

QUESTION 66

The Equality of the Virtues

Next we have to consider the equality of the virtues (*de aequalitate virtutum*). On this topic there are six questions: (1) Can a virtue be greater or lesser? (2) Are all the virtues that exist in the same individual at the same time equal to one another? (3) How do the moral virtues compare to the intellectual virtues? (4) How do the moral virtues compare to one another? (5) How do the intellectual virtues compare to one another? (6) How do the theological virtues compare to one another?

Article 1

Can a virtue be greater or lesser?

It seems that a virtue cannot be greater or lesser (*virtus non possit esse maior vel minor*):

Objection 1: Apocalypse 21:16 says that the sides of the city of Jerusalem are equal, where a Gloss on the passage says that the sides signify the virtues. Therefore, all the virtues are equal. Therefore, there cannot be a virtue that is greater than another virtue.

Objection 2: Nothing whose character consists in a maximum can be greater or lesser. But the character of a virtue consists in a maximum, since, as the Philosopher says in *De Caelo* 1, virtue is “the limit of a power” (*est virtus ultimum potentiae*); and in *De Libero Arbitrio* 2 Augustine likewise says, “Virtues are maximal goods that no one can make bad use of.” Therefore, it seems that a virtue cannot be greater or lesser.

Objection 3: An effect’s quantity is measured by the agent’s power. But perfect virtues, i.e., the infused virtues, are from God, whose power is uniform and infinite. Therefore, it seems that a virtue cannot be greater or lesser.

But contrary to this: There can be inequality whenever it is possible for there to be increase and greater abundance (*augmentum et superabundantia*). But greater abundance and increase are found among the virtues. For Matthew 5:20 says, “Unless your justice is greater than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” And Proverbs 15:5 says, “In abundant justice lies the greatest virtue.” Therefore, it seems that a virtue can be greater or lesser.

I respond: When one asks whether one virtue can be greater than another, there are two possible ways to understand the question:

One way is to understand it as having to do with *virtues that differ from one another in species*. And on this score it is clear that one virtue is greater than another. For it is always the case that a cause is more powerful than its effect; and, among the effects, the greater something is, the closer it is to its cause. But it is clear from what has been said (q. 18, a. 5 and q. 61, a. 2) that the cause and root of the human good is reason. And so *prudence*, which perfects reason, is greater in goodness than the other moral virtues, which perfect the appetitive power insofar it participates in reason. And among these latter virtues, one is better than another to the extent that it approaches closer to reason. Hence, *justice*, which exists in the will, is better than the other moral virtues, and *fortitude*, which exists in the irascible power, is greater than *temperance*, which exists in the concupiscible power—where, as is clear from *Ethics* 7, the concupiscible power participates to a lesser degree in reason.

In the second way, the question can be understood as having to do with *virtues of the same species*. And on this score—in accord with what was said above (q. 52, a. 1) when we were talking about the intensity of habits—there are two ways in which a virtue can be called greater or lesser, viz., (a) *in its own right (secundum seipsam)* and (b) *on the part of the subject who participates in it*.

Thus, if a virtue is considered *in its own right*, then its greatness or smallness has to do with what it extends to. Now if someone has a virtue, say temperance, then he has it with respect to everything that temperance extends to. This is not the case with scientific knowledge or art; for instance, it is not the case that a grammarian knows everything that belongs to grammar. And on this score the Stoics were

correct in claiming, as Simplicius reports in his commentary on the *Categories*, that virtue does not admit of *more* and *less* in the way that scientific knowledge and art do, because virtue consists in a maximum.

By contrast, if virtue is considered *on the part of the participating subject*, then it is possible for a virtue to be greater or lesser—whether in the same subject at different times or in different men. For one man is better disposed than another to attain to the mean of a virtue, which is in accord with right reason—and this either because of more habituation, or because of a better natural disposition or because of a more perspicacious judgment on the part of reason, or even because of a greater gift of grace, which, as Ephesians 4:9 says, is given to each individual “in accord with the measure of Christ’s giving.” And on this score the Stoics were mistaken in thinking that no one can be called virtuous if he is not maximally disposed toward virtue (*aestimantes nullum esse virtuosum dicendum nisi qui summe fuerit dispositus ad virtutem*). For the character of a virtue does not require that a virtue attain to the indivisible mean of right reason (*non exigitur quod attingat rectae rationis medium in indivisibili*), as the Stoics maintained; instead, as *Ethics* 2 says, it is enough for it to be close to the mean. For as is clear in the case of archers shooting at a fixed target, one individual gets closer to the same indivisible target than another does, and one does so more readily than the other.

