

CHAPTER 7
PROPERTIES OF BEING: TRANSCENDENTALS
TRUE, GOOD, BEAUTIFUL

Truth: in the mind, in things

Quaestiones disputatae de veritate, q. 1, art. 2

In the Second Article We Ask: Is Truth Found Principally in the Intellect or in Things?

Difficulties: It seems that it is found principally in things, for

1. It was pointed out that the true is convertible with being. But being is found more principally in things than in the soul. The true, therefore, is principally outside the soul.
2. Things are not in the soul through their essences but, as pointed out by the Philosopher, through species. If, therefore, truth is found principally in the soul, truth will not be the essence of a thing but merely its likeness or species; and the true will be the species of a being existing outside the soul. But the species of a thing existing in the soul is not predicated of a thing outside the soul and is not convertible with it; for, if this were so, the true could not be converted with being – which is false.
3. That which is in something is based upon that in which it is. If truth, then, is principally in the soul, judgments about truth will have as their criterion the soul's estimation. This would revive that error of the ancient philosophers who said that any opinion a person has in his intellect is true and that two contradictories can be true at the same time. This, of course, is absurd.
4. If truth is principally in the intellect, anything which pertains to the intellect should be included in the definition of truth. Augustine, however, sharply criticizes such definitions, as, for example, "The true is that which is as it is seen." For, according to this definition, something would not be true if it were not seen. This is clearly false of rocks hidden deep in the earth. Augustine similarly criticizes the following definition: "The true is that which is as it appears to the knower, provided he is willing and able to know." For, according to this definition, something would not be true unless the knower wished and were able to know. The same criticism can be leveled against other definitions that include any reference to intellect. Truth, therefore, is not principally in the intellect.

To the Contrary:

1. The Philosopher says: "The true and the false are not in things but in the mind."
2. Truth is "the conformity of thing and intellect." But since this conformity can be only in the intellect, truth is only in the intellect.

Reply:

When a predicate is used primarily and secondarily of many things, it is not necessary that what is the cause of the others receive the primary predication of the common term, but rather that in which the meaning of the common term is first fully verified. For example, healthy is primarily predicated of an animal, for it is in an animal that the nature of health is first found in its fullest sense. But inasmuch as medicine causes health, it is also said to be healthy. Therefore, since truth is predicated of many things in a primary and secondary sense, it ought to be primarily predicated of that in which its full meaning is primarily found.

Now, the fulfillment of any motion is found in the term of the motion; and, since the term of the motion of a cognitive power is the soul, the known must be in the knower after the manner of the knower. But the motion of an appetitive power terminates in things. For this reason the Philosopher speaks of a sort of circle formed by the acts of the soul: for a thing outside the soul moves the intellect, and the thing known moves the appetite, which tends to reach the things from which the motion originally started. Since good, as mentioned previously, expresses a relation to appetite, and true, a relation to the intellect, the Philosopher says, that good and evil are in things, but true and false are in the mind. A thing is not called true, however, unless it conforms to an intellect. The true, therefore, is found secondarily in things and primarily in intellect.

Note, however, that a thing is referred differently to the practical intellect than it is to the speculative intellect. Since the **practical** intellect causes things, it is a measure of what it causes. But, since the **speculative** intellect is receptive in regard to things, it is, in a certain sense, moved by things and consequently measured by them. It is clear, therefore, that, as is said in the *Metaphysics*, natural things from which our intellect gets its scientific knowledge measure our intellect. Yet these things are themselves measured by the divine intellect, in which are all created things —just as all works of art find their origin in the intellect of an artist. The *divine intellect*, therefore, measures and is not measured; a *natural thing* both measures and is measured; but our *intellect* is measured, and measures only artifacts, not natural things.

A natural thing, therefore, being placed between two intellects, is called true insofar as it conforms to either. It is said to be true with respect to its conformity with the **divine** intellect insofar as it fulfills the end to which it was ordained by the divine intellect. This

is clear from the writings of Anselm and Augustine, as well as from the definition of Avicenna, previously cited: “The truth of anything is a property of the act of being which has been established for it.” With respect to its conformity with a **human** intellect, a thing is said to be *true* insofar as it is such as to cause a true estimate about itself; and a thing is said to be *false* if, as Aristotle says, “by nature it is such that it seems to be what it is not, or seems to possess qualities which it does not possess.”

In a natural thing, truth is found especially in the first, rather than in the second, sense; for its reference to the divine intellect comes before its reference to a human intellect. Even if there were no human intellects, things could be said to be true because of their relation to the divine intellect. But if, by an impossible supposition, intellect did not exist and things did continue to exist, then the essentials of truth would in no way remain.

Answers to Difficulties:

1. As is clear from the discussion, true is predicated primarily of a true intellect and secondarily of a thing conformed with intellect. True taken in either sense, however, is interchangeable with being, but in different ways. Used of things, it can be interchanged with being through a judgment asserting merely material identity, for every being is conformed with the divine intellect and can be conformed with a human intellect. The converse of this is also true.

But if true is understood as used of the intellect, then it can be converted with being outside the soul—not as denominating the same subject, but as expressing conformity. For every true act of understanding is referred to a being, and every being corresponds to a true act of understanding.

2. The solution of the second argument is clear from the solution of the first.

3. What is in another does not depend on that other unless it is caused by the principles of that other. For example, even though light is in the air, it is caused by something extrinsic, the sun; and it is based on the motion of the sun rather than on air. In the same way, truth which is in the soul but caused by things does not depend on what one thinks but on the existence of things. For from the fact that a thing is or is not, a statement of an intellect is said to be true or false.

4. Augustine is speaking of a thing’s being seen by the human intellect. Truth, of course, does not depend on this, for many things exist that are not known by our intellects. There is nothing, however, that the divine intellect does not actually know, and nothing that the human intellect does not know potentially, for the agent intellect is said to be that “by which we become all things .” For this reason, one can place in the definition of a true thing its actually being seen by the divine intellect, but not its being seen by a human intellect— except potentially, as is clear from our earlier discussion.

True as opposed to false

BOOK IX: Lesson 11 *Truth and falsehood*

1897. ... You are not white because we think truly that you are white; but conversely we think you are white because you are white. Hence it has been shown that the way which a thing is disposed is the cause of truth both in thought and in speech.

1898. He adds this in order to clarify what he said above, namely, that in things truth and falsity consist in being combined and being separated. For the truth and falsity found in speech and in thought must be traced to a thing’s disposition as their cause. Now when the intellect makes a combination, it receives two concepts, one of which is related to the other as a form; hence it takes one as being present in the other, because predicates are taken formally.

Therefore, if such an operation of the intellect should be traced to a thing as its cause, then in composite substances the **combination of matter and form**, or also the combination of subject and accident, must serve as the foundation and cause of the truth in the combination which the intellect makes in itself and expresses in words. For example, when I say, “Socrates is a man,” the truth of this enunciation is caused by combining the form humanity with the individual matter by means of which Socrates is this man; and when I say, “Man is white,” the cause of the truth of this enunciation is the combining of whiteness with the subject. It is similar in

other cases. And the same thing is evident in the case of separation.

1899. Second, he concludes from what has been said that, if the combining and separating of a thing is the cause of the truth and falsity in thought and in speech, the difference between truth and falsity in thought and in speech must be based on the difference between the combining and separating of what exists in reality. Now in reality such difference is found to involve combination and separation, because (1) some things are **always combined** and it is impossible for them to be separated; for example, sentient nature is always united to the rational soul, and it is impossible for the latter to be separated from the former in such a way that the rational soul may exist without the power of sensation, although on the other hand a sentient soul can exist without reason. Again, (2) some things are **separated** and it is impossible for them to be combined, for example, black and white, and the form of an ass and that of a man. Again, (3) some things are **open to contraries**, because they can be combined and separated, as man and white and also running.

1900. However, the being in which the intellect’s act of combining consists, inasmuch as there is affirmation, indicates a certain composition and union; whereas non-

being, which negation signifies, does away with composition and union and indicates plurality and otherness. Hence it was shown that in the case of things **which may be combined and separated** one and the same statement is sometimes true and sometimes false; for example, the statement “Socrates is sitting” is true when he is sitting; but the same statement is false when he gets up. And the same holds true in the case of thought.

But with regard to those things which cannot be otherwise than they are, i.e., those **which are always combined or separated**, it is impossible for the same thought or statement to be sometimes true and sometimes false; but what is true is always true, and what is false is always false; for example, the proposition “Man is an animal” is true, but the proposition “Man is an ass” is false.

