

QUESTION 16

Truth

Since knowledge is of things that are true (*scientia verorum est*), now that we have considered God's knowledge, we must inquire into truth (*de veritate*). On this topic there are eight questions: (1) Does truth exist in things or only in the intellect (*in re vel tantum in intellectu*)? (2) Does truth exist in the intellect only insofar as the intellect composes and divides? (3) How is *true* related to *being*? (4) How is *true* related to *good*? (5) Is God truth? (6) Are all things true by one truth or by many truths? (7) Is truth eternal? (8) Is truth immutable?

Article 1

Does truth exist in things or only in the intellect?

It seems that truth exists not only in the intellect but even more so in things (*non tantum in intellectu sed magis in rebus*):

Objection 1: In *Soliloquia* Augustine disproves the account of *true* according to which the true is that which is seen; for on this account, rocks that lie in utterly remote recesses of the earth would not be true rocks, since they are not seen.

He likewise disproves the account of *true* according to which the true is that which is as it is seen by one who has cognition, if he is able to and wants to have cognition of it; for on this account it follows that nothing would be true if there were no one capable of having cognition.

And so he defines the true as follows: The true is that which is. And so it seems that truth exists in things and not in the intellect.

Objection 2: Whatever is true is true by reason of truth. Therefore, if truth exists in the intellect alone, then nothing will be true unless it is understood—which is the error of those ancient philosophers who claimed that whatever is seen is true (*omne quod videtur esse verum*). From this it follows that contradictories are simultaneously true, since contradictories are seen to be true by different individuals at the same time.

Objection 3: As is clear from *Posterior Analytics* 1, “That because of which a thing is such-and-such is itself even more so.” But, according to the Philosopher in the *Categories*, “A belief or spoken sentence is true or false because the thing itself is or is not so.” Therefore, truth exists more in the things than in the intellect.

But contrary to this: *Metaphysics* 6 says, “The true and the false exist not in the things, but in the intellect.”

I respond: Just as *good* names that toward which an appetite tends, so, too, *truth* names that toward which an intellect tends. However, the difference between the appetite and the intellect (or any kind of cognition) is that cognition exists insofar as what is known exists in the knower, whereas appetite exists insofar as the one who desires is inclined toward the desired thing itself. And so the terminus of an appetite, which is the good, exists in the desirable thing, whereas the terminus of cognition, which is the true, exists in the intellect itself.

However, the good exists in a thing insofar as the thing bears a relation to the appetite, and for this reason the concept *good* migrates from the desirable thing to the desire in such a way that the desire itself is called good insofar as it is a desire for something good. In the same way, since the true exists in an intellect insofar as that intellect is conformed to the thing that is understood, the concept *true* has to migrate from the intellect to what is understood in such a way that the thing that is understood is also called true insofar as it bears a certain relation to the intellect.

Now the relation that the thing that is understood bears to an intellect can be either *per se* or *per accidens*. It bears a *per se* relation to an intellect on which it depends for its own *esse*, whereas it has a *per accidens* relation to an intellect insofar it is knowable by that intellect. For example, we say that a house is related *per se* to the craftsman's intellect, whereas it is related *per accidens* to an intellect on which it does not depend for its *esse*. But a judgment about a thing derives not from what exists in it *per accidens*, but rather from what exists in it *per se*. Hence, each thing is called true absolutely speaking according to the relation it has to an intellect on which it depends for its *esse*.

Thus, artifacts are called true in relation to our intellect. For a house is called a true house when it attains a likeness of the form that exists in the mind of the craftsman; and a spoken sentence is called true insofar as it is a sign of a true understanding.

Similarly, natural things are called true to the extent that they attain a likeness of the species that exist in God's mind. For instance, a rock is called a true rock when it attains the proper nature of a rock as this is preconceived by God's intellect.

So, then, truth exists primarily in the intellect, but secondarily in the things insofar as they are related to an intellect as their principle. Accordingly, truth is explained in different ways.