Reply to objection 1: The sort of equality in question does not have to do with absolute quantity, but has to be understood as a proportion (*secundum proportionem*), since, as will be explained below (a. 2), the virtues grow proportionately in a man.

Reply to objection 2: The limit that is relevant to a virtue can have the character of a greater or lesser good in the ways explained above, since, as has been explained, it is not an indivisible limit.

Reply to objection 3: God operates not by a necessity of nature but in accord with the order of His wisdom, according to which He gives men diverse measures of virtue—this according to Ephesians 4:7 (“To every one of you is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ”).

Article 2

Are all the virtues in one and the same individual equally intense?

It seems that it is not the case that all the virtues in one and the same individual are equally intense:

Objection 1: In 1 Corinthians 7:7 says, “Each one has his own gift from God, one in this way and another in that way.” But it would not be the case that one gift is more proper to an individual than another gift if each individual had all the virtues infused by God’s gift equally. Therefore, it seems that it is not the case that all the virtues are equal in one and the same individual.

Objection 2: If all the virtues were equally intense in one and the same individual, then it would follow that if one individual surpassed another in a single virtue, then he would surpass him in all the other virtues as well. But this is obviously false, since different holy men are especially praised for different virtues, e.g., Abraham for his faith, and Moses for his gentleness, and Job for his patience. Again, the reason why the Church sings of each confessor, “There is no one like him in keeping the law of the most High,” is that each of them was outstanding in some virtue. Therefore, it is not the case that all the virtues are equal in one and the same individual.

Objection 3: The more intense a habit is, the more a man exercises it readily and with delight. But it is clear from experience that a given man performs the act of one virtue more readily and with more delight than he performs the act of some other virtue. Therefore, it is not the case that all the virtues are equal in one and the same individual.

But contrary to this: In *De Trinitate* 6 Augustine says, “Those who are equal in fortitude are equal in prudence and temperance, etc.” This would not be the case unless all the virtues that belong to one man were equal.” Therefore, all the virtues that belong to one man are equal.

I respond: As is clear from what has been said (a. 1), there are two possible ways to think of the quantity of the virtues:

In one way, according to *the nature of the species*. And on this score there is no doubt that one of a man's virtues is greater than another, in the way that charity is greater than faith and hope.

In the second way, one can think of the quantity according to *the subject's participation*, i.e., insofar as a virtue is intensified or weakened in its subject (*prout intenditur vel remittitur in subiecto*). And on this score all the virtues that belong to one man are equal by a certain sort of proportional equality insofar as they grow at an equal pace in a man—in the way that the fingers of a hand are unequal in quantity but proportionately equal because they grow in proportion to one another.

Now we have to understand the character of this latter sort of equality in the same way that we understood connectedness, since equality is a sort of connectedness with respect to quantity among the virtues. And it was explained above (q. 65, a. 1) that there are two possible ways to think of the reason for the connectedness of the virtues:

In one way, in accord with the interpretation of those who understand the four virtues in question as *four general conditions that belong to the virtues*, one of which is found together with the others in any given subject matter. And on this interpretation, a virtue, in whatever subject matter it is found, can be called 'equal' only if it has all these conditions to an equal degree (*habeat omnes istas condiciones aequales*). And this is the explanation for the equality of the virtues that Augustine gives in *De Trinitate* 4 when he says, "If you claim that the two individuals are equal in fortitude, but that this one is superior in prudence, then it follows that the other one's fortitude is less prudent. And, consequently, they are not equal in fortitude when the one's fortitude is more prudent. And you will find that the same thing holds for the other virtues, if you run through them one by one with the same sort of reasoning."

In the second way, the explanation for the connectedness of the virtues accords with those who understand these virtues to have *determinate subject matters*. And on this interpretation, the explanation for the connectedness of the virtues is taken from prudence—and from charity in the case of the infused virtues—but not, as was explained above (q. 65, a. 1), from any inclination that exists in the subject. So, then, the nature of the equality of the virtues can likewise be taken from prudence as regards what is *formal* in all the moral virtues. For when a complete nature exists equally (*esistente ratione aequaliter perfecta*) in one and the same individual, then it must be the case that the mean is constituted proportionately, in accord with right reason, in every subject matter. On the other hand, as regards what is *material* in the virtues, viz., the very inclination toward the act of the virtue, it is possible for a individual man to be more prompt with respect to the act of one virtue than with respect to the act of another virtue—either by nature, or because of habituation, or even because of a gift of grace.

