of being hungry first before we eat—well, then eating becomes finicky.

But you say, "I still cannot grasp the Atonement." Here I must

ask in which understanding—in the understanding of the anguished conscience or in the understanding of indifferent and objective speculation? How could anyone sitting placidly and objectively in his study and speculating ever be able to understand the necessity of an atonement, since an atonement is necessary only in the understanding of the anguished conscience. If a person had the power to live without needing to eat, how could he understand the necessity of eating—something the hungry person easily understands. It is the same in the life of the spirit. A person can acquire the indifference that renders the Atonement superfluous—yes, the natural man is actually in this situation, but how could someone in this situation be able to understand the Atonement? It is therefore very consistent for Luther to teach that a person must be taught by a revelation concerning how deeply he lies in sin, that the anguished conscience is not a natural consequence like being hungry.[13] —*JP* III 2461 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 192) *n.d.*, 1846

See 12:29–33:

A person can very well eat lettuce before it has formed a heart, but the tender delicacy of the heart and its lovely coil are something quite different from the leaves. It is the same in the world of spirit. Busyness makes it almost impossible for an individual to form a heart; on the other hand, the thinker, the poet, the religious person who has actually formed his heart never becomes popular, not because he is difficult but because a quiet and protracted occupation and intimacy with himself and a remoteness go along with it. Even if I could raise my voice and say something of which everybody would approve, I would not say it if it was of a religious nature, because there already is a kind of religious impropriety if the main point is to cry aloud; for religiousness the main point is rather to speak quite softly with oneself. Ah, it gets so turned around! We think that religiousness, instead of being a matter of every individual's going alone into his private room to talk quietly with himself, is a matter of talking very loudly. —*JP* II 1995 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 205) *n.d.*, 1846

From draft of Postscript; *see 271:11:*

. . . Pride is humility before God and humility before God is pride. What people call pride is a mean-minded composition of modesty and vanity. . . . —*Pap.* VII[1] B 92, p. 306 *n.d.*, 1846

See 91:4:

Love Is the Fulfilling of the Law

(a) the Law is the skeleton, the bony structure, the dehydrated husk. Love is the fullness.
(b) love is not malingering in fulfilling the Law—partiality—softness—no, it truly fulfills the Law and more.

—*JP* III 2403 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 225) *n.d.*, 1847

In margin of Pap. VII[1] A 225:

The Law articulates with difficulty (*μόγις λαλῶν*) (the demoniac who was dumb[14]), but love speaks the word plainly. —*JP* III 2404 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 226) *n.d.*

See 378:9–35:

The word to the centurion from Capernaum: Be it done for you as you have believed—is a consoling, a gladdening word, but it also contains the judgment: Do you really have faith? This could very well be developed further:

the judgment and the joy that what is done for a person is always according to his faith.

—*JP* II 1120 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 228) *n.d.*, 1847

See 368:15–16:

Protagoras's proposition that man is the measure of all things is, in the Greek understanding, really a parallel to the witticism of a noncommissioned officer out on the commons. Since the hawker did not have the half-pint measure handy and there was

no time to waste because roll call was being sounded, he said, "Just give me the bottle; I have the measure in my mouth." —*JP* IV 4308 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 235) *n.d.*, 1845–47

See title page:

Despite everything people ought to have learned about my maieutic carefulness, by proceeding slowly and continually letting it seem as if I knew nothing more, not the next thing—now on the occasion of my new upbuilding discourses[15] they will probably bawl out that I do not know what comes next, that I know nothing about sociality. The fools! Yet on the other hand I owe it to myself to confess before God that in a certain sense there is some truth in it, only not as people understand it—namely, that continually when I have first presented one aspect clearly and sharply, then the other affirms itself even more strongly. VIII[1] A 4 5 VIII[1] A 4 6

Now I have my theme of the next book. It will be called:

Works of Love.

—*JP* V 5972 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 4) January 1847

See title page:

The Difference between a Christian Discourse and a Sermon VIII[1] A 6 6

A Christian discourse deals to a certain extent with doubt—a sermon operates absolutely and solely on the basis of authority, that of Scripture and of Christ's apostles. Therefore, it is neither more nor less than heresy to deal with doubt in a sermon, however well one might be able to deal with it. VIII[1] A 6 7

The preface to my Christian discourses, therefore, contains the phrase: if a sufferer who is also *going astray in many thoughts.*[16]

A sermon presupposes a pastor (ordination); a Christian discourse can be by a layman. —*JP* I 638 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 6) *n.d.*, 1847

See 3:7:

I am charged with inducing young people to rest satisfied in their subjectivity. Perhaps, for a moment. But how is it possible

to get rid of all these mirages of objectivity, such as the public etc., without emphasizing the category of individuality. Under the guise of objectivity people have wanted to sacrifice individualities completely. This is the whole question. —*JP* IV 4541 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 8) *n.d.*, 1847

See 3:7:

VIII[1] A 9 7
VIII[1] A 9 8

The whole development of the world tends toward the absolute significance of the category of the single individual [*den Enkelte*], which is the very principle of Christianity. We acknowledge this principle *in abstracto*, but we still have not come especially far in the concretion. This explains why people still get an impression of proud, haughty arrogance when someone talks about the single individual, instead of recognizing that precisely this is complete humanity—namely that everyone is an individual. Sometimes the misunderstanding is expressed piously. Thus when the deceased Bishop Møller[17] of Lolland says (in the introduction to his *Guide*) that it would be too bad if the truth (Christianity in particular) were accessible only to a few individuals and not to all, he certainly says something true but also something false, for Christianity is accessible to all, to be sure, but—note well—this occurs through and only through each one's becoming an individual, the single individual. But neither this ethical courage nor the religious courage is in good supply. Most people become very much afraid when they must, each one for himself, become the single individual. The whole thing twists and turns like this—one moment it is supposed to be arrogance to present this view of the single individual, and then when the single individual is about to attempt it, he finds that this thought is too great for him, too overwhelming. —*JP* II 1997 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 9) *n.d.*, 1847

See 162:12–15:

There is something very profound in the stories about the Mount of Venus, that the person who went in there was not able to find the way back. It is always difficult to find the way back from lust. —Something similar is found in legends, that one

under the spell of enchantment had to play the same piece through backward, and every time he made the least mistake he had to begin this work all over again backward. —*JP* IV 4439 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 17) *n.d.*, 1847

See 385:24–25:

Concerning the Relationship between Good Works and Faith

Good works in the sense of meritoriousness are naturally an abomination to God. Yet good works are required of a human being. But they shall be and yet shall not be; they shall be and yet one ought humbly to be ignorant of their being significant or that they are supposed to be of any significance. Good works are something like a dish which is that particular dish because of the way in which it is served—likewise good works should be served in humility, in faith. Or it is like a child's giving his parents a present, purchased, however, with what the child has received from his parents; all the pretentiousness that otherwise is associated with giving a present disappears since the child received from the parents the gift that he gives to the parents. —*JP* II 1121 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 19) *n.d.*, 1847

See 3:7:

"The crowd" is really what I have aimed at polemically, and that I have learned from Socrates. I want to make people aware so that they do not waste and squander their lives. The aristocrats take for granted that there is always a whole mass of people who go to waste. But they remain silent about it, live secluded, and act as if these many, many human beings did not exist at all. This is the wickedness of the aristocrats' exclusiveness—that in order to have an easy life themselves they do not even make people aware. VIII[1] A 23 15

That is not what I want. I want to make the crowd aware of their own ruin, and if they are unwilling to respond to the good, then I will compel them with evil. Understand me—or do not misunderstand me. I do not intend to strike them (alas, one can- VIII[1] A 23 16

not strike the crowd)—no, I will make them strike me. Thus I will still compel them with evil. For if they strike me first—they will surely become aware—and if they kill me—then they will become unconditionally aware, and I will have won absolute victory. In that respect my constitution is thoroughly dialectical. Already there are many who say, "What does anyone care about Magister Kierkegaard? I'll show him." Ah, but showing me that they do not care about me or taking the trouble to get me to realize that they do not care about me is still dependence. It will work out just that way if one simply has enough ataraxy. They show me respect precisely by showing me that they do not respect me.

People are not so corrupt that they actually desire evil, but they are blind and really do not know what they are doing. Everything centers on drawing them out into the area of decision. A child can be somewhat unruly toward his father for a long time, but if the father can only get the child to make a real attack, the child is much closer to being saved. The revolt of the "masses" is victorious if we step aside for it so that it never comes to know what it is doing. The crowd is not essentially reflective; therefore, if it happens to put a person to death, it is *eo ipso* brought to a stop, becomes aware, and comes to its senses.

The reformer who, as they say, fights a power (a pope, an emperor, in short, an individual man) has to bring about the downfall of the mighty one; but he who with justice alone confronts "the crowd," from which comes all corruption, must see to it that he himself falls. —*JP* V 5979 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 23) *n.d.*, 1847

See 91:32–92:5:

Yes and No
or
The Two Brothers.

Which of the two sons was the prodigal, the one who said no—and did the father's will, or the one who said yes—but did not do the father's will, and perhaps even flattered himself for having been willing enough to say yes. —*JP* III 3011 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 29) *n.d.*, 1847

See 89:35:

N.B.
There is something very upbuilding in the thought that what is said of Christ also holds true of all suffering: what he suffered he suffered once.[18] One suffers only once: the victory is eternal. (In a worldly way one hears this talk often enough: Enjoy life—you live only once.) —*JP* IV 4593 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 31) *n.d.*, 1847

See 89:35:

N.B.
One suffers only once—but is victorious eternally. Insofar as one is victorious, this is also only once. The difference, however, is that the one time of suffering is momentary (even though the moment were seventy years)—but the one time of victory is eternity. The one time of suffering (even though it lasted seventy years) can therefore not be pictured or portrayed in art.[19] On the altar in Vor Frelsers Church there is a work that presents an angel who holds out to Christ the cup of suffering. The error is that it lasts too long; a picture always endures for an eternity. It appears interminable; one does not see that the suffering is momentary, as all suffering is according to the concept or in the idea of victory. The victory, however, is eternal; this (insofar as it is not spiritual) can be portrayed, because it endures. VIII[1] A 32 19 VIII[1] A 32 20

Meanwhile, the first impression of the upbuilding is *terrifying*—if people take time to understand it properly, since in this case to suffer once is like being sick once—that is, for a whole lifetime. But the wisdom and the impatience of this world must not demand that one should be able to comfort the sufferer—at least if one is to speak of the essentially Christian, because the comfort of Christianity begins first of all where human impatience would simply despair. This is how deep the essentially Christian is—*first of all* one must scrupulously try to find the *terrifying* and then scrupulously once again—then one finds the *upbuilding*. Alas, as a rule we try scrupulously in neither the first instance nor the second. —*JP* IV 4594 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 32) *n.d.*, 1847

See 275:21–38:

It is also common practice to use a dash in the sense of a division-mark to begin a minor part where a new departure would be too much. —*JP* V 5984 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 36) *n.d.*, 1847

See 275:21–38:

Ethical accent, pithiness of concept, antithesis, lucidity of two parts of a figure on one line, rhetorical emphasis, etc.: for all this I use a colon and dash, especially for the ironical in order to make it clear. —As a rule I use the colon for speech. —*JP* V 5985 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 37) *n.d.*, 1847

See 133:35:

It is a frightful satire and an epigram on the temporality of the modern age that the only use it knows for solitude is to make it a punishment, a jail sentence. How different from the time when—however worldly-minded temporality has always been—people believed in the solitude of the cloister, when they honored solitude as the highest, as a qualification of the eternal—and nowadays it is detested as a curse and is used only as a punishment for criminals. Alas, what a change! —*JP* IV 4306 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 40) *n.d.*, 1847

See 383:11–19:

VIII[1] A 55 29

Prayer

Father in heaven! It sometimes happens that we say one thing about a person when he is present and, regrettably, something else when he is absent; we speak differently about him in his presence than in his absence. But you, our God, how could we possibly talk about you in your absence—you who are omnipresent; how could we possibly talk about you—you who always remain the same! Grant then, O God, that we may do our best

VIII[1] A 55 30

to combat the absence of spirit that wants to delude us into think-

ing that you are absent, in order that, for the sake of collecting and building up the mind, disciplining and purifying the mind, we may keep in mind that you are always present. —*JP* III 3410 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 55) *n.d.*, 1847

See 136:3–34:

VIII[1] A 60 31

In the secular world the king is unconditionally the only one who is bound by the relationship of conscience. It is his preeminence that he alone is responsible only to God and his conscience.—But in the spiritual world, how completely different. Paul says, "You servants, be subject to your masters, not only on account of God's wrath but of conscience."[20] Consequently it is a relationship of conscience. A poor woman who weeds the gardens of the rich can say, "I am doing this work for a dollar a day, but that I do it very carefully is for the sake of conscience." In truth, these are kingly words! But a person must remember that he must have such words for himself—with God. This is real magnificence. For this reason it is very fatuous to want to make the poorer class impatient with their condition. The small worldly alteration that may be achieved is nevertheless as nothing, but this phrase and this thought—*for the sake of conscience*—is a transformation of language, is the Archimedean point[21] outside the world, and with this, when it is in deep inward silence before God, the weeder-woman can say that she moves heaven and earth.—*JP* I 683 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 60) *n.d.*, 1847

VIII[1] A 60 32

See 133:36–38:

Time is not merely appalling to a human being but is also mitigating, not merely that which makes life so strenuous (for what strenuousness can be compared to this: an eternal spirit living for years, for weeks, and for hours) but also that which alleviates. If you have ever broken God's commandments, you certainly did not dare at the time to think about God, not even penitently. But when a little time has passed during which you did not sin again, you gained the courage; it was as if your guilt had diminished somewhat because it was some time ago and

during that time you had not sinned very often. For an eternal spirit this specious semblance does not exist. —*JP* IV 4793 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 75) *n.d.*, 1847

See 103:30, 197:8–199:18:

VIII[1] A 77 37 Instead of all this preaching about lofty virtues, faith, hope, and love, about loving God, etc. (for how many really bother about this since, after all, it is regarded as something important if a man goes to church one day a week), someone should rather say something like this once: Never get involved with God, and above all never in any really intimate way. Get involved with people and imagine that together with them you are involving yourselves with God, because you name the name of God just as meaninglessly as the physicians scribble embellishments on prescriptions. Never let yourself be alone with God lest you venture too far out, but see to it that your God-relationship is like everybody else's so that you can get someone to assist you right away if God should leave you in the lurch. This way you will be able to live pleasantly and comfortably, believe in God and the lofty virtues, and now and then in passing toy with the whimsical thought whether a god really exists—your God-relationship is no more inconveniencing than this. Never involve yourself with God so long that any spiritual trial [*Anfægtelse*] has a chance to begin; if you think about God once a week and bow before him the way the others do, I guarantee that you will never be subjected to spiritual trials. But—for God in heaven's sake never get

VIII[1] A 77 38 involved with God in such a way that he becomes your only confidant, the only one you seek night and day to involve yourself with, the only one to whom you are really prepared to make yourself understood, whereas you perhaps forget to chatter about understanding with people—just suppose then that he left you in the lurch when you had come to understand that he truly is the one and only help and therefore you had not bothered about other helpers—just suppose that he left you in the lurch—just suppose that he did not exist! No, stick to the world of actuality; don't go to church too often; never go alone to God, for that is dangerous; he could make too strong an impression upon you,

and it is not legally correct either, for in the relation to God you must always make sure of having something to hold on to so that he does not absolutely reduce you to nothing. Never pray to God in solitude, never so that your heart would prompt you to boundless confidence—no, learn certain formulas that you know for sure others have used to good advantage.

If a person were to talk this way, he would talk far more accurately with regard to both the situation of most of the listeners and their wants than if he used all those high-flying phrases.

. . . . . And then shut your eyes to everything else and do not let yourself be disturbed by people. —*JP* II 1354 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 77) *n.d.*, 1847

See 122:7–18:

People sometimes complain that they find no friends. But this is very often untrue and one's own fault. It all depends on what a person wants in the world. If he has merely finite aims, no matter what they are, he will always find a few who must agree with him. But if a person wants the highest, with every sacrifice he still finds no friend, for there is no common interest here that can unite them, since there is no interest but rather the very opposite, sheer sacrifice. In this regard a friend usually would only hold one back, and therefore one ought to be careful. —*JP* II 1283 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 80) *n.d.*, 1847

I now would like to give a series of twelve lectures on the dialectic of communication.[22] After that, twelve lectures on erotic love [*Elskov*], friendship, and love [*Kjerlighed*]. —*JP* V 5996 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 82) *n.d.*, 1847

See 324:29–30:

All art is essentially involved in a dialectical self-contradiction. The truly eternal cannot be painted or drawn or carved in stone, for it is spirit. But neither can the temporal essentially be painted or drawn or carved in stone, for when it is presented in these ways, it is presented eternally; every picture expresses a fixation

of that particular moment. If I paint a man who is lifting a spoon to his mouth or blowing his nose, it is immediately eternalized—the man continues to blow his nose this one time as long as the painting endures. —*JP* I 161 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 88) *n.d.*, 1874

See 149:4–8, 150:6–21:

VIII[1] A 89 43 We should learn from God what love is. He is indeed the one who first loved us—and thus is our first teacher, who by loving us taught us love so that we could love him. And when at last the couch of death is prepared for you and you go to bed never to get up again, when the stillness grows around you, when those close to you gradually leave, and the stillness grows because only those

VIII[1] A 89 44 closest to you remain, and then when those closest to you leave quietly and the stillness grows because only the most intimate ones remain, and when the last one has gone—then there still remains one by the deathbed, he who was the first—God. —*JP* III 2407 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 89) *n.d.*, 1847

See 27:18–28:37:

VIII[1] A 96 46

A Christian's Duty "to Beware of People"[23]

All striving of a more noble character always meets with opposition, either of misunderstanding or of envy. But do not be disturbed; it is a strange world. As long as you live, it will do everything to thwart you and to change you. If you give in, it will say of you when you are dead: It was, after all, a weakness on his part to give in. But if you do not give in, it will be furious with you as long as you live, but when you are dead it will say: He was right, after all. The objection against one living becomes his eulogy when he is dead—and the world remains the same. The world cannot admit that you are right as long as you can hear it (indeed, it struggles with you), but when you are dead the world thinks you can no longer hear—then comes the admission. In a certain sense this world cannot benefit you, and yet the attack cannot harm you, either, while you live—if you just do not let it get the power to change you. If you hold only to God, the

attack and disparagement and the storm of opposition will help you discover things you otherwise would never discover; they will add new strings to your lyre. —Every person is like an instrument that no doubt can be disturbed and damaged by the world's wretchedness and rudeness—but if you hold to God, it can help you to ever new melody. —*JP* IV 4596 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 96) *n.d.*, 1847 VIII[2] A 96 47

See 100:11:

"Mary has chosen the better part."[24] VIII[1] A 111 52

Which is the better part? It is God—consequently everything. The better part is everything, but it is called the better part because it must be chosen. One does not get everything as everything, for one does not begin in this way; one begins by choosing the better part, which, however, is everything. —*JP* II 1356 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 111) *n.d.*, 1847

See 196:33–197:8:

When a man has a toothache, the world says: Poor man; when a man has financial troubles, the world says: Poor man; when a man's wife dies, the world says: Poor man; when a man is arrested, the world says: Poor man. When God lets himself be born and suffers for the world, the world says: Poor man; when an apostle of God is favored with the call to suffer persecution and death in the service of God, the world says of the apostle: Poor man.—Poor world!!! —*JP* IV 4597 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 113) *n.d.*, 1847

See 335:31–336:4, 376:14–386:9:

The Christian Like for Like VIII[1] A 114 53

Discourses

Christianity has abolished "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," has turned the relationship around, and has thereby introduced a *like for like*: as you relate yourself to people, so God relates himself to you.

Forgiveness is forgiveness.

(forgive, then you also will be forgiven;
forgive us our trespasses as we forgive.)

To judge another is to judge yourself.

VIII[1] A 114 54 When *in life* you are reconciled with your enemy—then you offer before *the altar* your gift to God.[*]

In the N.T. it is presented as if one offered a second gift: first go and be reconciled with your enemy and then come to offer your gift.[25]

—*JP* II 1207 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 114) *n.d.*, 1847

In margin of Pap. VIII[1] A 114:

[*]For where reconciliation takes place, there the altar is, and reconciliation itself is the only gift that can be offered upon the altar of God.

—*JP* II 1208 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 115) *n.d.*, 1847

In accordance with Journal NB, p. 251 [*Pap.* VIII[1] A 82 (p. 417)], I had recently begun to work out some lectures on the dialectic of ethical and ethical-religious communication.[26] In the meantime it has become clear to me that I am not qualified to give lectures. I am accustomed to working things out in detail; the burgeoning fertility of my style and exposition, every line thoroughly thought out, is too essential for me. If I were to give lectures, I would insist on working them out like everything else and as a consequence read them aloud from manuscript, which I do not care to do. But I cannot be satisfied with any other method.

It is quite true that a little course would contribute to my effort, create a greater ingress for my ideas, etc., at the moment. But let it go. My ideas will gain entry, all right, and then my presentation and its elaboration will have just the right place. The situation will change, however long I must put up with the impertinence of my contemporaries, who at most have just a few minutes to spend looking into books, or hardly that, but plenty of time to be insulting.

As a rule, contemporaries always miss the point; they cannot forget that the author, after all, looks like them and everybody else etc. But my contemporaries are particularly clever about appraising the cut of my trousers[27]—and in that my contemporaries are right; that is just about the only thing about me they understand. —*JP* V 6004 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 120) *n.d.*, 1847

So I once again have put the lectures[28] away and have taken up my interrupted work (the first part of which I have finished): Works of Love. This about dialectic of communication must become a book. —*JP* V 6005 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 121) *n.d.*, 1847

See 167:35–171:2:

People are always *busy* in order to win adherents. And it is extremely important (to them, that is) that it happens immediately. They rush to employ every means and to reject everyone who declines. God wins his adherents patiently; he wins them at the last moment. This is why a human being's adherents fall away—at the last moment; but God's adherents persevere.* —*JP* I 461 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 129) *n.d.*, 1847

VIII[1] A 129 63

VIII[1] A 129 64

In margin of Pap. VIII[1] A 129*; see 172:1–23:*

*This is precisely the way Christ won Peter, that time when he denied him—consequently at the last moment. A witness was needed, a witness before whose thought the crucified and risen one could hover day and night. Peter became that witness. The memory of that most shocking sight might not have been able to arouse his zeal adequately. But Peter had one more memory—the denial, which reminded him of the same thing. What he had seen and experienced could not possibly ever be forgotten. It was quite impossible that Peter's testimony to it could ever be silenced. But that look of love that overtook Peter on the path of perdition reminded him day and night of what he had to make up for. —*JP* I 462 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 130) *n.d.*, 1847

See 359:3–360:9:

VIII¹ A 160 78 An artist, a poet, a scientist, etc. may very well live admired through a whole lifetime, and it is accidental if such a one is persecuted or derided. Every such person relates himself differentially to the universally human, and since his production is in the medium of the imagination it does not essentially touch existence. But essentially an ethicist must come to be persecuted; otherwise he is a mediocre ethicist. An ethicist relates himself to the universally human (consequently to every person, and equally, not differentially), and he relates himself to human existence as a requirement. If the ethicist sees that people tend to admire him (which is quite all right for a poet, an artist, etc., since the relation is to that which differentiates), he must himself perceive that this is a deception, a lie. People should not admire an ethicist; they should be precipitated by him into the ethical life. The minute people are allowed to admire an ethicist, they make a genius of him—that is, the differentiated—and ethically this is nothing but the most dreadful deception, since the ethical life is and should be the universally human. An ethicist must continually insist and emphasize that every person is just as capable as he is. Now, you see, the relation is changed. Instead of exacting people's admiration (something people are quite willing to give, especially when it suits their indolence, as by saying: It is easy for him—he is a genius, etc.), he demands of them existence. Then they become furious. They would rather admire him in order to get rid of him—that is, the sting in his existence; but the humanity in him, his declaring that every person is just as capable as he is—this is what is hated and makes people want to get him out of the way.

