

Objection 1. It would seem that moral virtues are not divided into those which are about operations and those which are about passions. For the Philosopher says (Ethic. ii, 3) that moral virtue is “an operative habit whereby we do what is best in matters of pleasure or sorrow.” Now pleasure and sorrow are passions, as stated above (q. 31, a. 1; q. 35, a. 1). Therefore the same virtue which is about passions is also about operations, since it is an operative habit.

Objection 2. Further, the passions are principles of external action. If therefore some virtues regulate the passions, they must, as a consequence, regulate operations also. Therefore the same moral virtues are about both passions and operations.

Objection 3. Further, the sensitive appetite is moved well or ill towards every external operation. Now movements of the sensitive appetite are passions. Therefore the same virtues that are about operations are also about passions.

On the contrary, The Philosopher reckons justice to be about operations; and temperance, fortitude and gentleness, about passions (Ethic. ii, 3,7; v, 1, seqq.).

I answer that, Operation and passion stand in a twofold relation to virtue. First, as its effects; and in this way every moral virtue has some good operations as its product; and a certain pleasure or sorrow which are passions, as stated above (q. 59, a. 4, ad 1).

Secondly, operation may be compared to moral virtue as the matter about which virtue is concerned: and in this sense those moral virtues which are about operations must needs differ from those which are about passions. The reason for this is that good and evil, in certain operations, are

taken from the very nature of those operations, no matter how man may be affected towards them: viz. in so far as good and evil in them depend on their being commensurate with someone else. In operations of this kind there needs to be some power to regulate the operations in themselves: such are buying and selling, and all such operations in which there is an element of something due or undue to another. For this reason justice and its parts are properly about operations as their proper matter. On the other hand, in some operations, good and evil depend only on commensuration with the agent. Consequently good and evil in these operations depend on the way in which man is affected to them. And for this reason in such like operations virtue must needs be chiefly about internal emotions which are called the passions of the soul, as is evidently the case with temperance, fortitude and the like.

It happens, however, in operations which are directed to another, that the good of virtue is overlooked by reason of some inordinate passion of the soul. In such cases justice is destroyed in so far as the due measure of the external act is destroyed: while some other virtue is destroyed in so far as the internal passions exceed their due measure. Thus when through anger, one man strikes another, justice is destroyed in the undue blow; while gentleness is destroyed by the immoderate anger. The same may be clearly applied to other virtues.

This suffices for the Replies to the Objections. For the first considers operations as the effect of virtue, while the other two consider operation and passion as concurring in the same effect. But in some cases virtue is chiefly about operations, in others, about passions, for the reason given above.