

FIRST PART, QUESTION 37

Of the Name of the Holy Ghost—Love (In Two Articles)

We now inquire concerning the name “Love,” on which arise two points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether it is the proper name of the Holy Ghost?
- (2) Whether the Father and the Son love each other by the Holy Ghost?

Whether “Love” is the proper name of the Holy Ghost?

Ia q. 37 a. 1

Objection 1. It would seem that “Love” is not the proper name of the Holy Ghost. For Augustine says (De Trin. xv, 17): “As the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are called Wisdom, and are not three Wisdoms, but one; I know not why the Father, Son and Holy Ghost should not be called Charity, and all together one Charity.” But no name which is predicated in the singular of each person and of all together, is a proper name of a person. Therefore this name, “Love,” is not the proper name of the Holy Ghost.

Objection 2. Further, the Holy Ghost is a subsisting person, but love is not used to signify a subsisting person, but rather an action passing from the lover to the beloved. Therefore Love is not the proper name of the Holy Ghost.

Objection 3. Further, Love is the bond between lovers, for as Dionysius says (Div. Nom. iv): “Love is a unitive force.” But a bond is a medium between what it joins together, not something proceeding from them. Therefore, since the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, as was shown above (q. 36, a. 2), it seems that He is not the Love or bond of the Father and the Son.

Objection 4. Further, Love belongs to every lover. But the Holy Ghost is a lover: therefore He has love. So if the Holy Ghost is Love, He must be love of love, and spirit from spirit; which is not admissible.

On the contrary, Gregory says (Hom. xxx, in Pentecost.): “The Holy Ghost Himself is Love.”

I answer that, The name Love in God can be taken essentially and personally. If taken personally it is the proper name of the Holy Ghost; as Word is the proper name of the Son.

To see this we must know that since as shown above (q. 27, Aa. 2,3,4,5), there are two processions in God, one by way of the intellect, which is the procession of the Word, and another by way of the will, which is the procession of Love; forasmuch as the former is the more known to us, we have been able to apply more suitable names to express our various considerations as regards that procession, but not as regards the procession of the will. Hence, we are obliged to employ circumlocution as regards the person Who proceeds, and the relations following from this procession which are called “procession” and “spiration,” as stated above (q. 27, a. 4, ad 3), and yet express the origin rather than the relation

in the strict sense of the term. Nevertheless we must consider them in respect of each procession simply. For as when a thing is understood by anyone, there results in the one who understands a conception of the object understood, which conception we call word; so when anyone loves an object, a certain impression results, so to speak, of the thing loved in the affection of the lover; by reason of which the object loved is said to be in the lover; as also the thing understood is in the one who understands; so that when anyone understands and loves himself he is in himself, not only by real identity, but also as the object understood is in the one who understands, and the thing loved is in the lover. As regards the intellect, however, words have been found to describe the mutual relation of the one who understands the object understood, as appears in the word “to understand”; and other words are used to express the procession of the intellectual conception—namely, “to speak,” and “word.” Hence in God, “to understand” is applied only to the essence; because it does not import relation to the Word that proceeds; whereas “Word” is said personally, because it signifies what proceeds; and the term “to speak” is a notional term as importing the relation of the principle of the Word to the Word Himself. On the other hand, on the part of the will, with the exception of the words “dilection” and “love,” which express the relation of the lover to the object loved, there are no other terms in use, which express the relation of the impression or affection of the object loved, produced in the lover by fact that he loves—to the principle of that impression, or “vice versa.” And therefore, on account of the poverty of our vocabulary, we express these relations by the words “love” and “dilection”: just as if we were to call the Word “intelligence conceived,” or “wisdom begotten.”

It follows that so far as love means only the relation of the lover to the object loved, “love” and “to love” are said of the essence, as “understanding” and “to understand”; but, on the other hand, so far as these words are used to express the relation to its principle, of what proceeds by way of love, and “vice versa,” so that by “love” is understood the “love proceeding,” and by “to love” is understood “the spiration of the love proceeding,” in that sense “love” is the name of the person and “to love” is a notional term, as “to speak” and “to beget.”

