This document is subject to the following notice:

NOTICE: This material may be protected by copyright law.

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, U.S. Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material; the person using this equipment is liable for any infringement.
III.
To show that God exists, it is necessary to investigate man’s consciousness of himself. The bodily senses and the inner sense.

20 A. Let us take up our search in the following order, if you will. First, how is it proved [manifestum] that God exists? Second, are all things whatsoever, insofar as they are good, from God? Finally, is free will to be counted as a good? When we have answered these questions, it will be quite clear, I think, whether free will was rightly given. Therefore, to start at the beginning with the most obvious, I will ask you first whether you yourself exist. Are you, perhaps, afraid that you are being deceived by my questioning? But if you did not exist, it would be impossible for you to be deceived.

E. Let us move on.

21 A. Since it is clear that you exist, and since this would not be clear to you unless you lived, it is also clear that you are alive. So you understand that these two points are absolutely true?

E. I fully understand.

A. Then this third point is also clear: you understand.

E. Yes.

A. Which of these three things do you think is the best?

E. Understanding.

A. Why do you think so?

22 E. Because, while there are these things—to be, to live, and to understand—the stone is, and the beast lives, yet I think that the stone does not live, nor the beast understand. Furthermore, it is very certain that he who understands both is and lives. For this reason, I do not hesitate to judge that in which all these three are present to be more perfect than that in which any one is lacking. For what lives, also is; but it does not follow that it also understands. Such, I think, is the life of a beast. Furthermore, what is does not necessarily live or understand. I can admit that a dead body is, yet no one would say that it lives. Likewise, what does not live surely does not understand.

A. We maintain, then, that the dead body lacks two of these three; the beast, one; and man, none.

E. Yes.

A. We maintain this as well: of these three, what man has in addition to the two others—that is, understanding—is the most excellent. In having this, man consequently also is and lives.

E. We also maintain this.

A. Now tell me whether you know that you possess the ordinary bodily senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

E. I know that I possess them.

A. What do you think is the proper object of the sense of sight? That is, what do we perceive by sight?

E. Anything corporeal.

A. We don’t perceive hardness and softness by sight, do we?

E. We do not.

A. What then is the proper object of the eyes; what do we perceive with them?

E. Color.

A. The ears?

E. Sound.

A. Smell?

E. Odor.

A. Taste?

E. Flavor.

A. Touch?

E. Soft and hard, smooth and rough, and many other such things.

A. What about the shapes of bodies: large, small, angular, rounded, and others of this kind? Don’t we perceive them by touch and sight, so that they can properly be attributed, neither to sight nor to touch alone, but to both?
Therefore, you understand both that each sense has certain objects of its own about which it reports, and that some senses have objects in common.

E. I understand this also.

A. We cannot, can we, discern by any one sense either what is the proper object of that individual sense, or what all or some senses possess in common among themselves?

E. Of course not. This is discerned by something within.

A. Can this be reason, which beasts lack? For it seems to me that by reason we grasp this and know it is so.

E. No; I think, rather, that by reason we understand that there is a certain inner sense to which all things are referred by the five familiar senses. For the beast sees by one thing; by another, it avoids or seeks what it has perceived with its sight. For sight lies in its eyes, while the other sense lies within its soul. By this other sense, animals either seek and take (if pleased), or avoid and reject (if annoyed), what they see, hear, and grasp with the other senses. This sense cannot be called either sight, hearing, smell, taste or touch. It is something else which controls all the senses in common. While we grasp this with our reason, we cannot call it reason, since it is clearly to be found in beasts.

A. I recognize this, whatever it is, and I do not hesitate to name it "the inner sense." But unless what we perceive by the bodily senses passes beyond the inner sense, we cannot arrive at knowledge [scientia]. Whatever we know, we grasp and hold to by reason. Moreover, we know that we cannot perceive colors with our hearing or voices with our eyes, to say nothing of the other senses. When we know this, we know it neither by the eyes, nor by the ears, nor by the inner sense which beasts do not lack. We must not believe that beasts know that light is not perceived by the ears nor a voice by the eyes, for we perceive this only by rational thought and reflection within the soul.

