

Objection 1. It would seem that the gift of knowledge is about Divine things. For Augustine says (De Trin. xiv, 1) that “knowledge begets, nourishes and strengthens faith.” Now faith is about Divine things, because its object is the First Truth, as stated above (q. 1, a. 1). Therefore the gift of knowledge also is about Divine things.

Objection 2. Further, the gift of knowledge is more excellent than acquired knowledge. But there is an acquired knowledge about Divine things, for instance, the science of metaphysics. Much more therefore is the gift of knowledge about Divine things.

Objection 3. Further, according to Rom. 1:20, “the invisible things of God. . . are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” If therefore there is knowledge about created things, it seems that there is also knowledge of Divine things.

On the contrary, Augustine says (De Trin. xiv, 1): “The knowledge of Divine things may be properly called wisdom, and the knowledge of human affairs may properly receive the name of knowledge.”

I answer that, A sure judgment about a thing formed chiefly from its cause, and so the order of judgments should be according to the order of causes. For just as the first cause is the cause of the second, so ought the judgment about the second cause to be formed through the first cause: nor is it possible to judge of the first cause through any other cause; wherefore the judgment which is formed through the first cause, is the first and most perfect judgment.

Now in those things where we find something most perfect, the common name of the genus is appropriated for those things which fall short of the most perfect, and some special name is adapted to the most perfect thing, as is the case in Logic. For in the genus of convertible terms, that which signifies “what a thing is,” is given the special name of “definition,” but the convertible terms which fall short of this, retain the common name, and are called “proper” terms.

Accordingly, since the word knowledge implies certitude of judgment as stated above (a. 1), if this certitude of the judgment is derived from the highest cause,

the knowledge has a special name, which is wisdom: for a wise man in any branch of knowledge is one who knows the highest cause of that kind of knowledge, and is able to judge of all matters by that cause: and a wise man “absolutely,” is one who knows the cause which is absolutely highest, namely God. Hence the knowledge of Divine things is called “wisdom,” while the knowledge of human things is called “knowledge,” this being the common name denoting certitude of judgment, and appropriated to the judgment which is formed through second causes. Accordingly, if we take knowledge in this way, it is a distinct gift from the gift of wisdom, so that the gift of knowledge is only about human or created things.

Reply to Objection 1. Although matters of faith are Divine and eternal, yet faith itself is something temporal in the mind of the believer. Hence to know what one ought to believe, belongs to the gift of knowledge, but to know in themselves the very things we believe, by a kind of union with them, belongs to the gift of wisdom. Therefore the gift of wisdom corresponds more to charity which unites man’s mind to God.

Reply to Objection 2. This argument takes knowledge in the generic acceptation of the term: it is not thus that knowledge is a special gift, but according as it is restricted to judgments formed through created things.

Reply to Objection 3. As stated above (q. 1, a. 1), every cognitive habit regards formally the mean through which things are known, and materially, the things that are known through the mean. And since that which is formal, is of most account, it follows that those sciences which draw conclusions about physical matter from mathematical principles, are reckoned rather among the mathematical sciences, though, as to their matter they have more in common with physical sciences: and for this reason it is stated in Phys. ii, 2 that they are more akin to physics. Accordingly, since man knows God through His creatures, this seems to pertain to “knowledge,” to which it belongs formally, rather than to “wisdom,” to which it belongs materially: and, conversely, when we judge of creatures according to Divine things, this pertains to “wisdom” rather than to “knowledge.”