

Objection 1. It would seem that the gifts do not differ from the virtues. For Gregory commenting on Job 1:2, “There were born to him seven sons,” says (Moral. i, 12): “Seven sons were born to us, when through the conception of heavenly thought, the seven virtues of the Holy Ghost take birth in us”: and he quotes the words of Is. 11:2,3: “And the Spirit... of understanding... shall rest upon him,” etc. where the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost are enumerated. Therefore the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost are virtues.

Objection 2. Further, Augustine commenting on Mat. 12:45, “Then he goeth and taketh with him seven other spirits,” etc., says (De Quaest. Evang. i, qu. 8): “The seven vices are opposed to the seven virtues of the Holy Ghost,” i.e. to the seven gifts. Now the seven vices are opposed to the seven virtues, commonly so called. Therefore the gifts do not differ from the virtues commonly so called.

Objection 3. Further, things whose definitions are the same, are themselves the same. But the definition of virtue applies to the gifts; for each gift is “a good quality of the mind, whereby we lead a good life,” etc.*. Likewise the definition of a gift can apply to the infused virtues: for a gift is “an unreturnable giving,” according to the Philosopher (Topic. iv, 4). Therefore the virtues and gifts do not differ from one another.

Objection 4. Several of the things mentioned among the gifts, are virtues: for, as stated above (q. 57, a. 2), wisdom, understanding, and knowledge are intellectual virtues, counsel pertains to prudence, piety to a kind of justice, and fortitude is a moral virtue. Therefore it seems that the gifts do not differ from the virtues.

On the contrary, Gregory (Moral. i, 12) distinguishes seven gifts, which he states to be denoted by the seven sons of Job, from the three theological virtues, which, he says, are signified by Job’s three daughters. He also distinguishes (Moral. ii, 26) the same seven gifts from the four cardinal virtues, which he says were signified by the four corners of the house.

I answer that, If we speak of gift and virtue with regard to the notion conveyed by the words themselves, there is no opposition between them. Because the word “virtue” conveys the notion that it perfects man in relation to well-doing, while the word “gift” refers to the cause from which it proceeds. Now there is no reason why that which proceeds from one as a gift should not perfect another in well-doing: especially as we have already stated (q. 63, a. 3) that some virtues are infused into us by God. Wherefore in this respect we cannot differentiate gifts from virtues. Consequently some have held that the gifts are not to be distinguished from the virtues. But there remains no less a difficulty for them to solve; for they must explain why some virtues are called gifts and some not; and why among the gifts there are some, fear, for instance, that are not reckoned virtues.

Hence it is that others have said that the gifts should be held as being distinct from the virtues; yet they have not assigned a suitable reason for this distinction, a reason, to wit, which would apply either to all the virtues, and to none of the gifts, or vice versa. For, seeing that of the seven gifts, four belong to the reason, viz. wisdom, knowledge, understanding and counsel, and three to the appetite, viz. fortitude, piety and fear; they held that the gifts perfect the free-will according as it is a faculty of the reason, while the virtues perfect it as a faculty of the will: since they observed only two virtues in the reason or intellect, viz. faith and prudence, the others being in the appetitive power or the affections. If this distinction were true, all the virtues would have to be in the appetite, and all the gifts in the reason.

Others observing that Gregory says (Moral. ii, 26) that “the gift of the Holy Ghost, by coming into the soul endows it with prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude, and at the same time strengthens it against every kind of temptation by His sevenfold gift,” said that the virtues are given us that we may do good works, and the gifts, that we may resist temptation. But neither is this distinction sufficient. Because the virtues also resist those temptations which lead to the sins that are contrary to the virtues; for everything naturally resists its contrary: which is especially clear with regard to charity, of which it is written (Cant 8:7): “Many waters cannot quench charity.”

Others again, seeing that these gifts are set down in Holy Writ as having been in Christ, according to Is. 11:2,3, said that the virtues are given simply that we may do good works, but the gifts, in order to conform us to Christ, chiefly with regard to His Passion, for it was then that these gifts shone with the greatest splendor. Yet neither does this appear to be a satisfactory distinction. Because Our Lord Himself wished us to be conformed to Him, chiefly in humility and meekness, according to Mat. 11:29: “Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart,” and in charity, according to Jn. 15:12: “Love one another, as I have loved you.” Moreover, these virtues were especially resplendent in Christ’s Passion.

Accordingly, in order to differentiate the gifts from the virtues, we must be guided by the way in which Scripture expresses itself, for we find there that the term employed is “spirit” rather than “gift.” For thus it is written (Is. 11:2,3): “The spirit... of wisdom and of understanding... shall rest upon him,” etc.: from which words we are clearly given to understand that these seven are there set down as being in us by Divine inspiration. Now inspiration denotes motion from without. For it must be noted that in man there is a twofold principle of movement, one within him, viz. the reason; the other extrinsic to him, viz. God, as stated above (q. 9, Aa. 4,6): moreover the Philosopher says this in

* Cf. q. 55, a. 4

the chapter On Good Fortune (Ethic. Eudem. vii, 8).

Now it is evident that whatever is moved must be proportionate to its mover: and the perfection of the mobile as such, consists in a disposition whereby it is disposed to be well moved by its mover. Hence the more exalted the mover, the more perfect must be the disposition whereby the mobile is made proportionate to its mover: thus we see that a disciple needs a more perfect disposition in order to receive a higher teaching from his master. Now it is manifest that human virtues perfect man according as it is natural for him to be moved by his reason in his interior and exterior actions. Consequently man needs yet higher perfections, whereby to be disposed to be moved by God. These perfections are called gifts, not only because they are infused by God, but also because by them man is disposed to become amenable to the Divine inspiration, according to Is. 50:5: "The Lord. . . hath opened my ear, and I do not resist; I have not gone back." Even the Philosopher says in the chapter On Good Fortune (Ethic. Eudem., vii, 8) that for those who are moved by Divine instinct, there is no need to take counsel according to human reason, but only to follow their inner promptings, since they are moved by a principle higher than human reason. This then is what some say, viz. that the gifts perfect man for acts which are higher than acts of virtue.

Reply to Objection 1. Sometimes these gifts are called virtues, in the broad sense of the word. Never-

theless, they have something over and above the virtues understood in this broad way, in so far as they are Divine virtues, perfecting man as moved by God. Hence the Philosopher (Ethic. vii, 1) above virtue commonly so called, places a kind of "heroic" or "divine virtue*," in respect of which some men are called "divine."

Reply to Objection 2. The vices are opposed to the virtues, in so far as they are opposed to the good as appointed by reason; but they are opposed to the gifts, in as much as they are opposed to the Divine instinct. For the same thing is opposed both to God and to reason, whose light flows from God.

Reply to Objection 3. This definition applies to virtue taken in its general sense. Consequently, if we wish to restrict it to virtue as distinguished from the gifts, we must explain the words, "whereby we lead a good life" as referring to the rectitude of life which is measured by the rule of reason. Likewise the gifts, as distinct from infused virtue, may be defined as something given by God in relation to His motion; something, to wit, that makes man to follow well the promptings of God.

Reply to Objection 4. Wisdom is called an intellectual virtue, so far as it proceeds from the judgment of reason: but it is called a gift, according as its work proceeds from the Divine prompting. The same applies to the other virtues.

* *arete heroike kai theia*