This, again, is why they honor him when he is dead, because now the sting rooted in contemporaneity is taken away from him. That which they object to when he is alive they eulogize when he is dead. If the ethicist gives in during his lifetime, the

VIII¹ A 160 79 world momentarily thinks well of it, but it is not long before the world itself declares that it was, after all, weakness on his part—this much understanding of the ethical life the world does have. But if he refuses to give in, the world is embittered, but when he

is dead the same world says: He was, after all, right. —*JP* IV 4444 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 160) *n.d.*, 1847

See 270:20–21:

Most people are subjective toward themselves and objective toward all others, frightfully objective sometimes—but the task is precisely to be objective toward oneself and subjective toward all others. —*JP* IV 4542 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 165) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 3:1–21:

From a Preface to Works of Love

That mighty Eastern[29] emperor intended to perform so many and so great exploits that he had to take along a large number of writers in order to make complete and accurate reports. This would all have been fine and would have worked if the emperor's numerous and great exploits had amounted to something and if in any case he had taken along an adequate number of writers. But Christian love! It is so unlike that mighty Eastern emperor; it does not have the slightest notion of being able to do big things and therefore has no idea at all of having a staff of writers along. Christian love is so very unlike that mighty Eastern emperor, because it has the good fortune and grace to perform deeds that all the mighty ones of the world put together have not performed—so numerous and so glorious are they. Christian love is so very much unlike that mighty Eastern emperor—it remains devoutly oblivious of its works and therefore feels no need at all of a writer to record—the very things that love forgets. After all, even the poorest act of love has the essential quality of being beyond words, of being indescribable. —*JP* III 2409 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 173) *n.d.*, 1847

See 230:32–255:5:

Knowledge is the infinitely indifferent (in the sense of rank). Knowledge is like an auctioneer who puts existence [*Tilværelse*] on the block. The auctioneer then says: Ten dollars (the value of

the property)—but it means nothing; only when someone makes the bid, only then is the bid ten dollars. —*JP* II 2297 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 186) *n.d.*, 1847

See 373:16–31:

What Socrates says about loving the ugly is really the Christian doctrine of love for the neighbor. The ugly is the reflected, consequently the ethical object; whereas the beautiful is the immediate object that all of us therefore most willingly love. In this sense *the neighbor* is the *ugly*. —*JP* I 942 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 189) *n.d.*, 1847

See 266:17–267:2:

Erotic love [*Elskov*] and marriage are really only a deeper confirmation of self-love by becoming two in self-loving. For this very reason married people become so satisfied, so vegetatively prosperous—because true love does not fit into earthly existence [*Tilvær*] the way self-love does. Therefore the solitary lacks self-love; married people express this by saying: He loves himself—because married people presume that marriage is love [*Kjerlighed*]. —*JP* III 2596 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 190) *n.d.*, 1847

See 45:6–46:23:

I must once again deal with erotic love [*Elskov*] and friendship. It is obvious that in Christendom we have completely forgotten what love [*Kjerlighed*] is. We pander to erotic love and friendship, laud and praise them as love, that is, as a virtue. Nonsense! Erotic love and friendship are earthly happiness, a temporal good just like money, abilities, talents, etc., only better. They are to be complimented but should not be made delusively important. Love is self-denial, rooted in the relationship to God. Finally we abolish this. Scribe[30] has now abolished erotic love, and now we impudently (like Emilie Carlèn[31]) want to explain God's love as too visionary. Well, we must make allowance for a female who in all kindness wants to abolish God and make us happy by getting a little virgin married.

Imagine a novel like this. The Apostle Paul was really in love with a captain's wife. But Paul was a visionary; he did not want to marry her even though she was a widow. Now avenging fate overtakes Paul, for he was a visionary. One day he saw her pouring tea and, lo, she was pregnant—then Paul was painfully smitten (that it was not by him that the widow had become pregnant), and he despaired.

Nothing is more ludicrous than an author's arbitrary use of Nemesis, presenting an individual as acting rightly and then bringing Nemesis upon him—because the author unfortunately has not understood that he acted rightly, because the author is all at sea. —*JP* III 2410 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 196) *n.d.*, 1847

See 325:3–6, 326:35–38:

On the picture that depicts Commodore Sølling and a pilot boat on one side, a wreck on the other, there is inscribed underneath on one side: Poverty and Violent *Death*, on the other: Prosperity and Natural *Death*—alas, therefore *death* on both sides. —*JP* V 6026 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 207) *n.d.*, 1847

August 2, 47

I have finished "Works of Love," final copy and all. While working on No. VIII I felt a little tired and thought of traveling to Berlin. I did not dare allow myself that for fear of getting too far away from the decisive mood. I stuck it out. God be praised, it went all right. God be praised. Oh, while people deride and ridicule all the work I do, I thank God who grants success to it. Yes, take everything else I have had, the best is still an original and, God be praised, indestructible blessed conception that God is love. No matter how hopeless things have seemed to me many times, I scrape together all the best thoughts I can muster of what a loving person is and say to myself: This is what God is every moment.

Surely I will eventually succeed in awakening similar thoughts in people, in making them hear or in stirring them up so that they quit wasting their lives without ever really considering how loving God is. —*JP* V 6032 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 219) August 2, 1847

From draft; see title page:

Works-of-Love.
Christian Discourses
by
S. Kierkegaard.
—*Pap.* VIII[2] B 28 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see title page:

Works of Love.
Christian [*deleted:* Deliberations and] Discourses
[*added:* and Deliberations.]
by
S. Kierkegaard.
—*Pap.* VIII[2] B 70 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 3:1–21:

Preface

These Christian deliberations, which are the fruit of much deliberation [*added above:* the thoughtful fruit of much deliberation] [*essentially the same as 7:4–8*] far from it![*] [*In brackets:* That mighty Eastern emperor (same as 423:10–27 [*Pap. VIII[1] A 173*]) indescribable, (*deleted:* because it is either more speedily executed than any shorthand writer's pen can speed and more speedily forgotten than the speediest look of attention upon it, or so prolonged that no writer can hold out with it).]

[*] Something that in its total richness is *essentially* indescribable [*added above:* inexhaustible] is also in its smallest work indescribable, simply because it is *essentially* indescribable [*added below:* not to be exhausted] —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 44 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 3:1–21:

Preface

These Christian deliberations, which are the fruit of much deliberation, [*deleted:* are not intended for a hasty and curious read-

ing, because] [*]will [*same as 3:4–8*] if he then chooses to read,[**] will certainly find the deliberation set forth worthwhile, and this attempt worth deliberating, even if it is far from exhausting what deserves eternal deliberation: love.

They are [*same as 3:13–18*], God be praised, something that even in its smallest work or in its single expression is indescribable; *how* could this in its total indescribability be told or described?

[*] they wish to be ready sympathetically and

[**] let him lovingly test [*above this:* deliberate] whether [*same as 3:9–13*] great.

—*Pap.* VIII² B 45 *n.d.*, 1847

Addition to Pap. VIII² B 45:

VIII² B 46 103

That mighty emperor intended to perform so many and so great exploits that he had to take along a large number of writers in order that they all might be scrupulously recorded. This might have succeeded if all his many and great works had amounted to anything and if he had had enough writers. But love is devoutly oblivious of its works and the last thing it thinks of is having writers, and yet even the poorest work of love has the quality of being essentially indescribable, since it is speedier than any shorthand writer's pen and more deeply intimate than all the writings of the most prolix author. —*Pap.* VIII² B 46 *n.d.*, 1847

VIII² B 46 104

Addition to Pap. VIII² B 45:

But love—which does not have the slightest resemblance to that emperor, since it has such a humble opinion of itself, as if it could do nothing at all, and remains devoutly oblivious of its works—least of all considers taking writers along, and yet even the smallest work of love has the quality, which not even the sum total of the emperor's many laudable works has, that it actually and essentially is indescribable, since it is more speedily executed than any shorthand writer's pen* and more deeply intimate than all the writings of the most prolix author, and in addition has the essential quality that even the greatest achievement of the great-

est person does not have, so that exaggeration in describing it is impossible.

**In margin:* and more speedily forgotten and hidden than the speediest look of attention upon it,

and more modest and more securely hidden in the hidden person than the most modest of persons hiding himself most carefully in an out-of-the-way place. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 47 *n.d.*, 1847

From final copy; see 17:3:

VIII[2] B 71:4 123

[*Deleted:* **That We Shall Love**] **You Shall Love**

Deleted: This discourse no. 2 is omitted from the series and is to be added as an appendix to "Works of Love"; it is patterned more as a deliberation and also has a definitely didactic element. Therefore, the appendix: that love is a duty, that we shall love. a Christian deliberation. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 71:4 *n.d.*, 1847

VIII[2] B 71:4 124

Deleted from margin in final copy; see 19:14:

The basis for erotic love is a drive, the basis of friendship is inclination, but drive and inclination are natural qualifications, and natural qualifications are always selfish; only the eternal qualification of spirit expels the selfish; therefore there is still a hidden self-love in erotic love and friendship. When the girl is able to love only one person, one single man in the whole world (something the poet rejoices to hear and to celebrate), this is indeed erotic love, but this erotic love certainly is the most glowing expression of preference. Although neither the girl nor the erotic love are conscious of it, self-love lies hidden in preferential love, especially when it is ardent. To relate to one single human being in unconditioned impetuous preference is to relate to oneself in self-love; implicit in such a preference is a conscious or unconscious obstinacy that arbitrarily wants to have its own will. To be permitted to love this one person is the gratification of infatuation and of preference, but at bottom also of self-love; to despair if it is denied is the very proof that the erotic love was self-love.

But precisely because this escapes erotic love, it is able to come up with the giddy expression: to love another person more than oneself; alas, because the lover still has not learned to love himself in the truth and earnestness of eternity. —*JP* IV 4447 (*Pap.* VIII² B 71:6) *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 19:29:

VIII² B 71:7 124

Here, too, there is no occasion for despair, as in the case of the lover's not getting the beloved, because the neighbor is every person, and this is so far from being a natural qualification, an impulse of drive or of inclination to love the neighbor, that on the contrary one shall love him. —*JP* IV 4447 (*Pap.* VIII² B 71:7) *n.d.*, 1847

VIII² B 71:7 125

Deleted from final copy; see 21:9:

And this neighbor is every person; if he is not every person, then preference is part of the definition. The neighbor is not one who is more distinguished than you, since to love him because he is more distinguished can very easily be preference and to that extent self-love; neither is the neighbor one who is inferior to you, since to love him because he is inferior can very easily be the condescension of preference and to that extent self-love. No, to love the neighbor means equality. In relation to the distinguished person, it is heartening that you dare, yes, that you must love him as your neighbor; in relation to the inferior person, it is humbling that you are not to love him as the inferior person but as your neighbor; and both of them you are to love as yourself. —*JP* IV 4447 (*Pap.* VIII² B 71:9) *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 21:22:

In the ardent perception of preference, the beloved is *the other person* or the friend; in the earnestness and truth of equality, the neighbor is *the other person*, and it makes no difference if there are thousands or only one if that one is *the other person*. —*JP* IV 4447 (*Pap.* VIII² B 71:10) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 23:36–24:5:

Here the discourse has paused at the point it wishes to make the object of consideration. The commandment that one shall love the neighbor appears to be synonymous with the commandment to love oneself. Our aim has not been to talk about love for the neighbor. On the contrary, we wish to talk about:

that love is a duty, *that*
we **shall love** *the neighbor,*

because the distinctive mark of Christian love is the very fact that it contains this apparent contradiction—that to love is a duty. And yet it is only this kind of love that finds out that the neighbor exists [*er til*] and—it is one and the same—that everyone is that. If it were not a duty to love, then there could not be any question of loving the neighbor, since the concept "neighbor" corresponds to loving as a duty. Neither erotic love nor friendship nor any other kind of love corresponds to the concept—the neighbor—to this corresponds only the love that is a duty. —*JP* I 943 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 30:4) *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 24:9:

And it is this Christian love that finds out and knows that *the neighbor* exists and, what amounts to the same, that everyone is that, because if it were not a *duty* to love, then the concept "neighbor" would not exist either. —*JP* IV 4447 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:12) *n.d.*, 1847

From final copy; see 44:3:

Changed from: **That We Should Love *the Neighbor***
—*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:16 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 48:35–49:7:

And if this situation goes on year after year, does this not show that very little is being lived by virtue of that which on occasion

is talked about very much in lofty tones. —*Pap.* VIII² B 31:13 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 51:36–52:12:

But Christianity teaches with the trustworthiness of eternity: the very first person you see is the neighbor, whom you *shall* love. —*Pap.* VIII² B 31:14 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 57:33–58:7:

But *the neighbor* is not the other *I*, the neighbor is the *you* who is every other human being. —*Pap.* VIII² B 31:15 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 63:8:

. . . . . God, and just as all the Law and the Prophets depend on this commandment, so are all the promises linked to this commandment. —*Pap.* VIII² B 31:18 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 70:35–72:32:

VIII² B 31:20 86

Even in Christendom the dissimilarities of earthly life all too easily come to assert themselves un-Christianly. Yet the love commandment, which commands loving the neighbor, watches over this Christian equality among individuals. Every person, in Christendom as well, is assigned a place in one of the dissimilarities of earthly life where he in particular belongs by birth, by position, by circumstances, by education, by condition of life—because none of us is pure humanity. Christianity has nothing against this dissimilarity; Christianity is too earnest to romanticize about pure humanity; no, it simply does not want a person to damage his soul by becoming enamored of this dissimilarity, so that he either dementedly believes he has such a glorious time here on earth that he would gladly let God keep heaven, if only he may keep all his glory, or embittered by his oppressive lot here on earth, his wretchedness and misery, he dementedly will listen

to nothing about the blessedness of heaven. This is what Christianity wants to prevent, and it will not be deceived. Because Christianity has conquered and eradicated the crying-to-heaven and horribly obvious abominations of earthly dissimilarity, because Christendom at first glance appears to be Christian, Christianity therefore sees very clearly how damnation and detestableness can dwell in a person's inwardness, only more concealed. It sees, and surely with grief, that earthly busyness and the false prophets of worldliness have made it appear as if it were only the powerful person who can be enamored of the dissimilarities of earthly life, as if the lowly person were entitled to do everything in order to achieve equality—only not by way of becoming a Christian in earnestness and truth. Now people seem to want to reverse the relationship; once upon a time it was the powerful person who did not want to acknowledge his neighbor in the
VIII² B 31:20 87 lowly one, and now the lowly one is to be taught to see in the powerful person only—his enemy; I wonder if we come closer to the Christian similarity along this way? —*JP* I 1012 (*Pap.* VIII² B 31:20) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 80:4:

VIII² B 31:22 87 Let us think of another dissimilarity in earthly life—that which exists between the learned person and the layman. The times are past when the learned person arrogantly insisted that it be perfectly clear that compared with him everyone else was inarticulate. But I wonder if this same corruption, only more hidden and subtle, cannot still dwell in a person. Thus the learned corruption teaches that there still is and remains a chasmic abyss between the knowledgeable and the ignorant; the knowledgeable ones are human beings, the others are numbers in abundance, an extravagance of existence [*Tilværelse*], necessary to a degree as a substratum. This is the secret. But be careful, they say, do not express this too obviously lest you incite people, and these days one must not lay oneself open to such things. So this learned corruption wants to make the learned person believe that he should associate only with intellectuals, should exist [*være til*] only for them,

should have nothing to do with other people, should not be known by them. Yet he must not say such things out loud; it could be dangerous. The art of it is to sneak away from every contact and admission of kinship with other human beings in such a way that they do not become aware of it at all. It is no use getting involved with them, and so it is best that they never find out that one exists. Closed up within himself in this way, associating only with his fellows and those of the same synagogue, to other people he is supposed to be a momentary transient vision, seldom seen, soon forgotten. Ah, yes, the world has changed since those days when the learned ones showed themselves to the astonished throng in a splendid procession and accepted its adoration. The world has changed—and corruption along with it; and yet everything has remained the same.

And if there were a learned person (whose life consequently belonged particularly to the community of the learned) who could not find it in his heart to do this, who loathed this secret, who would rather admit openly that scholarship is not everybody's affair but on the other hand would rather not accept it as the basis of dissimilarities among people—such a scholar would certainly run a double danger. His ranking associates would look upon him as a traitor, and the less important people would perhaps misunderstand him and mock him. Yes, if he had chosen to head a revolt of ignorance against everything pertaining to art, science, and scholarship, then they probably would have honored him, but that he would not do. And when he then stood accused by his own and ridiculed by the unimportant people—then the learned corruption would triumph. And many better ones among the learned would perhaps not be able to avoid taking part in the mockery. Many a better one—perhaps the better ones were constantly in the company of the learned or in an environment that ensured them their dissimilarity as scholars—would be enthusiastically willing to champion the statement that essentially all human beings are equal. But to champion similarity in this manner is still, fundamentally, a confirmation of the dissimilarity. —*JP* I 1013 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 31:22) *n.d.*, 1847

VIII[2] B 31:22 88

From draft; see 82:6:

. . . . . side and now quoted Christ's words in Luke 14:12 (to be quoted)! So then the man who gave the banquet was right; he not only wanted to give food to the lame and the crippled and the beggars, but he wanted it to be called a banquet. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 31:23 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 83:14:

O my listener, does it seem to you that what has been set forth here is just a quibbling about the use of the word "banquet"? Has Christianity actually sunk so deeply into gross worldliness that like a district clerk or a relief officer it thought that food was everything; if only the poor were fed, the name or under what name it was done was irrelevant. Ah, may Christianity be far removed from this loathsomeness, this dissension. Christianity equally believes that in the external sense the richest person and the poorest can give equally much, that is, equally little, because riches, of course, are a gift from God. On the other hand, the richest and the poorest can equally give a word to take along, do their part to support word usage, as is the case now with calling it a banquet. Consequently this was not quibbling about words [*Ordstrid*] but a dispute [*Strid*] about loving *the neighbor.*

O my listener,

—*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:20 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 83:15–86:32:

O my listener, should this be merely quibbling [*Ordstrid*] about the use of the word "banquet." No, it is a dispute [*Strid*] about the neighbor, because to love the neighbor is to will to exist as *essentially* equal for all people. To will to exist for other people only according to one's advantages of dissimilarity is pride, but not to will to exist for them at all is also pride. Indeed, even if those we call the lowly were wrong, you must still want to exist for them and suffer their wrong rather than sagaciously damage your soul by the corrupted secrecy of furtive and evasive pride. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 31:24 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 90:30:

You shall. I have nothing to say to you; at most I can say what eternity says to me, in the conviction that it says the same thing to you and to everyone who will listen. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 31:26 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 94:12–38:

. . . . . the appearance of the good intention conceals not only that one was not merely not going forward but conceals how far one was going backward. It looks as if the intention led to the goal; one does not see that the intention not only came to nothing but took one backward because the intention took away some of one's strength and leaves behind a dejection, a gloom, that perhaps blazes up again in an even more vehement intention, which leaves greater weakness. It was also an appearance when one of the servants, each of whom received his pound, immediately went and buried it in order to safeguard it.[32] In other words, the one who wants to work with his pound [*hereafter in margin:*] risks it at the very same moment—after all, it is possible that he could lose it. But the one who buried it and hid it securely no doubt fancied at first that he had conducted himself far better than the others, he who had promptly done something at the first moment when the others had not even done anything. But it turned out that this servant was thrown out by the master. But I still wonder whether the snare in which he was trapped was not that he began with an illusion.

Bracketed in margin: That a rifle does not go off means not only that it does not go off but that the mechanism is damaged.[33] —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 32:3 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 106:15:

Love is the fulfilling of the Law, *because love is no shirking, no indulgence that, claiming exemption or giving exemption,* [*deleted:* exacting or excusing,] *coddling or being coddled, sneakily forces its way in between love and the fulfilling of the Law.* Alas, this is the way they sometimes talk about love in the world, as if there were conflict

between the Law and love, as there is indeed, but in love there is no conflict between the Law and love, since love is the fulfilling of the Law, [*essentially the same as 106:25–30*]. When . . . . . —*Pap.* VIII² B 71:26 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; original continuation of Pap. VIII² B 71:26:

. . . . . when a person has first managed to get love changed into an earthly good, appointed to enhance earthly life, to heighten pleasure, to mitigate pain, when he has first done this, he decides by himself that there should be the Law based upon mutual agreement, inasmuch as he either pamperingly wants to exempt the other's love from being the fulfilling of the Law or pretentiously wants to pamper himself and have his love exempted from being the fulfilling of the Law. To accommodate each other in this way for the enhancement and comfort of earthly life and then to hold together is called love. —*Pap.* VIII² B 33 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 106:24–112:22:

VIII² B 32:6 89
VIII² B 32:6 90

. . . . . Law. In various ways attempts are made to create a cleft between love and the Law, and one supposedly is speaking wisely when one sets them at odds this way, by [*deleted:* either making love a feeling and thus indeterminable in contrast to the Law's many provisions or] making love into an earthly good, so the advantage one could have from it should be the Law, although one defines it by means of mutual agreement, in that one either indulgently wants to exempt the other's love from being the fulfilling of the Law or exactingly wants to indulge oneself and have one's love exempt from being the fulfilling of the Law.

But what is the first untruth that explains all the others? Is it not that love is withdrawn from the relationship to God. Love is certainly an emotion, but . . . . . —*Pap.* VIII² B 32:6 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from draft; see 110:38:

. . . . . he who, as any contemporary clearly saw, could so easily have done the very opposite.* He does not establish any king-

dom; neither does he sacrifice himself so that the apostles could have the gain.** No, the apostles have to suffer the same. What, then, does he want? He wants to make people blessed, and how? By the relationship to God—because he was love.

In margin: *he could do it, he had it in his power; consequently the defect must be in his heart—namely, that he would not, would not sacrifice his whims and delusions.

In margin: **oh no, it is indeed madness; he sacrifices himself in order to make the loved ones just as unhappy as himself. —*Pap.* VIII² B 35:1 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 113:2–7:

Only this is Christian love's relationship between one person and another, that in his love each one first relates himself to God, so their mutual judgment is not the judgment, but God is the judge. —*Pap.* VIII² B 32:7 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 113:11–114:9:

What gives love an eternal life and prevents it from stopping in some self-deception or illusion is that the God-relationship in a person decisively determines the love-relationship between human beings. —*Pap.* VIII² B 34:2 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 113:18–114:9 and 130:25–131:4:

. . . . . are. Out of love for the beloved to give up a love because he wishes it is an example of a purely human relationship.* In other words, here God is not the highest; indeed, he is actually excluded, and the beloved's wish is decisive. But out of love for the beloved, who, infatuated and forgetting God, has but one wish, to be loved, which is also the loving one's only wish, to give up this love in order not to stand in God's way, in order not to deprive the beloved of the God-relationship, that is, to hate the beloved, to hate oneself, embittering one's life by having to deny the beloved and oneself the one and only wish—out of love—this is an example of Christian love.** The essentially Christian is this: truly to love oneself is to

VIII² B 35 2 94

love God; truly to love another person is infinitely and with every sacrifice to help the other person to love God or in loving God.

