

QUESTION 8

The Grace of Christ insofar as He is the Head of the Church

Next we have to consider the grace of Christ insofar as He is the head of the Church. And on this topic there are eight questions: (1) Is Christ the head of the Church? (2) Is Christ the head of men with respect to their bodies or only with respect to their souls? (3) Is Christ the head of all men? (4) Is Christ the head of the angels? (5) Is the grace according to which He is the head of the Church the same as his habitual grace insofar as He is an individual man? (6) Is being the head of the Church peculiar to Christ? (7) Is the devil the head of all who are evil? (8) Can the Antichrist likewise be called the head of all who are evil?

Article 1

Does it belong to Christ, insofar as He is a man, to be the head of the Church?

It seems that it does not belong to Christ, insofar as He is a man, to be the head of the Church (*Christo secundum quod est homo non competat esse caput Ecclesiae*):

Objection 1: The head pours sensing and movement (*sensum et motum*) into the members. But spiritual sensing and movement, which come from grace, are not poured into us by the man Christ; for as Augustine explains in *De Trinitate* 15, it is not insofar as He is a man that Christ gives the Holy Spirit, but only insofar as He is God. Therefore, it does not belong to Him, insofar as He is a man, to be the head of the Church.

Objection 2: It does not seem that a further head belongs to a head. But God is the head of Christ insofar as Christ is a man—this according to 1 Corinthians 11:3 (“The head of Christ is God”). Therefore, Christ Himself is not a head.

Objection 3: In a man the head is a particular member that receives influence from the heart. But Christ is a universal principle of the whole Church. Therefore, He is not the head of the Church.

But contrary to this: Ephesians 1:22 says, “He has given Him as the head over all the Church.”

I respond: As the Apostle teaches in Romans 12:4-5 and 1 Corinthians 12:12ff., just as the whole Church is said to be a single mystical body because of its similarity to a natural human body, which has diverse acts corresponding to its diverse members, so Christ is said to be the head of the Church because of His similarity to a human head. In this matter there are three things that we can consider, viz., *order*, *perfection*, and *power*.

Order, because the head is the first part of a man, beginning from the highest. And so it is that every principle is commonly called a head—this according to Jeremiah 2:20 (“At every head of a road you have set up your house of prostitution”).

Perfection, because in the head all the sentient powers, interior and exterior, are vigorous, whereas in the other members there is just the sense of touch. And it is for this reason that Isaiah 9:15 says, “The aged and honorable, he is the head.”

Power (*virtus*), because the power and movement of the other members, along with the governance of them in their acts, flows from the head because of the sensing and moving force that dominates there. Hence, a ruler (*rector*) is called the head of the people—this according to 1 Kings 15:17 (“When you were a little one in your own eyes, you were made the head of the tribes of Israel”).

Now these three things belong to Christ in a spiritual sense. For, first, because of His closeness to God, His grace is *more lofty and prior*, even if not prior in time, because everyone else receives grace through a relation to His grace (*per respectum ad gratiam ipsius*)—this according to Romans 8:29 (“Whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the first-born among many brothers”). Second, as was shown above (q. 7, a. 9), He has *perfection* as regards the fullness of all graces—this according to John 1:14 (“We saw Him full of grace

and of truth”). Third, He has the *power* to pour grace into all the members of the Church—this according to John 1:16 (“Of His fullness we have all received”). And so it is clear that Christ is appropriately called the head of the Church.

Reply to objection 1: To give grace or the Holy Spirit *by one’s own authority* (*auctoritative*) belongs to Christ insofar as He is God, but to give grace or the Holy Spirit *instrumentally* belongs to Him insofar as He is a man, i.e., insofar as His human nature was an instrument of His divine nature. And so by the power of His divine nature His actions were salvific for us, since they caused grace in us, both through His merit and through a type of efficient causality (*per meritum et per efficientiam quandam*).

Augustine, on the other hand, is denying that Christ, insofar as He is a man, gives the Holy Spirit *by His own authority* (*per auctoritatem*). But even other holy people are said to give the Holy Spirit either *instrumentally* or *ministerially*—this according to Galatians 3:5 (“He who gives to you the Holy Spirit, etc.”).