1901. He now explains how truth and falsity can be present in **simple** things; and in regard to this he does three things. First, he shows that truth is not present in the same way in simple things and in composite ones. He says that in the case of things which are not composite but simple, such as immaterial substances, truth or falsity is not present in them (~) as a result of any combination or separation which occurs in reality, but (+) arises because their **quiddity is known or not known**. For when we acquire knowledge of the quiddity of any simple being, the intellect seems to be true; and when we fail to acquire knowledge of its quiddity, but attribute something else to it, the intellect is then false.

1902. For there is no composition in simple beings as a consequence of which it could be said that, when the thing is combined, the intellect in making a combination is then true; or that, when that is separated in reality which the intellect combines, the intellect is then not true. Or to express this in a different way, there is no composition in simple things by reason of which, when we express affirmatively that it is so, its composition is signified; and when we express negatively that it is not so, its separation is signified; as, for example, in the case of composite things, when it is said that a piece of wood is white, its composition is signified, or when it is said that it is not white, or that the diagonal is not commensurable, its separation is signified.

1903. Thus it is evident that truth and falsity are not present in simple things in the same way as in composite things. Nor is this surprising, since **being also is not the same in both**; but the being of composite things results from their components, whereas that of simple things does not. Now truth follows being, because, as was said in Book II (298) of this work, the structure of things in being and in truth is the same.

Hence those things which are not similar in being are not similar in truth.

1904. Second, he shows how truth and falsity are present in simple things. He says that in the case of simple things truth and falsity are such as will be explained; for to come in contact with a simple thing through the intellect, in such a way as to **apprehend what it is** “and to express it,” i.e., to signify this simple thing by a word, constitutes the truth

present in simple things. And since sometimes the word “to express” is taken for affirmative predication, which involves composition, he rejects this interpretation. He says that affirmation and expression are not the same, because affirmation occurs when one thing is predicated of something else, and this implies combination, whereas expression is the simple utterance of something.

1905. Therefore to come in contact with simple things through the intellect and to express them constitutes truth; but not to come in contact with them is not to know them at all. For whoever does not grasp the quiddity of a simple thing is completely ignorant of it; because one cannot both know and not know something about it, since it is not composite.

1906. Moreover, since he had said that to come in contact with simple things is to express their truth, it would seem that **not to come in contact** with them is (~) to be false or in error. He did not say this, however, but said that not to come in contact with them is (+) not to know them.

Hence he gives the reason why not to come in contact with them is not to be in error about them, saying that it is possible to be in error about their quiddity only accidentally; and this must be understood as follows.

1907. It was said above in Book VII (1362) and in Book VIII (1710) that in the case of simple substances the thing itself and its quiddity are one and the same. Hence, since a simple substance is its own quiddity, the judgment about the knowledge of a simple substance and the judgment about the knowledge of its quiddity are one and the same. But the intellect is deceived about a quiddity only accidentally; for either a person comes in contact with a thing’s quiddity through his intellect, and then he truly knows what that thing is; or he does not come in contact with it, and then he does not know what it is. Hence, with regard to such a thing the intellect is neither true nor false. This is why Aristotle says in Book III of *The Soul* that, just as a sense is always true with regard to its proper object, in a similar fashion the intellect is always true with regard to its proper object—quiddity.

And the fact that the intellect is not deceived about a thing’s quiddity applies not only in the case of simple substances but also in that of composite ones.

1908. Now it is necessary to consider how one may be **accidentally deceived** about a quiddity. For a person is deceived about a quiddity only as a result of combining or separating; and with regard to **composite** substances this may occur in two ways. (1) First, it may occur by **combining** a definition with something defined or by **separating** them; for example, if someone were to say that an ass is a mortal rational animal, or that a man is not a mortal rational animal, both would be false. (2) Second, insofar as a definition is composed of **parts** which are incompatible with each other; for example, if someone were to give this definition—man is a non-sensible animal. Thus a definition is said to be false in the first way because it is not the definition of this thing; and in the second way it is said to be false in itself, as the Philosopher has instructed us above in Book V (1132).

1909. Now we can be deceived accidentally about the quiddity of **simple** substances only in the first way; for their quiddity is not composed of many parts in the combining and separating of which falsity can arise. *S.T.* I, q.17, a.4.

True and false are opposed as **contraries**, and not, as some have said, as affirmation and negation. In proof of which it must be considered that negation neither asserts anything nor determines for itself any subject. It can therefore be said of being as of non-being, for instance, not-seeing or not-sitting.

Quaestiones disputatae de veritate, q. 1, art. 10

In regard to everything that is positively predicated of things or found in them, a thing is related to the *divine* in one way (1) as the measured to its measure; for all such things come from the divine intellect's art. A thing is related in another way to the divine intellect: (2) as a thing known is related to the knower. In this way even negations and defects are equated to the divine intellect, since God knows all these even though He does not cause them. It is clear, then, that a thing is conformed to the divine intellect in whatever way it exists, under any form whatsoever or even under a privation or a defect. Consequently, it is clear that everything is true in its relation to the divine intellect.

Hence, the philosopher says that those things that are called false, "which are such as to seem to be what they are not, or a kind which they are not." For example, that is called "false" gold which has in its external appearance the color and other accidents of genuine gold, whereas the nature of gold does not interiorly underlie them.

A thing is not said to be the cause of falsity in the soul in the sense that it necessarily causes falsity; for truth and falsity exist principally in the soul's judgment; and the soul, inasmuch as it judges about things, is not acted upon by things, but rather, in a sense, acts upon them. Hence, a thing is not said to be false because it always of itself causes a false apprehension, but rather because its natural appearance is likely to cause a false impression.

Metaphysics: Book V, lectio 22 —False

1128. Here he gives the various senses of the terms which signify a lack of being or incomplete being. First, he gives the senses in which the term false is used... In regard to the first he does three things. First, he shows how the term false is used of real things; and second (1130), how it is used of definitions ("A false notion"); and third (1135), how men are said to be false ("A false man").

He accordingly says, first, that the term *false* is applied in one sense to real things inasmuch as a statement signifying a reality is not properly composed. And there are two ways in which this can come about:

In one way by forming a proposition which should not be formed; and this is what happens, for instance, in the case of false **contingent** propositions. In another way by forming a proposition about something impossible; and this is what happens in the case of false **impossible** propositions. For if we say that the diagonal of a square is commensurable with one of its sides, it is a false impossible proposition; for it is impossible to combine "commensurable" and "diagonal." And if someone says that you are sitting while you are standing, it is a false contingent proposition; for the predicate does not attach to the subject, although it is not impossible for it to do so. Hence one of these—the impossible—is always false; but the other—the contingent is not always so. Therefore those things are said to be false which are non-beings in their entirety; for a statement is said to be false when what is signified by the statement is nonexistent.

1129. The term false is applied to real things in a second way inasmuch as some things, though beings in themselves, are

But though privation asserts nothing, it determines a subject, for it is negation in a subject, as is stated in *Metaphysics* IV; for blindness is not said except of one whose nature it is to see. Contraries, however, both assert something and determine a subject, for blackness is a species of color. Now falsity asserts something, for a thing is false, as the Philosopher says, inasmuch as something is said or seems to be something that it is not, or not to be what it really is. For as truth implies an adequate apprehension of a thing, so falsity implies the contrary.

fitted by nature to appear either to, be other than they are or as things that do not exist, as "a shadowgraph," i.e., a delineation in shadow. For sometimes shadows appear to be the things of which they are the shadows, as the shadow of a man appears to be a man. The same applies to dreams, which seem to be real things yet are only the likenesses of things. And one speaks in the same way of false gold, because it bears a resemblance to real gold. Now this sense differs from the first, because in the first sense things were said to be false because they did not exist, but here things are said to be false because, while being something in themselves, they are not the things "of which they cause an image," i.e., which they resemble.

It is clear, then, that things are said to be false (1) either because they do not exist or (2) because there arises from them the appearance of what does not exist.

1130. He indicates how the term false applies to definitions. He says that "a notion," i.e., a definition, inasmuch as it is false, is the notion of something non-existent. Now he says "inasmuch as it is false" because a definition is said to be false in two ways:

It is either a **false definition** in itself, and then it is not the definition of anything but has to do entirely with the nonexistent; or it is a **true** definition in itself but false inasmuch as it is **attributed to something other** than the one properly defined; and then it is said to be false inasmuch as it does not apply to the thing defined.

1131. It is clear, then, that every definition which is a **true**

definition of one thing is a false definition of something else; for example, the definition which is true of a circle is false when applied to a triangle. Now for one thing there is, in one sense, **only one definition signifying its quiddity**; and in another sense there are **many** definitions for one thing. For in one sense the subject taken in itself and “the thing with a modification,” i.e., taken in conjunction with a modification, are the same, as Socrates and musical Socrates. But in another sense they are not, for it is the same thing **accidentally** but not in itself. And it is clear that they have different definitions. For the definition of Socrates and that of musical Socrates are different, although in a sense both are definitions of the same thing.