For in *De Vera Religione* Augustine says, "Truth is that by which what exists is made manifest." And Hilary says, "Truth clarifies and manifests being." Such accounts pertain to truth as it exists in the intellect.

On the other hand, as regards the truth of a thing in its relation to the intellect, a pertinent definition is that given by Augustine in *De Vera Religione*: "Truth is the highest likeness of the principle, a likeness that has no dissimilarity to the principle." Again, here is a definition given by Anselm: "Truth is a correctness (*rectitudo*) that is perceptible only to the mind; for what is in agreement with the principle is correct (*rectum*)." Again, Avicenna gives this definition: "The truth of each thing is a property of its *esse* that is stable for it."

Moreover, the claim that truth is a correspondence between the intellect and the thing (*adequatio rei et intellectus*) can pertain to both sorts of truth.

Reply to objection 1: Augustine is speaking here of the truth of a thing, and he is excluding a relation to *our* intellect from the conception of this sort of truth (*a ratione huius veritatis*). For what is *per accidens* is excluded from every definition.

Reply to objection 2: The ancient philosophers claimed that the species of natural things originated by chance and did not proceed from any intellect; and because they noticed that *true* connotes a relation to an intellect, they were forced to define the truth of things in terms of a relation to *our* intellect. From this followed the various absurdities that the Philosopher attacks in *Metaphysics* 4. However, these absurdities do not arise if we claim that the truth of things consists in their relation to *God's* intellect.

Reply to objection 3: Even though the truth in our intellect is caused by the things, the concept *true* need not be realized primarily in the things—just as the concept *health* is realized in the primary sense not in the medicine but rather in the animal. For it is the power of medicine—and not its health—that causes health, since medicine is not a univocal agent. Similarly, it is the *esse* of a thing—and not its truth—that causes truth in the intellect. This is why the Philosopher says that an opinion or spoken sentence (*opinio et oratio*) is true "in virtue of the fact that the thing is such-and-such, not in virtue of the fact that the thing is true."

Article 2

Does truth exist in the intellect only insofar as the intellect composes and divides?

It seems that it is not the case that truth exists in the intellect only insofar as the intellect composes and divides:

Objection 1: In *De Anima* 3 the Philosopher says that just as the sensing of proper sensibles is always true, so the understanding of what a thing is (*quid est*) is always true. But composition and division are found neither in the senses nor in the intellect's cognition of what a thing is. Therefore, it is not the case that truth is found only in the intellect's composing and dividing.

Objection 2: In *De Definitionibus* Isaac says that truth is a correspondence between the intellect and the thing. But just as the understanding of propositions (*complexa*) can correspond to the things, so, too, can the understanding of simple terms (*incomplexa*), as well as the senses sensing a thing as it is. Therefore, it is not the case that truth is found only in the intellect's composing and dividing.

But contrary to this: In *Metaphysics* 6 the Philosopher says that there is no truth, either in the intellect or in things, with respect to simple terms or with respect to what a thing is (*circa simplicia et quod quid est*).

I respond: As has been explained (a. 1), the true, according to its primary concept, exists in the intellect. However, since every entity is true insofar as it has the proper form of its own nature, it must be the case that the intellect, insofar as it is an entity that has cognition, is true insofar as it bears a likeness to the thing that is known; for this likeness is the intellect's form insofar as the intellect is an entity that has cognition. It is for this reason that truth is defined as a conformity between the intellect and the thing. Hence, to have a cognition of this conformity is to have a cognition of truth.

Now the senses do not in any way have a cognition of this conformity. For instance, even though the sense of sight has a likeness of the visible thing, it nonetheless does not itself have a cognition of the relation that obtains between the thing that is seen and what it itself apprehends about that thing.

By contrast, the intellect is able to have a cognition of its own conformity to an intelligible thing. However, it does not apprehend this conformity by grasping what a thing is. Rather, it is when it judges the thing to be like the form it apprehends with respect to that thing that it first has a cognition of truth and asserts truth (*tunc primo cognoscit et dicit verum*). And it does this by composing and dividing. For in every proposition the intellect either applies the form signified by the predicate to the thing signified by the subject, or else it separates off (*removet*) the form signified by the predicate from the thing signified by the subject.