Reply to Objection 1. Augustine is there speaking

of charity as it means the divine essence, as was said above (here and q. 24, a. 2, ad 4).

Reply to Objection 2. Although to understand, and to will, and to love signify actions passing on to their objects, nevertheless they are actions that remain in the agents, as stated above (q. 14, a. 4), yet in such a way that in the agent itself they import a certain relation to their object. Hence, love also in ourselves is something that abides in the lover, and the word of the heart is something abiding in the speaker; yet with a relation to the thing expressed by word, or loved. But in God, in whom there is nothing accidental, there is more than this; because both Word and Love are subsistent. Therefore, when we say that the Holy Ghost is the Love of the Father for the Son, or for something else; we do not mean anything that passes into another, but only the relation of love to the beloved; as also in the Word is imported the relation of the Word to the thing expressed by the Word.

Reply to Objection 3. The Holy Ghost is said to

be the bond of the Father and Son, inasmuch as He is Love; because, since the Father loves Himself and the Son with one Love, and conversely, there is expressed in the Holy Ghost, as Love, the relation of the Father to the Son, and conversely, as that of the lover to the beloved. But from the fact that the Father and the Son mutually love one another, it necessarily follows that this mutual Love, the Holy Ghost, proceeds from both. As regards origin, therefore, the Holy Ghost is not the medium, but the third person in the Trinity; whereas as regards the aforesaid relation He is the bond between the two persons, as proceeding from both.

Reply to Objection 4. As it does not belong to the Son, though He understands, to produce a word, for it belongs to Him to understand as the word proceeding; so in like manner, although the Holy Ghost loves, taking Love as an essential term, still it does not belong to Him to spirate love, which is to take love as a notional term; because He loves essentially as love proceeding; but not as the one whence love proceeds.

Whether the Father and the Son love each other by the Holy Ghost?

Ia q. 37 a. 2

Objection 1. It would seem that the Father and the Son do not love each other by the Holy Ghost. For Augustine (De Trin. vii, 1) proves that the Father is not wise by the Wisdom begotten. But as the Son is Wisdom begotten, so the Holy Ghost is the Love proceeding, as explained above (q. 27, a. 3). Therefore the Father and the Son do not love Themselves by the Love proceeding, which is the Holy Ghost.

Objection 2. Further, the proposition, “The Father and the Son love each other by the Holy Ghost,” this word “love” is to be taken either essentially or notionally. But it cannot be true if taken essentially, because in the same way we might say that “the Father understands by the Son”; nor, again, if it is taken notionally, for then, in like manner, it might be said that “the Father and the Son spirate by the Holy Ghost,” or that “the Father generates by the Son.” Therefore in no way is this proposition true: “The Father and the Son love each other by the Holy Ghost.”

Objection 3. Further, by the same love the Father loves the Son, and Himself, and us. But the Father does not love Himself by the Holy Ghost; for no notional act is reflected back on the principle of the act; since it cannot be said that the “Father begets Himself,” or that “He spirates Himself.” Therefore, neither can it be said that “He loves Himself by the Holy Ghost,” if “to love” is taken in a notional sense. Again, the love wherewith He loves us is not the Holy Ghost; because it imports a relation to creatures, and this belongs to the essence. Therefore this also is false: “The Father loves the Son by the Holy Ghost.”

On the contrary, Augustine says (De Trin. vi, 5): “The Holy Ghost is He whereby the Begotten is loved by the one begetting and loves His Begetter.”

I answer that, A difficulty about this question is objected to the effect that when we say, “the Father loves the Son by the Holy Ghost,” since the ablative is construed as denoting a cause, it seems to mean that the Holy Ghost is the principle of love to the Father and the Son; which cannot be admitted.