1132. But a definition which is **false in itself** cannot be a definition of anything. And a definition is said to be false in itself, or unqualifiedly false, by reason of the fact that one part of it cannot stand with the other; and such a definition would be had, for example, if one were to say “inanimate living thing.”

1135. Then he shows how the term *false* may be predicated of a man; and in regard to this he does two things. First, he gives two ways in which a man is said to be false. (1) In one way a man is said to be false if he is ready to **think**, or takes pleasure in thinking, thoughts of this kind, i.e., **false** ones, and chooses such thoughts not for any other reason but for themselves. For anyone who has a habit finds the operation relating to that habit to be pleasurable and readily performed; and thus one who has a habit acts in accordance with that habit and not for the sake of anything extrinsic. For example, a debauched person commits fornication because of the pleasure resulting from coition; but if he commits fornication for some other end, for instance, that he may steal, he is more of a thief than a lecher. And similarly one who chooses to speak falsely for the sake of money is more avaricious than false.

1136. (2) In a second way a man is said to be false if he **causes false notions in others**, in much the same way as we said above that things are false which cause a false image or impression. For it is clear from what has been said that the false has to do with the non-existent. Hence a man is said to

be false inasmuch as he makes false statements, and a notion is said to be false inasmuch as it is about something nonexistent.

1137. Second, he excludes two false opinions from what has been laid down above. He draws the first of these from the points made above. He says that, since a false man [a liar] is one who chooses and creates false opinions, one may logically refute or reject a statement made in the *Hippias*, i.e., one of Plato’s works, which said that the same notion is both true and false. For this opinion considered that man to be false who is able to deceive, so that, being able both to deceive and to speak the truth, the same man is both true and false. And similarly the same statement will be both true and false, because the same statement is able to be both true and false; for example, the statement “Socrates sits” is true when he is seated, but is false when he is not seated. Now it is evident that this is taken unwarrantedly, because even a man who is prudent and knowing is able to deceive; yet he is not false, because he does not cause or choose false notions or opinions, and this is the reason why a man is said to be false, as has been stated (1135).

1138. Then he rejects the second false opinion. This opinion maintained that a man who does base things and wills evil is better than one who does not. But this is false. For anyone is defined as being evil on the grounds that he is ready to do or to choose evil things. Yet this opinion wishes to accept this sense of false on the basis of a sort of induction from a similar case. For one who voluntarily limps is better and nobler than one who limps involuntarily: Hence he says that to do evil is like limping inasmuch as the same notion applies to both. And in a sense this is true; for one who limps voluntarily is worse as regards his moral character, although he is more perfect as regards his power of walking. And similarly one who voluntarily does evil is worse as regards his moral character, although perhaps he is not worse as regards some other power. For example, even though that man is more evil, morally speaking, who voluntarily says what is false, still he is more intelligent than one who believes that he speaks the truth when he in fact speaks falsely, though not wilfully.

Being and Good

Questiones disputatae de veritate, q. 21, art. 1 —Does goodness add anything to being?

Difficulties: It seems that it does, for

1. Everything is a being essentially. But a creature is good not essentially but by participation. Good, therefore, really adds something to being.
2. Since good includes being in its very notion, and yet good is rationally distinct from being, the formal character of good must add something to that of being. But it cannot be said to add a negation to being, as does the one, which adds undividedness, because the whole character of good consists in something positive. Hence it adds something to being positively, and thus it seems to add to being in reality.
3. The answer was given that it adds a relation to an end. — On the contrary, in this case good would be nothing but related being. But related being pertains to a definite category of being, which is called “relation” or “to something.” Good would therefore be in a definite category. But this is contrary to what the Philosopher says, placing good in all the categories.
4. As can be gathered from the words of Dionysius, good tends to pour out itself and existence. A thing is good, therefore, by the

fact that it is diffusive. But to pour out or diffuse implies an action, and an action proceeds from the essence through the mediation of a power. A thing is therefore said to be good by reason of a power added to the essence, and so good really adds something to being.

5. The farther we get from the first being, which is one and simple, the more we find difference in things. But in God being and good are really one, being distinguished only conceptually. In creatures, therefore, they are distinguished more than conceptually; and so, since there is no distinction beyond the conceptual except the real, they are distinguished really.

6. Accidentals really add something to the essence. But goodness is accidental to the creature; otherwise it could not be lost. Good therefore really adds something to being.

7. Whatever is predicated as informing something else really adds something to it, since nothing is informed by itself. Good, however, is predicated as informing, as is said in *The Causes*. It therefore adds something to being.

8. Nothing is determined by itself. But good determines being. It therefore adds something to being.

9. The answer was given that good determines being in concept. — On the contrary, corresponding to that concept there is either something in reality or nothing. If nothing, it follows that the concept is void and useless; but if there is something corresponding in reality, the point is established: good really adds something to being.

10. A relation is specified according to the term in respect to which it is predicated. But good implies a relation to a definite sort of being, an end. Good therefore implies a specified relation. Every specified being, however, really adds something to being in general. Hence good really adds something to being.

11. Good and being are interchangeable, like man and “capable of laughter.” But though “capable of laughter” is interchangeable with man, it nevertheless really adds something to man, namely, a property. But a property is classed as an accident. Similarly, therefore, good really adds something to being.

To the Contrary:

1. Augustine says: “Inasmuch as God is good, we are; but inasmuch as we are, we are good.” It therefore seems that good does not add anything to being.

2. Whenever things are so related that one adds something to the other either really or conceptually, one can be understood without the other. But being cannot be understood without good. Hence good does not add anything to being either really or conceptually. Proof of the minor: God can make more than man can understand. But God cannot make a being that is not good, because by the very fact of its being from good it is good, as Boethius makes clear. Therefore neither can the intellect understand it.

Reply:

Something can be added to something else in three ways. (1) It adds some reality which is **outside** the essence of the thing to which it is said to be added. For instance, white adds something to body, since the essence of whiteness is something beyond that of body. (2) One thing is added to the other as **limiting and determining** it. Man, for instance, adds something to animal—not indeed in such a way that there is in man some reality which is completely outside the essence of animal; otherwise it would be necessary to say that it is not the whole of man which is animal but only a part. Animal is limited by man because what is contained in the notion of man determinately and actually, is only implicitly and, as it were, potentially contained in the notion of animal. It belongs to the notion of man that he have a rational soul; to the notion of animal, that it have a soul, without its being determined to rational or nonrational. And yet that determination by reason of which man is said to add something to animal is founded in reality. (3) Something is said to add to something else in **concept only**. This occurs when something which is nothing in reality but only in thought, belongs to the notion of one thing and not to the notion of the other, whether that to which it is said to be added is limited by it or not. Thus blind adds something to man, i.e., blindness, which is not a being in nature but merely a being in the thought of one who knows privations. By it man is limited, for not every man is blind. But when we say “a blind mole,” no limitation is placed by what is added.

(1) It is not possible, however, for something to add anything to being in general in the first way, though in that way there can be an addition to some particular sort of being; for there is no real being which is outside the essence of being in general, though some reality may be outside the essence of this being.

(2) But in the second way certain things are found to add to being, since being is narrowed down in the ten categories, each of which adds something to being, not, of course, an accident or difference which is outside the essence of being, but a definite manner of being which is founded upon the very existence of the thing. It is not in this way, however, that good adds something to being, since good itself, like being, is divided into the ten categories, as is made clear in the *Ethics*.

(3) Good must, accordingly, either add nothing to being or add something merely **in concept**. For if it added something real, being would have to be narrowed down by the character of good to a special genus. But since being is what is first conceived by the

intellect, as Avicenna says, every other noun must either be a synonym of being or add something at least conceptually. The former cannot be said of good, since it is not nonsense to call a being good. Thus good, by the fact of its not limiting being, must add to it something merely conceptual.

What is merely conceptual, however, can be of only two kinds: negation and a certain kind of relation. Every absolute positing signifies something existing in reality. Thus to being, the first intellectual conception, *one* adds what is merely conceptual—a **negation**; for it means undivided being. But *true and good*, being predicated positively, cannot add anything except a **relation** which is merely conceptual. A relation is merely conceptual, according to the Philosopher, when by it something is said to be related which is not dependent upon that to which it is referred, but vice versa; for a relation is a sort of dependence. An example is had in intellectual knowledge and its object, as also in sense and the sensible object. Knowledge depends upon its object, but not the other way about. The relation by which knowledge is referred to its object is accordingly real, but the relation by which the object is referred to the knowledge is only conceptual. According to the Philosopher the object of knowledge is said to be related, not because it is itself referred, but because something else is referred to it. The same holds true of all other things which stand to one another as measure and thing measured or as perfective and perfectible.