For this reason, even though it might well be the case that a sensory power *is true* with respect to a given thing, or that the intellect *is true* in grasping what a thing is, nonetheless, it is not the case that it *has a cognition of* what is true or *asserts* what is true. And the same difference holds between spoken simple terms and spoken sentences (*de vocibus complexis aut incomplexis*).

So, to be sure, truth can exist in—as in a certain true entity—the senses or the intellect when the intellect grasps what a thing is; however, truth cannot exist in them as something that there is a cognition of in the knower—which is what the name 'true' connotes. For the perfection of the intellect is the true as known (*verum ut cognitum*). And so, properly speaking, truth exists in the intellect when it composes and divides, but it does not exist in the senses or in the intellect when the intellect grasps what a thing is.

Reply to objection 1 and objection 2: The reply to the objections is clear from what has been said.

Article 3

Is *true* convertible with *being*?

It seems that *true* and *being* are not convertible:

Objection 1: As has been explained (a. 1), what is true properly exists in the intellect. But being properly exists in things. Therefore, they are not convertible.

Objection 2: That which extends to both being and non-being is not convertible with *being*. But *true* extends to both being and non-being; for it is true that what is is and that what is not is not. Therefore, *true* and *being* are not convertible.

Objection 3: Things that are related as prior and posterior do not seem to be convertible. But *true* seems to be prior to *being*, since a being is understood only under the notion of the true (*sub ratione veri*). Therefore, it seems that they are not convertible.

But contrary to this: In *Metaphysics 2* the Philosopher says that things have the same disposition in being and in truth.

I respond: Just as *good* has the nature of the desirable, so *true* has a relation to cognition. But each thing is knowable to the extent that it has *esse*. Because of this, *De Anima 3* says that in a certain sense the soul is all things in its sensing and its intellective understanding. And so just as *good* is convertible with *being*, so is *true*. Still, just as *good* adds to *being* the notion of the desirable, so *true* adds a relation to the intellect.

Reply to objection 1: As was explained above (a. 1), the true exists both in things and in the intellect. Now the true as it exists in things is convertible with *being* according to its substance, while the true as it exists in the intellect is convertible with *being* in the sense that what manifests is convertible with what is manifested (*manifestativum cum manifestato*). For, as has been explained (a. 1), this is the nature of the true.

Now even though one could claim that being, like the true, exists both in things and in the intellect, it is still the case that the true exists principally in the intellect, whereas being exists principally in things. And this is so because *true* and *being* differ in concept.

Reply to objection 2: Non-being is not in itself capable of being known, but is instead known insofar as the intellect renders it knowable. Hence, the true is here grounded in being, insofar as a non-being is a certain being of reason, i.e., something apprehended by reason.

Reply to objection 3: There are two ways to interpret the claim that a being cannot be apprehended without the notion of the true (*sine ratione veri*).

In the first way, it has this sense: ‘A being is not apprehended unless the notion of the true follows upon the apprehension of the being’. So interpreted, the claim is true.

In the second way, it can be interpreted as follows: ‘A being could not be apprehended unless the notion of the true were apprehended’. And this is false.

It is the case, however, that something true cannot be apprehended unless the notion of being is apprehended. For *being* enters into the definition of *true*.

It is the same as comparing *intelligible* to *being*. For a being cannot be understood unless that being is intelligible, and yet a being can be understood without its intelligibility being understood. Similarly, a being as understood is true, but it is not the case that in understanding *being*, one understands *true*.

Article 4

Is *good* conceptually prior to *true*?

It seems that *good* is conceptually prior to *true*:

Objection 1: As is clear from *Physics* 1, that which is more universal is conceptually prior (*secundum rationem prius*). But *good* is more universal than *true*, since the true is a certain good, viz., the good of an intellect. Therefore, *good* is conceptually prior to *true*.