E. I cannot say that I am clear about this. What if animals, too, discern that colors cannot be perceived by hear-
ON FREE CHOICE OF THE WILL

A. Yet you do know this: that it is not possible to define these things except by reason, and that reason cannot do this except in the case of things which are brought to it to be examined.

E. That is certain.

A. Whatever that other thing is by which all that we know can be perceived, it is the servant of reason, to which it brings and reports whatever touches it, so that what is perceived can be distinguished by its own limits and grasped, not only by perception, but also by knowledge.

E. Yes.

A. That very reason which discerns its own servants and the objects that they bring to it, which likewise recognizes the differences between these things and itself, and affirms that it is more powerful than they—that very reason does not comprehend itself by anything other than itself, that is, reason, does it? Would you know that you possessed reason by any other means than perceiving it by reason?

E. This is most true.

A. Then, when we perceive color, we do not likewise perceive that we perceive it by the sense of sight itself; when we hear a sound, we do not hear our own hearing; when we smell a rose, something has fragrance for us, but not our sense of smell. When we taste something, the sense of taste itself does not taste in our mouth. We touch something, but we cannot touch the sense of touch itself. Since this is so, it is clear that these five senses cannot perceive themselves, although all corporeal objects may be perceived by them.

E. Yes.

IV.

The inner sense perceives that it perceives; the bodily senses do not.

A. It is also clear, I think, not only that the inner sense perceives what is presented by the five senses of the body, but also that it perceives the bodily senses themselves. Otherwise,
V.
The inner sense that controls and judges the bodily senses is more excellent than the bodily senses.

42 E. As I remember, of the three questions that we proposed to form the order of this discourse a little while ago, we are now dealing with the first: how we can prove that God exists, even though we believe it firmly and steadfastly.

A. Your memory is correct. I also want you to keep carefully in mind that when I asked whether you knew what I existed, it became obvious that you knew not only this, but also two other things [that you live and that you understand].

E. I remember this as well.

43 A. Now see in which of these three belongs everything that the senses of the body perceive; that is, in which of these classes would you place whatever reaches our senses through the eyes (or, for that matter, any organ of the body whatsoever)? In that which merely exists, that which also lives, or that which understands?

E. In that which merely exists.

A. In which class would you place the sense itself?

E. In that which lives.

A. Which of these two do you judge to be the better, the sense or its object?

E. The sense, of course.

A. Why?

E. Because what lives is better than what merely exists.

44 A. What of the inner sense, which we investigated previously and found to be inferior to reason, yet common to man and beast? Will you hesitate to rank this higher than the senses of the body—which, in turn, are to be ranked higher than the body itself?

E. No, I would not.

A. I would like to hear why you would not. You cannot say that the inner sense should be placed in that one of the three classes which understands as well, but only in that which is or lives, since it lacks understanding; for the inner sense is present in beasts as well, and they do not have understanding. Since this is so, I ask you why you place the inner sense higher than the sense which perceives corporeal objects. Both belong to the class that lives. Moreover, you placed the sense that touches bodies over the bodies themselves, because bodies are in the class of things that merely exist, while this sense is in the class of things that live. Since the inner sense is also found in the class that lives, tell me why you think it better. If you say, "Because the inner sense perceives the bodily sense," I believe that you will not find a rule by which we can confidently assert that everything which perceives is better than what it perceives. For by this same rule, we would be forced to admit that everything which understands is better than what is understood. This is false; for man understands wisdom, yet he is not better than wisdom itself. Therefore, why do you think that the inner sense is to be placed above the sense by which we perceive bodies?