The true and the good must therefore add to the concept of being a relationship of that which perfects. But in any being there are two aspects to be considered, the formal character of its species and the act of being by which it subsists in that species. And so a being can be perfective in two ways. (1) It can be so just according to its **specific character**. In this way the intellect is perfected by a being, for it perceives the formal character of the being. But the being is still not in it according to its natural existence. It is this mode of perfecting which the true adds to being. For the true is in the mind, as the Philosopher says, and every being is called true inasmuch as it is conformed or conformable to intellect. For this reason all who correctly define true put intellect in its definition. (2) A being is perfective of another not only according to its specific character but also according to **the existence which it has in reality**. In this fashion the good is perfective; for the good is in things, as the Philosopher says. Inasmuch as one being by reason of its act of existing is such as to perfect and complete another, it stands to that other as an end, And hence it is that all who rightly define good put in its notion something about its status as an end. The Philosopher accordingly says that they excellently defined good who said that it is “that which all things desire.”

(a) First of all and principally, therefore, a being capable of perfecting another after the manner of an **end** is called good; (b) but secondarily something is called good **which leads to an end** (as the useful is said to be good), or which naturally follows upon an end (as not only that which has health is called healthy, but also anything which causes, preserves, or signifies health).

Answers to Difficulties:

1. Since being is predicated absolutely and good adds to it the status of a final cause, the essence of a thing considered absolutely suffices for the thing to be called a being on its account, but not thereby to be called good. just as in the case of the other kinds of causes the status of a secondary cause depends upon that of the primary cause, but that of the primary cause depends upon no other; so also in the case of final causes secondary ends share in the status of final cause from their relation to the last end, but the last end has this status of itself.

And so it is that the essence of God, who is the last end of creatures, suffices for God to be called good by reason of it; but when the essence of a creature is given, the thing is not yet called good except from the relation to God by reason of which it has the character of a final cause. In this sense it is said that a creature is not good essentially but by participation. For from one point of view this is so inasmuch as the essence itself, in our understanding of it, is considered as something other than that relation to God by which it is considered a final cause and is directed to God as its end. But from another point of view a creature does not exist without a relation to God’s goodness. This is Boethius’ meaning.

2. It is not only negation that expresses what is merely conceptual but also a certain type of relation, as has been said.

3. Every real relation is in a definite category, but non-real relations can run through all being.

4. Though, according to the proper use of the word, to pour out seems to imply the operation of an efficient cause, yet taken broadly it can imply the status of any cause, as do to influence, to make, etc. When good is said to be of its very notion diffusive, however, diffusion is not to be understood as implying the operation of an efficient cause but rather the status of a final cause. Nor is such diffusion brought about through the mediation of any added power. Good expresses the diffusion of a final cause and not that of an agent, both because the latter, as efficient, is not the measure and perfection of the thing caused but rather its beginning, and also because the effect participates in the efficient cause only in an assimilation of its form, whereas a thing is dependent upon its end in its whole existence. It is in this that the character of good was held to consist.

5. Things can be really one in God in two ways. (1) Their unity may be merely from that in which they are, and not from their own formal characters. In this way knowledge and power are one; for knowledge is not really the same as power by reason of its being knowledge, but by reason of its being divine. Now things which are really one in God in this way are found to differ really in creatures.

(2) The things which are said to be really one in God may be so by their very formal characters. In this way good and being are

really one in God, because it is of the very notion of good that it does not differ in reality from being. Hence, wherever good and being are found, they are really identical.

6. Just as there is essential being and accidental being, so also there is essential good and accidental good; and a thing loses its goodness in just the same way as it loses its substantial or accidental act of being.

7. From the relationship mentioned above it comes about that good is said to inform or determine being conceptually.

8. The answer is clear from what has just been said.

9. To that concept something does correspond in reality (a real dependence of that which is a means to an end upon the end itself), as there also does in other conceptual relations.

10. Although good expresses a special status, that of an end, nevertheless that status belongs to any being whatsoever and does not put anything real into being. Hence the conclusion does not follow.

11. “Capable of laughter,” though interchanged with man, still adds to man a distinct reality which is over and above man’s essence. But nothing can be added to being in his way, as has been said.

Answers to Contrary Difficulties:

1. We grant this, because good as such does not really add anything to being.

2. This argues that nothing is added even conceptually. To this it must be said that a thing can be understood without another in two ways. (1) This occurs by way of enunciating, when one thing is understood to be without the other. Whatever the intellect can understand without another in this sense, God can make without the other. But being cannot be so understood without good, i.e., so that the intellect understands that something is a being and is not good. (2) Something can be understood without another by way of defining, so that the intellect understands one without at the same time understanding the other. Thus animal is understood without man or any of the other species. In this sense being can be understood without good. Yet it does not follow that God can make a being without good, because the very notion of making is to bring into existence.

Quaestiones disputatae de veritate, q. 21, art. 2 — *Are being and good interchangeable as to their real subjects?*

Difficulties: It seems that they are not, for

1. Opposites are capable of occurring in regard to the same thing. But good and evil are opposites. Now evil is not capable of being in all things; for, as Avicenna says, beyond the sphere of the moon there is no evil. It seems, then, that neither is good found in all beings. And so good is not interchangeable with being.

2. Predicates such that one “tends to more things than another are not interchangeable with one another. But, as Maximus the commentator says, good extends to more things than being; for it extends to non-beings, which are called into being by good. Therefore good and being are not interchangeable.

3. Good is a perfection of which the apprehension is enjoyable, as Algazel says. But not every being has perfection, for prime matter has none. Not every being, therefore, is good.

4. In mathematics being is found but not good, as appears from what the Philosopher says. Being and good are therefore not interchangeable.

5. In *The Causes* it is said that the first of created things is the act of being. But according to the Philosopher “the prior is that from which there is a sequence which cannot be reversed.” The sequence from being to good therefore cannot be reversed; and so good and being are not interchangeable.

6. What is divided is not interchangeable with any one of the things into which it is divided, as animal is not interchangeable with rational. But being is divided into good and evil, since many beings are called evil. Therefore good and being are not interchangeable.

7. Even a privation, according to the Philosopher, is called a being in a certain sense. But it cannot in any sense be called good; otherwise evil, consisting essentially in a privation, would be good. Good and being are therefore not interchangeable.

8. According to Boethius all things are said to be good by reason of the fact that they are from the good, namely God. But God’s goodness is His very wisdom and justice. By the same reasoning, then, all things which are from God would be wise and just. But this is false. So too, then, is the first, viz., that all things are good.

To the Contrary:

1. Nothing tends except to what is like itself. But, as Boethius says, “every being tends to good.” Then every being is good, and nothing can be good unless it in some way is. Consequently good and being are interchangeable.

2. Only what is good can be from the good. But every being proceeds from the divine goodness. Therefore every being is good; and so the conclusion must be the same as above.

Reply:

Since the essence of good consists in this, that something perfects another as an **end**, whatever is found to have the character of an end also has that of good. Now two things are essential to an end: (1) it must be sought or desired by things which have not yet attained the end, and (2) it must be loved by the things which share the end, and be, as it were, enjoyable to them. For it is essentially the same to tend to an end and in some sense to repose in that end. Thus by the same natural tendency a stone moves toward the center (of the world) and comes to rest there.

These two properties are found to belong to the act of being. (1) For whatever does not yet participate in the act of being tends toward it by a certain natural appetite. In this way matter tends to form, according to the Philosopher. (2) But everything which already has being naturally loves its being and with all its strength preserves it. Boethius accordingly says: “Divine providence has given to the things created by it this greatest of reasons for remaining, namely, that they naturally desire to remain to the best of their ability. Therefore you cannot in the least doubt that all beings naturally seek permanence in perduring and avoid destruction.”

Existence itself, therefore, has the essential note of goodness. Just as it is impossible, then, for anything to be a being which does not have existence, so too it is necessary that every being be good by the very fact of its having existence, even though in many beings many other aspects of goodness are added over and above the act of existing by which they subsist.

Since, moreover, good includes the note of being, as is clear from what has been said, it is impossible for anything to be good which is not a being. Thus we are left with the conclusion that good and being are interchangeable.

Answers to Difficulties:

1. Good and evil are opposed as privation and possession or habit. But privation does not have to be in every being in which habit is found; and so evil does not have to be in everything in which there is good. Furthermore, in the case of contraries as, long as one is really in a certain thing, the other is not capable of being in the same thing, as the Philosopher says. Good, however, is really in every being whatever, since it is called good from its own real act of existing.

2. Good extends to non-beings not attributively but causally, inasmuch as non-beings tend to good. And so we can call non-beings things which are in potency and not in act. But the act of being does not have causality except perhaps after the manner of an exemplary cause. This sort of causality, however, extends only to the things which actually participate in being.

3. Just as prime matter is a being in potency and not in act, so it is perfect in potency and not in act and good potentially and not actually.