Objection 2: The good exists in the things, whereas the true exists in the intellect as it composes and divides, as has been explained (a. 2). But things that exist in reality are prior to things that exist in the intellect. Therefore, *good* is conceptually prior to *true*.

Objection 3: As is clear from *Ethics* 4, truth (*veritas*) is a certain species of virtue. But virtue is contained under the good, since, as Augustine says, a virtue is a good quality of the mind. Therefore, *good* is prior to *true*.

But contrary to this: That which exists in more things is conceptually prior. But the true exists in certain things in which the good does not exist, viz., mathematical entities. Therefore, *true* is prior to *good*.

I respond: Even though *good* and *true* are convertible with *being* as far as their subject (*suppositum*) is concerned, they differ in concept. And on this score *true* is, absolutely speaking, prior to *good*. This is clear from two considerations:

First, *true* is more closely related to *being*, which is itself prior to *good*. For *true* is related simply and immediately to *esse* itself, whereas the concept *good* follows upon *esse* insofar as *esse* is in some way perfect. For this is why it is desirable.

Second, cognition naturally precedes desire. Hence, since *true* has to do with cognition, whereas *good* has to do with appetite, *true* will be conceptually prior to *good*.

Reply to objection 1: The will and the intellect mutually include one another. For the intellect understands the will, and the will wills that the intellect understand. So, then, the things that pertain to the intellect are contained among the things that are ordered to an object of the will, and vice versa. Hence, in the order of desirable things, the good stands as a universal and the true as a particular, whereas the opposite holds in the order of intelligible things.

Thus, from the fact that the true is a certain good it follows that the good is prior in the order of desirable things, but not that it is prior absolutely speaking.

Reply to objection 2: A thing is conceptually prior to the extent that it is prior in the understanding. But the intellect first apprehends being itself, and then apprehends that it is understanding being, and thirdly apprehends that it desires being. Hence, the concept *being* comes first, the concept *truth* comes second, and the concept *good* comes third—even though the good exists in the things.

Reply to objection 3: The virtue that is called truth is not truth in general, but truth insofar as a man, in what he says and does, manifests himself as he is. Moreover, ‘truth of life’ is predicated in a particular sense, insofar as in his life a man fulfills that to which he is ordered by God’s intellect—in the same way that, as has been explained (a. 1), truth exists in other things as well. Again, the ‘truth of justice’ exists insofar as a man attends to that which he owes to others according to the order of law. Hence, one cannot infer anything about truth in general from these particular senses of truth.

Article 5

Is God truth?

It seems that God is not truth (*non sit veritas*):

Objection 1: Truth consists in the intellect's composing and dividing. But in God there is no composition and division. Therefore, there is no truth there.

Objection 2: According to Augustine in *De Vera Religione*, truth is a likeness to a thing's principle. But in God there is no likeness to His principle. Therefore, truth does not exist in God.

Objection 3: Whatever is said of God is said of Him as the first cause of all things. For instance, God's *esse* is a cause of all *esse*, and God's goodness is a cause of every good. Therefore, if truth exists in God, then everything that is true will come from Him. But it is true that someone sins. Therefore, this truth will come from God. But this is clearly false.

But contrary to this: In John 14:6 our Lord says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

I respond: As has been explained (a. 1), truth is found in the intellect insofar as it apprehends a thing as it is, and truth is found in a thing insofar as it has *esse* that is conformable to an intellect. But the latter is found especially in God. For God's *esse* is not only conformed to His intellect, but is His very act of understanding; and His act of understanding is the measure and cause of all other *esse* and of every other intellect. And He Himself is His own *esse* and His own act of understanding. Hence, it follows not only that truth exists in Him, but that He Himself is the first and highest truth.

Reply to objection 1: Even though there is no composition or division in God's intellect, He nonetheless judges all things according to His simple understanding, and He has cognition of all the propositions. And this is the sense in which truth exists in His intellect.

