

Objection 1. It would seem that moral virtues can be without charity. For it is stated in the *Liber Sentent. Prosperi vii*, that “every virtue save charity may be common to the good and bad.” But “charity can be in none except the good,” as stated in the same book. Therefore the other virtues can be had without charity.

Objection 2. Further, moral virtues can be acquired by means of human acts, as stated in *Ethic. ii, 1,2*, whereas charity cannot be had otherwise than by infusion, according to *Rom. 5:5*: “The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Who is given to us.” Therefore it is possible to have the other virtues without charity.

Objection 3. Further, the moral virtues are connected together, through depending on prudence. But charity does not depend on prudence; indeed, it surpasses prudence, according to *Eph. 3:19*: “The charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge.” Therefore the moral virtues are not connected with charity, and can be without it.

On the contrary, It is written (*1 Jn. 3:14*): “He that loveth not, abideth in death.” Now the spiritual life is perfected by the virtues, since it is “by them” that “we lead a good life,” as Augustine states (*De Lib. Arb. ii, 17,19*). Therefore they cannot be without the love of charity.

I answer that, As stated above (q. 63, a. 2), it is possible by means of human works to acquire moral virtues, in so far as they produce good works that are directed to an end not surpassing the natural power of man: and when they are acquired thus, they can be without charity, even as they were in many of the Gentiles. But in so far as they produce good works in proportion to a supernatural last end, thus they have the character of virtue, truly and perfectly; and cannot be acquired by human acts, but are infused by God. Such like moral virtues cannot be without charity. For it has been

stated above (a. 1; q. 58, Aa. 4,5) that the other moral virtues cannot be without prudence; and that prudence cannot be without the moral virtues, because these latter make man well disposed to certain ends, which are the starting-point of the procedure of prudence. Now for prudence to proceed aright, it is much more necessary that man be well disposed towards his ultimate end, which is the effect of charity, than that he be well disposed in respect of other ends, which is the effect of moral virtue: just as in speculative matters right reason has greatest need of the first indemonstrable principle, that “contradictories cannot both be true at the same time.” It is therefore evident that neither can infused prudence be without charity; nor, consequently, the other moral virtues, since they cannot be without prudence.

It is therefore clear from what has been said that only the infused virtues are perfect, and deserve to be called virtues simply: since they direct man well to the ultimate end. But the other virtues, those, namely, that are acquired, are virtues in a restricted sense, but not simply: for they direct man well in respect of the last end in some particular genus of action, but not in respect of the last end simply. Hence a gloss of Augustine* on the words, “All that is not of faith is sin” (*Rom. 14:23*), says: “He that fails to acknowledge the truth, has no true virtue, even if his conduct be good.”

Reply to Objection 1. Virtue, in the words quoted, denotes imperfect virtue. Else if we take moral virtue in its perfect state, “it makes its possessor good,” and consequently cannot be in the wicked.

Reply to Objection 2. This argument holds good of virtue in the sense of acquired virtue.

Reply to Objection 3. Though charity surpasses science and prudence, yet prudence depends on charity, as stated: and consequently so do all the infused moral virtues.

* Cf. *Lib. Sentent. Prosperi cvi*.