4. The things which a mathematician studies are good according to the existence which they have in reality. The very existence of a line or of a number, for instance, is good. But the mathematician does not study them according to their existence but only according to their specific formal character. For he studies them abstractly, though they are not abstract in their existence but only in their notion. It was said above that good is not consequent upon the specific character except according to the existence which it has in some real thing. And so the note of goodness does not belong to a line or number as they fall within the purview of the mathematician, even though a line and a number are good.

5. Being is not called prior to good in the sense of prior employed in the objection, but in another sense, as the absolute is prior to the relative.

6. A thing can be called good both from its act of existing and from some added property or state. Thus a man is said to be good both as existing and as being just and chaste or destined for beatitude. By reason of the first goodness being is interchanged with good, and conversely. But by reason of the second, good is a division of being.

7. Privation is not called a reality but only a conceptual being. In this sense it is a good for reason, for to know a privation or anything of the sort is good. Even knowledge of evil, as Boethius points out, cannot be lacking in good.

8. According to Boethius a thing is called good from its very existence, but is called just by reason of some action of its own. Existence, however, is communicated to everything that comes forth from God. But not all things share in that activity to which justice is referred. For although in God to act and to be are the same thing, and thus His justice is His goodness, nevertheless in creatures to act and to be are distinct. Hence existence can be communicated to something to which activity is not; and even in those beings to which both are communicated, to act is not the same as to be. Hence also men who are good and just are indeed good because they exist, but not just because they exist, but rather because they have a certain habit directed to action. And the same can be said of wisdom and other things of the sort.

Or a different answer can be taken from the same Boethius: The just and the wise and other things of this kind are special goods since they are special perfections; but good designates something perfect in an unqualified sense. From the perfect God, therefore, things come forth perfect, but not with the same degree of perfection with which God is perfect, because what is made does not exist in the manner of the agent but in that of the product. Nor do all things which receive perfection from God receive it in the same measure. And so, just as it is common to God and all creatures to be perfect in an absolute sense, but not to be perfect in this or that particular way, so also does it belong to God and to all creatures to be good; but the particular goodness which is wisdom or that which is justice does not have to be common to all. Some goods belong to God alone, as eternity and omnipotence: but some others, to certain creatures as well as to God, as wisdom and justice and the like.

Summa Contra Gentiles. III, 20:2,7,8 —Participated goodness

We have pointed out in Book Two that no created substance is its own act of being. Hence, if anything is good by virtue of the fact that it exists, none of them is its own act of being; none of them is its own goodness. Rather each of them is good by participation in goodness, just as it is being by participation in existing being itself.

... Though God has His own perfect and complete goodness, in accord with His simple existing being, creatures do not attain the perfection of their goodness through their being alone, but through many things. Hence although any one of them is good in so far as it exists, it cannot be called good without qualification, if it lack any other things required for its goodness. Thus, a man who is destitute of virtue and host to vices is indeed called good, (+) relatively speaking; that is, to the extent that he is a being and a man. However, (~) in the absolute sense, he is not good, but evil. So, it is not the same thing for any creature to be and to be good without qualification, although each of them is good in so far as it exists. In God, however, to be and to be good are simply the same thing.

So, if each thing tends toward a likeness of divine goodness as its end, and if each thing becomes like the divine goodness in respect of all the things that belong to its proper goodness, then the goodness of the thing consists not only in its mere being, but in all the things needed for its perfection, as we have shown. It is obvious, then, that things are ordered to God as an end, not merely according to their substantial act of being, but also according to those items which are added as pertinent to perfection.

Quaestiones disputatae de veritate q.21, a.1, ad 4

Though, according to the proper use of the word, *to pour out* seems to imply the operation of an efficient cause, yet taken broadly it can imply the status of any cause, as do to influence, to make, etc. When good is said to be of its very notion diffusive, however, diffusion is not to be understood as implying the operation of (~) an efficient cause but rather the status of (+) final cause. Nor is such diffusion brought about through the mediation of any added power. Good expresses the diffusion of a final cause and not that of an agent, both because the latter, as efficient, is not the measure and perfection of the thing caused but rather its beginning, and also because the effect participates in the efficient cause only in an assimilation of its form, whereas a thing is dependent upon its end in its whole existence.

Metaphysics, Book V Lesson 18: Perfect

1034. (1) He accordingly says, first, that in one sense that thing is said to be perfect **outside of which it is impossible to find any of its parts**. For example, a man is said to be perfect when no part of him is missing; and a period of time is said to be perfect when none of its parts can be found outside of it. For example, a day is said to be perfect or complete when no part of it is missing.

1035. (2) A thing is said to be perfect in another sense with reference to some **ability**. Thus a thing is said to be perfect which admits of “**no further degree**,” i.e., excess or superabundance, from the viewpoint of good performance in some particular line, and is not deficient in any respect. For we say that that thing is in a good state which has neither more nor less than it ought to have, as is said in Book II of the *Ethics*. Thus a man is said to be a perfect physician or a perfect flute player when he lacks nothing pertaining to the particular ability by reason of which he is said to be a good physician or a good flute player. For the ability which each thing has is what makes its possessor good and renders his work good.

1036. And it is in this sense that we also transfer the term perfect to bad things. For we speak of a perfect “slanderer,” or scandal monger, and a perfect thief, when they lack none of the qualities proper to them as such. Nor is it surprising if we use the term perfect of those things which rather designate a defect, because even when things are bad we predicate the term good of them in an analogous sense. For we speak of a good thief and a good scandal monger because in their operations, even though they are evil, they are disposed as good men are with regard to good operations.

1037. The reason why a thing is said to be perfect in the line of its particular ability is that an ability is a perfection of a thing. For each thing is perfect when no part of the natural magnitude which belongs to it according to the form of its proper ability is missing. Moreover, just as each natural being has a definite measure of natural magnitude in continuous quantity, as is stated in Book II of *The Soul*, So too each thing has a definite amount of its own natural ability. For example, a horse has by nature a definite dimensive quantity, within certain limits; for there is both a maximum quantity and minimum quantity beyond which no horse can go in size. And in a similar way the quantity of active power in a horse has certain limits in both directions. For there is some maximum power of a horse which is not in fact surpassed in any horse; and similarly there is some minimum which never fails to be attained.

1038. Therefore, just as the first sense of the term perfect was based on the fact that a thing lacks no part of the dimensive quantity which it is naturally determined to have, in a similar way this second sense of the term is based on the fact that a thing lacks no part of the quantity of power which it is naturally determined to have. And each of these senses of the term has to do with internal perfection.

1039. (3) Here he gives the third sense in which the term perfect is used, and it pertains to **external perfection**. He says that in a third way those things are said to be perfect “which have a **goal**,” i.e., which have already attained their end, but only if that end is “**worth seeking**,” or good. A man, for instance, is called perfect when he has already attained happiness. But someone who has attained some goal that is evil is said to be deficient rather than perfect, because evil is a privation of the perfection which a thing ought to have. Thus it is evident that, when evil men accomplish their will, they are not happier but sadder. And since every goal or end is something final, for this reason we transfer the term perfect somewhat figuratively to those things which have reached some final state, even though it be evil. For example, a thing is said to be perfectly spoiled or corrupted when nothing pertaining to its ruin or corruption is missing. And by this metaphor death is called an end, because it is something final. However, an end is not only something final but is also that for the sake of which a thing comes to be. This does not apply to death or corruption.

1040. Here he shows how things are perfect in **different ways** according to the foregoing senses of perfection. (1) He says that some things are said to be **perfect in themselves**; and this occurs in two ways. (a) For some things are altogether perfect because they lack absolutely nothing at all; they neither have any “further degree,” i.e., excess, because there is nothing which surpasses them in goodness; nor do they receive any good from outside, because they have no need of any external goodness. This is the condition of the first principle, God, in whom the most perfect goodness is found, and to whom none of all the perfections found in each class of things are lacking.

1041. (b) Some things are said to be perfect in some **particular line** because “they do not admit of any further degree,” or excess, “in their class,” as though they lacked anything proper to that class. Nor is anything that belongs to the perfection of that class external to them, as though they lacked it; just as a man is said to be perfect when he has already attained happiness.

1042. And not only is this distinction made with reference to the second sense of perfection given above, but it can also be made with reference to the first sense of the term, as is mentioned at the beginning of *The Heavens*. For any individual body is a perfect quantity in its class, because it has three dimensions, which are all there are. But the world is said to be universally perfect because there is absolutely nothing outside of it.