Reply to objection 1: This passage from the Apostle can be understood as having to do with the gifts of gratuitous grace (*de donis gratiae gratis datae*), which are not common to everyone and which are not equal even in one and the same individual.

An alternative reply is that the Apostle is talking about the measure of sanctifying grace (*refertur ad mensuram gratiae gratum facientis*), in accord with which one individual abounds in all the virtues more than another individual because of his abundance of prudence, or also of charity, in which all the infused virtues are connected.

Reply to objection 2: One saint is praised mainly for one virtue and another for another virtue because of a more surpassing promptitude with respect to the act of one virtue than with respect to the act of another virtue.

Reply to objection 3: This likewise makes clear the reply to the third objection.

Article 3

Are the moral virtues preeminent over the intellectual virtues?

It seems that the moral virtues are preeminent over the intellectual virtues (*virtutes morales praeemineant intellectualibus*):

Objection 1: What is more necessary and more permanent is better. But the moral virtues are more permanent than the scientific disciplines (*permanetiores etiam disciplinis*), which are intellectual virtues, and they are also more necessary for human life. Therefore, they are to be preferred to the intellectual virtues.

Objection 2: It belongs to the nature of a virtue that it makes the one who has it good. But a man is called good because of his moral virtues and not because of his intellectual virtues—except, perhaps, prudence alone. Therefore, moral virtue is better than intellectual virtue.

Objection 3: An end is more noble than the means to that end. But as *Ethics* 4 says, “Moral virtue makes the intending of the end correct, whereas prudence makes the choosing of the means to that end correct.” Therefore, moral virtue is more noble than prudence, which is an intellectual virtue that has to do with moral matters.

But contrary to this: As *Ethics* 1 says, moral virtue exists through participation in the rational part of the soul, whereas intellectual virtue exists through its essence in the rational part of the soul. But what is rational through its essence is more noble than what is rational through participation. Therefore, intellectual virtue is more noble than moral virtue.

I respond: There are two ways in which something can be called greater or lesser: (a) *absolutely speaking (simpliciter)* and (b) *in a certain respect (secundum quid)*. For nothing prevents something from being better absolutely speaking, in the way that being a philosopher is better than being rich (*ut philosophari quam ditari*), even though there is a certain respect in which it is not better, viz., for one who lacks the necessities of life.

Now a thing is being thought of *absolutely speaking* when it is thought of with respect to the proper character of its species. But as has been said (q. 54, a. 2 and q. 60, a. 1), a virtue has its species from its object. Hence, absolutely speaking, the virtue that is more noble is the one that has a more noble object. But it is clear that reason’s object is more noble than the appetite’s object, since reason apprehends a thing in general (*in universali*), whereas the appetite tends toward things that have particularized *esse (esse particulare)*. Hence, absolutely speaking, the intellectual virtues, which perfect reason, are more noble than the moral virtues, which perfect the appetite.

However, if virtue is thought of *in relation to its act*, then on this score moral virtue, which perfects the appetite, the role of which, as was explained above (q. 9, a. 1), is to move the other powers to their acts, is the more noble. And since something is called a virtue is because it is the principle of an act (for a virtue is the perfection of a power), it also follows that the character of a *virtue* belongs more to the moral virtues than to the intellectual virtues, even though the intellectual virtues are more noble *habits* absolutely speaking.

Reply to objection 1: The moral virtues are more permanent than the intellectual virtues because they are exercised in matters that belong to ordinary life (*propter exercitium earum in his quae pertinent ad vitam communem*). But it is clear that the objects of the scientific disciplines, which are necessary and always the same, are more permanent than the objects of the moral virtues, which are particular things that can be done.

On the other hand, the fact that the moral virtues are more necessary for human life shows not that they are more noble absolutely speaking, but only that they are more necessary in a certain respect. Indeed, the speculative intellectual virtues are more dignified (*digniores*) by the very fact that they are not ordered toward anything else in the way that what is useful is ordered toward an end. This is so

because through these virtues there in some sense exists within us a beginning of beatitude, which, as was explained above (q. 3, a. 6), consists in the cognition of truth.