In view of this difficulty some have held that it is false, that “the Father and the Son love each other by the Holy Ghost”; and they add that it was retracted by Augustine when he retracted its equivalent to the effect that “the Father is wise by the Wisdom begotten.” Others say that the proposition is inaccurate and ought to be expounded, as that “the Father loves the Son by the Holy Ghost”—that is, “by His essential Love,” which is appropriated to the Holy Ghost. Others further say that this ablative should be construed as importing a sign, so that it means, “the Holy Ghost is the sign that the Father loves the Son”; inasmuch as the Holy Ghost proceeds from them both, as Love. Others, again, say that this ablative must be construed as importing the relation of formal cause, because the Holy Ghost is the love whereby the Father and the Son formally love each other. Others, again, say that it should be construed as importing the relation of a formal effect; and these approach nearer to the truth.

To make the matter clear, we must consider that since a thing is commonly denominated from its forms, as “white” from whiteness, and “man” from humanity; everything whence anything is denominated, in this particular respect stands to that thing in the relation of form. So when I say, “this man is clothed with a garment,” the ablative is to be construed as having relation to the formal cause, although the garment is not the form. Now it may happen that a thing may be denom-

inated from that which proceeds from it, not only as an agent is from its action, but also as from the term itself of the action—that is, the effect, when the effect itself is included in the idea of the action. For we say that fire warms by heating, although heating is not the heat which is the form of the fire, but is an action proceeding from the fire; and we say that a tree flowers with the flower, although the flower is not the tree’s form, but is the effect proceeding from the form. In this way, therefore, we must say that since in God “to love” is taken in two ways, essentially and notionally, when it is taken essentially, it means that the Father and the Son love each other not by the Holy Ghost, but by their essence. Hence Augustine says (*De Trin.* xv, 7): “Who dares to say that the Father loves neither Himself, nor the Son, nor the Holy Ghost, except by the Holy Ghost?” The opinions first quoted are to be taken in this sense. But when the term Love is taken in a notional sense it means nothing else than “to spirate love”; just as to speak is to produce a word, and to flower is to produce flowers. As therefore we say that a tree flowers by its flower, so do we say that the Father, by the Word or the Son, speaks Himself, and His creatures; and that the Father and the Son love each other and us, by the Holy Ghost, or by Love proceeding.

Reply to Objection 1. To be wise or intelligent is taken only essentially in God; therefore we cannot say that “the Father is wise or intelligent by the Son.” But to love is taken not only essentially, but also in a notional sense; and in this way, we can say that the Father and the Son love each other by the Holy Ghost, as was above explained.

Reply to Objection 2. When the idea of an action includes a determined effect, the principle of the action may be denominated both from the action, and from the

effect; so we can say, for instance, that a tree flowers by its flowering and by its flower. When, however, the idea of an action does not include a determined effect, then in that case, the principle of the action cannot be denominated from the effect, but only from the action. For we do not say that the tree produces the flower by the flower, but by the production of the flower. So when we say, “spirates” or “begets,” this imports only a notional act. Hence we cannot say that the Father spirates by the Holy Ghost, or begets by the Son. But we can say that the Father speaks by the Word, as by the Person proceeding, “and speaks by the speaking,” as by a notional act; forasmuch as “to speak” imports a determinate person proceeding; since “to speak” means to produce a word. Likewise to love, taken in a notional sense, means to produce love; and so it can be said that the Father loves the Son by the Holy Ghost, as by the person proceeding, and by Love itself as a notional act.

Reply to Objection 3. The Father loves not only the Son, but also Himself and us, by the Holy Ghost; because, as above explained, to love, taken in a notional sense, not only imports the production of a divine person, but also the person produced, by way of love, which has relation to the object loved. Hence, as the Father speaks Himself and every creature by His begotten Word, inasmuch as the Word “begotten” adequately represents the Father and every creature; so He loves Himself and every creature by the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as the Holy Ghost proceeds as the love of the primal goodness whereby the Father loves Himself and every creature. Thus it is evident that relation to the creature is implied both in the Word and in the proceeding Love, as it were in a secondary way, inasmuch as the divine truth and goodness are a principle of understanding and loving all creatures.