1043. (2) He now gives the sense in which some things are said to be perfect by reason of their **relation to something else**. He says that other things are said to be perfect “in reference to these,” i.e., in reference to things which are perfect in themselves, (a) either because they **make** something perfect in one of the preceding ways, as medicine is perfect because it causes perfect health; or (b) because they **have** some perfection, as a man is said to be perfect who has perfect knowledge; or (c) because they **represent** such a perfect thing, as things which bear a likeness to those that are perfect (as, for example, an image which represents a man perfectly is said to be perfect); or in any other way in which they are referred to things that are said to be perfect in themselves in the primary senses.

Common good

Quaestiones disputatae de veritate, q.7, a.6, ad 7

A thing is said to be common in two senses. (1) First, it is said to be common through **effect or predication**; that is, it is found in many things according to one intelligible character. In this sense, what is common is not more noble but more imperfect, as animal is, which is more common than man. (2) Second, a thing is said to be common after the manner of a **cause**; that is, it resembles a cause which, while remaining numerically one, extends to many effects. In this sense, what is more common is more noble. For example, the preservation of a city is more noble than the preservation of a family.

Summa Theologiae I-II, q. 55 a. 4 ad 2

Good, which is put in the definition of virtue, is not good in general which is convertible with being, and which extends further than quality, but the good as fixed by reason, with regard to which Dionysius says (*Div. Nom.* iv) “that the good of the soul is to be in accord with reason.”

Summa contra gentiles III, 17 [6]

Furthermore, a particular good is ordered to the common good as to an end; indeed, the being of a part depends on the being of the whole. So, also, the good of a nation is more godlike than the good of one man. Now, the highest good which is God is the common good, since the good of all things taken together depends on Him; and the good whereby each thing is good is its own particular good, and also is the good of the other things that depend on this thing. Therefore, all things are ordered to one good as their end, and that is God.

Contra Gentiles, lib. 3 cap. 69 [16]

Moreover, as it is the function of the good to make what is good, so it is the prerogative of the highest good to make what is best. But God is the highest good, as we showed in Book One. So, it is His function to make all things best. Now, it is better for a good that is conferred on a thing to be common to many than for it to be exclusive, for “the common good is always found to be more divine than the good of one alone.” But the good of one being becomes common to many if it can pass from one to the other; this cannot occur unless it can diffuse this good to others through its own action. On the other hand, if it lacks the power to transfer this good to others, it continues to keep it exclusively. Therefore, God so communicates His goodness to created beings that one thing which receives it can transfer it to another. Therefore, to take away their proper actions from things is to disparage the divine goodness.

Quodlibet I, q. 4 a. 3

We see that any part, by a kind of natural inclination, works for the good of the whole, even to its own danger or detriment, for example, when someone exposes his hand to a sword to defend his head on which his whole body’s health depends. So it is natural that any part in its way loves the whole more than itself. And also according to this natural inclination and according to political virtue, the good citizen faces the danger of death for the common good. But it is clear that God is the common good of the whole universe and of all its parts, so any creature in its way naturally loves God more than itself—in sensible things do so naturally, brute animals sensitively, rational creatures through the intellectual love which is called love (*dilectio*).

Summa Theologiae I-II, q. 92 a. 1 ad 3

The goodness of any part is considered in comparison with the whole; hence Augustine says (Confess. iii) that “unseemly is the part that harmonizes not with the whole.” Since then every man is a part of the state, it is impossible that a man be good, unless he be well proportionate to the common good: nor can the whole be well consistent unless its parts be proportionate to it. Consequently the common good of the state cannot flourish, unless the citizens be virtuous, at least those whose business it is to govern. But it is enough for the good of the community, that the other citizens be so far virtuous that they obey the commands of their rulers. Hence the Philosopher says (*Polit.* ii, 2) that “the virtue of a sovereign is the same as that of a good man, but the virtue of any common citizen is not the same as that of a good man.”

Summa theologiae II-II, q.47, a.10, ad 2

He who seeks the common good of the group seeks in consequence his own good for two reasons. (1) First, because the **individual** good is impossible without the common good of the family, state, or kingdom.... (2) Secondly, because man, being a part of the home and state, must consider what is good for him by being prudent about the good of the group. For the **good disposition of the parts** depends on their relation to the whole.

Summa Theologiae II-II, q. 26 a. 3

Now the fellowship of natural goods bestowed on us by God is the foundation of natural love, in virtue of which not only man, so long as his nature remains unimpaired, loves God above all things and more than himself, but also every single creature, each in its own way, i.e. either by an intellectual, or by a rational, or by an animal, or at least by a natural love, as stones do, for instance, and other things bereft of knowledge, because each part naturally loves the common good of the whole more than its own particular good. This is evidenced by its operation, since the principal inclination of each part is towards common action conducive to the good of the whole. It may also be seen in civic virtues whereby sometimes the citizens suffer damage even to their own property and persons for the sake of the common good. Wherefore much more is this realized with regard to the friendship of charity which is based on the fellowship of the gifts of grace.

The Nature of Evil

Summa Theologiae, I, q. 48, art. 1 —Whether Evil is a Nature?

We must now consider the distinction of things in particular. And firstly the distinction of good and evil; then the distinction of spiritual and corporeal creatures. Concerning the first, we inquire into evil and its cause.

We proceed thus to the First Article:

Objection 1. It would seem that evil is a nature. For every genus is a nature. But evil is a genus, for the Philosopher says that good and evil are not in a genus, but are genera of other things. Therefore evil is a nature.

Obj. 2. Further, every difference which constitutes a species is a nature. But evil is a difference constituting a species in the field of morals; for a bad habit differs in species from a good habit, as does liberality from illiberality. Therefore evil signifies a nature.

Obj. 3. Further, each extreme of two contraries is a nature. But evil and good are not opposed as privation and habit, but as contraries, as the Philosopher shows by the fact that between good and evil there is an intermediate position, and from evil there

can be a return to good. Therefore evil signifies a nature.

Obj. 4. Further, what is not, acts not. But evil acts, for it corrupts good. Therefore evil is a being and a nature.

Obj. 5. Further, nothing belongs to the perfection of the universe except what is a being and a nature. But evil belongs to the perfection of the universe of things, for Augustine says that the admirable beauty of the universe is made up of all things. In which even what is called evil, well ordered and in its place, makes better known the greatness of the good. Therefore evil is a nature.

On the contrary, Dionysius says that Evil is neither a being nor a good.

I ANSWER that, One opposite is known through the other, as darkness is known through light. Hence, what evil is must be known from the nature of good. Now, we have said above that good is everything that is appetible; and thus, since every nature desires its own being and its own perfection, it must be said also that the being and the perfection of any nature is good. Hence it is impossible that evil signifies any being, or any form or nature. Therefore, by the name evil there must be signified some absence of good. And this is what is meant by saying that evil is neither a being nor a good. For since being, as such, is good, the absence of being involves the **absence** of good.

Reply Obj. 1. Aristotle speaks there according to the opinion of the Pythagoreans, who thought that evil was a kind of nature, and therefore they asserted the existence of good and evil as genera., For Aristotle, especially in his logical works, was in the habit of bringing forward examples that in his time were probable in the opinion of some philosophers. Or, it may be said that, as the Philosopher says, the first kind of contrariety is habit and privation, being verified in all contraries; for one contrary is always imperfect in relation to another, as black in relation to white, and bitter in relation to sweet. And in this way good and evil are said to be genera, not absolutely, but in regard to contraries; because, just as every form has the nature of good, so every privation, as such, has the nature of evil.

Reply Obj. 2. Good and evil are not constitutive differences except in moral matters, which receive their species from the end, which is the object of the will, the source of all morality. And because good has the nature of an end, for this reason good and evil are specific differences in moral matters. Something is good in itself, but evil as the absence of the due end. Yet neither does the absence of the due end by itself constitute a species in moral matters, except as the absence is joined to an undue end; just as we do not find the privation of the substantial form in natural things, unless it is joined to another form. Thus, therefore, the evil which is a constitutive difference in morals is a certain good joined to the privation of another good; just as the end proposed by the intemperate man is not the privation of the good of reason, but the delight of sense against the order of reason. Hence evil is not as such a constitutive difference, but by reason of the good that is annexed.

Reply Obj. 3. The answer to this objection appears from the above. For the Philosopher there speaks of good and evil in morality. Now in that respect, between good and evil there is something **intermediate**; as good is considered something rightly ordered, and evil a thing not only out of right order, but also injurious to another. Hence the Philosopher says that a prodigal man is foolish, but not evil. And from this evil in morality, there may be a return to good, but not from any sort of evil; for from blindness there is no return to sight, although blindness is an evil.

Reply Obj. 4. A thing is said to act in a threefold sense. In one way, formally, as when we say that whiteness makes white; and in that sense evil considered even as a privation is said to corrupt good, for it is itself a corruption or privation of good. In another sense, a thing is said to act effectively, as when a painter makes a wall white. Thirdly, it is said in the sense of the final cause, as the end is said to effect by moving the efficient cause. But in these last two ways evil does not effect anything of itself, that is, as a privation, but by virtue of the good annexed to it. For every action comes from some form; and everything which is desired as an end is a perfection. Therefore, as Dionysius says, evil does not act, nor is it desired, except by virtue of some good joined to it: while of itself it is nothing definite, and outside the scope of our will and intention.