Reply to objection 2: Truth exists in our intellect insofar as our intellect is conformed to its principle, viz., the things themselves from which it takes its cognition. Likewise, truth exists in the things insofar as they are conformed to their principle, viz., God's intellect.

However, this conformity to a principle cannot, properly speaking, be predicated of God's truth—unless perhaps insofar as truth is appropriated to the Son, who has a principle. Still, if we are speaking of truth as predicated of God's essence, then conformity is unintelligible unless the affirmation is analyzed as a negation—as, for instance, when one says 'The Father is from Himself' because He is not from another'. Similarly, one can call God's truth a likeness of its principle insofar as His *esse* is not dissimilar to His intellect.

Reply to objection 3: Non-beings and privations have truth not of themselves, but only from the intellect's apprehension. But all of the intellect's apprehensions are from God. Thus, when I say, 'It is true that he is fornicating', whatever truth is contained therein is wholly from God. However, if someone goes on to infer, 'Therefore, the fact that he is fornicating is from God', then he is committing a fallacy of accident.

Article 6

Is there just one truth according to which all things are true?

It seems that there is just one truth according to which all things are true:

Objection 1: According to Augustine, nothing except God is greater than the human mind. But truth is greater than the human mind; otherwise, the mind would be the judge of truth, whereas in fact it

judges all things according to the truth and not according to itself. Therefore, God alone is the truth. Therefore, there is no truth other than God.

Objection 2: In *De Veritate* Anselm says that truth is related to true things as time is related to temporal things. But there is one time for all temporal things. Therefore, there is one truth by which all things are true.

But contrary to this: Psalm 11:2 says: “Truths are decayed from among the children of men.”

I respond: In a certain sense there is one truth by which all things are true, and in a certain sense there is not.

To see this clearly, note that when something is predicated univocally of many things, it is found in each of them according to its proper nature, in the way that *animal* is found in every species of animal. However, when something is predicated analogously of many things, it is found in just one of them according to its proper nature, and it is from this one that the others are denominated. For example, ‘healthy’ is predicated of an animal, of urine, and of medicine. It is not that health is found anywhere except in the animal alone; rather, medicine is denominated as healthy from the health of the animal, insofar as it effects that health, and urine is denominated as healthy insofar as it is a sign of that health. And even though health exists neither in the medicine nor in the urine, nonetheless, in the one there is something in virtue of which it effects health, while in the other there is something in virtue of which it is a sign of health.

Now it has been explained (a. 1) that truth exists primarily in the intellect and secondarily in the things insofar as they are ordered to God’s intellect. Therefore, if we are talking about truth as it exists in the intellect according to its proper nature, then there are many truths in the many created intellects and many truths even in one and the same intellect insofar as it knows many things. Hence, a Gloss on Psalm 11:2 (“Truths are decayed from among the children of men”) says that in the same way that many likenesses of a single human face might appear in a mirror, so too many truths result from the one divine truth.

On the other hand, if we are talking about truth as it exists in the things, then all the things are true by the one First Truth to which each is assimilated according to its own being (*entitas*). And so even though the things have many essences or forms, there is nonetheless one truth of God’s intellect in virtue of which all things are denominated as true.

Reply to objection 1: The soul judges of each thing not according to just any truth but according to the First Truth, insofar as that truth comes to exist in it, as in a mirror, by reason of the first intelligible things (cf. q. 15). Hence, it follows that the First Truth is greater than the soul.

And yet even the created truth that exists in our intellect is greater than the soul—not absolutely speaking, but in a certain respect, viz., insofar as it is the soul’s perfection. In this same sense, knowledge can also be said to be greater than the soul.

However, it is true that nothing *subsistent*, except God, is greater than the rational mind.

Reply to objection 2: This passage from Anselm is true in the sense that things are called true because of their relation to God’s intellect.

Article 7

Is created truth eternal?

It seems that created truth is eternal:

Objection 1: In *De Libero Arbitrio* Augustine says that there is nothing more eternal than the

nature of a circle or the fact that two plus three equals five. But the truth of these things is created truth. Therefore, created truth is eternal.