VIII² B 35:2 94 *In margin:* *And in repayment the human being who does this will also be loved by the beloved—and this again is a mark of the purely human relationship—because he did indeed fulfill the beloved's wish.

In margin: **To make every sacrifice for the beloved, the friend, the loved ones, the contemporaries, and then in repayment to be loved by them—this is the purely human love—how rarely it is found! But to make the sacrifice to the beloved, the friend, the loved ones, the contemporaries, and in repayment for one's love to be hated by them—this is the Christian love. This a human being must be willing to risk if his love is even barely to be related to the Law that is referred to when the apostle says that love is the fulfilling of the Law. In other words, if a human being has become the one and only beloved for another human being or other human beings, he is in the process of hindering their God-relationship. For him to admonish about it, warn against it, certainly will not help, because he thereby becomes ever more loveworthy—and consequently the one who loves becomes even more deceived. Only Christianity knows the solution, that he makes the sacrifice—in repayment for his love to be hated by the beloved. If people are unwilling to understand that truly to love oneself is to love God, then you would of course be only more harmful to them if you became the beloved. Christianity knows the solution, that you make the sacrifice—in repayment for your love to be hated by them.

N.B. [*in pencil*] Can be used in the next section about the inwardness required by the Law.

—*Pap.* VIII² B 35:2 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 116:8–117:12:

. . . . . the one shifts the blame to the other, and so it goes around, while underneath they then in turn seek to support each other by means of the alliance. —*Pap.* VIII² B 32:8 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 118:31–120:3:

Alas, how many have been corrupted by pleasing the beloved and the friend and the loved ones in such a way that they all said of him: He is the most loving person! There actually is a conflict between what the world understands by love, namely, an *alliance in self-love*, which shuts out God*, and what God understands by love, *self-sacrificing love*, not only in the human sense but in the *divine sense, self-sacrificing* love that makes room for God, ...

*True, an alliance also requires sacrifice and devotion on the part of the one it will call loving, but this sacrifice is actually a giving up of the God-relationship in order to hold together in a worldly way with the alliance. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 34:3 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 120:32–121:10:

This is certainly necessary to say, that the love of God is the mark that stamps love for people as genuine, because there is so much talk about love that actually glosses over the irregularities. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 34:5 *n.d.*, 1847

From sketch; see 122:4–124:9:

Is it not also entirely natural that the friend and the beloved and the loved ones become angry when they detect that there still is someone who is loved more highly by the friend, someone who is loved so highly that all his love for people is through this love for God. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 32:11 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 122:4–124:31:

Is it not also entirely natural for the friend and the beloved and the loved ones, if they do not hold to God in order to learn what love is, to become angry that there is someone who is loved more, someone for whom, through the power of love, love is for humanity. VIII[2] B 34:6 92

The discourse judges no one, even if, as was said, it is an impossibility to discuss such a word without judging; for it is self-

VIII² B 34:6 93 evident that, concerning the many who were immortalized and praised by people for their love, the discourse can by no means be willing to join the eulogy if his love was not otherwise recognizable by the God-relationship. Yet the discourse judges no one; it seeks with the help of thought only to penetrate the illusions or to understand those apostolic words within the daily situations of life, precisely where the illusions are at home. Only give yourself good time, in both the one and the other sense, to follow the deliberation. It takes no time at all to be deceived; one can be deceived immediately and remain so for a long time—but to become aware of the deception takes time. What good is it to say that love is the fulfilling of the Law if one with the aid of worldly illusions then promptly understands the law about everything else but not the Christian Law and God's Law, whose explanation of love is: truly to love oneself is to love God; truly to love another person is to help him to love or in loving God. —*Pap.* VIII² B 34:6 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 124:22–31:

VIII² B 35:4 95 But if your ultimate and highest view of life is to have everything made easy, then take my word: do not read a single word of what I write, because I have just the opposite view: to have life

VIII² B 35:4 96 made as difficult as it is supposed to be according to divine stipulation. Therefore I do not weary of continually tracking down illusions, inasmuch as I am a thinker, fearing most to be in error. —*Pap.* VIII² B 35:4 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft, see 126:26–36:

But love is the fulfilling of the Law. The fact that other people want to exempt you from having duties, that they are willing to call it love in you if you permit them to idolize you, adore you, coddle you, does not exempt you. In these circumstances genuine love will be recognizable by the fact that it does the opposite of what is demanded of it. And this will be the sacrifice. It is by no means love to indulge human weakness. Neither is it human judgment as such that is to determine what sacrifice is, because

God is to determine this, and human judgment is valid only when it judges in accordance with God's judgment. God's requirement is that love shall be self-sacrificing, but how this is to be interpreted more specifically in the particular case, God, again, must determine.

Love is the fulfilling of the Law; this is the eternal requirement that you dare not cheat or pare down in any way in compromise with people, for . . . . . —*JP* I 944 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 34:7) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 129:29:

This commandment or this word that love is the fulfilling of the Law aims so high that Christianity has indeed always taught that if it is required you must, in order to be able to fulfill the Law by your love, be able to hate father and mother, sister and brother. In the sense, I wonder, that you should actually hate them? Oh, far be this abomination from Christianity! But certainly it is in the sense that you must be able to bear that your love for them is regarded as hate. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 32:13 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 132:22:

Tell me, then, if it is possible to speak about love as the fulfilling of the Law without against one's will beginning to judge, even if one wishes only to judge oneself. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 35:7 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 133:35:

What an enormous difference between these: a mighty blast of enthusiastic breeze that fills the sails as you steer out at the beginning—and the steady wind that uniformly fills the sails so that you continually move forward under full sail. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 35:8 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 137:8:

Talking about what is outside and what is within may seem strange to many people; yet everyone of course knows that this

place within exists. We read in the Gospel about the unforgiving servant, that his master forgave him all his debt.[34] We then read, "As he went out, he met one of his fellow servants." Thus the first part, what took place between the master and the servant, took place within—and yet, is this not the case with all of us, whether we are masters or servants, whether we live in houses or on the street, that what happens between the master and the servant takes place *within*, and only outside does the differentiation begin. What happens within concerns no one; it concerns only the one who also lives within: God, to whom you relate within yourself in the relationship of conscience. —*Pap.* VIII² B 71:28 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 137:30:

VIII² B 36:2 96

If love is to be out of a pure heart, the point is not only that love is an affair of the heart, but purity of heart is the expression for the relationship to God, since only the pure of heart can see God, and a human being becomes pure of heart only by seeing God—that is, through the relationship of conscience. And if love is to be out of a sincere faith, the point is not only about the pledged faith of the two, that they sincerely pledge faith to each other and mean what they pledge, but sincere faith is the relationship to God, because only through honesty before him is a person saved from being in error with regard to his own heart; but here again "sincere faith" is an expression for the relationship of conscience. —*Pap.* VIII² B 36:2 *n.d.*, 1847

VIII² B 36:2 97

In margin of draft; see 159:29–36:

N.B. the duty. We are speaking, then, not about loving all people (we do indeed see so many), this is to love the neighbor, which we have discussed elsewhere, but about the duty [*deleted:* in loving the beloved to love the people we see] to find in the world of actuality those we love in a particular sense and in loving them to love the people we see. —*Pap.* VIII² B 36:5 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 163:26:

. . . . . actuality, and at the very same moment you have the object of your love in abundance—because the more imperfect the object is, the greater is your love. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:6 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 164:7:

This was the first condition, in order to fulfill the duty to love the people we see, to find actuality with the help of the changed conception of what love is. Error says that one must seek the object; Christianity says that if only actuality is found, the object will not be lacking, because then, of course, the task is to find the object[*] *in everyone.*

But if a person has found actuality in this way and comprehended the task, then . . . . .

[*]*In margin:* To find the object in what is found, or that one's love understands that the task is to find the object lovable. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:7 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 164:29–165:8:

On the other hand it is a lack, an imperfection, on the part of love to change the beloved into something else, to volatilize his nature, or covertly require him to be other than he is. Yet the person who is inclined to be critical (indeed, we actually have no word for this in our mother tongue; we ordinarily use a foreign word) is exposed to much danger, runs the risk of making his love distasteful to himself and making it burdensome for the beloved. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:8 *n.d.*, 1847

In margin of draft; see 167:24:

The love that does not spend so much time or stake everything on finding the object, but all the more on finding the chosen one lovable and on being able to continue loving him no matter how he is changed. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:9 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 172:1–23:

A witness was needed, a witness before whose thought the crucified and risen one could hover day and night. Peter became that witness. The memory of that most shocking sight might not have been able to arouse his zeal adequately. But Peter had one more memory—the denial, which reminded him of the same thing. What he had seen and experienced could not possibly ever be forgotten. It was quite impossible that Peter's testimony to it could ever be silenced. But that look of love that overtook Peter on the path of perdition reminded him day and night of what he had to make up for. —But let us not forget what is the object of this discourse: Christ loved the man he saw, the man who had changed in such a way that he denied Christ.[35] —*JP* III 3231 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:11) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 178:30–32:

. . . . . and when the debt is enormous, then the accounting is impossible.

When the debt is enormous, the accounting is impossible. But this, of course, applies exactly to the one who is in debt by being loved; thus the son is always in the wrong toward the father. Correct. But in a certain sense it is true of this relationship that it is the son's highest wish to demonstrate if possible such a reciprocal love that he gets out of debt. But when to love is to be in enormous debt, then I must of course wish to remain in debt, for otherwise I would wish to stop loving. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 37:3 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 181:28:

If someone says of something that it charges forward at an infinite speed or breaks through with an infinite strength, it always seems as if it were possible that it eventually must become exhausted. But what is infinite in itself also has an infinite debt behind it; it is infinitized a second time, it contains within itself the overseer who continually sees to it that it does not stop or become exhausted, and the debt is the expediter the second time. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 71:31 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 186:8:

We shout to the enthusiast in this way if finally there is need to shout to him; otherwise it is better to say to him: Draw the silk curtain of roguishness in front of you as long as possible, or place mirror glass in the windows so that your enthusiasm is hidden, because curiosity and envy see only themselves. There is no better hiding place for inwardness than that behind mirror glass. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:32 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 186:34–36:

It is unbelievable how sorrowful and debilitating a change takes place in a person as soon as he has taken comparison into his household. Comparison is a damnable guest whom no one is able to feed or satisfy, because it is ever more hungry and eats from the children's food. Comparison is the noisy resident in the previously quiet and calm house; comparison sleeps neither day nor night. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 37:5 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 192:9–193:10:

. . . . . to despair over the world because the truth of the matter was not said to him in time, alas, perhaps because the speaker was afraid to recommend the good in this admittedly strange—but truthful way, that it has no reward in the world or is repaid with evil. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 39:1 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft of lectures on communication; see 192:16–195:29:

In "achieving actuality," there is also something that both antiquity and original Christianity thought about and followed through—to be present for the mass, to live and teach on the street. Luther was absolutely right in saying that preaching really should not be done in churches but on the street.[36] The whole modern concept of a pastor who preaches in a church is pure hallucination, really a poet-relationship; the existential situation is represented at most by an assurance "that if it is required—then . . . . ." Not until the ethical and the Christian are again made actual in this way (and every other communication is unethical,

that is, an unethical communication of the ethical) does that which I am always talking about also appear: the double danger. —*JP* I 653 (*Pap.* VIII² B 85:18) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 193:12–194:18:

. . . . . world, but on the other hand we prefer not to deceive a young person by suppressing the difficulty. We put our confidence in boldly daring to praise the good, also with the addition that in the world its reward, to put it mildly, is ingratitude; we regard it as our specific duty to call this to mind at the same time, so that we never pretend as if Christianity dared to count on the world's assistance, pretend as if there were no obstacles in this respect—in order to recommend Christianity, and then at another time hit upon a few grounds of comfort in order if possible to let the listeners remain ignorant of the true, the essential connectedness. —*Pap.* VIII² B 41:1 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 195:1–196:6:

. . . . . as a malefactor. It is easy to see that this self-denial makes its way to God and has its only abode in God, since it is fighting in two places: with itself and with the world's reward. —*Pap.* VIII² B 39:3 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 199:15–29:

. . . . . frightens them away from itself. When it has done that, it opens its arms to everyone who seeks rest. But the speaker who omits this deterrent abolishes Christianity.

In margin: When Christianity came into the world, it did not itself need to point out the offense, but now missing out on Christianity has happened precisely through missing out on the possibility of offense—this is why Christianity can no longer satisfy people—alas, it can indeed no longer offend them.

Here something is to be used that is in parentheses in the preceding part [*Pap.* VIII² B 38 (pp. 447–48)].

—*JP* III 3027 (*Pap.* VIII² B 40) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 200:12–13:

. . . . . palmed off Christianity on people as if it were human foolery and juggling tricks. Woe to the one who recommended Christianity—by leaving out the possibility of offense. Woe to the one who by this kind of recommendation devoured Christianity and thereby gained so many followers. —*Pap.* VIII² B 41:6 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 200:24–25:

. . . . . added the approval of fatuous people by the hundreds. Woe to them if they deceive the simple, the widows and the fatherless, by making them think that this is Christianity, by mocking them if they had the audacity to think that this was not Christianity. —*Pap.* VIII² B 41:7 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft in brackets; see 201:37–204:21:

[*]We do not want to spoil this upbuilding deliberation by showing how this Christian duty, when it is perfected in human frailty, looks in the world. Alas, [*essentially the same as 192:3–27*] enemy, almost as if it were he who was in the wrong, although it is he who suffers wrong. Let [*essentially the same as 193:12–194:3*] just like the others. This is about the way it is with the world's view of Christianity. It is not simply out of evil that it judges as they judge. No, the world thinks, as is natural, well of itself, and therefore it wants everyone to be as it is and to that extent cannot in a certain sense but find it strange if someone wants to be different. VIII² B 38 99

But whatever the world judges and however it is rewarded in the world, it is and remains a Christian duty to remain in love's debt to one another. The humble confession must be made before God but also before people, and how beautiful, then, if people will understand one another on this point, understand how infinitely much, or rather, how all is lost when love also is dragged down into finitude, so that it is possible for a person to VIII² B 38 100

get out of this debt by many or by a few good deeds—it is out of love.). . .

[*]*In margin:* to be used at the end.

—*Pap.* VIII[2] B 38 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 215:22–25:

Love builds up. But if everything can be upbuilding because love can be present in everything and everything can become upbuilding or for upbuilding because love can be present in everything—how can the discourse be composed with regard to the prolixity of the subject, which can embrace everything and even more make everything diverse in the most diverse ways. This task surely seems impossible to limit, because how could one finish speaking about everything, and on the other hand, if each component of the multiple is permeated by love, it will gather everything into itself just as the drop represents the infinite fully as well as the sea. But even if this is a celebration of the nature of love, it is still a mistake for a discourse to choose such a task. But then we have not chosen such a task. If, instead of distracting by means of the multiple or by beginning the insurmountable, we focus attention on the essential and the decisive, on the common element in all the multiplicity—then we will surely succeed in being able to speak about this text.

Let us bear in mind the introduction to this discourse. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 50:2 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 219:3–13:

The one who loves shuts his eyes to the weaknesses, presupposes that love is present, and precisely in this way he builds it up. It is said that a word that comes from the heart also goes to the heart. And so it is; no human being has ever brought love into another human being, but if he has presupposed that it was there, he has also drawn it out. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 50:3 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 221:14–22:

If you had wronged a person and he forgave you, the question is how did he forgive you. In other words, if he now forgave you

in such a way that you perceived that he presupposed that love was in the ground, then he would have built you up. Otherwise the wrong might, as we say, have created a break, but a break is the very opposite of building up. Therefore, if he by his forgiveness truly built you up, it was because you vividly perceived that there had been no break. —*Pap.* VIII² B 50:6 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 231:37–232:37:

Yes, a person is tempted in many ways, but one is also tempted by [*in margin:* N.B.]

Here something in the second part of this deliberation [*Pap.* VIII² B 52:1] is to be used—*Pap.* VIII² B 50:11 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 235:18:

It is [*essentially the same as 231:37–232:26*] evil, where it was not? Will it not in eternity become more stupid if the one [*essentially the same as 234:11–23*] him. But here in the world it is not "stupid" to believe ill of a good person, but stupid to believe well of an evil person; so one safeguards oneself—since one is afraid of being deceived. But the one who loves is truly afraid of being deceived, and therefore he believes all things and is safeguarded, because to have believed well of a person whom others regarded as corrupt, if he actually was a good person, is surely not to be deceived; but to believe well of an actually corrupt person is not to be deceived either, because to believe good is a blessing in itself. VIII² B 52:1 107 VIII² B 52:1 108

In margin: N.B. This was used in the first part of this deliberation, where it is noted—*Pap.* VIII² B 52:1 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 244:35–245:14:

The same thing happens to us as happens to that man in the play[37] who has lost patience with his wife and has wanted to strike her: he has controlled himself, the wife has gone—but suddenly the impulse seizes him again and he has to follow her in order to strike her. In view of the fact that here in temporality deception extends just as far as truth for the individual who

wishes to judge and as a consequence he cannot judge but has to choose, when he has chosen to keep himself in love by believing all things, and then the thought comes to him—suppose that in eternity it turned out that he actually was deceived—then the lower nature rises in him again and it is as if he really was deceived—

> But the one who truly loves believes all things—and yet is never deceived.
>
> —*Pap.* VIII² B 52:3 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 249:29–250:11:

Then the relationship divides according to the way a person himself chooses. To relate oneself expectantly to the possibility of the good is *to hope*, which for that very reason cannot be any temporal expectancy but is an eternal hope. To relate oneself to the possibility of evil is to *fear.* —*Pap.* VIII² B 54:2 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from margin of final copy; see 253:6–8:

The child [*changed from:* little girl] plays with the doll, but then in turn a child becomes the doll when the child has become a mother—in the same way possibility stretches over a whole life, it is the youth's plaything, but possibility is also the earnestness of eternity. —*Pap.* VIII² B 71:36 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 258:22:

Only love hopes all things, as Paul says. [*Essentially the same as 259:27–260:5*] others; it does not perceive that love, which is greater than hope, is the middle term. Without love, no hope for oneself; with love, hope for all others. —*Pap.* VIII² B 71:37 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 268:2:

I do not deny that erotic love [*Elskov*] and friendship can embellish life, make earthly existence happier (perhaps also more

insignificant than it otherwise would become), more contented, more restful, and whatever else of this sort can be said, nor do I deny that one human being needs another human being in so many ways and that it is to that extent right to seek this mutual assistance, more right than to disdain it in false pride: but one thing I cannot comprehend, why all this is called love [*Kjerlighed*]—and in any case Christian love it certainly is not—that is to be seen if and when the distinction between *mine* and *yours* is entirely canceled. —*Pap.* VIII² B 55:4 *n.d.*, 1847

In margin of draft; see 278:35:

The one who wants to work must also assert himself; he becomes recognizable and also uses some energy for self-assertion; but the one who loves is willing, in the intellectual sense, to founder entirely, to become the foundation for others, and therefore he becomes unrecognizable in the self-sacrifice. —*Pap.* VIII² B 55:8 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 352:30–32:

. . . . . he makes sure to blubber a little in the newspaper on the day of the funeral, sees to it that it is the velvet hearse, and that there are two attendants and three pastors for the sake of the last honor—

In margin: if only you see to it to show him the last honor—for the sake of common decency—and that with regard to the last honor due attention is given to the necessities: the velvet hearse, three pastors and attendants, two pastors in cloth, one pastor in silk, and two attendants. —*Pap.* VIII² B 59:14 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 359:26–36:

And if you want to speak to the living about your having totally forgotten the one who is dead, they will find this proper and right, whereas the one who is dead perhaps lies there and scorns you, although he proudly does everything to seem totally unchanged. —*Pap.* VIII² B 59:16 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 359:3–360:9:

VIII² B 58:1 111

The Work of Love in Praising Love

Intro.

"To say it is no art, but to do it is." This is certainly true, except for the instances where to say it is the art (poetry, oratory). But of love it holds true to the highest degree that to do it is the most important thing. Yet to praise love is a work.

VIII² B 58:1 112

It can of course be done only in *love*—namely,
in *the love of truth.*

—*Pap.* VIII² B 58:1 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 360:15:]

Then everyone will easily perceive that it is a work of love. If it is certain that love is the highest good—something surely no one doubts—then it is also easy to see that it is a work of love to want to win people to it by praising it. —*Pap.* VIII² B 71:39 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 360:16–21, 362:18, 33–34:

If praising love is to be done effectually, one must persevere for a long time in thinking one thought—this is very strenuous.*—Then one discovers within the thorn in the flesh[38]—that it is God who gives all things, that one is oneself able to do nothing at all.

**In margin:* In this lies the self-denial.

—*Pap.* VIII² B 58:3 *n.d.*, 1847

In margin of sketch; see 362:28–363:21:

At this point a doxology for God's assistance.

—*Pap.* VIII² B 58:5 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from draft; see 363:6, 364:10–18:

But love can be praised effectually only in self-denial, for God is Love. What a human being knows truly about love he must

learn from God, that is, in self-denial he must become what every human being can become (for self-denial is the claim upon the universally human), an instrument for God. —*JP* III 3743 (*Pap.* VIII² B 59:20) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 363:25–364:4:

> Before one learns when night comes to sleep calmly, away from the thoughts, in the confidence that God, who is Love, has them, and to wake up confident to thoughts, assured that God has not been sleeping.
>
> King Darius had a servant,* but the amazing thing is that an insignificant human being says to God, "Do by all means remind me of this and that" and then God does it. —While in another sense he still can let someone harshly feel that he is the master.
>
> *who reminded him to war against the Greeks
>
> —*Pap.* VIII² B 58:4 *n.d.*, 1847

From sketch; see 366:19–27:

> If love is to be praised effectually, it must be done in such a way that it cannot possibly please the moment immediately. —*Pap.* VIII² B 58:7 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 366:35–37:

> The contradiction: "we strive to win people—before God we are open"[39]—to what extent it is permissible to win people.[40]
>
> —*Pap.* VIII² B 58:8 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 367:33–369:4:

> This unselfishness is especially necessary in these times. The age of thinkers is past—everything is supposed to be communicated in a half hour to a gathering that in turn wastes half the time in approval and disapproval.* Would that I could at some time conjure up an unselfish character like

that for this generation that very likely does not have time to look at it.

*the coinage standard for being a human being is debased.

—*Pap.* VIII² B 58:9 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 369:23–370:6:

VIII² B 59:23 116

What holds true with regard to all love of truth also holds true, and superbly, with regard to praising love. It is easy enough to speak in such a way about love that one wins people's approval, that one satisfies the moment (something that is supposed to be a person's highest task since the time God retired); but love in the sense of the moment is simply self-love; it is self-loving to speak in that way, and the discourse nourishes self-love. Nor does it follow as a matter of course that the person who speaks rightly and truthfully about love is bound to be loved, because this is best

VIII² B 59:23 117

achieved momentarily by talking falsely about love in the world where the one who was Love was crucified—because he was love. Self-denial's love cannot possibly satisfy the moment, because what else is self-denial but giving up the moment. But self-denial's love is the only true love, and as a consequence it can be talked about in truth only by self-sacrificing unselfishness.[*]

[*Deleted: the same as Supplement, p. 455:3–13* (*Pap.* VIII² B 73)]

[*]*In margin:* A discourse about love "to a certain degree," with significant cautionary stipulations and sagacious rules, will be gladly received in the world, and the speaker will be regarded as a loveworthy man. But this discourse is false and also self-seeking. If love is to be spoken about in truth, the speaker must at least be prepared to be regarded as not loveworthy at all. Yet what we human beings as a rule call lovableness, or to be lovable in that sense, is a quality that surely will at some time be regarded by eternity as worthy of punishment. —*Pap.* VIII² B 59:23 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 369:23–370:6:

VIII² B 73 130

Not to be used

N.B. This is something from the book "Works of Love" that was not used.