Reply Obj. 5. As was said above, the parts of the universe are ordered to each other, according as one acts on the other, and according as one is the end and exemplar of the other. But, as was said above, this can happen to evil only as joined to some good. Hence evil neither belongs to the perfection of the universe, nor comes under the order of the universe, except accidentally, that is, by reason of some good joined to it.

Summa Theologiae, I, q. 48, art. 2 —Is evil found in things?

Objection 1. It would seem that evil is not found in things. For whatever is found in things is either something, or a privation of something, which is a non-being. But Dionysius says that evil is distant from the existent, and even more distant from the non-existent. Therefore evil is not at all found in things.

Obj. 2. Further being and thing are convertible. If, therefore, evil is a being in things, it follows that evil is a thing; which is contrary to what has been said.

Obj. 3. Further, the whiter white is the white unmixed with black, as the Philosopher says. Therefore the good unmixed with evil is the greater good. But God always makes what is better much more than nature does. Therefore in things made by God there is

no evil.

On the contrary, On the above assumptions, all prohibitions and penalties would cease, for they are concerned only with evils.

I ANSWER that, As was said above, the perfection of the universe requires that there should be inequality in things, so that every grade of goodness may be realized. Now, (1) one grade of goodness is that of the good which cannot fail. (2) Another grade of goodness is that of the good which can fail in goodness. These grades of goodness are to be found in being itself; for there are some things which cannot lose their being, as incorruptible things, while there are some which can lose it, as corruptible things. As, therefore, the perfection of the universe requires that there should be not only incorruptible beings, but also corruptible beings, so the perfection of the universe requires that there should be some which can fail in goodness and which sometimes do fail. Now it is in this that evil consists, namely, in the fact that a thing fails in goodness. Hence it is clear that evil is found in things in the way that corruption also is found; for corruption itself is an evil.

Reply Obj. 1. Evil is distant both from being absolutely and from non-being absolutely, because it is neither a habit nor a pure negation, but a privation.

Reply Obj. 2. As the Philosopher says, being (*ens*) is said in two ways. In one way, it is considered as signifying the entity of a thing, according as it is divided by the ten categories. In that sense it is convertible with thing, and thus no privation is a being, and neither therefore is evil a being. In another sense, being is said to be that which signifies the truth of a proposition which consists in composition, revealed by the verb is. In this sense, being is what answers to the question, Does it exist? It is in this sense that we speak of blindness as being in the eye; or of any other privation. In this way even evil can be called a being. Through ignorance of this distinction, some considering that things may be evil, or that evil is said to be in things, believed that evil was a positive thing in itself.

Reply Obj. 3. God and nature and any other agent make what is better in the whole, but not what is better in every single part, except in relation to the whole, as was said above. And the whole itself which is the universe of creatures, is all the better and more perfect if there be some things in it which can fail in goodness, and which do sometimes fail, without God preventing it. This happens, firstly, because it belongs to Providence, not to destroy, but to save nature, as Dionysius says. But it belongs to nature that what may fail should sometimes fail. It happens, secondly, because, as Augustine says, God is so powerful that He can even make good out of evil. Hence many good things would be taken away if God permitted no evil to exist; for fire would not be generated if air was not corrupted, nor would the life of a lion be preserved unless the ass were killed. Neither would avenging justice nor the patience of a sufferer be praised if there were no injustice.

The Cause of Evil

Summa Theologiae, I, q. 49, art. 1 —Can good can be the cause of evil?

Objection 1. It would seem that good cannot be the cause of evil. For it is said (Matt. vii. 18): A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.

Obj. 2. Further, one contrary cannot be the cause of another. But evil is the contrary to good. Therefore good cannot be the cause of evil.

Obj. 3. Further, a deficient effect can proceed only from a deficient cause. But supposing that evil has a cause, it is a deficient effect; and therefore it has a deficient cause. But everything deficient is an evil. Therefore the cause of evil can be only evil.

Obj. 4. Further, Dionysius says that evil has no cause., Therefore good is not the cause of evil.

On the contrary, Augustine says: There is no possible source of evil except good.

I ANSWER that, It must be said that every evil in some way has a cause. For evil is the absence of the good which is natural and due to a thing. But that anything fall short of its natural and due disposition can come only from some cause drawing it out of its proper disposition. For a heavy thing is not moved upwards except by some impelling force; nor does an agent fail in its action except from some impediment. But only good can be a cause; because nothing can be a cause except inasmuch as it is a being, and every being, as such, is good. And if we consider the special kinds of causes, we see that the agent, the form and the end imply some kind of perfection which belongs to the notion of good. Even matter, as a potentiality to good, has the nature of good.

Now that good is the cause of evil by way of the (+) material cause was shown above. For it was shown that good is the subject of evil. But evil has no (~) formal cause, but is rather a privation of form. So, too, neither has it a (~) final cause, but is rather a privation of order to the proper end; since it is not only the end which has the nature of good, but also the useful, which is ordered to the end. Evil, however, has a cause by way of an (+) agent, not (~) directly, but (+) accidentally.

In proof of this, we must know that evil is caused in action otherwise than in the effect. In **action**, evil is caused by reason of the defect of some principle of action, either of the principal or the instrumental agent. Thus, the defect in the movement of an animal may happen by reason of the weakness of the motive power, as in the case of children, or by reason only of the ineptitude of the

instrument, as in the lame.

On the other hand, evil is caused in a thing, but not in the proper effect of the agent, (a) sometimes by the power of the agent, (b) sometimes by reason of a defect, either of the agent or of the matter.

(a) It is caused by reason of the power or perfection of the agent when there necessarily follows on the form intended by the agent the privation of another form; as, for instance, when on the form of fire there follows the privation of the form of air or of water. Therefore, as the more perfect the fire is in strength, so much the more perfectly does it impress its own form, so also the more perfectly does it corrupt the contrary. Hence that evil and corruption befall air and water comes from the perfection of the fire, but accidentally; because fire does not aim at the privation of the form of water, but at the introduction of its own form, though by doing this it also accidentally causes the other.

(b) But if there is a defect in the proper effect of the fire—as, for instance, that it fails to heat—this comes either by defect of the action, which implies the defect of some principle, as was said above, or by the indisposition of the matter, which does not receive the action of the fire acting on it. But the fact itself that it is a deficient being is accidental to good to which it belongs essentially to act.

Hence it is true that evil in no way has any but an accidental cause. Thus good is the cause of evil.

Reply Obj. 1. As Augustine says, The Lord calls an evil will an evil tree, and a good will a good tree. Now, a good will does not produce a morally bad act, since it is from the good will itself that a moral act is judged to be good. Nevertheless the movement itself of an evil will is caused by the rational creature, which is good; and thus good is the cause of evil.

Reply Obj. 2. Good does not cause that evil which is contrary to itself, but some other evil. Thus, the goodness of the fire causes evil to the water, and man, good in his nature, causes a morally evil act. Furthermore, as was explained above, this is by accident. Moreover, it does happen sometimes that one contrary causes another by accident: for instance, the exterior surrounding cold heats inasmuch as the heat is confined by it.

Reply Obj. 3. Evil has a deficient cause in voluntary beings otherwise than in natural things. For the natural agent produces the same kind of effect as it is itself, unless it is impeded by some exterior thing; and this amounts to some defect in it. Hence evil never follows in the effect unless some other evil pre-exists in the agent or in the matter, as was said above. But in voluntary beings the defect of the action comes from an actually deficient will inasmuch as it does not actually subject itself to its proper rule. This defect, however, is not a fault; but fault follows upon it from the fact that the will acts with this defect.

Reply Obj. 4. Evil has no direct cause, but only an accidental cause, as was said above.

Quaestiones disputatae de malo q.1, a.3

In all those things in which one is the rule and measure of another the good of that which is ruled and measured consists precisely in its being ruled and conformed to a **rule and a measure**; and evil consists in not being ruled or measured. If there were some artisan who should cut a piece of wood according to a certain pattern but does not cut it correctly but badly, the bad cut is caused by the fact that the artisan did not use a rule and a measure. Likewise, sensible pleasure and anything of this kind found in human life is to be measured and regulated by the rule of right reason and divine law. Therefore, not using the rule of reason and divine law is presupposed in the will before any inordinate choice takes place.

One should not try to find out the reason for not using the aforementioned rule. The freedom of will suffices to explain this, for it is through the will that one can act or not act. Not to pay attention to such a rule, if considered in itself, is neither an evil of fault nor of penalty, because the mind is not obliged nor can it always be aware of such a rule in every act.