Reply to objection 2: In metaphorical locutions one should not look for the similarity *in every respect*, since otherwise there would not be a *similitudo*, but *the plain truth* of the matter (*sic non esset similitudo sed rei veritas*). Thus, there is no further head of a natural head, since the human body is not a part of some other body.

However, when *body* is taken by way of a similitude, i.e., as a certain ordered multitude, it is indeed a part of another multitude, in the way that a domestic multitude is a part of a civil multitude. And so the father of a family (*paterfamilias*), who is the head of a domestic multitude, has the ruler of the city as a head over him. And in this sense nothing prevents the head of Christ from being God, even though Christ himself is the head of the Church.

Reply to objection 3: The head has a clear preeminence over the exterior members, but the heart has a certain hidden influence. And that is why the Holy Spirit, who invisibly vivifies and unites the Church, is compared to the heart, whereas Christ is compared to the head in accord with visible nature, by which a man is placed above men.

Article 2

Is Christ the head of men with respect to their bodies?

It seems that Christ is not the head of men with respect to their bodies (*Christus non sit caput hominum quantum ad corpora*):

Objection 1: Christ is called the head of the Church insofar as He pours spiritual sensing and movement (*spiritualem sensum et motum*) into the Church. But the body is not capable of spiritual sensing and movement. Therefore, [Christ] is not the head of men with respect to their bodies.

Objection 2: It is with respect to our bodies that we share a common life with the non-rational animals. Therefore, if Christ were the head of men with respect to their bodies, it would follow that He is likewise the head of the non-rational animals—which is absurd.

Objection 3: As is clear from Matthew 1 and Luke 3, Christ drew His body from other men. But as has been explained (a. 1), the head is the first among the other members. Therefore, Christ is not the head with respect to bodies.

But contrary to this: Philippians 3:21 says, “He will re-make the body of our lowliness to be configured to the body of His glory.”

I respond: The human body has a natural ordering toward the rational soul, which is its proper form and mover. And insofar as the rational soul is the human body’s form, the body receives from the soul life and the rest of the properties that are appropriate for a human body according to its own species.

However, insofar as the soul is the mover of the body, the body serves the soul *instrumentally*. So,

then, one should reply that the human nature of Christ has the power to influence insofar as it joined to the Word of God and, as was explained above (q. 6, a. 1), the body is united to the Word of God through the soul. Hence, the whole of Christ's human nature, viz., soul and body, has an influence on men with respect to both their soul and their body, through principally with respect to their soul and secondarily with respect to their body. It does this in one way to the extent that, as the Apostle puts it in Romans 6:13, "the members of the body are presented as instruments of justice" in a soul that lives through Christ. It does this in a second way insofar as the life of glory flows from the soul into the body—this according to Romans 8:11 ("He who has raised Jesus from the dead will likewise vivify your mortal bodies because of His Spirit, who dwells in you").

Reply to objection 1: As has been explained, the spiritual sensing that belongs to grace does not reach the body primarily and principally, but instead reaches it secondarily and instrumentally.

Reply to objection 2: The body of a non-rational animal does not have a disposition toward the rational soul in the way that the human body does. And so there is no comparison.

Reply to objection 3: Even though Christ drew the matter of His body from other men, nonetheless, all men draw from Him the immortal life of their bodies—this according to 1 Corinthians 15:22 ("Just as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be brought to life.")

Article 3

Is Christ the head of all men?

It seems that Christ is not the head of all men (*Christus non caput omnium hominum*):

Objection 1: The head has a relationship only to the members of its own body. But non-believers are not in any way members of the Church, "which is the body of Christ," as Ephesians 1:23 says. Therefore, Christ is not the head of all men.

Objection 2: In Ephesians 5:25-27 the Apostle says, "Christ handed Himself over for the Church, that He might present to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." But there are many, even among the believers, in whom the spot or wrinkle of sin is found. Therefore, it will not even be the case that Christ is the head of all the believers.

Objection 3: As Colossians 2:17 explains, the sacraments of the Old Law are to Christ what a shadow is to a body. But the fathers of the Old Testament observed those sacraments in their own day—this according to Hebrews 8:5 ("They observed a copy and shadow of heavenly things"). Therefore, they did not belong to the body of Christ. And so Christ is not the head of all men.