Its place was in the second series, no. X, and it would begin as follows:

> Thus self-sacrificing unselfishness is required. Just because we in this regard are conscious of our endeavor as being truly unselfish, I dare to call this book a work of love. There has been an honest effort to make love as beautiful as it truly is; and it is our wish that the person who reads it might be won for love. This is our work. Whether the book acquires readers is not our affair; our work certainly does not become less unselfish because we acquire no readers; unless someone will say that it is vanity, pride, presumption, etc. But if we then, well aware in advance of the possibility of this danger, quietly and calmly put up with the actuality of danger, just as it did not disturb us in advance, during the work, is it not then a work of love? Ah, the eternal is still the strongest, even in the conflict of thoughts! May we succeed in always holding ourselves to it! VIII² B 73 131

Then the next part follows.

A Self-Defense

"Receive us; we have wronged no one,
misled no one, taken advantage of
no one." II Corinthians 7:2

Even an apostle has found it necessary to recommend himself, to praise himself[41]—"but for upbuilding."[42] Therefore he does it out of love. In other words, the person who is aware that he is in the right and clearly sees how much wrong has been done to him, the person who by a happy experience knows how much trouble he has lightly borne in gentleness, the person who quietly rests in the conviction that God will give him the power to bear lightly and gladly any further wrong and persecution—only love can motivate that person to praise himself, because it would satisfy anger and pride almost far more to strengthen people, if possible, in doing him even more wrong. Under such circumstances no pagan would praise himself. This love for assailants that for their sake seeks to prevent their doing more wrong is unknown to paganism. VIII² B 73 132

So, then, even an apostle has found it necessary to recommend

himself, to praise himself, but for upbuilding. If we should be criticized for anything, it might rather be for a too great indifference to the opinion of people, which is wrong and reprehensible, yet, please note, if one makes an exception of indifference to the opinion of fools and of "a degenerate generation,"[43] whose approval one should not merely not dare to covet but shall and ought to be indifferent to, that is, one must try hard to be thoroughly indifferent. But insofar as it is also a duty to recommend oneself, as truth requires, we will not incur the guilt, the responsibility, for having totally failed to do it. So let us then for once talk in the following way:

If anyone is hard working, I am more so; if anyone is unselfish, I am more so; if anyone is sacrificing himself for a cause, I do it more. For seven years now we have been an author in the Danish language. We have worked on a scale that is seldom seen. With all this work we have not earned a penny. During all this time we have not enjoyed one single word of encouragement or honor, which it is true we have never desired either. As for the alliance of more dominant authors (the literary aristocracy) closest to us, we have honestly tried to give them their due; but we have also been scrupulously careful not to let slip the little ingratiating word that could win any support for ourselves from the alliance of more dominant authors—that is, any false, any illusory support. We have observed with dismay that in many ways the lower class, led astray by a few corrupt individuals, has rudely tried to offend the dignitaries. We had expected that at this point the more dominant authors would show that they are the more
VIII² B 73 133 dominant. But since this has not happened, we have not allowed ourselves to expect it, and on the first given occasion we have deliberately exposed ourselves to all the dangers of insult and the most varied kinds of unappreciation.[44]

In our endeavor we have honestly renounced working with the aid of any illusion. We are well aware, knew it before we began, knew it from our acquaintance with antiquity, and with that most profound poet who someplace has a king impart this knowledge to the prince,[45] we were well aware that to live concealed, secluded, exclusive, seldom seen in public, creates a splendid illusion that helps one to enjoy esteem. But deliberately and with our eyes on those noble ones, whom we regard as

teachers of the human race, we have renounced and scorned securing esteem for the truth by means of illusion or, more correctly, securing esteem for ourselves at the expense of the truth. On the contrary, we have striven in every way to annihilate ourselves in order to serve the truth. We did not think that our cause would truly gain by our becoming honored and glorified—and then perhaps becoming weary of working for it; on the contrary, we have thought that our cause, like any good cause, shows up to best advantage when we stand with our good cause regarded with low esteem, laughed at, insulted, mistreated. We are not unaware of the fact that our unselfishness has been regarded as self-love. We have nothing against that. If one is to speak about love, an illusion is easily created by being regarded oneself as loving. Speaking about love is similar to drilling a well: the deeper one drills the better; but one drills deepest when one is oneself regarded as self-loving while speaking about love and speaking truthfully about it.

In our work, which frequently has been beyond a human being's powers but, God be praised, never without his support, we have striven to comply with the beautiful rule that one never must detect on a dancer that he is panting. We are convinced that, in their judging, people do not follow this rule, because if they do not see him pant or hear him groan they have no idea at all that he is dancing. If someone groans over a little book, he is thought to be working hard; and if someone does the most arduous work as if it were a jest, they consider it a jest and think that he is a careless worker. —See, we believe it our duty to say this just once—God knows how reluctant in a certain sense we are to do this. VIII² B 73 134

And now we will do one more work of love by saying a few words about our social situation. We are not unware that this work must have its reward intrinsically, because how it is rewarded by people we have experienced enough—but have also truly experienced how it has its reward intrinsically. —In our day there are always enough false prophets and sophists. These sophists flatter the people. They do not flatter the people, at least the Danish people, by saying that they are a fortunately endowed people, since they are that; but they flatter by not saying anything else. One must not limit oneself to saying this to the fortunately

endowed person, because this flatters him, since his endowment, after all, is God's gift, and the question is: how he uses it.

In a small nation there is a danger that lies all too close and yet is greatest in a small nation: it is alliance in small groups (coteries, cliques). In a small nation people know each other too well, become afraid of each other, and are easily tempted to form a party. But an alliance very easily confuses the cause with advantage and pampers the people into a cowardly, timorous, false, and impious kind of modesty. Ultimately one ceases to be a human being; no one is a human being, but everyone is an alliance-fellow with his alliance. Just because of our familiarity with this danger and our solicitude for our good cause, we have not by the slightest little word sought alliance with anyone, and we have honestly rebuffed everyone who in a false way wanted to create an alliance. Our own personal experience has further convinced us of the greatness of the danger and of the importance of resisting it unselfishly. A small nation that has a language of its own, a small nation that has only one large city, in which it is almost "swallowed up," can easily change into a market town. We market town-folk are as such able mutually to agree that a certain standard, as such to a certain degree, is sufficient; that is, we are able to transform ourselves into the promised land of mediocrity—and who then contradicts us! In a large nation there is the likelihood that there are always a few who hold up eternity's standard; but in a small nation a conspiracy has a more or less easy time of it, a conspiracy not against the king, not against the authorities, but against God, against eternity's requirement for every single human being. Thus in good times a small nation can succeed in self-complacently abolishing the highest. One flatters mediocrity, mediocrity admires mediocrity; one crushes with envy and annoyance every higher striving that provides the criterion: this is easy to do—in a market town.

VIII² B 73 135

In a small nation there is a danger that is all too close and in a small nation is most terrible; it is town gossip, backbiting, or the continual talking among people about people. In a large nation, where the political machine puffs and blares with 100,000 horsepower, where event after event crowds in, there it in turn vanishes—it is heard and ignored. But in a small nation, where

everything usually is so quiet and still, there, if one does not take care, town gossip finally becomes the only thing that is heard and acquires such power that finally no one dares to say how wrong it is, because in despair one has given up any hope of rescue and therefore falsely calls it nothing, because everyone takes comfort in the thought that he himself will surely escape, and because all agree to regard it as madness to want to protest it, and therefore all agree to let the courageous one be betrayed. It would be strange for someone who is ignorant to doubt, and for someone who is not ignorant to deny, that there is town gossip and backbiting in all countries, and that it is especially characteristic of this modern age to have made scandal an official political power in the state, made it into a kind of necessity. But one still presumably pays attention to the situation, the proportion. And because attention has not been paid to it in Denmark, I dare to say, and I actually do not dare to remain silent about it, and it is indefensible that it is not said: *In no country in Europe is town gossip so dominant as in Denmark.* It is taken for granted that small rooms must be aired out more frequently—in Denmark no one thinks about this at all. When it comes to town gossip and backbiting, we live as if we were in the huge rooms of Paris and London. It is taken for granted that if the swimming pool is small it must be cleaned out more frequently and not too many should go into the water at one time. In Denmark no one thinks about this at all. In a small country where one person knows everyone, where there are no events, where everything becomes fixed—there we find this incessant talk among people about people; indeed, as if fearing that the town gossip might not be able to stir up the mud and filth, the hydraulic pump of the press is used—to stir up the mud. And precisely because the proportions are so small, this publicity finally acquires a moral power. In antiquity it was the merit of the people in high places to watch over the purity of morals; in Christianity it was the clergy who watched judgingly over it by means of public confession, which took place in God's house—since it truly was an earnest matter to judge morals. But now, now rabble-barbarism is the judge of morals, now the judging of morals is by immorality. What a loathsome horror! Is there the slightest, slightest,

VIII² B 73 136

slightest proportionality to this: that a person commits a crime or even a mere digression—and this; that it is immorality that judges morals. Thus, if we compare the purity of morals to a woman's virtue, it is like not letting the young girl remain in her parent's house under their supervision, or placing her under the strict, upright custody of the man of integrity: no, one sends her to contemptible people and says to them, "See to it that you preserve her virtue."

See, this must be said, and to do this is truly an unselfish work, and it truly is indefensible that the better journalists, who write about the most trivial things, *do not have the courage to write about how envy and cowardice and flabbiness and rabble-barbarism are at work in the demoralization of Denmark.* I am well aware that the danger
VIII² B 73 137 to which I am exposing myself by saying this is not the usual one and is not what we at times are deluded into thinking it is: to become an object of the government's persecution. Far from it, it is the government and the authorities in our little nation who understand me best; and one need not be a big politician to see that all over Europe the governments, instead of possessing too much power, are weakened; one need not be a great politician to see what a major poet in Paris said: that *in Europe the "crowd" is the dangerous power.*[46] No, the danger to which I am exposing myself is something else, the danger that makes people shudder most. The danger involved in attacking a government when one has the support of public opinion is not very great, but it is indeed dangerous to expose oneself to the persecution of a confused and in some measure corrupt public opinion—in a little nation, where we are in the process of bringing up our children, at least by the press, to mock and scorn everything they do not understand, as if we wished to fulfill the prediction with which one of the ancient prophets threatened Israel: Boys will judge you.[47] Denmark is too small to have both a public opinion and town gossip. Therefore one of two things: either each one individually and conscientiously takes care to work against town gossip by silence, or town gossip becomes public opinion in Denmark. And this is the danger to which I am exposing myself, this fighting with shadows, as Socrates calls it in his defense when he declares that those who accuse him today are mentioned by name,

but those who over the years have accused him are like shadows.[48] And this is the danger to which I am exposing myself, that it is doubtful whether I am doing a good work or something presumptuous, in proportion to whether one deigns to call town gossip public opinion in Denmark or not.

So, then, let this work of love be done—and would that it might be well understood. We do not say it on our own behalf, since by this time we are experienced in bearing all sorts of things; in several years of schooling, we have striven to develop our aptitudes. What I say is well considered. It is not written on the occasion of this or that, as one writes in a newspaper on the occasion of what happened yesterday. No, even speaking about the momentary ought not to be momentary but ought to be of such a nature that for the sake of the cause it could be written at another but, note well, similar time, and therefore in such a way that it could be written at any time. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 73 *n.d.*, 1847

VIII[2] B 73 138

From draft; see 370:13–20:

On the whole it signifies neither more nor less than that such a man has permitted himself to higgle and haggle considerably over the eternal's requirement for an essential and essentially strenuous existence. The lovable man has a little business of sorts with which he piddles around and has a lot of time for all the inconsequentials, takes part in family life and in social pleasures; this is why he is really kind and good-natured.*

*cooperative in all small matters, extremely earnest in all life's nonsense—which is natural, since what is truly earnest has eluded him.[*]

[*]or one who by a kind of busy and easy participation in all kinds of public affairs trains oneself in the delusion of being an active man in a comfortable way, a useful member of society at a bargain price. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 62 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 371:11–18:

Yes, even if one wanted to forget how the world is and what one can know about how the world is, that is, if one wanted to

forget what sacrifices the true discourse about love, as is the case with the other love of truth, would have to make to the absurdity or the corruption of the world

In margin: Yes, even if for a moment we wanted to forget actuality and poetically transfer the whole relation by talking about love in the realm of the imagination—*Pap.* VIII^2 B 63:1 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 372:30–373:5:

So it is also with speaking about the love that is in self-denial. The speaker must be regarded as a self-lover. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 63:5.

From draft; see 373:19–21:

. . . . . he said, namely, that one **should** love the **ugly**. He did not deny that to love is to love the beautiful, but he said—yes, it was a kind of jest—that one should love the ugly. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 63:9 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 374:14–29:

This is the situation when someone momentarily forgets actuality and transfers the relation over to the realm of the imagination. But the relation of actuality requires the self-sacrificing unselfishness of the love of truth in order to speak truthfully about love.

Here the discourse ends; so perhaps Journal NB^2 pp. 64 and 65 top [*Pap.* VIII^1 A 173 (p. 423)] can be used. —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 63:12 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 375:5:

. . . . . yet we thank him even more because we are confident that with his aid we could succeed in beginning once again from the beginning and speak about the same text in other ways. *In margin: N.B.* —*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:41 *n.d.*, 1847

From sketch; see 375:7–25:

"Beloved, let us love one another." This kind of speaking is the proper intermediate tone. If you want to test the words, weigh them; you will see that you do not find the rigorousness of duty, nor do you find the rigorousness of the eternal as commandment and command, but neither do you find the intensity of poet-passion and of inclination. It is like a sadness, a sadness that is agitated over life and mitigated by the eternal, which would say: "Lord God, what does life have to give, etc.—let us therefore love. Certainly it is a commandment and command of the eternal, but, Lord God, it is also the only blessed consolation both here and in the next world." A confession of faith is not enough to indicate whether one is a Christian. "Thereby shall it be known that you are my disciples if you love one another."[49]
—*JP* I 945 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 58:14) *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 376:14–386:9:

One more thing, remember *like for like*
see folder [*Pap.* VIII[2] B 64–67 (pp. 463–66)]
—*Pap.* VIII[2] B 58:15 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 376:14–386:9:

N.B.

It would perhaps be best at the end of the tenth discourse in the second series to add

"and then just one more like for like,"* and thereby have the opportunity to take up this essentially Christian truth that cancels all illusions in that direction. This becomes a counterpart to the ending of the first collection.

*something I wished to say again and
again and therefore here again at the end

see Journal NB[2], pp. 3, 4 [*Pap.* VIII[1] A 114, 115 (pp. 419–20)].
—*Pap.* VIII[2] B 64 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 378:7–380:10:

The one who sows sparingly reaps sparingly—the one who sows with blessing harvests with blessing.[50]

What you have done to the least of my brothers you have done to me[51]

Be it done for you—as you have believed, that is, be it done for you as you believe.[52] Christianity gives no other certitude than this rigorous one. "Is it not certain, then, that I am a Christian since I have been baptized?" To that Christianity does not respond; it merely says be it done for you as you believe. Therefore if you actually do believe. But you do not receive certitude about that in any external manner; God does not let himself be made a fool. (The comfortable, cowardly, timorous orthodoxy that wants to have everything so easy.) —*Pap.* VIII² B 65 *n.d.*, 1847

In margin of draft; see 380:30–382:23:

To accuse another person before God is to accuse oneself. What happened to the pickpocket who had stolen a hundred-rix-dollar bill and then was defrauded out of it by another rogue, whom he then denounced to the police—alas, but the police also said: Where did you get a hundred-rix-dollar bill? So they both became guilty. —*Pap.* VIII² B 68:4 *n.d.*, 1847

Deleted from final copy; see 382:23:

. . . .—to say it jestingly (and jest truly has its justification also in earnestness) before God, we are not merely all Jutlanders, but we are all robbers.[53] —*Pap.* VIII² B 71:42 *n.d.*, 1847

From draft; see 382:27–33:

with regard to like for like.
The log in your own eye is neither more nor less than your
judging the splinter in the other person's eye
see Abraham a St. Clara,[54] XV, p. 148 middle
therefore more than like for like
—*Pap.* VIII² B 66 *n.d.*, 1847

From final draft; see 383:11:

But on the other hand, perhaps people often delude themselves into thinking that there are many, many moments, perhaps even long periods, when God is not present, that there are remote and lonely places or much-frequented places where God is not present. If this were the case, there would be no Christian like for like. That this is not the way it is, you know very well, but you are similarly mistaken about your knowledge: it is not always present to you either. [*Penciled in margin:* Therefore you must practice having this knowledge of yours present, because it is not enough if someone even in an exciting way makes it vividly clear to you that God is always present and everywhere. Let me tell you a rather exciting story that I read in an old author.[55] Once upon a time there was a clergyman, a zealous servant of the Lord, who in every way sought to save lost and erring people. Clad in nonclerical clothes, he once visited a woman of dubious reputation and pretended to be infatuated by her beauty. He made an appointment with her as if wanting to let himself be seduced, but he made one condition: "You must," he said to her, "guarantee to find a place so remote that no one will find out about our relationship; bear in mind my position, that I am a clergyman." She agreed to that and led the disguised clergyman around from one place to the other, because she had not yet found a place that was safe enough; the clergyman always found it still possible that someone could come and his guilt could be discovered. Then she led him out to a secluded place in a woods and said, "Here you can be absolutely safe, here no one ever comes, and under this arch no one can see us except God. "What!" cried the clergyman, "Can God see us, and he was the very one I would least of all have see me at such a moment." Himself powerfully gripped by the impression, the clergyman was now able to talk so stirringly that this woman never again tried to find a place safe enough—for sinning.] —*Pap.* VIII² B 69:3 *n.d.*, 1847 VIII² B 69:3 122 VIII² B 69:3 123

From draft; see 383:31–35:

The Jewish and worldly and bustling like for like is: as others do unto you, by all means take care in turn to do likewise unto VIII² B 67 120

them. But the Christian like for like is: God will do unto you exactly as you do unto others. Thus there is like for like; a like for like does, after all, belong with love, except that the Christian like for like is directed upward, because, in the Christian sense, love for people, loving them, is to love God. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 67 *n.d.*, 1847

VIII[2] B 67 121

See 56:12–57:13:

Oddly enough, I find an especially good observation in my old journal for 1839 (E.E. [*Pap.* II A 469]), which on the whole does not have much that is really felicitous or thorough: Marriage is not really love, and therefore it is said that the two become *one flesh*—but not one spirit, since two spirits cannot possibly become one spirit. This observation would have lent itself very well for use in "Works of Love." —*JP* III 2598 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 231) *n.d.*, 1847

Aug. 15

When I had the urge to travel to Berlin (while working on discourse VII of "Works of Love," Part II), I did not give in. Instead I visited the king [Christian VIII] one day, something I had no desire at all to do. I must be able to forgo such great distractions. Now the point is to reduce productivity and to loaf a little here at home rather than to have these intense distractions that promptly make me productive again. —*JP* V 6042 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 249) August 15, 1847

Aug. 16

VIII[1] A 250 119

So it is decided; I will stay at home. Tomorrow the manuscript will be delivered to the printer. —To make sure that what kept me from making the journey was in no way a possible distaste for all the fuss involved, I have—with typical suspiciousness of myself—begun a bath-cure that I knew was extremely repulsive to me.

There is a far deeper reason for my staying at home, a need

within me. I must learn to forgo such intense distractions. If I am to consider committing myself to a definite external task, it does me no good after such a forced removal to have the craving come upon me suddenly and with such a melancholy cast. Therefore just as well now as later. Now I am finished with the books; if I went on a journey, I probably would begin again and would not be convinced that I could stop without needing, like a leviathan, to break away by hurling myself in the very opposite direction.

I now feel a need to find myself in a deeper sense by coming closer to God in an understanding of myself. I must remain where I am and be *renewed inwardly*. That I might be able to take a regular journey abroad for a longer time toward the end of autumn is something entirely different. But it must not in any way have an emotional cast or a concentration of emotionality such as a little Berlin expedition would have had.