The first notion of guilt arises from the fact that without explicit attention to the rule the person goes ahead and makes a choice. Thus the artisan is not at fault by the fact that he does not always have a rule in his hand, but rather by proceeding to cut without using a rule. Likewise the fault of the will does not consist in not attending to the rule of reason or of divine law, but rather in proceeding to make a choice without using the rule or measure.

Moral evil

Quaestiones disputatae de malo, q. 1, a.1, ad 4

In moral matters more than in material things is evil said to be a **contrary** of the good, because moral matters depend on the will, and the object of the will is good and evil. Every act is moved and receives its species from the object. Thus if an act of the will tends to what is evil, it is called evil and is evil. This kind of evil is most properly the contrary of good.

Summa Contra Gentiles. III, ch.9, 1,2

Evil and good are assigned as specific differences in moral matters, as the first argument asserted, because moral matters depend

on the will. For this reason, anything that is voluntary belongs in the class of moral matters. Now, the object of the will is the end and the good. Hence, moral matters get their species from the **end**, just as natural actions are specified by the form of the active principle; for instance, the act of heating is specified by heat. Hence, because good and evil are so termed by virtue of a universal order, or privation of order, to the end, it is necessary in moral matters for the primary distinction to be between good and evil.

Now, there must be but one primary standard in any one genus. The standard in moral matters is **reason**. Therefore, it must be from a rational end that things in the moral area are termed good or evil. So, in moral matters, that which is specified by an end that is in accord with reason is called good specifically; and that which is specified by an end contrary to the rational end is termed evil specifically. Yet that contrary end, even though it runs counter to the rational end, is nevertheless some sort of good: for instance, something that delights on the sense level, or anything like that. Thus, these are goods for certain animals, and even for man, when they are moderated by reason. It also happens that what is evil for one being is good for another. So evil, as a specific difference in the genus of moral matters, does not imply something that is evil in its own essence, but something that is good in itself, though evil for man inasmuch as it takes away the order of reason which is the good for man.

From this it is also clear that evil and good are **contraries** according to the way they are understood in the area of moral matters, but they are not when taken without qualification.

God and Evil

Summa Theologiae, I, q. 49, art. 2 —Is the highest good, god, is the cause of evil?

Objection 1. It would seem that the highest good, God, is the cause of evil. For it is said (Isa. xlv 5, 1): I am the Lord, and there is no other God, forming the light, and creating darkness, making peace, and creating evil. It is also said (Amos iii. 6), Shall there be evil in a city, which the Lord hath not done?

Obj. 2. Further, the effect of the secondary cause is reduced to the first cause. But good is the cause of evil, as was said above. Therefore, since God is the cause of every good, as was shown above, it follows that also every evil is from God.

Obj. 3. Further, as is said by the Philosopher, the cause of both the safety and danger of the ship is the same. But God is the cause of the safety of all things. Therefore He is the cause of all perdition and of all evil.

On the contrary, Augustine says that, God is not the author of evil, because He is not the cause of tending to non-being.

I answer that, as appears from what was said, the evil which consists in the defect of action is always caused by the defect of the agent. But in God there is no defect, but the highest perfection, as was shown above. Hence, the evil which consists in (~) **defect of action**, or which is caused by defect of the agent, is not reduced to God as to its cause.

But the evil which consists in the **corruption of some things** is reduced to God as the cause. And this appears as regards both natural things and voluntary things. For it was said that some agent, inasmuch as it produces by its power a form which is followed by corruption and defect, causes by its power that corruption and defect. But it is manifest that the form which God chiefly intends in created things is the good of the order of the universe. Now, the order of the universe requires, as was said above, that there should be some things that can, and sometimes do, fail. And thus God, by causing in things the good of the order of the universe, consequently and, as it were by accident, causes the corruptions of things, according to I Kings ii. 6: The Lord killeth and maketh alive. But when we read that God hath not made death (Wis. i. 13), the sense is that God does not will death for its own sake. Nevertheless, the order of justice belongs to the order of the universe; and this requires that penalty should be dealt out to sinners. And so God is the author of the evil which is (+) penalty, but not of the evil which is (~) fault, by reason of what is said above.

Reply Obj. 1. These passages refer to the evil of penalty, and not to the evil of fault.

Reply Obj. 2. The effect of the deficient secondary cause is reduced to the first non-deficient cause as regards what it has of being and perfection, but not as regards what it has of defect; just as whatever there is of motion in the act of limping is caused by the motive power, whereas what is unbalanced in it does not come from the motive power, but from the curvature of the leg. So, too, whatever there is of being and action in a bad action is reduced to God as the cause; whereas whatever defect is in it is not caused by God, but by the deficient secondary cause.

Reply Obj. 3. The sinking of a ship is attributed to the sailor as the cause, from the fact that he does not fulfill what the safety of the ship requires; but God does not fail in doing what is necessary for safety. Hence there is no parity.

Beauty

Summa Theologiae, I-II, q.27, a.1, ad 3 —Definition

The beautiful is the same as the good, different only in point of view. Since good is what all seek, the good is what calms the desire, while the beautiful is what calms the desire by being seen or known. Consequently those senses chiefly regard the beautiful which are the most cognitive, namely, sight and hearing in their role of instruments to reason, for we speak of beautiful sights and sounds.

But as regards the objects of the other senses, we do not use the expression beautiful, for we do not speak of beautiful tastes and beautiful odors. Thus, it is evident that beauty adds to goodness a relation to the cognitive faculty, so that good means that which simply pleases the appetite, while the beautiful is something pleasant to apprehend.

Summa Theologiae, I, q. 39, a.8 —Beauty and good

Beauty includes three conditions: (1) Integrity or perfection, since those things which are impaired are by that very fact ugly; (2) due proportion, or harmony; and lastly, (3) brightness or clarity.

Compendium Theologiae, Book 2, ch. 9

If any object is lovable so far as it is beautiful and good, as Dionysius remarks in *De divinis nominibus* [IV, 10], surely God, who is the very essence of beauty and goodness, cannot be gazed at without love. Therefore perfect vision is followed by perfect love. Gregory observes in one of his homilies on Ezekiel: “The fire of love which begins to burn here on earth, flares up more fiercely with love of God when He who is loved is seen” —N.B. Read all of Thomas’ *Commentary on Dionysius*, Book IV, lesson 5ff.!

Compendium Theologiae, Book 1, ch. 102

The multiplicity and distinction existing among things were devised by the divine intellect and were carried out in the real order so that the divine goodness might be mirrored by created things in variety, and that different things might participate in the divine goodness in varying degree. Thus the very order existing among diverse things issues in a certain beauty, which should call to mind the divine wisdom.

Summa Theologiae II-II, q. 145 a. 2

I answer that, As may be gathered from the words of Dionysius (*Div. Nom.* iv), beauty or comeliness results from the concurrence of clarity and due proportion. For he states that God is said to be beautiful, as being “the cause of the harmony and clarity of the universe.” Hence the beauty of the body consists in a man having his bodily limbs well proportioned, together with a certain clarity of color. In like manner spiritual beauty consists in a man's conduct or actions being well proportioned in respect of the spiritual clarity of reason. Now this is what is meant by honesty, which we have stated (Article [1]) to be the same as virtue; and it is virtue that moderates according to reason all that is connected with man. Wherefore “honesty is the same as spiritual beauty.” Hence Augustine says (*Questions* [83], qu. 30): “By honesty I mean intelligible beauty, which we properly designate as spiritual,” and further on he adds that “many things are beautiful to the eye, which it would be hardly proper to call honest.”

Super Psalmo 44 (Heb 45)

Therefore, each has a different beauty. And Christ had this beauty, as his state and the dignity of his condition required. So we must not think that Christ had blond hair and a ruddy complexion, because that did not befit him. But he eminently had that physical beauty which his state and and gracious appearance demanded, such that something divine radiated in his face, which all respected, as Augustine says.

Summa Theologiae II-II, q. 180 a. 2 ad 3

Beauty, as stated above (Question [145], Article [2]), consists in a certain clarity and due proportion. Now each of these is found radically in the reason; because both the light that makes beauty seen, and the establishing of due proportion among things belong to reason. Hence since the contemplative life consists in an act of the reason, there is beauty in it by its very nature and essence; wherefore it is written (Wis. 8:2) of the contemplation of wisdom: “I became a lover of her beauty.”

On the other hand, beauty is in the moral virtues by participation, in so far as they participate in the order of reason; and especially is it in temperance, which restrains the concupiscences which especially darken the light of reason. Hence it is that the virtue of chastity most of all makes man apt for contemplation, since venereal pleasures most of all weigh the mind down to sensible objects, as Augustine says (Soliloq. i, 10).