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St. Epiphanius disputed with St. John Chrysostom, saying that he never would tolerate the disciples of Origen. St. John Chrysostom, not so hasty in his conclusion, said that he would never confound the innocent with the guilty. St. Epiphanius replied that the heresy was so impious, the crime so enormous that true love for the Faith should force him to expel this brood of vipers from the Church without delay. St. John Chrysostom answered: “A good judge condemns no one without a hearing.”

St. Epiphanius exclaimed: “You are too punctilious in the matter.”

In reply St. John Chrysostom complained that Epiphanius was too zealous, not having patience enough to listen to the truth. “Patience,” answered St. Epiphanius, “you mean sympathy with the cause and hypocrisy!”

“Say rather violence and precipitation,” answered Chrysostom.

“But,” said Epiphanius, “are you afraid to condemn heretics?”

“And have you no fear of condemning the innocent as guilty?” asked Chrysostom.

“I clearly see,” remarked Epiphanius, “that you favor Origen.”

“And I,” rejoined St. John Chrysostom, “fear that you side with the enemies of truth.”

“Be it so! But I say to you in the name of God,” replied St. Epiphanius, “that you will not die in Constantinople; you will be banished, and will end your life upon a distant shore.”

“And I also tell you, on the part of God,” answered St. John Chrysostom, “that you will die at sea.”

Both were saints, both prophesied truly, both were right; and yet there seemed to be sufficient cause for dispute and opposition between them. Similar contests and differences of opinion occurred between St. Peter and St. Paul, the Princes of the Apostles; between St. Augustine and St. Jerome, and many others great and eminent in learning and sanctity.

...The little world-man changes every moment—he turns like a weather-cock with every wind. One is of a hasty temperament, and does everything with impetuosity; another has a sluggish mind, and troublesome disposition; he is as dull as lead, and as inflexible as iron. If he be urged on a little, he begins to despond. This one is as restless as quicksilver; he can scarcely be kept quiet; that one is melancholy and always looks upon the dark side of the picture. Another is ambitious and selfish, and strives to draw the eyes of all men upon himself. Again, one desires to be flattered, another, on the contrary, assumes an attitude of distrust when treated kindly, and puts himself on his guard. What is too indulgent for one, is too severe for another. What is illiberal in the eyes of one, is deemed too great freedom in the eyes of another. One prefers a spirit of freedom and liberalism, whilst another is displeased at such a spirit, and complains of the want to rigor and discipline. One is controlled too much, the other too little.
The Morality of a Kidney Transplantation

**Question:** In recent times the operation of kidney transplantation has been successfully performed between identical twins. Up to the present (January 1958), eight such operations have taken place (seven at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston, one at the Medical College of Virginia Hospital in Richmond). None of the donors have suffered any perceptible harm up to the present. Two of the recipients have died, the other six are apparently in good health. What is to be said of the morality of such an operation?

**Answer:** Theologians are not in agreement as to the morality of organic transplantation from a living person. Some believe that such operations are forbidden by the natural law, on the ground that a person is not permitted to authorize the mutilation of his own body except for the benefit of the whole body by the principle of totality. Such, for example, is the teaching of Merkelbach and Noldin-Schmitt.

Pope Pius XII, in an address to doctors on May 14, 1956, expressly stated that he did not intend to discuss this question. However, he did add that it is not permissible to argue to the lawfulness of organic transplantation on the score that the relation of an individual to society is analogous to the relation of a particular organ of the human body to the whole, so that the physical integrity of one individual may be sacrificed for the benefit of another, just as one member of the human body can be excised for the well-being of another member or of the society as a whole. This argument, as the Pope points out, is based on an erroneous concept of the relation of an individual to the social body.

However, this does not mean that the Pope has condemned transplantation, within certain limits. Hence, according to some moralists, it may be permitted, in harmony with Catholic moral principles, from one living person to another. I believe that a good argument can be given in defense of the morality of certain operations of this nature, such as the one described by the questioner. The argument is that God allows a person a certain limited dominion over his bodily integrity. For example, all theologians allow blood transfusions. On the same ground, I believe, we can argue that God allows the transfer of organs from one living person to another as long as the operation does not gravely endanger the life of the donor and does not impair his functional integrity. By this last phrase we mean that he can continue to function as a normal human being after the operation, without being noticeably or gravely impeded in the use of his limbs and members. Now, I do not believe that the kidney transplantation, performed by reliable surgeons, involves either of these two evils. As far as actual results are concerned, none of the donors have died up to the present, so there does not seem to be grave danger to life involved in donating one kidney. Furthermore, the donors are apparently functioning properly, without any noticeable impairment, like many other persons who have had one kidney removed for pathological reasons. Hence, as long as there is no decision to the contrary from the Holy See, I would assure any surgeon who is in doubt about the morality of such an operation, or any person who wishes to be the subject of the operation, that he is on sufficiently safe moral grounds to take part in the kidney transplantation.
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