E. Because I recognize that it controls and, as it were, judges the bodily senses. If something is missing in the performance of their function, the inner sense demands its debt, so to speak, from its servants, just as we proved a little while ago. For the sense of the eye does not see that it sees or does not see. Since it does not, it cannot judge what is missing or what is sufficient. The inner sense, however, advises the bodily sense, in the soul of a beast, to open the closed eyes and to complete what it perceives is lacking. No one can doubt that what judges is better than what is judged.

A. You assert, then, that the bodily sense makes judgments in the same way about bodies? For pleasure and pain affect the bodily sense when it is touched gently or roughly by a body. Just as the inner sense judges what is lacking or what is sufficient in the sense of the eyes, so the sense of the eyes itself judges what is lacking or sufficient in color. Just as the inner sense judges whether or not our hearing is intent enough, so hearing itself judges voices, what flows in harmoniously or what makes a harsh noise. We need not continue with
the rest of the senses. I think that you know what I mean; just as the inner sense makes judgments about the senses of the body, approving their completeness or demanding what is lacking, so the senses of the body make judgments about bodies, accepting from among them what is pleasing and rejecting what is not.

E. I understand and agree.

VI.
Reason is the highest and most excellent faculty of man. God and that which is more excellent than reason.

51 A. Now see if reason makes any judgment about the inner sense. I am not asking whether you doubt that reason is better than the inner sense, since I am sure you think it is. I think that now we do not need to question whether reason makes judgments about the inner sense. For, of the things that are under the reason—bodies, bodily senses, and the inner sense—how would one be better than another and reason more excellent than all, unless reason itself told us so? Certainly this is possible only if reason makes judgments concerning them.

E. That is evident.

52 A. Therefore, since the nature which merely exists and does not live or understand (for example, the inanimate body) is inferior to the nature that not only exists, but also lives, though it does not understand (for example, the soul of beasts); and since this in turn is inferior to that which at once exists, lives, and understands (for example, the rational mind in man)—you do not think then, do you, that anything can be found in us more excellent (that is, among those things by which our nature is perfected so that we are men) than this which we put in the third place? Clearly we have a body, and a kind of life that makes the body live and grow. We recognize these two conditions in beasts as well. We have also a third thing: a head or eye of our soul, as it were, or whatever term can be more aptly applied to our reason and understanding. This is what the nature of a beast does not have. Please see whether you can find anything in man's nature which is more noble than reason.

E. I see absolutely nothing more noble.

A. What if we should be able to find something which you would not doubt not only exists, but even is more excellent than our reason? Will you hesitate to say that, whatever it is, this is our God?

E. If I could find something better than what is best in my nature, I would not immediately say that this is God. I am not inclined to call God that to which my reason is inferior, but rather that to whom no one is superior.

A. Clearly. And God Himself has given your reason the power to think so devoutly and truly about Him. But, I ask you, if you find that there is nothing superior to our reason except what is eternal and immutable, will you hesitate to say that this is God? You know that bodies are mutable and that life itself, which animates the body in its varying conditions, is plainly subject to change. Reason itself is clearly proven to be mutable, now struggling to arrive at truth, now ceasing to struggle, sometimes reaching it and sometimes not. If, without the aid of any organ of the body or of any sense inferior to it, either touch, taste, smell, hearing, or sight, reason discerns that it is inferior and through its own power discerns something eternal and immutable, reason should at the same time admit that it is inferior and that this is its God.

E. I shall admit that this is God to which nothing is granted to be superior.

A. Good! It will be sufficient, then, for me to prove that there is something of this nature which you will admit to be God; or, if there is anything superior, you will grant that this superior being is God. Therefore, whether there is something superior or not, it will be proven that God exists when, as I promised, I show with God's aid that there is something superior to reason.

E. Prove then what you promise.
VII.

How can the same object be known by many at the same time?

58 A. I will. Let me ask first whether my bodily sense is the same as yours; or whether it is not really my sense, unless it be mine, and not really your sense, unless it be your own. Were it not so, I could not see through my eyes any object that you did not see.