I must get better hold of my depression. Up to now it has been deeply submerged and my enormous intellectual activity has helped to keep it there. It is clear enough that I have benefited by my work and that God has sanctioned it and helped me in every way. I thank him again and again for having done infinitely more for me than I expected. It comforts me that just as surely as no human being has any merit before God, he has looked upon my efforts with favor, so that through this help in my terrible suffering I have stuck it out to the end. I am aware before God that my work as an author, my readiness to respond to his beck and call, to sacrifice every earthly and worldly motive, will mitigate my own impression of what I personally have done wrong. Simply because I began my writing with a burdened conscience, for that very reason I have tried my utmost to make it so pure that it could be partial payment on the debt. In the eyes of the world, this purity, unselfishness, and industry seem insane. I know that God looks at it differently, although it does not follow as a matter of course that in his eyes it is so pure that before him I dare to congratulate myself on it. VIII¹ A 250 120

But now God wants something else. Something is stirring within me that hints at a metamorphosis. That is why I dare not go to Berlin, since that would induce abortion; therefore I will

be quiet, by no means work too hard, not even hard, and will not begin a new book but try to find myself and, *here where I am, really together with God to think through the idea of my depression.* In this way my depression may be lifted and *Christianity may come closer to me.* Up to now I have armed myself against my depression with intellectual activity that keeps it away—now, in the faith that God has forgotten in forgiveness whatever guilt I have, I must try to forget it myself, but not in any diversion, not in any distance from it, but in God, so that when I think of God I may think that he has forgotten it and in that way myself learn to dare to forget it in forgiveness. —*JP* V 6043 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 250) August 16, 1847

See 55:4–56:4:

VIII[1] A 269 128
VIII[1] A 269 129

One must actually have suffered a great deal in the world and have been made very unhappy before there can even be any question of beginning to love the neighbor. The *neighbor* does not come into existence [*blive til*] until in self-denial one has died to earthly happiness and joys and comforts. Therefore the immediate person cannot properly be censured for not loving the neighbor, because the immediate person is too happy for *the neighbor* to exist [*være til*] for him. Anyone who clings to earthly life does not love his neighbor—that is, for him the neighbor does not exist. —*JP* IV 4603 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 269) *n.d.*, 1847

See 231:6–7:

The category "to remain standing" can be used in connection with Asia. The Jews remained standing; China has remained standing; India has remained standing—on the other hand, the category for Europe is: to fall. Rome fell. Greece fell. —*JP* IV 4122 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 279) *n.d.*, 1847

See 118:31–120:32:

VIII[1] A 283 134

The world regards the relationship of the single individual [*den Enkelte*] as really being self-love. Since the world does not really

believe in God, in the long run the God-fearing person must really love himself. The God-fearing person does not love what the world loves, but then what is left—God and himself. The world takes God away, and therefore the God-fearing person loves himself. The world regards the fear of God as self-love. It is also self-love to be unwilling to deify the world and contemporary opinion, to want to maintain (as every human being ought to) that one's ultimate judgment and ultimate responsibility are to God. This impiety (the abolition of the relationship of conscience) is the fundamental damage done by Hegelian philosophy. And Hegelian philosophy has now become so popular that finally the street-corner loiterers become the objective spirit. Heiberg,[56] for example, does not like this, yet not because he perceives the sophistry but because he and his want to be the objective spirit. —*JP* II 1613 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 283) *n.d.*, 1847

VIII[1] A 283 135

See title page:

The Difference between an Upbuilding Discourse and a Deliberation

A deliberation [*Overveielse*] does not presuppose the definitions as given and understood; therefore, it must not so much move, mollify, reassure, persuade, as *awaken* and provoke people and sharpen thought. The time for deliberation is indeed before action, and its purpose therefore is rightly to set all the elements into motion. A deliberation ought to be a "gadfly"; therefore its tone ought to be quite different from that of an upbuilding [*opbyggelig*] discourse, which rests in mood, but a deliberation ought in the good sense to be impatient, high-spirited in mood. Irony is necessary here and the even more significant ingredient of the comic. One may very well even laugh once in a while, if only to make the thought clearer and more striking. An upbuilding discourse about love presupposes that people know essentially what love is and seeks to win them to it, to move them. But this is certainly not the case. Therefore a "deliberation" must first fetch them up out of the cellar, call to them, turn their comfort-

able way of thinking topsy-turvy with the dialectic of truth. —*JP* I 641 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 293) *n.d.*, 1847

In margin of Pap. VIII[1] A 293:

The difference can be seen expressed in the preface: that single individual . . . . . lovingly deliberate whether etc. The preface to an upbuilding discourse could never read like that. —*JP* I 642 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 294) *n.d.*, 1847

See 372:25–373:14:

He who is to speak of self-denial's love does not need to take great pains to appear to be a self-lover, because the world must regard him as a self-lover if he is the one who truly loves. —*JP* III 2411 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 295) *n.d.*, 1847

See 168:36–169:31:

. . . . . The crowd spat on him (Christ). You shudder, you would perhaps prefer that such a thing be left unmentioned because it is so horrible, because the fact that it happened shakes one out of one's customary soft way of thinking. —But now imagine yourself contemporary with that event. Are you quite sure you would have had the courage to side openly with Christ, to stand by a man mocked by every glance, betrayed by all—on whom the crowd spat. But you were present! Perhaps you were moved to compassion by the sight of the mistreatment of this man, but you stood in the crowd. Far be it from you to participate in those diabolical doings. But look, those standing near you noticed that you did not shout along. Enraged in their wild passion, a couple of them standing nearby grabbed hold of you—your life was at stake, more surely than if you had been attacked by a wild animal—and at the moment you had neither the courage nor the resolution to risk your life, at least not for such a man, despised and rejected by all—and you went along with the crowd; you, too, shouted insults at him, and you, too, spat upon him.

Oh, we warn young people against going to dens of iniquity, even out of curiosity, because no one knows what might happen. Even more terrible is the danger of being along in the crowd if you are not so unconditionally resolved within yourself concerning what you want that you are willing to sacrifice your life. Ah, but those who are so resolved seldom run with the crowd. In truth, there is no place, not even one most disgustingly devoted to lust and vice, where a human being is so easily corrupted—as in the crowd. —*JP* III 2926 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 296) *n.d.*, 1847

See 311:10:

Concerning a portion in "Christian Deliberations," Second Series, no. VI:

that it is a dubious matter to become something great in the world—it must be noted here that the reference is not to the state. In that sense Mynster[57] may well be said to have become something great, but he has a strong tendency to want to be in the minority. —*JP* V 6053 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 298) *n.d.*, 1847

See 315:1–330:8:

Deliberation no. VII in the Second Series about mercifulness is also rightly turned against communism. It is no art to speak of such things in ordinary expressions that mean nothing, but here the matter is given a completely different turn that is certainly Christian. —*JP* IV 4124 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 299) *n.d.*, 1847

See 264:15:

Contemporary Christendom really lives as if the situation were like this: Christ is the great hero and benefactor who once and for all has guaranteed us salvation, and now all we have to do is be happy and satisfied with the innocent goods of earthly life and leave the rest to him. But Christ is essentially the prototype [*Forbillede*]; therefore we should *be like* [*ligne*] him and not merely reap benefits from him. —*JP* II 1837 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 303) *n.d.*, 1847

See 249:20:

This is the turning point in world history. Christianity is the religion of the *future*; paganism was the religion of the present or the past (pre-existence). Even Judaism, in spite of its prophetic nature, was too much in the present; it was a future in the present tense. Christianity is a present tense *in futuro*. —*JP* II 1639 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 305) *n.d.*, 1847

See title page:

Most likely no one is aware now that the word "deliberations" [*Overveielser*] is already a cue word in the introduction to one of the "Christian Discourses," no. VI.[58] —*JP* V 6054 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 308) *n.d.*, 1847

See 372:38:

In the reference to the people of love, there is also a fling at Grundtvig, for it is really presumptuous that a particular group will call itself "the people of love"; it is vain and self-loving. —*JP* V 6055 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 309) *n.d.*, 1847

See 317:22–29:

VIII[1] A 311 144 . . . . . But now suppose that the victim, whom the merciful Samaritan took care of, died in his hands, and then suppose that consequently the Samaritan had to report it to the police, and suppose the police had said: Of course we must keep you under arrest for the time being. What then? His contemporaries would VIII[1] A 311 145 have laughed at him for being obtuse enough to let himself in for all that nonsense and would think either that he must be an "idiot" and entirely ignorant of the ways of the law or, if he did know in advance what could happen, he must indeed be "crazy."

Behold, these are the wages of mercy.

—*JP* III 2862 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 311) *n.d.*, 1847

See 31:35:

Everyone desires to be or to become *contemporary* with great men, great events, etc.—but only God knows how many people really live contemporaneously with themselves. To be contemporary with oneself (therefore neither in the future of fear nor of expectation nor in the past) is transparency in repose, and this is possible only in the God-relationship, or it is the God-relationship. —*JP* I 1050 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 320) *n.d.*, 1847

VIII[1] A 320 148

VIII[1] A 320 149

Nov. 4

VIII[1] A 390 171

Today I looked in on Bishop Mynster.[59] He said he was very busy—so I left at once. But he was also very cold toward me. Very likely he is offended by the latest book.[60] That is how I interpreted it. Perhaps I am wrong. But I am not wrong on another point, that this has given me a serenity I have not had before. I have always winced at writing anything I knew might offend him, yes, almost embitter him. Now I assume that it has happened. It has happened many times before, but he has not let himself be offended. But a momentary hurt just livens things up for me. I have never done the slightest thing to win his favor and support, but it would have made me indescribably happy to have him agree with me—for his sake as well, because that I am right I know best of all—from his sermons. —*JP* V 6071 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 390) November 4, 1847

VIII[1] A 390 172

See 53:2–4:

To be married, to have children, to be a public official and have subordinates—in short, to have a lot of people sharing in one's life and giving it point is, of course, a heightening of self-esteem. People complain about being lonesome and therefore get married etc.—but is this love; I should say it is self-love. Most of what people of this kind say about believing in God and feeling God close to them is simply illusion, an intensified self-esteem and sense of vitality that they confuse with religiousness. They believe themselves to be, as they say, the object of the

fatherly care of providence. Ultimately it is nothing more nor less than a sense of coziness in life, that their lives would be missed, which in a certain sense they feel every moment of their lives. —*JP* III 2412 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 393) *n.d.*, 1847

[1847]

Dear Jette,[61]

I am glad that you yourself have provided the occasion for sending the book[62] that accompanies this letter. So you yourself are responsible and will all the more carefully see to it that your reading of the book or any single part of it will not in any way conflict with my brother's idea of what is beneficial or harmful reading, for it would distress me to have that happen.

Please note, therefore, that I have arranged it so that emphasis is in no way placed on whether or not you read it, something I never oblige anyone to do, and especially not that person whom I surely would not wish to *burden* with a *complimentary* copy.

This is my own copy, originally destined for myself: thus it has a purely personal relationship to me, not in my capacity as author as with other copies, but rather as if the author had presented it to me. However, it now occurs to me that it has not fulfilled its destiny and reaches its proper destination only in being destined for you—the only copy in the whole printing suitable for that. —The bookbinder has done a beautiful job on the book (and in judging the bookbinder's craft I am after all impartial). —It has been read through by me and is to that extent a used copy. So please notice that everything is as it ought to be now. For a brief moment you may admire the bookbinder's art as you would admire any other art object; then you may—for a longer moment, if you please, take pleasure in the thought that it is a gift; and then you may put the book down (—for it has been read—), put it aside as one puts a gift aside, put it aside carefully—if it is a welcome gift.

But enough of this. I was sorry not to be able to take my leave of you. I hope this little letter in which I take my leave will find you as well as I found you when I arrived. *Above all, do not lose your desire to walk: every day I walk myself into a state of well-being and walk away from every illness; I have walked myself into my best*

thoughts, and I know of no thought so burdensome that one cannot walk away from it. Even if one were to walk for one's health and it were constantly one station ahead—*I would still say: Walk!* Besides, it is also apparent that in walking one constantly gets as close to well-being as possible, even if one does not quite reach it—*but by sitting still, and the more one sits still, the closer one comes to feeling ill.* Health and salvation can be found only in motion. If anyone denies that motion exists, I do as Diogenes[63] did, I walk. If anyone denies that health resides in motion, then I walk away from all morbid objections. *Thus, if one just keeps on walking, everything will be all right.* And out in the country you have all the advantages; you do not risk being stopped before you are safe and happy outside your gate, nor do you run the risk of being intercepted on your way home. I remember exactly what happened to me a while ago and what has happened frequently since then. I had been walking for an hour and a half and had done a great deal of thinking, and with the help of motion I had really become a very agreeable person to myself. What bliss, and, as you may imagine, what care did I not take to bring my bliss home as safely as possible. Thus I hurry along, with downcast eyes I steal through the streets, so to speak; confident that I am entitled to the sidewalk, I do not consider it necessary to look about at all (for thereby one is so easily intercepted, just as one is looking about—in order to avoid) and thus hasten along the sidewalk with my bliss (for the ordinance forbidding one to carry anything on the sidewalk does not extend to bliss, which makes a person lighter)—directly into a man who is always suffering from illness and who therefore with downcast eyes, defiant because of his illness, does not even think that he must look about when he is not entitled to the sidewalk. I was stopped. It was a quite exalted gentleman who now honored me with conversation. Thus all was lost. After the conversation ended, there was only one thing left for me to do: instead of going home, to go walking again.

As you see, there really is no more space in this letter, and therefore I break off this conversation—for in a sense it has been a conversation, inasmuch as I have constantly thought of you as present. Do take care of yourself!

Yours, S. KIERKEGAARD.

From draft of unpublished reply:

Merchant Nathanson[64]
A bit of polemic
—*Pap.* VIII² B 74 *n.d.*, 1847

Addition to Pap. VIII² B 74:

A hint from Herr Merchant N.—and a hint to Herr Merchant N.

—*Pap.* VIII² B 75 *n.d.*, 1847

Addition to Pap. VIII² B 74:

To

Herr Merchant Nathanson!

Ah, dear Herr Merchant! It surely must not be true, as you yourself say, that it is impossible to withstand the persuasion in the tenth deliberation in *Works of Love*, or the ending of this book. If you have read it, and if it has been impossible for you to withstand it, then it seems to me that it would inevitably have been impossible for you to write such a hasty review. —*Pap.* VIII² B 76 *n.d.*, 1847

Addition to Pap. VIII² B 74:

VIII² B 77 138 Herr Merchant Nathanson gives me a hint, suggesting that I should preach. If I were superstitious, it might have some meaning for me, since superstition, as is well known, takes hints and omens from the strangest and most insignificant things, from the flight of birds, their entrails, from peculiar sounds of nature, from what chickens refuse to eat—thus I, too, could take the hint from the fact that Herr Merchant N. wishes it. But I am not, as said, superstitious, and with "my sharp psychological eye" I easily perceive that with regard to the hint it is a matter of *distinguendum est inter* and *inter*[65] [one must make a distinction between and between]. VIII² B 77 139 Since I cannot fulfill Herr Merchant's wish, which is to

hear me preach, I can perhaps serve him with this—which may not be according to his wish either. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 77 *n.d.*, 1847

Addition to Pap. VIII[2] B 74:

If one were to specify by grades the significance for literature of Merchant Nathanson's literary activity, I know of no better grade for it than 0+ (0 plus), 0+ as it is registered on the thermometer. Incidentally, I find that the highest temperature registered on the thermometer in the shade on December 29 was 0+, and this actually is the highest Nathanson is. That is, he is 0, but to say it to him as politely and gently as possible, one could call him 0+. He is a plus, and yet the least possible; he is 0+. —*Pap.* VIII[2] B 78 *n.d.*, 1847

When I eventually publish discourses on the Atonement, it will be best to title them:

"Work of Love."[66]
—*JP* V 6092 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 472) *n.d.*, 1847

It is something both to laugh and to cry over. *Aftenbladet* apologizes[67] because the review of my *Works of Love*[68] is so disproportionately long. A few days later the same paper produces an article[69] just about as long that is a police report on the trial of a thief. Here no apology is necessary, for it is enormously important. —*JP* V 6098 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 496) *n.d.*, 1847

I almost went and upset the whole design of *Christian Discourses* and their original purpose by including in them "Thoughts That Wound from Behind for Upbuilding"[70] simply because these discourses were lying there ready. A polemical piece like that belongs there least of all; it will itself be weakened by its surroundings and divert all attention away from the "Friday Discourses."[71] No, my intention is to be as gentle as possible, right after the powerful polemic in *Works of Love*. The Christian discourses are given in this way. Then, too, I may take a journey, and I would like to depart in peace. Finally, the book was getting

too large; the smaller, the better I am read. —*JP* V 6111 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 559) *n.d.*, 1848

But Mynster[72] has touched me by retaining his friendship for me in spite of *Works of Love*. I would so much like to humor him once. I know he would like *Christian Discourses* if it did not have Part Three. But I cannot do it. I would also have liked to dedicate the fourth part to him, but that cannot be done. Perhaps here again it is only a gloomy thought that he would get angry about Part Three; it would even be unfair of him; but in any case I have acted with this pressure upon me also. Oh, the more pressures there are, the clearer it is that one needs God and the clearer it is that one makes decisions trusting in God. —*JP* V 6112 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 560, p. 261) *n.d.*, 1848

See 368:9:

In *Works of Love* I said: The age of thinkers is past.[73] Soon one will have to say: The age of thought is past. —*JP* III 3313 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 627) *n.d.*, 1848

VIII[1] A 680 325

Something about Loving

What human being, ideally, can be loved the most? The one who makes me unhappy, but in such a way that I am fervently convinced that it is according to his best conviction, that in truth he honestly intends to do the best. All the elements of love must be set in motion by him who is to be loved the most, and this occurs only according to the formulation here developed. I love such a person because I feel the love in him, but the fact that he made me unhappy through something he intended to be the best for me awakens my sympathy—and I love him even more. In sorrow over my own unhappiness, when I consider how difficult it must be for him who loves now that he has made the beloved unhappy, in sorrow over this I love him even more.

This is the most perfect formulation for loving. I have never seen it presented. It has the remarkable paradox that I love the most—because he made me unhappy.

In this formulation there is more reflected sympathy than is usually thought of. VIII¹ A 680 326

This is the scale.

(1) To love someone *because* he makes me happy—is egotism.

(2) To love without further additions, which is higher than (1) in the sense that a general is higher than a major general. Simplicity is more than the gradations. The identity of simplicity and the superlative. ([To love] *because* is like "major" added to "general"; it diminishes.)

(3) To love—and in addition to love even more—because he made me unhappy. When a "because" in relation to loving is like a plus (as in no. 1), it subtracts from and is a minus. But if in relation to loving a "because" seems to be a minus (that he made me unhappy is indeed like a subtraction), it is a plus, the only, the absolutely fervently moving plus in relationship to loving.

—*JP* III 2416 (*Pap.* VIII¹ A 680) *n.d.*, 1848

See 376:20–32:

After all, many people think that the Christian commandments (for example, to love one's neighbor as oneself) are purposely a little too rigorous—something like the household alarm clock that runs a half-hour fast so one does not get up too late in the morning. —*JP* I 480 (*Pap.* IX A 28) *n.d.*, 1848

See 67:37–68:5:

Just as *faith* is a dialectical specification, so also is true Christian love. Therefore Christianity teaches very specifically that one ought to love one's enemy, that the pagan, too, loves his friend. One can love one's enemy only for God's sake or because one loves God. Hence the mark of one's loving God is quite rightly the dialectical, because one spontaneously hates one's enemy. When a person loves his friend, it is by no means clear that he

loves God; but when a person loves his enemy, it is clear that he fears and loves God, and only in this way can God be loved. —*JP* III 2419 (*Pap.* IX A 306) *n.d.*, 1848

See 270:21:

IX A 363 208 The one and only consolation and absolute distraction in all one's suffering is to look to God, to think of him, submit everything to him, consider that it comes from him in that he allows it. In this way one becomes, in the right sense, objective and, in the right sense, subjective—objective toward others and subjective toward oneself. In public meetings remarks are supposed to be addressed to the president, not to the individual person—why?—to avoid personalities.

IX A 363 209 And thus in the midst of all the persecutions one avoids all personalities. Someone spits in my face; I do not look at him but at God, address the remarks concerning it to God—that is, I remain personally on the outside, relate myself *personally* only to God; I do not talk *with* such a person but talk *about* him even in his presence.

This is the victory over all meanness. Any person would, I am sure, do this with regard to an animal, with regard to the elements etc., where he does not acknowledge any personal relationship. But the God-fearing person has really only one personal relationship: to God. He cannot relate himself to a representative of coarseness in any other way than he would to a dog that bit him.

This was the truth in the words of Socrates when he reprimanded someone who wanted him to become angry because Xanthippe did something unbecoming toward him—Socrates answered: If a hen did the same thing, you would not become angry.[74]

But Socrates' shortcoming was that he did not have the inward turning of piety but only the averted turning of objectivity.

It is the opposite, however, with most people, as I have noted somewhere else [*Pap.* VIII[1] A 165 (p. 423)]. They are objective in the wrong place, because they allow themselves everything, and subjective in the wrong place, because when the slightest

thing happens to them they promptly become subjectively affected, sometimes even by a dog, which is the most bestial admission a person can make. —*JP* IV 4545 (*Pap.* IX A 363) *n.d.*, 1848

See 192:16–204:21:

N.B. N.B. IX A 414 242

To be a Christian involves a double danger.

First, all the intense internal suffering involved in becoming a Christian, this losing the understanding and being crucified on the paradox.—This is the issue *Concluding Postscript* presents as ideally as possible.

Then the danger of the Christian's having to live in the world of worldliness and there express that he is a Christian. Here belongs all the later productivity, which will culminate in what I have ready at present and which could be published under the title: Collected Works of Completion (see this journal, p. 21 [*Pap.* IX A 390]).

When this has been done, the question bursts forth as with elemental power: But how can it occur to a human being to want to subject himself to all this, why should he be a Christian when it is so demanding? The first answer might be: Hold your tongue; Christianity is the absolute, you shall. But another answer may also be given: Because the consciousness of sin within him allows him no rest anywhere; its grief strengthens him to endure everything else if he can only find reconciliation.

This means that the grief of sin must be very deep within a person, and therefore Christianity must be presented as the difficult thing it is, so that it may become entirely clear that Christianity is related solely to the consciousness of sin. To want to be involved in becoming a Christian for any other reason is literally foolishness—and so it must be. —*JP* I 493 (*Pap.* IX A 414) *n.d.*, 1848

The second time I talked with Christian VIII was at Sorgenfrie[75] many months later. . . . X' A 42 28

The third time I visited him was at Sorgenfrie; I brought him X' A 42 31

a copy of *Works of Love*. Pastor Ibsen[76] had told me that he had somehow gotten the idea fixed in his head that he could not understand me and that I would not get it out again. I had this in mind. I entered, handed him the book. He glanced at it, noted the organization of the first part (You *shall* love, you shall love *the neighbor, you* shall love the neighbor) and grasped it immediately; he really was very intelligent. Thereupon I took the book from him again and asked his permission to read a passage aloud to him and chose the first portion (p. 150 [pp. 135–36]). It moved him, easily moved as he generally was. . . .

X¹ A 42 32

—*JP* VI 6310 (*Pap.* X¹ A 42) *n.d.*, 1849

See 455:18–461:16:

N.B. N.B.

As yet I have not said a direct word about myself:[77] the postscript to *Concluding Postscript*[78] contains nothing of the sort; all I did was to assume responsibility for the pseudonymous authors and speak *hypothetically* ("according to what I have understood"[79]) about their ideas. The information given in *Concluding Postscript* about the character of the pseudonymous authors is by a third party. The conclusion of *Works of Love* ("The Work of Love in Praising Love") contains nothing direct about me; on the contrary, it says that "the most self-loving person" "may be the one who undertakes to praise love." The review of *Two Ages*[80] has one little hint about me, but that again is not direct communication but is concealed by making it seem as if I had learned it from the novel.
—*JP* VI 6366 (*Pap.* X¹ A 161) *n.d.*, 1849

See 82:20–30:

The martyrdom in being a Christian is seen here also. Tax-collectors and sinners are in fact human beings who actually are unable to reciprocate; to love them is therefore true love—and yet Christ *is reproached* for this, and he must suffer because he is truly loving.

To love those who can reciprocate—the distinguished and the

respected ones who confer prestige by association—this the world calls love. The relativities can be of many kinds, but in one way or another there must be a little profit involved with love; otherwise the world does not regard it as love and makes it even less profitable by punishing it as if it were an offense. —*JP* III 2421 (*Pap.* X[1] A 444) *n.d.*, 1849

See 3:13–18:

Here again Luther is completely right. No one can see faith; it is unseen; therefore no one can decide whether or not a person has faith. But faith is to be known by love. Nowadays we have wanted to make love into an unseen something, but against this Luther, together with Scripture, would protest, because from the Christian point of view love is the work of love.[81] To say that love is a feeling and the like is really an un-Christian concept. This is the esthetic definition of love and therefore fits the erotic and everything of that nature. But from the Christian point of view love is the work of love. Christ's love was not intense feeling, a full heart, etc.; it was rather the work of love, which is his life. —*JP* III 2423 (*Pap.* X[1] A 489) *n.d.*, 1849

See 214:17:

Much that is said praising a mother's love for her child is, of course, rooted in a misunderstanding, since maternal love as such is simply self-love raised to a higher power, and thus the animals also have it. That this kind of love in its initial state is self-love is apparent also in other analogous relationships where the fatuousness of this kind of praise is obvious to everyone—for example, an author's love for his work.

In the Scriptures it is never maternal love as such that is compared with God's love for a human being; the comparison is only with the strength of maternal love. One could also use other figures—for example, the passion of the miser and the like. But such a figure would be inappropriate. Maternal love, on the contrary, is a beautiful figure. —*JP* III 2425 (*Pap.* X[1] A 635) *n.d.*, 1849

See 131:12–19:

We praise it as a characteristic of true love—the more sacrifices a person makes, the more he loves the object of his love. But this, too, is still a form of self-love, for the sacrifices remind a person of himself. —*JP* III 2426 (*Pap.* X[1] A 638) *n.d.*, 1849

See 44:12:

X[2] A 63 49

The Way It Really Should Be Said

As for erotic love and friendship, it ought to be said that Christianity does not really praise them. You should not be in too much of a hurry but only hold out with God a little or, better, as long as you can—but if you discern that God overstrains you, then accept these human means as an aid. It is the same with earning a living, occupation, and all such things.

