

Objection 1. It would seem that wisdom ought not to be reckoned among the gifts of the Holy Ghost. For the gifts are more perfect than the virtues, as stated above (Ia IIae, q. 68, a. 8). Now virtue is directed to the good alone, wherefore Augustine says (De Lib. Arb. ii, 19) that “no man makes bad use of the virtues.” Much more therefore are the gifts of the Holy Ghost directed to the good alone. But wisdom is directed to evil also, for it is written (James 3:15) that a certain wisdom is “earthly, sensual, devilish.” Therefore wisdom should not be reckoned among the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Objection 2. Further, according to Augustine (De Trin. xii, 14) “wisdom is the knowledge of Divine things.” Now that knowledge of Divine things which man can acquire by his natural endowments, belongs to the wisdom which is an intellectual virtue, while the supernatural knowledge of Divine things belongs to faith which is a theological virtue, as explained above (q. 4, a. 5; Ia IIae, q. 62, a. 3). Therefore wisdom should be called a virtue rather than a gift.

Objection 3. Further, it is written (Job 28:28): “Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding.” And in this passage according to the rendering of the Septuagint which Augustine follows (De Trin. xii, 14; xiv, 1) we read: “Behold piety, that is wisdom.” Now both fear and piety are gifts of the Holy Ghost. Therefore wisdom should not be reckoned among the gifts of the Holy Ghost, as though it were distinct from the others.

On the contrary, It is written (Is. 11:2): “The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him; the spirit of wisdom and of understanding.”

I answer that, According to the Philosopher (Metaph. i: 2), it belongs to wisdom to consider the highest cause. By means of that cause we are able to form a most certain judgment about other causes, and according thereto all things should be set in order. Now the highest cause may be understood in two ways, either simply or in some particular genus. Accordingly he that knows the highest cause in any particular genus, and by its means is able to judge and set in order all the things that belong to that genus, is said to be wise in that genus, for instance in medicine or architecture, according to 1 Cor. 3:10: “As a wise architect, I have laid a foundation.” On the other hand, he who knows the cause that is simply the highest, which is God, is said to be wise

simply, because he is able to judge and set in order all things according to Divine rules.

Now man obtains this judgment through the Holy Ghost, according to 1 Cor. 2:15: “The spiritual man judgeth all things,” because as stated in the same chapter (1 Cor. 2:10), “the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.” Wherefore it is evident that wisdom is a gift of the Holy Ghost.

Reply to Objection 1. A thing is said to be good in two senses: first in the sense that it is truly good and simply perfect, secondly, by a kind of likeness, being perfect in wickedness; thus we speak of a good or a perfect thief, as the Philosopher observes (Metaph. v, text. 21). And just as with regard to those things which are truly good, we find a highest cause, namely the sovereign good which is the last end, by knowing which, man is said to be truly wise, so too in evil things something is to be found to which all others are to be referred as to a last end, by knowing which, man is said to be wise unto evil doing, according to Jer. 4:22: “They are wise to do evils, but to do good they have no knowledge.” Now whoever turns away from his due end, must needs fix on some undue end, since every agent acts for an end. Wherefore, if he fixes his end in external earthly things, his “wisdom” is called “earthly,” if in the goods of the body, it is called “sensual wisdom,” if in some excellence, it is called “devilish wisdom” because it imitates the devil’s pride, of which it is written (Job 41:25): “He is king over all the children of pride.”

Reply to Objection 2. The wisdom which is called a gift of the Holy Ghost, differs from that which is an acquired intellectual virtue, for the latter is attained by human effort, whereas the latter is “descending from above” (James 3:15). In like manner it differs from faith, since faith assents to the Divine truth in itself, whereas it belongs to the gift of wisdom to judge according to the Divine truth. Hence the gift of wisdom presupposes faith, because “a man judges well what he knows” (Ethic. i, 3).

Reply to Objection 3. Just as piety which pertains to the worship of God is a manifestation of faith, in so far as we make profession of faith by worshipping God, so too, piety manifests wisdom. For this reason piety is stated to be wisdom, and so is fear, for the same reason, because if a man fear and worship God, this shows that he has a right judgment about Divine things.