But contrary to this: 1 Timothy 4:10 says, "He is the savior of all, and especially of believers." And 1 John 2:2 says, "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but the sins of the whole world." But to save men, or to be the propitiation for their sins, belongs to Christ insofar as He is the head. Therefore, Christ is the head of all men.

I respond: The difference between the natural body of a human being and the mystical body of the Church is that the members of a natural body all exist at the same time, whereas the members of the mystical body do not all exist at the same time either (a) with respect to the *esse* of their nature, since the body of the Church is made up of men who existed from the beginning of the world right up to its end, nor, again, (b) with respect to the *esse* of grace, since of those who exist at any given time, some lack grace who are going to have it later on, while others already have grace. So, then, the members of the Church are taken not only as they are in actuality, but also as they are in potentiality. However, some who are in potentiality [for grace] are never brought to actuality, whereas others are at some time brought to actuality—and this at three levels, one of which is *through faith*, the second of which is *through charity in this life*, and the third of which is *through the enjoyment of heaven*.

So, then, one should reply that, taking into account in general the whole time of the world, Christ is

the head of all men, but at different levels. For, first and principally, He is the head of those who are actually united to Him *in glory*. Second, He is the head of those who are actually united to Him *through charity*. Third, He is the head of those who are actually united to Him *through faith*. Fourth, He is the head of those who are united to Him only in a potentiality which has not yet been brought to actuality but which is going to be brought to actuality in accord with God's predestination. Fifth, He is the head of those who are united to him in a potentiality that will never be brought to actuality, e.g., men who are now living in this world and who are not predestined. But when these latter leave the world, they totally cease to be members of Christ, since they are then no longer in potentiality to being united to Christ.

Reply to objection 1: Even if those who are non-believers do not in actuality belong to the Church, they are nonetheless in potentiality to belonging to the Church. This potentiality is founded in two things: (a) first, and principally, in the power of Christ, which is sufficient for the salvation of the whole human race, and (b) secondarily, in free will (*in arbitrii libertate*).

Reply to objection 2: For the Church to be glorious, "not having spot or wrinkle," is the ultimate end to which we are led by the passion of Christ. Hence, this will occur in the state of heaven, but not in the state of the present life, in which, as 1 John 1:8 puts it, "If we claim that we do not have sin, then we are deluding our very selves."

However, there are certain sins, viz., mortal sins, which are lacking in those who are members of Christ through an actual union of charity. By contrast, those who are subject to such sins are not members of Christ in actuality but [only] in potentiality—unless, perhaps, they are members in an imperfect or incomplete way (*imperfecte*) through *unformed faith*, which unites one to Christ in a certain respect but not absolutely speaking (*secundum quid et non simpliciter*), i.e., not in the sense in which a man attains to the life of grace through Christ. For as James 2:20 says, "Faith without works is dead." Yet such individuals receive from Christ a certain act of life, viz., having faith, as if a lifeless limb were being moved in some way by a man.

Reply to objection 3: The saintly fathers treated the sacraments of the Law not as realities but as images and shadows of future things. For as is clear from the Philosopher in *De Memoria et Remiscentia*, the movement that belongs to an image as an image is the same as the movement in the reality. And so the ancient fathers, by observing the sacraments of the Law, were being borne toward Christ by the same faith and love by which we ourselves are borne toward Him. And so the ancient fathers belonged to same body of the Church that we belong to.

Article 4

Is Christ the head of the angels insofar as He is a man?

It seems that Christ is not the head of the angels insofar as He is a man (*Christus, secundum quod homo, non sit caput angelorum*):

Objection 1: The head and the members belong to the same nature (*sunt unius naturae*). But Christ, insofar as He is a man, is not conformed in nature to the angels, but is conformed in nature only to men; for as Hebrews 2:16 says, "He never took hold of the angels, but instead took hold of the seed of Abraham." Therefore, Christ, insofar as He is a man, is not the head of the angels.

Objection 2: Christ is the head of those who belong to the Church, "which is His body," as Ephesians 1:23 says. But angels do not belong to the Church, since the Church is the congregation of believers, whereas faith does not exist in the angels. For, given what the Apostle argues in 2 Corinthians 5:6-7, they do not "walk by faith," but "by sight"—otherwise, "they would wander away from the Lord." Therefore, Christ, insofar as He is a man, is not the head of the angels.