But the relationship must not be turned around as it is done in Christendom; we must not be permitted to make out that erotic love and friendship are the truest love; and we must not be permitted to make out that earning a living and everything connected with it are the true earnestness of life.

In short, the Christian contention is that God quite simply must have first priority in a person's life at every point in existence [*Tilværelsen*], in every relationship of his life. And this must be in earnest—not Sunday platitudes. But on the other hand God is no cruel creditor and mortgage holder, nor should a human being presume to want to be more than a human being, a daimon or God-man.

But people, or a person, should not live in such a way that they tumble out into life from an irresponsible upbringing and never in a deeper sense really give a thought to God and to his priority-demand, but instead regard erotic love, friendship, making a living, and the like as the earnestness of life. No, stretched to the

X[2] A 63 50

utmost by the most rigorous religious upbringing, after persevering in a demanding God-relationship with youthful confidence and trust, a person should have learned that this is the earnestness of life. But then, presumably, he has also been humbled in such a way that he may accept this human aid and alleviation, accept

it as something beautiful that God blesses; but he does not become enamored of it, does not forget what is truly the earnestness of life. —*JP* III 2428 (*Pap.* X² A 63) *n.d.*, 1849

What makes my life so frightfully strenuous is that everything is reversed, a dialectic that in every moment of spiritual trial changes into its opposite for me. To myself I am more insignificant than all others, even a penitent—for this very reason I dare to venture what I have ventured: but in the eyes of people my life expresses apparent pride, overwhelming ambition, etc. Then when spiritual trial [*Anfægtelse*][82] comes, it takes advantage of this, because I have no direct outwardness but continually a reversed, that is, an unalloyed, spirit-relation, which is the opposite as soon as faith is not present. And yet precisely because I am a penitent, I have had to learn to cling to God on a totally different scale than other people do; I have learned not to shrink, have acquired the courage to take unusual risks—and thus God helps me to be capable on an extraordinary scale; but it has the appearance of pride and arrogance. What dreadful suffering, never, never, never to be understood.

So also with my love relationship, which, humanly, appears as cruelty.

Yet it is certain that only by keeping on living in this way has it been possible for me, or has it been granted me, to describe the truly Christian, because precisely this is Christianity. The person who is able to make the matter present to himself must, of course, be able to see that Christ's life in relation to his mother and his disciples must appear to be the greatest cruelty, must be understood as such by them—and yet it was love. This I have presented in *Works of Love*.[83] —*Pap.* X² A 64 *n.d.*, 1849

See 77:35–38:

What is true of one's relationship to God is not true of one's relationship to another human being—namely, that the longer they live together and the more they get to know each other, the more intimate they become. It is the reverse in the relationship to God—the longer one lives with him the more infi-

nite he becomes—and the less one becomes oneself. Alas, as a child one still thought that God and the human being could play happily together. As a youth one dreamed that if one really and truly made an effort, like someone passionately in love, even though beseeching—that then the relationship might still be achieved. Alas, when one has matured, one discovers how infinite God is, discovers the infinite distance. This is the upbringing, and it has something in common with Socratic ignorance, with which the beginning was not made but the ending—it ended with ignorance! —*JP* II 1393 (*Pap.* X^2 A 72) *n.d.*, 1849

The Christian Emphasis

Christianly the emphasis does not fall so much upon to what extent or how far a person succeeds in meeting or fulfilling the requirement, if he actually is striving, as upon his getting an impression of the requirement in all its infinitude so that he rightly learns to be humbled and to rely upon grace.

To scale down the requirement in order to be able to fulfill it better (as if this were earnestness, that now it can all the more easily *appear* that one is earnest about wanting to fulfill the requirement)—to this Christianity in its deepest essence is opposed.

No, infinite humiliation and grace, and then a striving born of gratitude—this is Christianity. —*JP* I 993 (*Pap.* X^3 A 734) *n.d.20, 1851*

See 17:3:

The Way to Christianity

is not that another person by coaxing etc. undertakes to lead you to it.

No, you must go through this "You **shall**"; this is the condition for *unconditional* respect. And behind this "You shall" lies

grace, and there everything smiles, there all is gentleness. —*JP* I 994 (*Pap.* X[3] A 737) *n.d.*, 1851

See 51:22–31:

"He who sees his brother in need, yet shuts his heart"[84]

—yes, at the same time he also shuts out God.

Love for God and love for neighbor are like two doors that open simultaneously, so that it is impossible to open one without also opening the other, and impossible to shut one without also shutting the other. —*JP* III 2434 (*Pap.* X[3] A 739) *n.d.*, 1851

Notations in copy of Works of Love:

[*1:5*] *Addition:* Second edition.
In margin: Issue 525, 5 on vellum.

[*1:7:*] 1852 [*changed from:* 1847]

[*1:7:*] To typesetter
I did not remember that it was page proofs I was reading rather than the manuscript; therefore I not only made deletions in the text but wrote [deletion symbol] in the margin. [*Deleted:*—a superfluous comment.] Especially in the first part. There are many quotation marks that are removed from the words poet and neighbor.

[*7:22:*] *Addition:* Autumn 1847

[*130:35:*] exact [*changed from:* publish]

[*205:6:*] *Addition:* Second edition

[*205:7:*] 1852 [*changed from:* 1847]

[*207:22:*] *Addition:* Autumn 1847

[*317:23:*] could only beg and beseech [*changed from:* and begged and beseeched in vain]

—*Pap.* X[6] B 31:1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 *n.d.*, 1852

See 114:25–115:15:

. . . Of course it must be remembered that any conceivable superiority in the relation among people is still only a very imperfect analogy to the relation between being God and being a human being. And since we nobly and piously suppose the equality of all people, we are quite right in straightway equalizing the reciprocity so that the Law for both parties is to be changed into likeness to the beloved. —*JP* III 2451 (*Pap.* XI^2 A 9) *n.d.*, 1854

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TITLE PAGE

TITLE PAGE. See Supplement, pp. 409, 426 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 4; VIII[2] B 28, 70).
Deliberations. See Supplement, pp. 469–70, 472 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 293, 294, 308).
Discourses. See Supplement, p. 409 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 6).

FIRST SERIES

1. See Supplement, pp. 423, 426–28 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 173; VIII[2] B 44-47).
2. See Supplement, pp. 402–05, 409–10 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 176; VIII[1] A 8, 9, 23).
3. With reference to the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 483 (*Pap.* X[1] A 489).
4. Cf. John 16:13.
5. Cf. John 14:26.
6. A draft version (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 29:1) cites Ephesians without chapter and verse. Cf. p. 10 and note 11 on a related theme.
7. Immortelles (such as *Antennaria*, *Gnaplialium*, *Helichrysum*, and *Xeranthemum*), flowers that preserve their form and color for a long time after being picked.
8. Proverbs 4:23.
9. I Timothy 6:16.
10. Genesis 19:26.
11. Ephesians 4:30.
12. Adam Gottlob Oehlenschläger, *Morgen-Vandring*, in *Langelands-Reise. I Sommeren 1804, Poetiske Skrifter*, I-II (Copenhagen: 1805; *ASKB* 1597–98), I, pp. 363, 364.
13. Matthew 12:34.
14. With reference to the following two sentences, see Supplement, p. 407 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 205).
15. Cf. "*D. Martin Luthers Auslegung des vierzehenten, funfzehenten und sechzehenten Capitels St. Johannis*," III, 199, *D. Martin Luthers . . . Sämtliche Schriften . . .* , I-XXIII, ed. Johann Georg Walch (Halle: 1739–53), VIII, col. 608–09; *Geist aus Luther's Schriften oder Concordanz der Ansichten und Urtheile des grossen Reformators . . .* , I-IV, ed. F. W. Lomler et al. (Darmstadt: 1828–31; *ASKB* 317–20), II, p. 67.
16. See Matthew 6:3.
17. II Samuel 12:1–7.
18. Matthew 7:24–27.
19. See Matthew 10:28.

20. See Supplement, pp. 428, 486–87 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:4; X^3 A 737).

21. With reference to the following two sentences, see Supplement, pp. 396, 400 (*Pap.* II A 462; IV B 148).

22. See, for example, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to* Philosophical Fragments, pp. 14–15, *KW* XII.1 (*SV* VII 6).

23. See Genesis 32:31.

24. See Supplement, pp. 428–29 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:6).

25. See Supplement, p. 429 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:7).

26. Matthew 22:37.

27. James 2:8: "If you really fulfill the royal law, according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you do well."

28. See Luke 10:29.

29. In English "neighbor" is derived from the Old English *neahgebur* (nigh-dweller).

30. Matthew 5:46.

31. See Supplement, p. 429 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:9).

32. See, for example, G.W.F. Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, I, *Die objective Logik, "Etwas und ein Anderes," Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe*, I-XVIII, ed. Philipp Marheineke et al. (Berlin: 1832–45; *ASKB* 549–65), III, pp. 122–29; *Sämtliche Werke. Jubiläumsausgabe* [*J.A.*], I-XXVI, ed. Hermann Glockner (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1927–40), IV, pp. 132–39; *Hegel's Science of Logic* (tr. of *W.L.*, Lasson ed., 1923; Kierkegaard had 2 ed., 1833–34), tr. A. V. Miller (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), "Something and an Other," pp. 117–22.

33. See Supplement, p. 429 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:10).

34. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 430 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 30:4).

35. See Supplement, p. 430 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:12).

36. See note 27 above.

37. See I Corinthians 2:9. See also, for example, *Philosophical Fragments, or a Fragment of Philosophy*, pp. 36, 109, *KW* VII (*SV* IV 203, 271).

38. See, for example, *Fear and Trembling*, pp. 5, 9, 23, 32–33, 37, 69, 88, 121, 123, *KW* VI (*SV* III 57, 62, 75, 84, 88, 118, 136, 166, 168); *Fragments*, pp. 111, *KW* VII (*SV* IV 272).

39. II Corinthians 5:17.

40. See I Corinthians 7:29–31.

41. See Revelation 3:15.

42. With reference to the following three paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 418–19 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 96).

43. Matthew 10:16.

44. Cf. I Timothy 3:9.

45. I Peter 3:4.

46. See Matthew 9:20–22.

47. An allusion to Solon and Croesus. See Herodotus, *History*, I, 32, 34, 86; *Die Geschichten des Herodotos*, I-II, tr. Friedrich Lange (Berlin: 1811–12; *ASKB*

1117), I, pp. 18–19, 20, 49–50); *Herodotus*, I-IV, tr. A. D. Godley (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981–82), I, pp. 38–39, 40–41, 108–11:

> Thus then, Croesus, the whole of man is but chance. Now if I am to speak of you, I say that I see you very rich and the king of many men. But I cannot yet answer your question, before I hear that you have ended your life well. . . . If then such a man besides all this shall also end his life well, then he is the man whom you seek, and is worthy to be called blest; but we must wait till he be dead, and call him not yet blest, but fortunate.
>
> But after Solon's departure, the divine anger fell heavily on Croesus: as I guess, because he supposed himself to be blest beyond all other men.
>
> So the Persians took Sardis and made Croesus himself prisoner, he having reigned fourteen years and been besieged fourteen days, and, as the oracle foretold, brought his own great empire to an end. Having then taken him they led him to Cyrus. Cyrus had a great pyre built, on which he set Croesus, bound in chains, and twice seven Lydian boys beside him: either his intent was to sacrifice these first-fruits to some one of his gods, or he desired to fulfil a vow, or it may be that, learning that Croesus was a god-fearing man, he set him for this cause on the pyre, because he would fain know if any deity would save him from being burnt alive. It is related then that he did this; but Croesus, as he stood on the pyre, remembered even in his evil plight how divinely inspired was that saying of Solon, that no living man was blest. When this came to his mind, having till now spoken no word, he sighed deeply and groaned, and thrice uttered the name of Solon. Cyrus heard it, and bade his interpreters ask Croesus who was this on whom he called; they came near and asked him; Croesus at first would say nothing in answer, but presently, being compelled, he said, "It is one with whom I would have given much wealth that all sovereigns should hold converse." This was a dark saying to them, and again they questioned him of the words which he spoke. As they were instant, and troubled him, he told them then how Solon, an Athenian, had first come, and how he had seen all his royal state and made light of it (saying thus and thus), and how all had happened to Croesus as Solon said, though he spoke with less regard to Croesus than to mankind in general and chiefly those who deemed themselves blest. While Croesus thus told his story, the pyre had already been kindled and the outer parts of it were burning. Then Cyrus, when he heard from the interpreters what Croesus said, repented of his purpose.

48. See, for example, *Christian Discourses*, *KW* XVII (*SV* X 78); Supplement, p. 473 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 320).

49. See I John 4:18.

50. Romans 8:37.

51. Presumably a reference to Bishop Mynster. The source of the quotation has not been located.

52. See James 3:10.

53. The vampire bat.

54. See Matthew 25:1–10.

55. Darius (c. 558-c. 486 B.C.) of Persia. See Herodotus, *History*, V, 105; *Geschichten*, II, p. 59; Loeb, III, p. 126–27.

56. See Sirach 36:27.

57. See pp. 10–11.

58. See, for example, *The Sickness unto Death*, pp. 13–14, *KW* XIX (*SV* XI 127–28).

59. The source of the quotation has not been found. It may be that the quotation marks are for emphasis.

60. See, for example, *Sickness unto Death*, pp. 51, 61–62, *KW* XIX (*SV* XI 164, 173–74).

61. With reference to the heading, see Supplement, p. 430 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:16).

62. See Supplement, pp. 484–85 (*Pap.* X^2 A 63).

63. With reference to the following three paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 424–25 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 196).

64. See II Corinthians 10:5.

65. See Luke 10:37.

66. See, for example, *Sickness unto Death*, pp. 77–78, *KW* XIX (*SV* XI 189–90).

67. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 430–31 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 31:13).

68. With reference to the following three sentences, see Supplement, p. 487 (*Pap.* X^3 A 739).

69. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 431 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 31:14).

70. See I Corinthians 7:9.

71. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, pp. 473–74 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 393).

72. See Matthew 5:46.

73. See Lucius Firmianus Lactantius, *Institutiones divinae*, VI, 9; *Firmiani Lactantii opera*, I-II, ed. Otto Fridolin Fritzsche (Leipzig: 1842–44; *ASKB* 142–43), II, p. 19; *The Divine Institutes*, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, I-X, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885–97), VII, pp. 171–72. The idea is usually attributed to Augustine, although the expression is not his. Cf. *The City of God*, XIX, 25; *Sancti Aurelii Augustini hipponensis episcopi opera*, I-XVIII (Bassani: 1797–1807; *ASKB* 117–34), IX, col. 750–51; *Des heiligen Augustinus zwey und zwanzig Bücher von der Stadt Gottes*, I-II, tr. J. P. Silbert (Vienna: 1826), II, pp. 723–24; *The City of God, Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, I-II, ed. Whitney J. Oates (New York: Random House, 1948), II, p. 504:

> For although some suppose that virtues which have a reference only to themselves, and are desired only on their own account, are yet true and genuine virtues, the fact is that even then they are inflated with pride, and are there-

fore to be reckoned vices rather than virtues. For as that which gives life to the flesh is not derived from flesh, but is above it, so that which gives blessed life to man is not derived from man, but is something above him; and what I say of man is true of every celestial power and virtue whatsoever.

See also *Fragments*, p. 53, *KW* VII (*SV* IV 219).

74. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 468 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 269).

75. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 466 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 231).

76. See, for example, *Sickness unto Death*, pp. 13–14, *KW* XIX (*SV* XI 127–28).

77. With reference to the following seven sentences, see Supplement, p. 431 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 31:15).

78. See, for example, *Practice in Christianity*, pp. 123–44, *KW* XX (*SV* XII 115–34); *JP* III 3025–40. See also Supplement, p. 446 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 40).

79. See Matthew 3:4, 11:8.

80. See Luke 7:23.

81. See Isaiah 42:3.

82. See I John 4:8.

83. I Corinthians 3:9.

84. For continuation of the sentence, see Supplement, p. 431 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 31:18).

85. See Luke 10:37.

86. Cf. Genesis 2:21–22.

87. See Romans 12:15.

88. See pp. 10–11, 38.

89. With reference to the following four sentences, see Supplement, p. 479–80 (*Pap.* IX A 306).

90. See pp. 44, 52, 58, 60.

91. With reference to the following three sentences, see Supplement, pp. 396–97 (*Pap.* III B 181:4).

92. In India a designation for those outside the four castes. The three highest castes are twice born, the fourth class is once born, and others are pariahs or outcasts or "not born."

93. See Matthew 6:6.

94. See John 17:15.

95. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following three paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 431–32 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 31:20).

96. See James 1:27.

97. See Psalm 1:1.

98. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, pp. 485–86 (*Pap.* X[2] A 72).

99. Cf. Romans 2:11; I Peter 1:17.

100. The traditional version of Luther's response to Emperor Charles V at the Diet of Worms (1521).

101. For continuation of the text, see Supplement, pp. 432–33 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 31:22).

102. On the French Revolution, for example, see Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, *Werke*, II, pp. 441–51; *J.A.*, II, pp. 449–59; *The Phenomenology of Mind* (tr. primarily based on *P.G.*, 3 ed., 1841; Kierkegaard had 2 ed., 1832), tr. J. B. Baille (New York: Harper, 1967), "Absolute Freedom and Terror," pp. 599–610.

103. For continuation of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 434 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 31:23).

104. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 482–83 (*Pap.* X^1 A 444).

105. For continuation of the text, see Supplement, p. 434 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:20).

106. With reference to the following six paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 434 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 31:24).

107. See Exodus 20:17.

108. Cf. Matthew 6:2.

109. See Supplement, p. 413 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 31, 32); *Christian Discourses*, *KW* XVII (*SV* X 101–10).

110. For continuation of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 435 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 31:26).

111. See Supplement, p. 408 (*Pap.* VII^1 A 225).

112. With reference to the following three paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 398–94, 412 (*Pap.* IV B 96:13; VIII^1 A 29).

113. See also Luke 15:11–32.

114. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 435 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 32:3).

115. See Romans 13:10.

116. Socrates.

117. Luke 10:29.

118. See I Corinthians 3:19.

119. See John 15:9–10.

120. Cf. John 8:46.

121. I Peter 2:22.

122. Matthew 21:28–30.

123. See John 4:34.

124. See John 10:30.

125. See Luke 19:41–42.

126. See John 11:32–34.

127. Luke 10:42. See Supplement, p. 419 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 111).

128. See Luke 22:61.

129. See Luke 10:17.

130. See Matthew 26:40; Mark 14:37–40; Luke 22:45.

131. Cf. Matthew 12:49.

132. Cf. John 9:4.

133. See Matthew 6:33.

134. See Supplement, pp. 416–17 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 77).

135. See Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 10:1.

136. Cf. Mark 9:44.

137. See Supplement, pp. 435–36 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 71:26,33).

138. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, the following nine paragraphs, and the following clause, see Supplement, p. 436 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 32:6).

139. See Luke 14:26.

140. Matthew 16:23.

141. Cf. John 6:14. For continuation of the paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 436–37 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 35:1).

142. See *Practice*, pp. 40–56, *KW* XX (*SV* XII 38–53).

143. Matthew 10:16.

144. See I Corinthians 7:33.

145. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 437 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 32:7).

146. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 437 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 34:2).

147. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 437–38 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 35:2).

148. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 397–98 (*Pap.* IV A 76).

149. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 488 (*Pap.* XI[2] A 9).

150. Ephesians 2:12.

151. See *Kierkegaard: Letters and Documents*, Letter 186, pp. 260–63, *KW* XXV.

152. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 438 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 32:8).

153. With reference to the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 439 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 34:3). With reference to the following four paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 468–69 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 283).

154. See II Timothy 4:7.

155. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 439 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 34:5).

156. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 439 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 32:11). With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following three paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 439–40 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 34:6).

157. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 417 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 80).

158. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 440 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 35:4).

159. An allusion to Socrates. See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Phi-*

losophers, II, 31, *Diogenis Laertii de vitis philosophorum*, I-II (Leipzig: 1833; *ASKB* 1109), I, p. 75; *Diogen Laërtses filosofiske Historie*, I-II, tr. Børge Riisbrigh (Copenhagen: 1812; *ASKB* 1110–11), I, p. 70; *Diogenes Laertius*, I-II, tr. R. D. Hicks (Loeb, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1979–80), I, pp. 160–61.

160. With reference to the following three sentences, see Supplement, pp. 440–41 (*Pap.* VIII^2 A 34:7).

161. See John 11:49–50.

162. See Plato, *Apology*, 30 e; *Platonis quae exstant opera*, I-XI, ed. Friedrich Ast (Leipzig: 1819–32; *ASKB* 1144–54), VIII, pp. 130–31; *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 16–17:

> It is literally true, even if it sounds rather comical, that God has specially appointed me to this city, as though it were a large thoroughbred horse which because of its great size is inclined to be lazy and needs the stimulation of some stinging fly. It seems to me that God has attached me to this city to perform the office of such a fly, and all day long I never cease to settle here, there, and everywhere, rousing, persuading, reproving every one of you.

163. Ibid., 31 c-d; *Opera*, VIII, pp. 132–33; *Dialogues*, p. 17:

> It may seem curious that I should go round giving advice like this and busying myself in people's private affairs, and yet never venture publicly to address you as a whole and advise on matters of state. The reason for this is what you have often heard me say before on many other occasions—that I am subject to a divine or supernatural experience, which Meletus saw fit to travesty in his indictment. It began in my early childhood—a sort of voice which comes to me, and when it comes it always dissuades me from what I am proposing to do, and never urges me on. It is this that debars me from entering public life, and a very good thing too, in my opinion, because you may be quite sure, gentlemen, that if I had tried long ago to engage in politics, I should long ago have lost my life, without doing any good either to you or to myself!

164. For continuation of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 441 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 32:13).

165. With reference to the following three sentences, see Supplement, p. 484 (*Pap.* X^1 A 638).

166. For continuation of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 441 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 35:7).

167. For continuation of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 441 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 35:8).

168. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 414 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 40) and pp. 415–16 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 75).

169. See Romans 8:37.

170. See, for example, Homer, *Iliad*, V, 334–42; *Homers Iliade*, I-II, tr. Christian Wilster (Copenhagen: 1836), I, p. 79; *Homer The Iliad*, I-II, tr. A. T. Mur-

ray (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976–78), I, pp. 219–21 (Diomedes in pursuit of Cypris):

> But when he had come upon her as he pursued her through the great throng, then the son of great-souled Tydeus thrust with his sharp spear and leapt upon her, and wounded the surface of her delicate hand, and forthwith through the ambrosial raiment that the Graces themselves had wrought for her the spear pierced the flesh upon the wrist above the palm and forth flowed the immortal blood of the goddess, the ichor, such as floweth in the blessed gods; for they eat not bread neither drink flaming wine, wherefore they are bloodless, and are called immortals.

171. See I Peter 2:9.

172. Cf. Revelation 1:6.

173. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 415, 481–82 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 60, X[1] A 42, p. 32).