Reply to objection 2: The reason why it is due to his moral virtues, and not his intellectual virtues, that a man is called good absolutely speaking is that, as was explained above (q. 56, a. 3), the appetite moves the other powers to their acts. Hence, this objection proves only that moral virtue is better in a certain respect.

Reply to objection 3: Prudence directs the moral virtues not only in choosing the means to an end, but also in establishing the end (*sed etiam in praestituendo finem*). Now the end of every moral virtue is to attain the mean in its proper subject matter and, as *Ethics* 2 and 4 point out, this mean is determined in accord with the right reason that belongs to prudence.

Article 4

Is justice the principal moral virtue?

It seems that justice is not the principal moral virtue (*iustitia non sit praecipua inter virtutes morales*):

Objection 1: It is better to give someone what belongs to oneself than to render to someone what is owed to him. But the former pertains to generosity (*pertinent ad liberalitatem*), whereas the latter pertains to justice. Therefore, it seems that generosity is a greater virtue than justice.

Objection 2: It seems that what is greatest in any given matter is what is most perfect in it. But as James 1:4 says, “Patience has a perfect work.” Therefore, it seems that patience is greater than justice.

Objection 3: As *Ethics* 4 says, “Magnanimity does what is great in all the virtues.” Therefore, it likewise does what is great in justice itself (*magnificat etiam ipsam iustitiam*). Therefore, magnanimity is greater than justice.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 5 the Philosopher says, “Justice is the greatest of the virtues” (*iustitia est praeclarissima virtutum*).

I respond: A virtue can be called greater or lesser in its species either *absolutely speaking* or *in a certain respect*:

As was explained above (a. 1), a virtue is called greater *absolutely speaking* insofar as a greater good of reason is reflected in it. And on this score justice excels among all the moral virtues because it is closer to reason. This is clear both from its *subject* and from its *object*. It is clear from its *subject*, since it exists in the will as its subject and, as is clear from what has been said (q. 8, a. 1 and q. 26, a. 1), the will is a rational appetite. On the other hand, it is clear from its *object* or *matter*, since it has to do with operations, by which a man is ordered not only within himself but also with respect to others. This is why, as *Ethics* 5 says, “Justice is the greatest of the virtues.” And among the other moral virtues, which have to do with the passions, the good of reason is more reflected in each of them to the extent that a greater appetitive movement is subject to reason. But the greatest among the things that belong to a man is his life, on which all other things depend. And so fortitude, which subjects the appetitive movement to reason in those matters that pertain to life and death, holds first place among those moral virtues that have to do with the passions, even though it ranks below justice. This is why the Philosopher says in *Rhetoric* 1, “The greatest virtues have to be those that are honored over the others, since virtue is a power for doing good. Because of this, people especially honor the brave and the just; for the former,” viz., fortitude, “is useful in war,” and the latter,” viz., justice, “is useful both in war and in peace.” After fortitude ranks temperance, which subjects to reason the appetite for those things that are directly ordered toward life, either life in numerically the same individual or life in the same species—i.e., the appetite for food and sex. And so these three virtues, along with prudence, are said to be the principal virtues in

dignity as well.

Now a virtue is called greater *in a certain respect* insofar as it serves as an aid to or embellishment of a principal virtue. In the same way, a substance has more dignity than an accident absolutely speaking, but an accident may have more dignity than a substance in a certain respect, insofar as it perfects the substance in some sort of accidental *esse*.

Reply to objection 1: An act of generosity must be founded on an act of justice, since, as *Politics 2* says, “There would be no generous giving if one did not give of what is his own.” Hence, there could be no generosity without justice, which separates what is one’s own from what is not one’s own. By contrast, justice could exist without generosity. Hence, justice is greater than generosity absolutely speaking, as something that is more general than generosity and grounds it, whereas generosity is greater in a certain respect, since it is a sort of embellishment of justice and a complement to it.

Reply to objection 2: Patience is said to have a perfect act in tolerating evils. In such cases patience not only excludes *unjust vengeance*, which justice likewise excludes, and *hatred*, which charity excludes, and *anger*, which gentleness excludes, but it also excludes *disordered sadness*, which is the root of all of the things just mentioned. And so patience is greater and more perfect in extirpating the root in this subject matter.

However, patience is not more perfect than all the other virtues absolutely speaking. For fortitude not only puts up with troubles without being disturbed, which belongs to patience, but also fights against them when this is necessary. Hence, whoever is brave is patient, but not vice versa; for patience is a certain part of fortitude.