Objection 3: In *Super Ioannem* Augustine says, "Just as the Word that existed from the beginning with the Father vivifies souls, so the Word made flesh" vivifies bodies, which angels lack. But the Word

made flesh is Christ insofar as He is a man. Therefore, insofar as He is a man, He is not the head of the angels.

But contrary to this: In Colossians 2:10 the Apostle says, “He is the head of every Principality and Power.” And the same argument holds for the angels who belong to the other orders. Therefore, Christ is the head of the angels.

I respond: As has been explained (a. 1), where there is a single body, a single head has to be posited. But by a similitude a single body means a single multitude ordered toward a single end (*ordinata in unum*) in accord with diverse acts or roles. Now it is clear that men and angels are ordered toward a single end, which is the glory of enjoying God. Hence, the mystical body of the Church consists not only of men, but also of angels.

Now Christ is the head of this whole multitude because He is related to God more closely, and participates in God’s gifts more perfectly, than not only men but also the angels. And it is not just men who receive His influence, but angels as well. For Ephesians 1:20ff. says, “He seated Him”—i.e., God the Father seated Christ—“at His right hand in the heavens, above every Principality and Power and Virtue and Domination, and above every name that is named not only in this world but also in the world to come, and He subjected everything under His feet.” And so Christ is the head not only of men but of the angels as well. Hence, Matthew 4:11 says, “Angels came and ministered to Him.”

Reply to objection 1: The influence of Christ over all men is mainly with respect to their souls, by which men agree with angels in the nature of their genus, though not in the nature of their species. And by reason of this conformity Christ can be called the head of the angels, even there is no conformity with respect to bodies.

Reply to objection 2: In the state of the present life the Church is the congregation of the faithful, but in the state of heaven it is the congregation of all who comprehend [the divine essence]. Now Christ was not only a wayfarer but also a comprehender. And so he is the head not only of the faithful, but also of those who comprehend, since He has grace and glory to the fullest extent.

Reply to objection 3: In this passage Augustine is speaking by way of a sort of assimilation of the cause to the effect, viz., in the sense that a corporeal entity acts on bodies and a spiritual entity acts on spiritual entities. However, by virtue of His spiritual nature, i.e., His divine nature, Christ’s human nature can cause something not only in the spirits of men but also in the spirits of angels, because of His maximal conjunction with God, viz., by a personal union.

Article 5

Is the grace by which Christ is the head of the Church the same as the singular grace that belongs to *this* man [Christ]?

It seems that the grace by which Christ is the head of the Church is not the same as the singular grace that belongs to *this* man [Christ] (*non sit eadem gratia qua Christus est caput Ecclesiae cum gratia singulari illius hominis*):

Objection 1: In Romans 5:15 the Apostle says, “If by the offense of one many have died, how much more has the grace of God and the gift, in the grace of the one man Jesus Christ, abounded for many more.” But the *actual sin* of Adam himself is different from the *original sin*, which he passed on to his posterity. Therefore, the personal grace that is proper to Christ Himself is different from the grace which He has insofar as He is head of the Church and which flows from Him to the others.

Objection 2: Habits are distinguished by their acts. But in Christ His personal grace is ordered toward one act, viz., the sanctification of that one soul, and His grace as the head is ordered toward another act, viz., sanctifying the others. Therefore, the personal grace of Christ Himself is different from the grace that belongs to Him insofar as He is the head of the Church.

Objection 3: As was explained above (q. 7, intro.), three sorts of grace are distinguished in Christ, viz., the grace of union, the grace of the head, and the singular grace of *this* man. But the singular grace of Christ is different from the grace of union. Therefore, it is likewise different from the grace of the head.

But contrary to this: John 1:16 says, “Of his fullness we have all received.” But we receive from Him insofar as He our head. Therefore, He is our head insofar as He has the fullness of grace. But as was explained above (q. 7, a. 9), He had the fullness of grace insofar as personal grace existed perfectly in Him. Therefore, He is our head because of His personal grace. And so it is not the case that His grace as the head is one thing and His personal grace is something else.