Objection 2: Everything that always exists is eternal. But universals exist always and everywhere. Therefore, they are eternal. Therefore, truth, which is especially universal, is likewise eternal.

Objection 3: That which is true at present is such that the proposition ‘It is going to be’ was always true. But just as the truth of a present-tense proposition is a created truth, so too is the truth of a future-tense proposition. Therefore, some created truth is eternal.

Objection 4: Everything that lacks both a beginning and an end is eternal. But the truth of propositions lacks both a beginning and an end.

For if truth began to exist after it had not previously existed, then the proposition ‘Truth does not exist’ was true. But surely it was true by some truth, and so truth existed before it began to exist.

Similarly, if someone claims that truth has an end, then it follows that truth exists after it will have ceased to exist. For the proposition ‘Truth does not exist’ will then be true.

Therefore, truth is eternal.

But contrary to this: As was established above (q. 10, a. 3), God alone is eternal.

I respond: The truth of propositions (*enuntiabilia*) is nothing other than the truth of the intellect. For propositions exist both in the intellect and in speech. Insofar as a proposition exists in the intellect, it has its truth *per se*. On the other hand, as existing in speech, a proposition is called true insofar as it signifies some truth of the intellect and not because of any truth that exists in it itself as in a subject—just as urine is called healthy not because of any health that exists in it itself, but because of the animal’s health, which it signifies.

Similarly, it was likewise explained above (a. 1) that things themselves are denominated as true from the truth of the intellect.

Hence, if no intellect were eternal, then no truth would be eternal. But since only God’s intellect is eternal, it is in that intellect alone that truth has eternity. Nor does it follow from this that something other than God is eternal. For, as was shown above (a. 5), the truth of the divine intellect is God Himself.

Reply to objection 1: The nature of a circle and the fact that two plus three equals five have eternity in the mind of God.

Reply to objection 2: There are two ways in which a thing can be understood to exist always and everywhere.

In the first way, the thing exists always and everywhere because it has within itself that in virtue of which it extends to every time and to every place. This is the way in which it belongs to God to exist always and everywhere.

In the second way, the thing exists always and everywhere because it does not have anything within itself by which it is limited to a certain time or place. This is like the way in which primary matter is said to be one. It is one not because it has one form—in the way, e.g., that a man is one because of the unity of his one form—but because of the absence of all distinguishing forms.

It is in this second way that a universal is said to exist always and everywhere. For universals abstract from the here and now. But from this it does not follow that universals are eternal—unless they are eternal in an intellect, if there is an eternal intellect.

Reply to objection 3: The reason why that which now exists was, before it existed, going to exist, is that its cause was such that that thing was going to exist. Hence, if that cause had been removed, then it would not have been the case that that thing was going to exist. But only the first cause is eternal. Hence, it does not follow that the things that now exist are such that the proposition ‘They are going to exist’ was always true, except insofar as an everlasting cause was such that they were going to exist. But God alone is such a cause.

Reply to objection 4: Since our intellect is not eternal, neither is it the case that the truth of any proposition formulated by us is eternal; rather, the truth of any such proposition begins to exist at some time. And before a truth of this sort existed, it was not true to assert ‘This truth does not exist’—unless it was being asserted by God’s intellect, in which alone truth is eternal.

To be sure, the assertion ‘This truth did not exist at that time’ is now true. But this is true only by a truth that now exists in our intellect, and not by any truth that now exists on the part of a thing. For it is a truth about a non-being. But a non-being does not have its truth of itself; rather, its being true comes solely from an intellect’s apprehending it. Hence, to the extent that we apprehend that the non-existence of the truth in question preceded its existence, the assertion ‘This truth did not exist’ is true.

Article 8

Is truth immutable?

It seems that truth is immutable:

Objection 1: In *De Libero Arbitrio* 2 Augustine says that truth is not of equal status with the mind, because otherwise it would be changeable, just like the mind is.

