

Objection 1. It would seem that hope precedes faith. Because a gloss on Ps. 36:3, “Trust in the Lord, and do good,” says: “Hope is the entrance to faith and the beginning of salvation.” But salvation is by faith whereby we are justified. Therefore hope precedes faith.

Objection 2. Further, that which is included in a definition should precede the thing defined and be more known. But hope is included in the definition of faith (Heb. 11:1): “Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for.” Therefore hope precedes faith.

Objection 3. Further, hope precedes a meritorious act, for the Apostle says (1 Cor. 9:10): “He that plougheth should plough in hope... to receive fruit.” But the act of faith is meritorious. Therefore hope precedes faith.

On the contrary, It is written (Mat. 1:2): “Abraham begot Isaac,” i.e. “Faith begot hope,” according to a gloss.

I answer that, Absolutely speaking, faith precedes hope. For the object of hope is a future good, arduous but possible to obtain. In order, therefore, that we may hope, it is necessary for the object of hope to be proposed to us as possible. Now the object of hope is, in one way, eternal happiness, and in another way, the Divine assistance, as

explained above (a. 2; a. 6, ad 3): and both of these are proposed to us by faith, whereby we come to know that we are able to obtain eternal life, and that for this purpose the Divine assistance is ready for us, according to Heb. 11:6: “He that cometh to God, must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him.” Therefore it is evident that faith precedes hope.

Reply to Objection 1. As the same gloss observes further on, “hope” is called “the entrance” to faith, i.e. of the thing believed, because by hope we enter in to see what we believe. Or we may reply that it is called the “entrance to faith,” because thereby man begins to be established and perfected in faith.

Reply to Objection 2. The thing to be hoped for is included in the definition of faith, because the proper object of faith, is something not apparent in itself. Hence it was necessary to express it in a circumlocution by something resulting from faith.

Reply to Objection 3. Hope does not precede every meritorious act; but it suffices for it to accompany or follow it.