I respond: Each thing acts insofar as it is a being in actuality. Now it has to be the case that it is the same thing in actuality (a) by which something *exists in actuality* and (b) by which it *acts*—and so it is the same heat by which a fire is hot and by which the fire makes something hot. However, not every act by which a thing exists in actuality is sufficient for its being the principle of acting on other things. For as Augustine explains in *Super Genesim ad Litteram* 12 and the Philosopher in *De Anima* 3, since an agent prevails over its patient (*cum agens sit praestantius patiente*), a thing that acts on others must have an act with a sort of preeminence.

Now it was explained above (q. 7, aa. 9-10) that grace is received in the soul of Christ with the utmost preeminence. And so, because of the preeminence of the grace that He has received, it befits Him that this grace should flow into others—something that belongs to the nature of a head. And so the personal grace by which Christ’s soul is justified is the *same in essence* (*eadem est secundum essentiam*) as the grace by which He is the head of the Church who justifies others, though they *differ conceptually* (*differt tamen secundum rationem*).

Reply to objection 1: *Original sin* in Adam, which is a sin that belongs to the nature (*est peccatum naturae*), is derived from his *actual sin*, i.e., from his personal sin, since in him the person corrupts the nature and, by the mediation of this corruption, the sin of the first man flows into his posterity insofar as the corrupted nature corrupts the person.

By contrast, it is not the case that grace flows from Christ into us by the mediation of human nature; instead, it flows from Christ into us solely by the personal action of Christ himself. Hence, it is not necessary in Christ to distinguish two sorts of *grace*, one of which corresponds to the nature and the other to the person, in the way that in Adam the sin that belongs to the nature is distinguished from the sin that belongs to the person.

Reply to objection 2: Diverse acts, one of which is the explanation for and cause of the other, do not make for diverse habits. But the act of the personal grace, which is to make holy the one who formally has it, is the explanation of the justification of the others, which pertains to the grace of the head. And thus it is that the *essence of the habit* is not diversified by a difference of this sort.

Reply to objection 3: The grace belonging to the person and the grace belonging to the head are ordered toward the same action, whereas the grace of union is ordered not toward an action but instead toward the *esse* of a person. And so the grace belonging to a person and the grace belonging to the head agree in the *essence of the habit*, whereas the grace of union does not.

This is so, even though the grace that belongs to the person can in some sense be called a ‘grace of union’, insofar as it brings about a certain congruity with the union. And on this interpretation, the ‘grace of union’ and the grace that belongs to the head and the grace that belongs to the individual person are one in essence and differ only conceptually.

Article 6

Is being the head of the Church peculiar to Christ?

It seems that being the head of the Church is not peculiar to Christ (*esse caput Ecclesiae non sit proprium Christo*):

Objection 1: 1 Kings 15:7 says, “When you were a little one in your own eyes, you were made the head of the tribes of Israel.” But there is a single Church in the New and Old Testaments. Therefore, it seems that, by the same line of reasoning, another man besides Christ can be the head of the Church.

Objection 2: Christ is called the head of the Church because He pours grace into the members of the Church. But it likewise belongs to others to offer grace to others—this according to Ephesians 4:29 (“Let no evil speech proceed from your mouth, but whatever is good for the building up of the faith, that it may give grace to the hearers.”) Therefore, it seems that it belongs to others besides Christ to be the head of the Church.

Objection 3: By the fact that He presides over the Church, Christ is called not only the ‘head’ (*caput*), but also the ‘shepherd’ (*pastor*) and the ‘foundation’ (*fundamentum*). But Christ did not reserve the name ‘shepherd’ for Himself alone—this according to 1 Peter 5:4 (“And when the prince of shepherds appears, you will receive a never-fading crown of glory”). Again, neither did He reserve the name ‘foundation’ for Himself alone—this according to Apocalypse 21:14 (“The wall of the city has twelve foundations”). Therefore, it seems that He likewise did not reserve the name ‘head’ for Himself alone.

But contrary to this: Colossians 2:19 says, “The head of the Church is that from whom the body, nourished and knit together through joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.” But this applies to Christ alone. Therefore, Christ alone is the head of the Church.

I respond: There are two ways in which the head has an influence on the members: (a) by a sort of *intrinsic influence*, insofar as the moving and sentient power flows from the head to the other members; and (b) by a sort of *exterior governance*, insofar as a man is guided in his exterior acts by vision and the other senses, which are rooted in the head.

Now the *interior flow of grace* is from no one except Christ alone, whose human nature, by the fact that it is adjoined to His divine nature, has the power to justify.