Objection 2: What remains after every change is immutable; for instance, primary matter is ungenerated and incorruptible, since it remains after every instance of generation and corruption. But truth remains after every change, since after each change either the assertion ‘This thing exists’ or the assertion ‘This thing does not exist’ will be true. Therefore, truth is immutable.

Objection 3: If the truth of a proposition changed, it would do so especially because of a change in things. But it does not change for this reason. For according to Anselm, truth is a sort of rectitude, viz., a thing’s fulfilling what is contained about it in God’s mind. But the fact that the proposition ‘Socrates is sitting’ signifies that Socrates is sitting derives from God’s mind, since the proposition signifies this even when Socrates is not sitting. Therefore, a proposition’s truth does not change in any way.

Objection 4: When the cause is the same, the effect is also the same. But the same reality is the cause of the truth of these three propositions: ‘Socrates is sitting’, ‘Socrates will be sitting’, and ‘Socrates was sitting’. Therefore, the truth of these propositions is the same. But one or another of these propositions must be true. Therefore, the truth of these propositions persists immutably—and, for the same reason, so does the truth that belongs to any other proposition.

But contrary to this: Psalm 11:2 says: “Truths are decayed from among the children of men.”

I respond: As was explained above (a. 1), truth exists properly in the intellect alone, whereas things are called true in a sense that derives from the truth that exists in an intellect. Hence, the mutability of truth must be thought of as having to do with an intellect.

Now the truth of the intellect consists in its conforming to the things that are understood. This conformity, just like any other kind of likeness, can change in two ways, viz., because of a change in one or the other of its terms. Hence, in the first way, truth changes on the part of the intellect, viz., from the fact that someone accepts a different opinion about a thing while the thing itself remains the same, whereas in the second way, truth changes when the thing changes while the opinion remains the same—assuming in both cases that there is a change from truth to falsity.

Therefore, if there is an intellect which is such that (a) a change of opinion cannot occur in it and (b) no entity can undermine its acceptance of an opinion, then immutable truth will exist in that intellect. As is clear from what was said above (q. 14, a. 15), God’s intellect is like this. Hence the truth of God’s intellect is immutable.

By contrast, the truth of our intellect is mutable. This is not because truth itself is subject to change, but because our intellect changes from truth to falsity. (For this is the sense in which forms can be called mutable.)

On the other hand, it is the truth of God's intellect according to which natural things are called true, and this sort of truth is altogether immutable.

Reply to objection 1: Augustine is speaking here of God's truth.

Reply to objection 2: *True* and *being* are convertible. Hence, just as, according to *Physics* 1, being itself is generated and corrupted not *per se* but *per accidens*, insofar as *this* or *that* being is corrupted or generated, so too truth changes not because no truth remains, but because *this* truth, which previously existed, does not remain.

Reply to objection 3: A proposition does not have truth merely in the way that other things are said to have truth, viz., insofar as they fulfill what is ordained for them by God's intellect. Rather, a proposition is also said to have truth in a certain special way, viz., insofar as it signifies the truth of an intellect. This latter truth consists in the conformity between the intellect and the thing, and once this conformity is removed, the truth of the opinion—and, consequently, the truth of the proposition—changes.

So, then, when Socrates is sitting, the spoken proposition 'Socrates is sitting' is true both (a) with the *truth of a thing*, insofar as it is a certain meaningful locution, and also (b) with the *truth of signification*, insofar as it signifies a true opinion (*veram opinionem*). However, once Socrates gets up, the first sort of truth remains, while the second changes.

Reply to objection 4: Socrates's sitting, which is the cause of the truth of the proposition 'Socrates is sitting', does not have the same status while Socrates is sitting and after he will have sat and before he sits. Hence, the truth caused by Socrates's sitting likewise exists in different ways and is signified in different ways by the present-tense proposition, the past-tense proposition, and the future-tense proposition. Hence, even though one or the other of the propositions is true, it does not follow that the same truth remains invariable.