174. An allusion to Archidemes and the Archimedean point. See Plutarch, "Marcellus," 14, *Lives*; *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, I-IX, ed. Gottfried Heinrich Schaeffer (Leipzig: 1812–14; *ASKB* 1197–1200), III, p. 171; *Plutark's Levnetsbeskrivelser*, I-IV, tr. Stephan Tetens (Copenhagen: 1800–11; *ASKB* 1197–1200), III, p. 272; *Plutarch's Lives*, I-XI, tr. Bernadotte Perrin (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968–84), V, pp. 472–73:

> Archimedes, who was a kinsman and friend of King Hiero, wrote to him that with any given force it was possible to move any given weight; and emboldened, as we are told, by the strength of his demonstration, he declared that, if there were another world, and he could go to it, he would move this.

175. Cf. I Peter 3:4.

176. See John 2:1–11.

177. For continuation of the paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 441–42 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 71:28).

178. For continuation of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 442 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:2).

179. See John 18:36.

180. See I Peter 3:4.

181. Matthew 26:53.

182. Luke 9:55.

183. See Philippians 2:7.

184. An allusion to Diogenes of Sinope on Plato's universal ideas. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, VI, 53; *Vitis*, I, pp. 271–72; Riisbrigh, I, p. 252; Loeb, II, pp. 54–55:

> As Plato was conversing about Ideas and using the nouns "tablehood" and "cuphood," he said, "Table and cup I see; but your tablehood and cuphood, Plato, I can nowise see." "That's readily accounted for," said Plato, "for you have the eyes to see the visible table and cup; but not the understanding by which ideal tablehood and cuphood are discerned."

185. See Romans 12:20.

186. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 418 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 89).

187. Danish: *Prioritet* (from Latin *prioritas*), which means "firstness" in a categorical sense and also "mortgage" in a commercial sense.

188. Cf. *Either/Or*, II, pp. 134, 250, *KW* IV (*SV* II 121–22, 224).

189. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 400–01, 418 (*Pap.* IV B 150; VIII[1] A 89).

190. See Genesis 2:18.

191. See Mark 8:2.

192. See Luke 4:2.

193. See Mark 14:66–72.

194. See James 5:9.

195. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 442 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:5).

196. See Mark 7:11.

197. With reference to the remainder of the sentence, see Supplement, pp. 410–11 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 17).

198. See L. Achim v. Arnim and Clemens Brentano, "*Der Tannhäuser*," *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, I-III (Heidelberg: 1819; *ASKB* 1494–96), I, pp. 86–88.

199. For continuation of the sentence, see Supplement, p. 443 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:6).

200. With reference to the following clause, see Supplement, p. 443 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:7).

201. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 443 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 36:8).

202. See, for example, Hegel on Indian religion, *Philosophie der Religion*, *Werke*, XI, pp. 359–61, *J.A.*, XV, pp. 375–77; *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, I-III (tr. of *P.R.*, 2 ed., 1840; Kierkegaard had this edition), tr. E. B. Speirs and J. Burdon Sanderson (New York: Humanities, 1962), II, pp. 23–24:

> The Third is Síva, Mahādeva, the great god, or Rudra: this ought to be the return into self. The First, namely, Brāhma, is the most distant unity, the self-enclosed unity; the Second, Vishnu, is manifestation (the moments of Spirit are thus far not to be mistaken), is life in human form. The Third should be the return to the First, in order that the unity might appear as returning into itself. But it is just this Third which is what is devoid of Spirit; it is the determination of Becoming generally, or of coming into being and passing away. It has been stated that change in the general sense is the Third; thus the fundamental characteristic of Síva is on the one hand the prodigious life-force, on the other what destroys, devastates; the wild energy of natural life. . . .
>
> The Third, instead of being the reconciler, is here merely this wild play of begetting and destroying. Thus the development issues only in a wild whirl of delirium.

203. See Supplement, p. 443 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 36:9).

204. With reference to the following eight paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 421 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 129, 130).

205. With reference to the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 470–71 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 296).

206. See Matthew 27:25.

207. See Luke 22:61.

208. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 421, 444 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 130; VIII^2 B 36:11).

209. With reference to the following four sentences, see Supplement, pp. 400–01 (*Pap.* IV B 150).

210. See John 3:13.

211. Socrates. See Plato, *Symposium*, 203 b-c; *Opera*, III, pp. 500–01; *Udvalgte Dialoger af Platon*, I-VIII, tr. Carl Johan Heise (Copenhagen: 1830–59; *ASKB* 1164–67, 1169 [I-VII]), II, pp. 64–65; *Dialogues*, p. 555.

212. The source of the quotation has not been located.

213. See Matthew 6:19–20.

214. See p. 318.

215. See Matthew 6:3.

216. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 444 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 37:3).

217. See Luke 15:7.

218. See Supplement, p. 444 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:31).

219. The English and Danish terms have semantically similar roots: *object—ob* (against) + *ject* (something that is thrown); *Gjenstand—gjen* (against) + *stand* (something that stands).

220. See Supplement, pp. 481–82 (*Pap.* X^1 A 42).

221. See Supplement, p. 445 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 71:32).

222. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 445 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 37:5).

223. See Romans 13:7.

224. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 445 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 39:1).

225. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following five paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 445–46, 481 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 85:18; IX A 414).

226. See Luke 10:37.

227. See Matthew 6:2.

228. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 446 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 41:1).

229. See *JP* V 6050 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 271); "Does a Person Have the Right To Let Himself Be Put to Death for the Truth," *Two Ethical-Religious Essays*, *KW* XVIII (*SV* XI 55–91).

230. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 446 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 39:3).

231. See note 73 above.

232. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 419 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 113).

233. With reference to the following four paragraphs, see pp. 416–17 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 77).

234. See I Corinthians 1:23.

235. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 446 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 40).

236. See Matthew 24:9.

237. See John 16:2.

238. Genesis 6:2.

239. The Danish *Du*, the familiar second person singular pronoun, was used in addressing family members and close friends.

240. See Matthew 18:7.

241. With reference to the remainder of the sentence, see Supplement, p. 447 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 41:6).

242. See John 16:2.

243. See Luke 16:1–9.

244. With reference to the remainder of the sentence, see Supplement, p. 447 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 41:7).

245. Sermon on Matthew 21:1–9, the first Sunday in Advent, and on Philippians 4:4–7, the fourth Sunday in Advent, *En christelig Postille, sammendragen af Dr. Morten Luthers Kirke- og Huuspostiller*, I-II, tr. Jörgen Thisted (Copenhagen: 1828; *ASKB* 283), I, p. 28, II, p. 46. See also Supplement, pp. 406–07 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 192).

246. With reference to the following five paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 447–48 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 38).

247. See Supplement, p. 481 (*Pap.* IX A 414).

SECOND SERIES

1. On the translation of the Danish *opbygge* and *opbyggelig* as "build up" and "upbuilding," see *Eighteen Discourses*, pp. 503–05, *KW* V.

2. See Matthew 14:13–21; Mark 8:1–10.

3. A Danish children's game called *Komme Fremmed*, in which the identity of the player who is "it" is to be guessed by the others.

4. At this point in the illustrative display of ordinary language, the English idiom does not parallel the Danish.

5. Cf. Matthew 7:26.

6. See Matthew 7:25.

7. Cf. Luke 14:28–30.

8. I Corinthians 14:26.

9. See Supplement, p. 483 (*Pap.* X[1] A 635).

10. See I Corinthians 13:1.

11. I Corinthians 8:1.

12. II Corinthians 12:19.

13. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 448 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 50:2).

14. Cf. Proverbs 16:32.

15. See, for example, *Fragments*, pp. 39, 42–44, *KW* VII (*SV* IV 207, 210–11).

16. See Mark 4:26–29.

17. See Matthew 7:4.

18. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 448 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 50:3).

19. See Luke 7:47.

20. See James 1:19.

21. *Abraham a St. Clara's sämmtliche Werke*, I-XXII (Passau, Lindau: 1835–54; *ASKB* 294–311), X, p. 392. See Supplement, p. 401 (*Pap.* VII^1 A 41).

22. See Luke 15:19–32.

23. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 448–49 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 50:6).

24. I Corinthians 13:13.

25. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following eight paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 423–24 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 186).

26. During the writing of *Works of Love*, Kierkegaard also began sketching proposed lectures on communication. See *JP* I 648–57 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 79, 81–89).

27. Danish: *halv befaren*, literally "half-traveled," used to designate an "ordinary seaman" as distinguished from an "able seaman." See *Postscript*, p. [630], *KW* XII.1 (*SV* VII [549]).

28. With reference to the following two paragraphs and the following clause, see Supplement, p. 449 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 50:11).

29. Socrates. See p. 124 and note 159.

30. See Matthew 7:1.

31. For continuation of the text, see Supplement, p. 449 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 52:1).

32. See Matthew 10:28.

33. See pp. 18–19.

34. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 449–50 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 52:3).

35. Cf. Romans 5:5.

36. See Luke 12:18.

37. See I Corinthians 9:26.

38. Cf. I Corinthians 15:42-44.

39. See II Corinthians 4:17.

40. See I Corinthians 9:24–25.

41. Cf. *For Self-Examination*, pp. 55–70, *KW* XXI (*SV* XII 341–54).

42. See I Corinthians 13:13.

43. See Supplement, p. 472 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 305).

44. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 450 (*Pap.* VIII² B 54:2).

45. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 450, (*Pap.* VIII² B 71:36).

46. See Supplement, p. 450 (*Pap.* VIII² B 71:37).

47. See John 15:9–10.

48. An allusion to Pandora's box. See Paul Friedrich Achat Nitsch, *neues mythologisches Wörterbuch*, I-II, rev. Friedrich Gotthilf Klopfer (Leipzig, Sorau: 1821; *ASKB* 1944–45), II, pp. 410–11. See also Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 80–105; *Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, tr. Hugh G. Evelyn-White (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 8–9.

49. See James 1:27.

50. Cf. Philippians 1:20; Romans 5:4.

51. See Luke 15:11–24.

52. See Genesis 1:26–27.

53. See Matthew 5:48.

54. See Matthew 19:17.

55. See Supplement, p. 471 (*Pap.* VIII¹ A 303).

56. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 424 (*Pap.* VIII¹ A 190).

57. For continuation of the text, see Supplement, pp. 450–51 (*Pap.* VIII² B 55:4).

58. See I Corinthians 3:21.

59. See Luke 17:33.

60. See p. 53 and note 73.

61. See Romans 8:38.

62. See Supplement, pp. 423, 480–81 (*Pap.* VIII¹ A 165; IX A 363).

63. Domitian is reported to have stayed indoors for hours at a time occupied with a pursuit of flies, which upon capture were placed on pins. See Suetonius, "Titus Flavius Domitianus," 3, *The Lives of the Caesars*; *Caji Svetonii Tranqvilli Tolv første Romerske Keiseres Levnetsbeskrivelse*, I-II, tr. Jacob Baden (Copenhagen: 1802–03; *ASKB* 1281), II, p. 231; *Suetonius*, I-II, tr. J. C. Rolfe (Loeb, New York: Macmillan, 1914), II, pp. 344–45. See also *Repetition*, p. 179, *KW* VI (*SV* III 214).

64. See Supplement, p. 408 (*Pap.* VII¹ B 92).

65. See Supplement, pp. 405–06 (*Pap.* VII¹ A 181).

66. See Supplement, pp. 405–06 (*Pap.* VII¹ A 181).

67. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 414 (*Pap.* VIII¹ A 36, 37).

68. Socrates.

69. See *The Concept of Anxiety*, p. 3, *KW* VIII (*SV* IV 276).

70. See Supplement, pp. 405–06 (*Pap.* VII¹ A 181).

71. See Plato, *Theaetetus*, 149 a-b, 150 a-d; *Platonis quae exstant opera*, I-XI, ed. Friedrich Ast (Leipzig: 1819–32; *ASKB* 1144–54), II, pp. 22–25, 26–27; *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 853–54, 855:

SOCRATES: How absurd of you, never to have heard that I am the son of a midwife, a fine buxom woman called Phaenarete!

THEAETETUS: I have heard that.

SOCRATES: Have you also been told that I practice the same art?

THEAETETUS: No, never.

SOCRATES: It is true, though; only don't give away my secret. It is not known that I possess this skill; so the ignorant world describes me in other terms as an eccentric person who reduces people to hopeless perplexity. Have you been told that too?

THEAETETUS: I have.

SOCRATES: Shall I tell you the reason?

THEAETETUS: Please do.

SOCRATES: Consider, then, how it is with all midwives; that will help you to understand what I mean. I dare say you know that they never attend other women in childbirth so long as they themselves can conceive and bear children, but only when they are too old for that.

SOCRATES: All this, then, lies within the midwife's province, but her performance falls short of mine. It is not the way of women sometimes to bring forth real children, sometimes mere phantoms, such that it is hard to tell the one from the other. If it were so, the highest and noblest task of the midwife would be to discern the real from the unreal, would it not?

THEAETETUS: I agree.

SOCRATES: My art of midwifery is in general like theirs; the only difference is that my patients are men, not women, and my concern is not with the body but with the soul that is in travail of birth. And the highest point of my art is the power to prove by every test whether the offspring of a young man's thought is a false phantom or instinct with life and truth. I am so far like the midwife that I cannot myself give birth to wisdom, and the common reproach is true, that though I question others, I can myself bring nothing to light because there is no wisdom in me. The reason is this. Heaven constrains me to serve as a midwife, but has debarred me from giving birth. So of myself I have no sort of wisdom, nor has any discovery ever been born to me as the child of my soul. Those who frequent my company at first appear, some of them, quite unintelligent, but, as we go further with our discussions, all who are favored by heaven make progress at a rate that seems surprising to others as well as to themselves, although it is clear that they have never learned anything from me. The many admirable truths they bring to birth have been discovered by themselves from within. But the delivery is heaven's work and mine.

72. See Plato, *Theaetetus*, 151 b-d; *Opera*, II, pp. 28–31; *Dialogues*, p. 856:

And now for the upshot of this long discourse of mine. I suspect that, as you yourself believe, your mind is in labor with some thought it has conceived. Accept, then, the ministration of a midwife's son who himself prac-

tices his mother's art, and do the best you can to answer the questions I ask. Perhaps when I examine your statements I may judge one or another of them to be an unreal phantom. If I then take the abortion from you and cast it away, do not be savage with me like a woman robbed of her first child. People have often felt like that toward me and been positively ready to bite me for taking away some foolish notion they have conceived. They do not see that I am doing them a kindness. They have not learned that no divinity is ever ill-disposed toward man, nor is such action on my part due to unkindness; it is only that I am not permitted to acquiesce in falsehood and suppress the truth.

See also *Fragments*, p. 21, *KW* VII (*SV* IV 190).

73. See Supplement, p. 451 (*Pap.* VIII² B 55:8).

74. See I Peter 4:8. See also *Three Upbuilding Discourses* (1843), I and II, in *Eighteen Discourses*, pp. 55–78, *KW* V (*SV* III 273–95).

75. See p. 182.

76. See I John 4:18.

77. See I John 4:17.

78. Judges 14:14.

79. See Luke 7:47.

80. See the story of Heracles in Pollux, *Onomasticon*, I, 45–46, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Berlin: 1846), p. 12.

81. See I Corinthians 14:20.

82. See Plato, *Phaedrus*, 244 b-e, 265 a; *Opera*, I, pp. 164–67, 216–17; *Dialogues*, pp. 491–92, 510 (Socrates speaking):

> It was when they were mad that the prophetess at Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona achieved so much for which both states and individuals in Greece are thankful; when sane they did little or nothing. As for the Sibyl and others who by the power of inspired prophecy have so often foretold the future to so many, and guided them aright, I need not dwell on what is obvious to everyone. Yet it is in place to appeal to the fact that madness was accounted no shame nor disgrace by the men of old who gave things their names; otherwise they would not have connected that greatest of arts, whereby the future is discerned, with this very word 'madness,' and named it accordingly. No, it was because they held madness to be a valuable gift, when due to divine dispensation, that they named that art as they did, though the men of today, having no sense of values, have put in an extra letter, making it not *manic* but *mantic*. . . . You see then what this ancient evidence attests. Corresponding to the superior perfection and value of the prophecy of inspiration over that of omen reading, both in name and in fact, is the superiority of heaven-sent madness over man-made sanity.
>
> And in the second place, when grievous maladies and afflictions have beset certain families by reason of some ancient sin, madness has appeared among them, and breaking out into prophecy has secured relief by finding the means

thereto, namely by recourse to prayer and worship, and in consequence thereof rites and means of purification were established, and the sufferer was brought out of danger, alike for the present and for the future.

SOCRATES: I thought you were going to say—and with truth—madly, but that reminds me of what I was about to ask. We said, did we not, that love is a sort of madness?

PHAEDRUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And that there are two kinds of madness, one resulting from human ailments, the other from a divine disturbance of our conventions of conduct.

83. Thomas Kingo, "*Gak under Jesu Kors at staa*," stanza 7, *Psalmer og aandelige Sange af Thomas Kingo*, ed. Peter Andreas Fenger (Copenhagen: 1827; *ASKB* 203), 62, p. 179.

84. See Daniel 3:21–30.

85. Cf. *Fear and Trembling*, p. 9, *KW* VI (*SV* III 61), and note 2.

86. See II Corinthians 4:18.

87. See Isaiah 38:17.

88. Cf. Hebrews 11:1.

89. See *Sickness unto Death*, pp. 105–31, *KW* XIX (*SV* XI 215–41).

90. Cf. Romans 7:8.

91. See Matthew 18:7.

92. See Luke 10:20.

93. See Romans 8:38.

94. Cf. I Corinthians 13:8.

95. The source of the quoted phrase has not been located.

96. See Genesis 1:3.

97. The play between the various meanings of the Danish *blive*, "to be," "to become," and "to abide," cannot be rendered by a single English word.

98. Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus (d. 243 B.C.), called *Cunctator* (Delayer) because of his evasive, dilatory tactics used against Hannibal in the Second Punic War.

99. See note 95 above.

100. See Supplement, p. 471 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 298).

101. See Supplement, p. 471 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 299).

102. Hebrews 13:16.

103. See James 5:9.

104. See Matthew 23:14.

105. See Matthew 6:3.

106. See Luke 10:33–37.

107. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 472 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 311).

108. See Luke 21:1–4.

109. The comment of the exiled Jugurtha as he leaves Rome. See Sallust,

"Jugurtha," 35; *C. Sallusti Crispi opera*, I-II, ed. Friedrich Kritzius (Leipzig: 1828–34; *ASKB* 1269–70), II, pp. 209–11; *Sallusts Jugurthinske Krig*, tr. Rasmus Møller (Copenhagen: 1812), p. 48; *Sallust*, tr. J. C. Rolfe (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 212–13:

> Jugurtha, however, although he was clearly responsible for so flagrant a crime, did not cease to resist the evidence, until he realized that the indignation at the deed was too strong even for his influence and his money. Therefore, although in the first stage of the trial he had given fifty of his friends as sureties, yet having an eye rather to his throne than to the sureties, he sent Bomilcar secretly to Numidia, fearing that if he paid the penalty, the rest of his subjects would fear to obey his orders. A few days later he himself returned home, being ordered by the senate to leave Italy. After going out of the gates, it is said that he often looked back at Rome in silence and finally said, "A city for sale and doomed to speedy destruction if it finds a purchaser!"

110. Socrates. See Plato, *Apology*, 19 d-20 c, 33 a-b; *Opera*, VIII, pp. 104–05, 136–37; *Dialogues*, pp. 6, 18–19 (Socrates speaking):

> The fact is that there is nothing in any of these charges, and if you have heard anyone say that I try to educate people and charge a fee, there is no truth in that either. I wish that there were, because I think that it is a fine thing if a man is qualified to teach, as in the case of Gorgias of Leontini and Prodicus of Ceos and Hippias of Elis. Each one of these is perfectly capable of going into any city and actually persuading the young men to leave the company of their fellow citizens, with any of whom they can associate for nothing, and attach themselves to him, and pay money for the privilege, and be grateful into the bargain.
>
> There is another expert too from Paros who I discovered was here on a visit; I happened to meet a man who has paid more in Sophists' fees than all the rest put together—I mean Callias, the son of Hipponicus. So I asked him--he has two sons, you see—. . . . Who is the expert in perfecting the human and social qualities? I assume from the fact of your having sons that you must have considered the question. Is there such a person or not?
>
> Certainly, said he.
>
> Who is he, and where does he come from? said I. And what does he charge?
>
> Evenus of Paros, Socrates, said he, and his fee is five minas.
>
> I felt that Evenus was to be congratulated if he really was a master of this art and taught it at such a moderate fee. I should certainly plume myself and give myself airs if I understood these things, but in fact, gentlemen, I do not.
>
> I have never set up as any man's teacher, but if anyone, young or old, is eager to hear me conversing and carrying out my private mission, I never grudge him the opportunity; nor do I charge a fee for talking to him, and refuse to talk without one. I am ready to answer questions for rich and poor alike, and I am equally ready if anyone prefers to listen to me and answer my questions.

If any given one of these people becomes a good citizen or a bad one, I cannot fairly be held responsible, since I have never promised or imparted any teaching to anybody, and if anyone asserts that he has ever learned or heard from me privately anything which was not open to everyone else, you may be quite sure that he is not telling the truth.

111. See I Corinthians 4:12; I Thessalonians 2:9.

112. See Suetonius, "The Deified Vespasian," 23, *Lives of the Caesars*; Baden, II, p. 213; Loeb, II, pp. 318–19:

When Titus found fault with him for contriving a tax upon public conveniences, he held a piece of money from the first payment to his son's nose, asking whether its odour was offensive to him. When Titus said "No," he replied, "Yet it comes from urine."

113. See Ephesians 5:2; Philippians 4:18.

114. See Luke 16:19–31.

115. See Supplement, pp. 417–18 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 88).

116. Peder Norden Sølling (1758–1822), Norwegian-born naval officer who developed a superior type of pilot boat used also in rescue missions. The picture referred to was a repeatedly printed lithograph by Ludvig Fehr.

117. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 425 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 207).

118. See Acts 3:1–8.

119. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 468 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 279).

120. See Romans 8:37.

121. See Plutarch, "Pyrrhus," 21; *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, I-IX, ed. Gottfried Heinrich Schaeffer (Leipzig: 1812–14; *ASKB* 1181–89), IV, pp. 99–100; *Plutark's Levnetsbeskrivelser*, I-IV, tr. Stephan Tetens (Copenhagen: 1800–11; *ASKB* 1197–1200), IV, pp. 181–82; *Plutarch's Lives*, I-XI, tr. Bernadotte Perrin (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968–84), IX, pp. 414–17:

After a short flight the Romans reached their camp, with a loss of six thousand men, according to Hieronymus, who also says that on the side of Pyrrhus, according to the king's own commentaries, thirty-five hundred and five were killed. Dionysius, however, makes no mention of two battles at Asculum, nor of an admitted defeat of the Romans, but says that the two armies fought once for all until sunset and then at last separated; Pyrrhus, he says, was wounded in the arm by a javelin, and also had his baggage plundered by the Daunians; and there fell, on the side of Pyrrhus and on that of the Romans, over fifteen thousand men.

The two armies separated; and we are told that Pyrrhus said to one who was congratulating him on his victory, "If we are victorious in one more battle with the Romans, we shall be utterly ruined." For he had lost a great part of the forces with which he came, and all his friends and generals except a few; moreover, he had no others whom he could summon from home, and

he saw that his allies in Italy were becoming indifferent, while the army of the Romans, as if from a fountain gushing forth indoors, was easily and speedily filled up again, and they did not lose courage in defeat, nay, their wrath gave them all the more vigour and determination for the war.