Reply to objection 3: As *Ethics 4* says, magnanimity cannot exist unless the other virtues exist before it. Hence, it is related to the other virtues as their embellishment. And so it is greater than all the others in a certain respect, but not absolutely speaking.

Article 5

Is wisdom the greatest of the intellectual virtues?

It seems that wisdom is not the greatest of the intellectual virtues (*sapientia non sit maxima inter virtutes intellectuales*):

Objection 1: What commands is greater than what is commanded. But prudence seems to command wisdom; for *Ethics 1* says that political science, which, as *Ethics 8* explains, belongs to prudence, “determines which scientific disciplines should exist in the cities, which ones each individual should learn, and to what extent.” Therefore, since wisdom is also included among the scientific disciplines, it seems that prudence (*prudentia*) is greater than wisdom (*sapientia*).

Objection 2: It belongs to the nature of a virtue to order a man toward happiness, since, as *Physics 7* says, virtue is “the disposition of what is perfect toward what is best.” But prudence is right reason with respect to things that can be done, and it is through prudence that a man is led to happiness, whereas wisdom does not consider the human acts by which one is led to beatitude. Therefore, prudence is a greater virtue than wisdom.

Objection 3: Cognition seems to be greater to the extent that it is more perfect. But we have a more perfect cognition of human things, with respect to which there is scientific knowledge, than we do of divine things, with respect to which there is wisdom—to use Augustine’s distinction in *De Trinitate 12*. For divine things are incomprehensible—this according to Job 36:26 (“Behold, God is great, surpassing all our knowledge”). Therefore, scientific knowledge (*scientia*) is a greater virtue than wisdom (*sapientia*).

Objection 4: The cognition of principles has more dignity than does the cognition of conclusions.

But wisdom, like the other types of scientific knowledge, draws conclusions from indemonstrable principles, with respect to which there is understanding. Therefore, understanding (*intellectus*) is a greater virtue than wisdom (*sapientia*).

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says that wisdom is, as it were, the head of the intellectual virtues (*est sicut caput inter virtutes intellectuales*).

I respond: As has been explained (a. 3), a virtue's greatness with respect to species is thought of on the basis of its object. But the object of wisdom is the most excellent among the objects of all the intellectual virtues. For as is explained at the beginning of the *Metaphysics*, wisdom considers the highest cause, i.e., God. And since an effect is judged by its cause, and since lower causes are judged by higher causes, it follows that (a) wisdom passes judgment on all the other intellectual virtues and that (b) it belongs to wisdom to order all of them, and that (c) wisdom is, as it were, architectonic with respect to all of them.

Reply to objection 1: Since prudence has to do with human things, whereas wisdom has to do with the highest cause, it is impossible for prudence to be a greater virtue than wisdom—unless, as *Ethics* 4 explains, man is the greatest of the things in the world. Hence, one should reply that, as the same book says, prudence does not command wisdom itself, but instead just the opposite, since, as 1 Corinthians 2: says, “The spiritual man judges all things, and he himself is judged by no man.” For prudence does not have the wherewithal to deal with the highest things that wisdom considers; instead, prudence issues commands about things that are ordered toward wisdom—more specifically, it issues commands about how men should arrive at wisdom. Hence, in this role prudence, or political science, is the servant of wisdom, since it leads to wisdom, preparing the way for her like a doorkeeper for the king.

Reply to objection 2: Prudence considers those things by which one arrives at happiness, but wisdom considers the very object of happiness, i.e., the highest intelligible thing. And if wisdom's consideration with respect to its object were perfect, then there would be perfect happiness in the act of wisdom. But since in this life wisdom's act is imperfect with respect to its principal object, viz., God, it follows that the act of wisdom is a sort of beginning of or participation in the happiness that is to come. and so wisdom is closer to happiness than prudence is.

Reply to objection 3: As the Philosopher says in *De Anima* 1, one type of knowledge (*una notitia*) has preference over another either because it is of more noble things or because of its certitude. Therefore, if the subjects are equal in goodness and nobility, then the type of knowledge that is more certain will be the greater virtue.

However, a type of knowledge that is less certain and about higher and greater things has preference over a type of knowledge that is more certain but about lower things. This is why in *De Caelo* 2 the Philosopher says, “It is a great thing to be able to know something about celestial entities, even if in a weaker and merely probable way.” And in *De Partibus Animalium* 1 he says, “It is better to know a little about more noble things than a lot about less noble things.” Thus, wisdom, to which the cognition of God belongs, is unable, especially in this life, to arrive perfectly at possessing Him, as it were; instead, as *Metaphysics* 1 says, “This belongs to God alone.” And yet the modicum of cognition that can be had of God through wisdom has preference over all other cognition.