By contrast, influence on members of the Church with respect to *exterior governance* can belong to others. And on this score, some others can be called heads of the Church—this according to Amos 6:1 (“You great men, heads of the people”). But they are heads in a different way from Christ:

First, because Christ is the head of *all those who belong to the Church at every time and place and in any state*, whereas other men are called heads (a) at certain specific places, e.g., bishops with respect to their churches, or, again, (b) at certain specific times, in the way that a pope is the head of the whole Church at the time of his pontificate, or (c) according to a determinate state, viz., insofar as they are in the state of a wayfarer.

Second, Christ is the head of the Church *by His own power and authority*, whereas others are called heads insofar as they act in the place of Christ—this according to 2 Corinthians 2:10 (“What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the person of Christ”), and according to 2 Corinthians 5:20 (“So we are ambassadors for Christ, with God exhorting through us”).

Reply to objection 1: This passage is taken in such a way that the notion of a head is being thought of as based on exterior governance, in the way that a king is called the head of his kingdom.

Reply to objection 2: A man ‘gives grace’ not by pouring it out interiorly, but by urging others on exteriorly to things that involve grace.

Reply to objection 3: As Augustine says in *Super Ioannem*, “If the leaders of the Church are shepherds, then how is there just one shepherd, unless because they are all members of the one shepherd?” And, similarly, others can be called ‘foundations’ and ‘heads’ insofar as they are members of

the one head and of the one foundation.

And yet, as Augustine points out in the same place, “He gave it to His members to be shepherds, but none of us calls himself the door or gate (*ostium*) (cf. John 10); this He reserved for Himself.” And this is because ‘door’ implies the *principal authority*, since the door is that through which everyone enters the house, and Christ Himself is the only one through whom we have access to that grace in which we abide. By contrast, the other names mentioned above can imply a secondary authority and not just the principal authority.

Article 7

Is the devil the head of those who are evil?

It seems that the devil is not the head of those who are evil (*diabolus non sit caput malorum*):

Objection 1: As a certain Gloss on Ephesians 1:22 (“He made Him the head”) explains, the nature of a head involves sense and movement flowing into the other members. But the devil does not have the power to pour [into others] the wickedness which belongs to sin and which proceeds from the will of the sinner. Therefore, the devil cannot be the head of those who are evil.

Objection 2: It is through every sort of sin that a man becomes evil. But not all sins are from the devil. This is clear in the case of the sins of those demons who did not sin because they were persuaded by another. Similarly, it is likewise not the case that every human sin proceeds from the devil; for in *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus* it says, “It is not the case that all our bad thoughts are always excited by the prompting of the Devil; instead, they oftentimes arise from the movement of our own judgment.” Therefore, the devil is not the head of all who are evil.

Objection 3: One head is fixed to one body. But the whole multitude of those who are evil does not seem to have anything in which they are unified. For as Dionysius explains in *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 4, “an evil can be contrary to an evil,” since they “stem from diverse defects.” Therefore, the devil cannot be called the head of all who are evil.

But contrary to this: A Gloss on Job 18:17 (“Let the memory of him perish from the earth”) says, “Of each wicked individual it is said that he returns to the head, i.e., the devil.”

I respond: As was explained above (a. 6), the head not only influences the members interiorly, but also governs them exteriorly by directing their acts toward some end. So, then, an individual can be called the head of a given multitude either (a) in both ways, i.e., with respect to interior influence and exterior governance—and, as has explained (a. 6), this is how Christ is the head of the Church—or (b) only with respect to external governance—and this is how a prince or a prelate is the head of the multitude that is subject to him. And it is in this latter way that the devil is called the head of all those who are evil, since, as Job 41:25 says, “He is the king over all the children of pride.”

Now governing involves leading those whom one governs to his own end, and the devil’s end is the rational creature’s turning away from God; this is why from the beginning he tried to move man away from obedience to God’s command. And turning away from God has the character of an end insofar as it is desired under the appearance of liberty—this according to Jeremiah 2:20 (“From of old you have broken my yoke, you have shattered my chains, and you have said, ‘I will not serve’”). Therefore, insofar as some individuals are led to this end by sinning, they fall under the rule and governance of the devil. And it is because of this that he called their head.