122. An allusion to Solon and Croesus. See p. 31 and note 47.

123. See Romans 12:21.

124. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, pp. 419–20 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 114).

125. Matthew 5:23–24.

126. See Matthew 5:25.

127. II Corinthians 5:20.

128. See I John 4:19.

129. For Kierkegaard's distinction between recollection [*Erindring*] and memory [*Hukommelse*], see *Stages*, pp. 9–15, *KW* XI (*SV* VI 15–20).

130. See p. 106.

131. The source of the quotation has not been located. It could be an allusion to the "Nook of Eight Paths." See *Stages*, pp. 16–19, *KW* XI (*SV* VI 21–24). "Eight paths and not a traveler! Indeed, it is as if the world were dead" (p. 17 [22]).

132. See Psalm 137:5–6.

133. See Luke 18:2–5.

134. With reference to the following two clauses, see Supplement, p. 451 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 59:14).

135. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 451 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 59:16).

136. With reference to the following 16 pages, see Supplement, p. 482 (*Pap.* X[1] A 161).

137. With reference to the heading and the following three paragraphs, see Supplement, pp. 422–23, 452 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 160; VIII[2] B 58:1).

138. See Supplement, p. 452 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 71:39).

139. With reference to the following two sentences, see Supplement, p. 452 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 58:3).

140. Cf., for example, *Sickness unto Death*, pp. 14, 30, 46, 49, 82, 101, 124, 131, *KW* XIX (*SV* XI 128, 144, 158, 160, 194, 211, 233, 241).

141. See, for example, *JP* III 2820 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 200).

142. See Mark 8:35.

143. J. G. v. Herder, *Abhandlungen und Briefe über schöne Literatur und Kunst*, II, 45, *Johann Gottfried von Herder's sämmtliche Werke. Zur schönen Literatur und Kunst*, I-XX (Stuttgart, Tübingen: 1827–30; *ASKB* 1685–94), XVI, p. 114. See *JP* II 1550; V 5560, 5674 (*Pap.* IV B 96:1; III A 203; IV A 126).

144. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 452 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 58:5).

145. See Supplement, p. 452 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 58:3).

146. See Supplement, pp. 452–53 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 59:20). See also pp. 364–65.

147. See, for example, *Stages*, pp. 445, 470–71, *KW* XI (*SV* VI 415, 437–38).

148. With reference to the remainder of the sentence and the following two sentences, see Supplement, p. 453 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 58:4).

149. See p. 37 and note 55.

150. See Supplement, pp. 405–06 (*Pap.* VII^1 A 181).

151. With reference to the following two sentences, see Supplement, pp. 452–53 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 59:20).

152. See, for example, Homer, *Odyssey*, I, 1–10; *Homers Odyssee*, tr. Christian Wilster (Copenhagen: 1837), p. 3; *Homer The Odyssey*, I-II, tr. A. T. Murray (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976–80), I, pp. 2–3:

> Tell me, O Muse, of the man of many devices, who wandered full many ways after he had sacked the sacred citadel of Troy. Many were the men whose cities he saw and whose mind he learned, aye, and many the woes he suffered in his heart upon the sea, seeking to win his own life and the return of his comrades. Yet even so he saved not his comrades, though he desired it sore, for through their own blind folly they perished—fools, who devoured the kine of Helios Hyperion; but he took from them the day of their returning. Of these things, goddess, daughter of Zeus, beginning where thou wilt, tell thou even unto us.

153. See Luke 17:10.

154. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 453 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 58:7).

155. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 453 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 58:8).

156. II Corinthians 5:11.

157. With reference to the following paragraph and the following two sentences, see Supplement, pp. 453–54 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 58:9).

158. See Supplement, pp. 453–54, 478 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 58:9; VIII^1 A 627). Cf. *Anxiety*, p. 3, *KW* VIII (*SV* IV 276).

159. A formulation by the Sophist Protagoras. Plato, *Theaetetus*, 152 a (see also *Cratylus*, 386 a; *Opera*, III, p. 112, *Dialogues*, p. 424); *Opera*, II, pp. 30–31; *Dialogues*, p. 856: "'Man is the measure of all things—alike of the being of things that are and of the not-being of things that are not.'" See also *Fragments*, p. 38, *KW* VII (*SV* IV 205); *Postscript*, p. 33, *KW* XII.1 (*SV* VII 22). See Supplement, pp. 408–09 (*Pap.* VII^1 A 235).

160. See I Thessalonians 4:1.

161. Cf. Plato, *Apology*, 24 e-25 a; *Opera*, VIII, pp. 116–17; *Dialogues*, p. 11 (Socrates speaking):

> Do you mean, Meletus, that they have the ability to educate the young, and to make them better?
>
> Certainly.
>
> Does this apply to all jurymen, or only to some?

To all of them.

Excellent! A generous supply of benefactors. Well, then, do these spectators who are present in court have an improving influence, or not?

Yes, they do.

And what about the members of the Council?

Yes, the councilors too.

But surely, Meletus, the members of the Assembly do not corrupt the young? Or do all of them too exert an improving influence?

Yes, they do.

Then it would seem that the whole population of Athens has a refining effect upon the young, except myself, and I alone demoralize them. Is that your meaning?

Most emphatically, yes.

162. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 454 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 59:23).

163. For continuation of the text, see Supplement, pp. 455–61 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 73).

164. With reference to the following two sentences, see Supplement, p. 461 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 62).

165. With reference to the following two sentences, see Supplement, pp. 461–62 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 63:1).

166. Socrates. See, for example, Plato, *Symposium*, 201 a-212 a; *Opera*, III, pp. 494–521; Heise, II, pp. 59–81; *Dialogues*, pp. 553–63.

167. Cf. Ephesians 4:30.

168. With reference to the following paragraph, see Supplement, p. 470 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 295).

169. With reference to the following three sentences, see Supplement, p. 462 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 63:5).

170. See Supplement, p. 472 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 309).

171. With reference to the following twelve sentences, see Supplement, p. 424 (*Pap.* VIII^1 A 189).

172. With reference to the remainder of the sentence and the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 462 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 63:9). See also Plato, *Symposium*, 210 b-c; *Opera*, III, pp. 516–17; Heise, II, p. 78; *Dialogues*, p. 562 (Diotima speaking):

> Next he must grasp that the beauties of the body are as nothing to the beauties of the soul, so that wherever he meets with spiritual loveliness, even in the husk of an unlovely body, he will find it beautiful enough to fall in love with and to cherish—and beautiful enough to quicken in his heart a longing for such discourse as tends toward the building of a noble nature. And from this he will be led to contemplate the beauty of laws and institutions. And when he discovers how nearly every kind of beauty is akin to every other he will conclude that the beauty of the body is not, after all, of so great moment.

173. See Matthew 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27.

174. With reference to the following three paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 482 (*Pap.* X[1] A 161).

175. With reference to the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 462 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 63:12).

176. Cf. Hebrews 1:1.

177. For continuation of the sentence, see Supplement, p. 462 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 71:41).

178. I John 4:7.

179. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 463 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 58:14).

180. With reference to the remainder of the deliberation, see Supplement, pp. 419–20, 463 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 114; VIII[2] B 58:15, 64).

181. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 479 (*Pap.* IX A 28).

182. See I Corinthians 1:23.

183. See Exodus 21:24.

184. With reference to the following three paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 464 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 65).

185. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph, see Supplement, p. 408 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 228).

186. Matthew 8:13.

187. Cf. I John 4:18.

188. See Galatians 6:7.

189. See Matthew 6:14.

190. With reference to the remainder of the paragraph and the following two paragraphs, see Supplement, p. 464 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 68:4).

191. With reference to the following seven sentences, see Supplement, pp. 401–02, 464 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 87; VIII[2] B 68:4).

192. For continuation of the text, see Supplement, p. 464 (*Pap.* VIII[1] B 71:42).

193. See Matthew 7:3.

194. Abraham a St. Clara, *Grammatica Religiosa oder geistliche Tugend-Schule*, *Sämmtliche Werke*, I-XXI (Passau, Lindau: 1835–54; *ASKB* 294–311), XV, p. 148. With reference to the following three sentences, see Supplement, p. 464 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 66).

195. For continuation of the text, see Supplement, p. 465 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 69:3).

196. With reference to the following three sentences, see Supplement, pp. 414–15 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 55).

197. With reference to the following three sentences, see Supplement, pp. 465–66 (*Pap.* VIII[2] B 67).

198. James 1:17.

199. With reference to the following sentence, see Supplement, p. 411 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 19).

SUPPLEMENT

1. See Matthew 6:43–46.

2. *Figaros Giftermaal eller Den gale Dag*, tr. Niels Thoroup Bruun (Copenhagen: 1817), IV, 14, pp. 138–42; *Le Nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*), tr. Ruth and Thomas Martin (New York: G. Schurmer, 1951), pp. 445–58.

3. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1168 a-1169 b, 1177 a; *Aristoteles graece*, I-II, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Berlin: 1831; *ASKB* 1074–75), II, pp. 1168, 1177; *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, I-II, ed. Jonathan Barnes (rev. Oxford tr., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), II, pp. 1847–48, 1860.

4. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177 a; Bekker, II, p. 1177; cf. *Works*, II, p. 1860.

5. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177 a-1178 a; Bekker, II, p. 1177; *Works*, II, pp. 1860–62.

6. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1176 b; Bekker, II, p. 1176; *Works*, II, p. 1859.

7. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1176 a-b; Bekker, II, p. 1176; *Works*, II, pp. 1859–60.

8. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1178 b; Bekker, II, p. 1178; *Works*, II, pp. 1862–63.

9. See *JP* V 5645 (*Pap.* IV A 85).

10. *Sancti Aurelii Augustini hipponensis episcopi opera*, I-XVIII (Bassani: 1797–1807; *ASKB* 117–34), XVIII, col. 26–30. The numerous entries under *Amo*, *Amor*, etc. do not include Kierkegaard's formulation, which covers material from various subrubrics in the index.

11. *Abraham a St. Clara's sämmtliche Werke*, I-XXII (Passau, Lindau: 1835–54; *ASKB* 294–311).

12. *Discourses in Various Spirits*, p. 4, *KW* XV (*SV* VIII 116).

13. See Martin Luther, sermon on Romans 13:11–14, the first Sunday in Advent, *En christelig Postille, sammendragen af Dr. Morten Luthers Kirke- og Huuspostiller*, I-II, tr. Jörgen Thisted (Copenhagen: 1828; *ASKB* 283), II, p. 11; *Luther's Epistle Sermons*, I-III, tr. John Nicholas Lenker (Minneapolis: Luther Press, 1908–09), I, pp. 11–12.

14. Cf. Mark 7:32.

15. *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits*, published March 13, 1847.

16. "The Gospel of Sufferings," Part Three of *Discourses in Various Spirits*, p. 215, *KW* XV (*SV* VIII 303).

17. Dr. Rasmus Møller, *Veiledning til en andægtig og forstandig Læsning af det Nye Testament, især for ulærde Læsere* (Copenhagen: 1824). Bishop Møller was the father of Poul Martin Møller, professor of philosophy, University of Copenhagen.

18. See Hebrews 7:27; 9:12,26,28; 10:10.

19. Lessing, *Laokoon, oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie*, III, XV-XVIII; *Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's sämmtliche Schriften*, I-XXXII (Berlin, Stettin: 1825–28; *ASKB* 1747–62), II, pp. 147–52, 265–99, esp. pp. 148–50, 269;

Laocoön, Nathan the Wise, Minna von Barnhelm, tr. W. A. Steel (Toronto: 1930), pp. 14–16, 53–69, esp. pp. 14–15, 55:

> The fact that the material limits of Art confine her imitative effort to one single moment will, I believe, lead us to similar conclusions.
>
> If the artist can never, in presence of ever-changing Nature, choose and use more than one single moment, and the painter in particular can use this single moment only from one point of vision; if, again, their works are made not merely to be seen, but to be considered, to be long and repeatedly contemplated, then it is certain that that single moment, and the single viewpoint of that moment, can never be chosen too significantly. Now that alone is significant and fruitful which gives free play to the imagination. The more we see, the more must we be able to add by thinking. The more we add thereto by thinking, so much the more can we believe ourselves to see. In the whole gamut of an emotion, however, there is no moment less advantageous than its topmost note. Beyond it there is nothing further, and to show us the uttermost is to tie the wings of fancy and oblige her, as she cannot rise above the sensuous impression, to busy herself with weaker pictures below it, the visible fullness of expression acting as a frontier which she dare not transgress. When, therefore, Laocoön sighs, the imagination can hear him shriek; but if he shrieks, then she cannot mount a step higher from this representation, nor, again, descend a step lower without seeing him in a more tolerable and consequently more uninteresting condition. She hears him only groan, or she sees him already dead.
>
> Further. As this single moment receives from Art an unchangeable continuance, it must not express anything which thought is obliged to consider transitory. All phenomena of whose very essence, according to our conceptions, it is that they break out suddenly and as suddenly vanish, that what they are they can be only for a moment—all such phenomena, whether agreeable or terrible, do, by the permanence which Art bestows, put on an aspect so abhorrent to Nature that at every repeated view of them the impression becomes weaker, until at last the whole thing inspires us with horror or loathing. La Mettrie, who had himself painted and engraved as a second Democritus, laughs only the first time that one sees him. View him often, and from a philosopher he becomes a fool, and the laugh becomes a grin. So, too, with cries. The violent pain which presses out the cry either speedily relaxes or it destroys the sufferer. If, again, the most patient and resolute man cries aloud, still he does not cry out without intermission. And just this unintermitting aspect in the material imitations of Art it is which would make his cries an effeminate or a childish weakness. This at least the artist of the Laocoön had to avoid, if cries had not been themselves damaging to beauty, and if even it had been permitted to his art to depict suffering without beauty.
>
> Painting, in her co-existing compositions, can use only one single moment of the action, and must therefore choose the most pregnant, from which what precedes and follows will be most easily apprehended.

20. Romans 13:5.

21. See p. 136 and note 174.

22. Considerable work was done on the proposed lectures, but they were not finished and none of them was delivered or printed. See *JP* I 648–57 (*Pap.* VIII^{2} B 79, 81–89); Supplement, pp. 420–21 (*Pap.* VIII^{1} A 120).

23. Matthew 10:17.

24. Luke 10:42.

25. See Matthew 5:24.

26. See note 22 above.

27. See Corsair *Affair*, Historical Introduction, pp. xxi-xxii, and Index, p. 318, *KW* XIII.

28. See note 22 above.

29. Possibly an allusion to the Persian ruler Xerxes (d. 465 B.C.). See Herodotus, *History* VII, 100; *Die Geschichten des Herodotos*, I-II, tr. Friedrich Lange (Berlin: 1811–12; *ASKB* 1117), II, p. 184; *Herodotus*, I-IV, tr. A. D. Godley (Loeb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981–82), III, pp. 402–03.

30. Augustin Eugène Scribe (1791–1861), French dramatist. See "The First Love," *Either/Or*, I, pp. 231–79, *KW* III (*SV* I 205–51).

31. Emilie Carlèn, *En Nat ved Bullar-Søen*, *Berlingske Tidende*, 43–206, February 20-September 4, 1847.

32. See Matthew 25:14–30; Luke 19:11–27.

33. See *JP* IV 4441 (*Pap.* VIII^{1} A 67).

34. See Matthew 18:23–35.

35. See Matthew 26:69–75; Luke 22:56–62.

36. See Luther, sermon on Acts 6:8–14, 7:54–59, Second Christmas Day (St. Stephen's Day), *Postille*, II, p. 66; *Epistle Sermons*, I, p. 199.

37. Herman von Bremen, a character in Ludvig Holberg, *Den politiske Kandestøber*, II, 3, *Den Danske Skue-Plads*, I-VII (Copenhagen: 1788; *ASKB* 1566–67), I, no pagination; *The Political Tinker, Comedies by Holberg*, tr. Oscar James Campbell and Frederic Schenck (New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1935), p. 68.

38. See II Corinthians 12:7. See also, for example, "The Thorn in the Flesh," *Four Upbuilding Discourses* (1844), in *Eighteen Discourses*, pp. 327–46, *KW* V (*SV* V 106–23).

39. See II Corinthians 5:11.

40. Cf. *For Self-Examination*, p. 2, *KW* XXI (*SV* XII 294).

41. See II Corinthians 10:13–18; 11:17–30.

42. See II Corinthians 12:19.

43. See Matthew 16:4.

44. See Corsair *Affair*, *KW* XIII.

45. See Shakespeare, *Henry the Fourth, Part One*, III, 2, 46–59; *William Shakspeare's Tragiske Værker*, I-IX, tr. Peter Foersom and Peter Frederik Wulff (Copenhagen: 1807–25; *ASKB* 1889–96); III, p. 109; *Shakspeare's dramatische Werke*, I-XII, tr. August Wilhelm v. Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck (Berlin: 1839–

41; *ASKB* 1883–88), I, p. 269; *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. George Lyman Kittredge (Boston: Ginn, 1936), pp. 565–66:

> By being seldom seen, I could not stir
> But, like a comet, I was wond'red at;
> That men would tell their children, "This is he!"
> Others would say, "Where? Which is Bolingbroke?"
> And then I stole all courtesy from heaven,
> And dress'd myself in such humility
> That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
> Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths
> Even in the presence of the crowned King.
> Thus did I keep my person fresh and new,
> My presence, like a robe pontifical,
> Ne'er seen but wond'red at; and so my state,
> Seldom but sumptuous, show'd like a feast
> And won by rareness such solemnity.

See also *JP* V 5892 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 105).

46. The source of the quotation has not been located.

47. See Isaiah 3:4; *JP* II 1162; IV 4127 (*Pap.* VII[1] A 58; VIII[1] A 531).

48. See Plato, *Apology*, 18 c-e; *Platonis quae exstant opera*, I-XI, ed. Friedrich Ast (Leipzig: 1819–32; *ASKB* 1144–54), pp. 100–03; *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 5 (Socrates speaking):

> And the most fantastic thing of all is that it is impossible for me even to know and tell you their names, unless one of them happens to be a playwright. All these people, who have tried to set you against me out of envy and love of slander—and some too merely passing on what they have been told by others—all these are very difficult to deal with. It is impossible to bring them here for cross-examination; one simply has to conduct one's defense and argue one's case against an invisible opponent, because there is no one to answer. So I ask you to accept my statement that my critics fall into two classes, on the one hand my immediate accusers, and on the other those earlier ones whom I have mentioned, and you must suppose that I have first to defend myself against the latter. After all, you heard them abusing me longer ago and much more violently than these more recent accusers.

49. See John 13:35.

50. See II Corinthians 9:6.

51. See Matthew 25:40.

52. See Matthew 8:13.

53. The inhabitants of Jylland were traditionally referred to as the guardians of Denmarks wealth, the largest fertile land area of Denmark, but also as the robbers of that same wealth.

54. *Abraham a St. Clara's Sämmtliche Werke*, I-XXI (Passau, Lindau: 1835–47; *ASKB* 294–311).

55. Ibid., XV, pp. 54–55. See *JP* V 6024 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 204); *Pap.* VIII[2] C 2:28.

56. Johan Ludvig Heiberg (1791–1860), prominent Danish literary critic and poet. He was also an advocate of Hegelian philosophy.

57. See note 59 below.

58. "The Joy of It That the Happiness of Eternity Still Outweighs Even the Heaviest Temporal Suffering," *Discourses in Various Spirits*, pp. 306–11, *KW* XV (*SV* VIII 385–90).

59. Jakob Peter Mynster (1775–1854), Bishop of Sjælland, a family friend from the days of Kierkegaard's father. Kierkegaard read Mynster's sermons regularly, as his father had done. See *JP* V 6073 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 397).

60. *Works of Love*, published September 29, 1847.

61. Sophie Henriette Glahn Kierkegaard (1809–1881), wife of Kierkegaard's brother Peter Christian, Bishop of Aalborg. *Letters*, Letter 150, *KW* XXV.

62. The book accompanying the letter was most likely *Works of Love*.

63. Parmenides and Zeno of Elea maintained that the concepts of motion and change involve logical contradictions and that sense experience is therefore illusory. The anecdote about Diogenes of Sinope is found in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, VI, 39; *Diogenis Laertii de vitis philosophorum*, I-II (Leipzig: 1833; *ASKB* 1109), I, p. 266; *Diogen Laertses filosofiske Historie*, I-II, tr. Børge Riisbrigh (Copenhagen: 1812; *ASKB* 1110–11), I, p. 246; *Diogenes Laertius*, I-II, tr. R. D. Hicks (Loeb, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1979–80), II, pp. 40–41: "In like manner, when somebody declared that there is no such thing as motion, he got up and walked about." Cf. *Repetition*, p. 131, *KW* VI (*SV* III 173).

64. See Historical Introduction, p. xv.

65. Kierkegaard used Inter et Inter for the pseudonymous author of *The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress* (published July 24, 25, 26, and 27, 1848 in *Fædrelandet*), with *Christian Discourses*, *KW* XVII (*SV* X 323–44).

66. *Works of Love* had been published three month's earlier (September 29, 1847). The projected work became *Sickness unto Death* (July 30, 1849). See *JP* IV 4012, 4013; V 6110, 6134, 6136–38 (*Pap.* VIII[1] A 473, 497, 558, 648, 651–53.

67. *Nyt Aftenbladet*, 294, December 17, 1847.

68. Ibid., 291, 292, 294, December 14, 15, 17, 1847.

69. Ibid., 295, December 18, 1847.

70. See the title page of Part Three of *Christian Discourses*, *KW* XVII (*SV* X 161–244).

71. Ibid., "Discourses at the Communion on Fridays," Part Four (245–317).

72. See note 59 above.

73. See p. 368.

74. See Plutarch, "On the Control of Anger," 461 d-e; *Plutarchs moralische Abhandlungen*, I-IX, tr. Johann Friedrich S. Kaltwasser (Frankfurt am Main:

1783–1800; *ASKB* 1192–96), IV, p. 280; *Plutarch's Moralia*, I-XV, tr. Frank Cole Babbitt et al. (Loeb, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1967–84), VI, pp. 142–143:

> Once when Socrates took Euthydemus home with him from the palaestra, Xanthippê came up to them in a rage and scolded them roundly, finally upsetting the table. Euthydemus, deeply offended, got up and was about to leave when Socrates said, "At your house the other day did not a hen fly in and do precisely this same thing, yet we were not put out about it?"

75. A royal summer residence north of Copenhagen in a wooded park along the stream running into Lyngby Sø.

76. Peter Diderik Ibsen (1793–1855), from whom Kierkegaard took instruction in church music in 1839. In 1847 he was pastor in Kongens Lyngby, near the royal residence of Sorgenfrie.

77. See Supplement, pp. 455–61 (*Pap.* VIII^2 B 73).

78. *Postscript*, pp. [625–30], *KW* XII.1 (*SV* VII [545–49]).

79. Cf. ibid., p. [626] ([546]).

80. See *Two Ages*, pp. 93 fn., 94–96, *KW* XIV (*SV* VIII 87 fn., 88–89).

81. Luther, sermon on Matthew 6:24–34, the fifteenth Sunday after Trinity, *Postille*, I, p. 520.

82. See *Fear and Trembling*, p. 31 and note 14, *KW* VI (*SV* III 83).

83. Pp. 108–12.

84. I John 3:17.

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