Reply to objection 4: The truth of, and cognition of, indemonstrable principles depends on the meaning of their terms; for instance, from the the cognition of what a whole is and what a part is, it is immediately known that a whole is greater than its part. But it pertains to wisdom to have cognition of the concepts of being and non-being, and of a whole and a part, and of other things that follow upon being, from which the indemonstrable principles are constituted as from their terms. For being in general (*ens commune*) is the proper effect of the highest cause, viz., God. And so wisdom makes use of the indemonstrable principles, with respect to which there is understanding, not only by drawing conclusions from them, in the way that the other types of scientific knowledge do, but also by passing judgment on them and by disputing with those who deny them. Hence,, it follows that wisdom is a greater virtue than understanding.

Article 6

Is charity the greatest of the theological virtues?

It seems that charity is not the greatest of the theological virtues (*caritas non sit maxima inter virtutes theologicas*):

Objection 1: Since, as was explained above (q. 62, a. 3), faith exists in the intellect, whereas hope and charity exist in the appetitive power, it seems that faith is related to hope and charity in the same way that intellectual virtue is related to moral virtue. But as is clear from what has been said (a. 3), intellectual virtue is greater than moral virtue. Therefore, faith is greater than hope and charity.

Objection 2: What results from addition to another seems to be greater than the latter. But hope, it seems, results from an addition to charity; for as Augustine says in *Enchiridion*, hope presupposes love and adds to it a certain movement of stretching out toward the thing that is loved. Therefore, hope is greater than charity.

Objection 3: A cause is more powerful than its effect. But faith and hope are causes of charity; for a Gloss on Matthew 1:2 says, “Faith generates hope, and hope generates charity.” Therefore, faith and hope are greater than charity.

But contrary to this: In 1 Corinthians 13:13 the Apostle says, “Now these three remain: faith, hope, charity; and the greatest of these is charity.”

I respond: As was explained above (a. 3), a virtue’s greatness with respect to species is thought of on the basis of its object. Now since the three theological virtues have God as their proper object, one of them can be called greater than another not because it has a greater object but rather because it is situated closer to the object than the other. And on this score charity is greater than the others. For the others imply in their nature a certain distance from their object, since faith is of things not seen and hope is of things not had. But the love that belongs to charity (*amor caritatis*) is of something that is already had, since what is loved exists in a certain way within the lover, and the lover is also drawn toward union with what is loved. This is why 1 John 4:16 says, “The one who abides in charity abides in God, and God in him.”

Reply to objection 1: Faith and hope are not at all related to charity in the way that prudence is related to moral virtue—and this for two reasons:

First, because the theological virtues have an object which lies beyond the human soul, whereas prudence and the moral virtues have to do with what is lower than man. Now in the case of those things that lie beyond man, affection is more noble than cognition (*nobilior est dilectio quam cognitio*). For cognition is perfected to the extent that what is known exists in the knower, whereas affection is perfected to the extent that the one who has the affection is drawn toward the thing he has affection for. But what lies beyond man is more noble in itself than when it exists in a man, since each thing exists in another in the manner of that in which it exists. On the other hand, the opposite point holds in the case of those things that are lower than man.

Second, because prudence moderates the appetitive movements that belong to the moral virtues, whereas faith does not moderate the appetitive movement that tends toward God and belongs to the theological virtues. Instead, faith merely exhibits the object, whereas the appetitive movement toward the object surpasses human cognition—this according to Ephesians 3:19 (“... the charity of Christ, which surpasses all knowledge”).

Reply to objection 2: Hope presupposes the love of that which one hopes to attain, and this is a love of concupiscence—a love by which the one who desires the good loves himself rather than anything else. By contrast, charity implies a love of friendship, which, as was explained above (q. 62, a. 4), one arrives at by means of the hope.

Reply to objection 3: A *perfecting* cause (*causa perficiens*) is more powerful than its effect, but a

disposing cause (*causa disponens*) is not more powerful. Otherwise, the heat of a fire would be more perfect than the soul for which it disposes the matter—which is clearly false. But this is the sense in which faith generates hope and in which hope generates charity, viz., insofar as the former disposes one for the latter.