Reply to objection 1: Even though the devil does not influence the rational mind interiorly, he nonetheless leads it toward evil by making suggestions.

Reply to objection 2: A governor does not always suggest to each individual that he obey his will, but he instead proposes a sign of his will to everyone, and some of them are incited to follow his will because they are thus induced, whereas others follow it spontaneously on their own—the latter is clear in

the case of an army leader whose banner the soldiers follow even though no one is exhorting them.

So, then, the first sin of the devil, who, as 1 John 3:8 says, “sins from the beginning,” is proposed for all to follow, and some imitate him because of his suggestion, whereas others imitate him spontaneously on their own without any suggestion. And on this score, the devil is the head of all who are evil insofar as they imitate him—this according to Wisdom 2:24-25 (“By the envy of the devil, death entered the world. And those who are on his side imitate him”).

Reply to objection 3: All sins agree in the *turning away from* God, even though they differ from one another in that they *turn toward* diverse changeable goods.

Article 8

Is the Antichrist the head of those who are evil?

It seems that the Antichrist is not the head of those who are evil (*Antichristus non sit caput malorum*):

Objection 1: There are not different heads of a single body. But the devil is the head of the multitude of those who are evil. Therefore, the Antichrist is not their head.

Objection 2: The Antichrist is a member of the devil. But the head is distinct from the members. Therefore, the Antichrist is not the head of those who are evil.

Objection 3: The head has influence on the members. But the Antichrist has no influence on the evil men who preceded him. Therefore, the Antichrist is not the head of those who are evil.

But contrary to this: A Gloss on Job 21:29 (“Ask any of those who travel the roads”) says, “While he is talking about the body of all who are evil, he suddenly turns his words to the head of all evildoers, the Antichrist.”

I respond: As was explained above (a. 1), one finds three things in a natural head, viz., *order*, *perfection*, and *power to influence*.

Thus, with respect to the *order of time*, the Antichrist is not said to be the head of those who are evil in the sense that his sin preceded them in the way that the sin of the devil did.

Similarly, he is likewise not said to be the head of those who are evil because of his *power to influence*. For even if he were to turn some individuals of his own time to evil by inducing them exteriorly, it would nonetheless not be the case that those who lived before him had either been induced by him toward wickedness or had imitated his wickedness.

It remains, then, that he is called the head of those who are evil because of the completeness of his wickedness (*propter malitiae perfectionem*). Hence, a Gloss on 2 Thessalonians 2:4 (“... showing himself as if he were God”) says, “Just as the fullness of the divine nature lived in Christ, so the fullness of all wickedness lived in the Antichrist”—not in such a way that his human nature is assumed by the devil in a oneness of person, in the way that Christ’s human nature is assumed by the Son of God, but because the devil by suggestion pours his wickedness into the Antichrist in a more prominent way than into all the others. And on this score the other evil individuals who have preceded him are a sort of prefigurement of the Antichrist—this according to 2 Thessalonians 2:7 (“The mystery of iniquity is already at work”).

Reply to objection 1: The devil and the Antichrist are not two heads but one head, because the Antichrist is called a head insofar as the devil’s wickedness (*malitia diaboli*) is found to be impressed on him to the fullest extent. Hence, a Gloss on 2 Thessalonians 2:4 (“... showing himself as if he were God”) says, “In him will exist the head of all who are evil, viz., the devil, who is the king over all the children of pride.” However, the devil is not said to exist in the Antichrist through a personal union or even through an intrinsic indwelling (*non per unionem personalem nec per intrinsecam habitationem*)—since, as *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus* puts it, “Only the Trinity dwells in the mind”—but instead it is through the effect of his wickedness that the devil is said to exist in the Antichrist.

Reply to objection 2: Just as, in the way explained above (a. 1), “the head of Christ is God” (1 Corinthians 11:3) and yet “He Himself is the head of the Church” (Colossians 1:18), so too the Antichrist is a member of the devil and yet he himself is the head of those who are evil.

Reply to objection 3: The Antichrist is called the head of all who are evil not because of a similarity [to the devil] having to do with influence, but because of a similarity having to do with perfection or completeness. For the devil will, as it were, bring his own wickedness to a head in him, in the way in which an individual is said to bring what he intends to a head when he has perfected it.