59 E. I admit this fully. Although senses are the same in kind, we each have our own senses of seeing, hearing, and so forth. Not only can one man see or hear what another cannot; but it is also possible for any person to perceive with any sense what someone else does not perceive. Thus it is proven that a sense is not yours unless it is yours, nor mine unless it is mine.

60 A. Would you say the same thing about the inner sense, or something else?

E. The same, surely. My inner sense perceives my senses, and yours perceives yours. For this reason, I am often asked by a man who sees something whether I see it too. For I perceive whether or not I see it; he who asks does not perceive whether or not I see it.

61 A. Well, does not each one of us have his own reason? For it can happen that I understand something which you do not understand and which you cannot know whether or not I understand, while I, on the other hand, do know that I understand it.

E. It is evident that each of us has his own rational mind.

62 A. You could not say, could you, that each of us has his own sun, moon, stars, and so forth, which we see, although each perceives these with his own sense?

E. Of course not!

63 A. Many of us at the same time can see one object. Yet each of us has his own senses, with which each per-
hear a whole word or see the same sight. Different parts of the food or drink must enter each of us. Do you understand this?

E. I admit that this is clear and true.

A. You don’t think, do you, that the sense of touch can be compared to the sense of the eyes and ears in the case we have just discussed? Not only can both of us perceive one body through the sense of touch, but even the same part of a body. This is not the case when we are both eating; we cannot both take all of the food placed before us, as, with the sense of touch, you could touch the same object that I touched, and all of it—so that both of us each touched, not just individual parts of the object, but the whole object.

E. I admit that in this way the sense of touch is very like the sense of seeing and hearing. But I see a difference: both of us can see and hear one entire object at the same time. Both of us, however, cannot touch an entire object at one time, only a part at a time; and not the same part, except at different times. I cannot touch any part that you are touching unless you move away from it.

A. A most acute answer! Yet attend to this: of all the objects that we perceive, there are some which both of us perceive at the same time and others which we each perceive separately. Yet each of us perceives his own sensations separately; I never feel yours and you never feel mine. What can each of us separately, not both together, perceive from among those things that are perceived by us through the bodily senses, that is, from among corporeal objects, except what becomes our own so completely that we change it into our-selves? For instance, food and drink. You cannot perceive any part of food or drink that I have perceived. Even though nurses give infants food that has already been chewed, the part that has already been tasted, chewed, and absorbed into the vitals of the one who chewed it cannot in any way be called back as food for the infant. When the palate has tasted something pleasant, however small that part may be, the palate claims it irrevocably as its own and forces it to conform to the nature of the body. Were this not so, there would remain no taste in the mouth after the food which was bitten off and tasted has been spit out. The same can also be said of the parts of the air that we inhale through the nose. Although you too can inhale all that I have exhaled, you cannot breathe in what has been used as nourishment because I cannot exhale that part. Doctors teach us that we take in nourishment through our nose. This nourishment I alone can perceive by inhaling, and I cannot restore it by exhaling for you to inhale and perceive through your nose. When we perceive other sorts of sensible objects we do not, in the act of perception, break them up and absorb them into our body. Both of us can perceive them either at one time or separately, so that either all or part of what I perceive may also be perceived by you. Examples of this are light, sound, or corporeal bodies, with which we come into contact but, in so doing, do not alter them.

E. I understand.

A. It is, therefore, clear that objects we do not change when we perceive them with our bodily senses do not become part of the nature of our senses and so are common to us, since they are not changed or turned into our own, as it were, personal property.

E. I agree completely.

A. By “our own” and “personal,” I mean that which each one of us consumes for himself and what each alone perceives in himself as belonging properly to his own nature. By “common” and, as it were, “public,” I mean what is perceived by everyone who perceives, without its being changed or destroyed.

E. Yes.

**VIII.**

The order of numbers, known as one and unchangeable, is not known by the bodily senses.

A. Come! Listen and tell me whether we may find anything that all reasoning men see with their reason and mind in common with all others, while what is seen is present in all