

QUESTION 81

Religion

Next we have to consider the individual virtues just mentioned, to the extent that this is relevant to our present purpose. The first to be considered is *religion* (*religio*) (questions 81-100); the second is *piety* (*pietas*) (question 101); the third is *respect* or *reverence* (*observantia*) (questions 102-105); the fourth is *gratitude* (questions 106-107); the fifth is *vindication* (*vindicta*) (question 108); the sixth is *truthfulness* (*veritas*) (questions 109-113); the seventh is *friendliness* (*amicitia*) (questions 114-116); the eighth is *generosity* (*liberalitas*) (questions 117-119); and the ninth is *equitableness* (*epieikeia*) (question 120).

The other virtues enumerated [in Question 80] have already been treated above, (a) partly in the treatise on charity, viz., *concord* (*concordia*) and others of this sort, and (b) partly in the present treatise on justice, e.g., *innocence* (*innocentia*) and *good exchange* (*bona commutatio*), whereas (c) *good lawmaking* (*legispositiva*) was treated in the treatise on prudence.

As for religion, there are three things that have to be considered: first, religion in its own right (question 81); second, its acts (questions 82-91); and, third, the opposed vices (questions 92-100).

On the first topic there are eight questions: (1) Does religion consist in a relation just to God? (2) Is religion a virtue? (3) Is religion a single virtue? (4) Is religion a special or specific virtue (*specialis virtus*)? (5) Is religion a theological virtue? (6) Is religion preeminent over the other moral virtues? (7) Does religion have exterior acts? (8) Is religion the same virtue as holiness (*sanctitas*)?

Article 1

Does religion order a man only toward God?

It seems that religion does not order a man only toward God:

Objection 1: James 1:27 says, “Religion clean and undefiled before our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself unblemished by this world.” But to visit orphans and widows has to do with one’s relation to his neighbor, whereas to keep oneself unblemished by this world pertains to an ordering by which a man is ordered within himself. Therefore, it is not the case that religion implies being ordered just toward God.

Objection 2: In *De Civitate Dei* 10 Augustine says, “Since in customary Latin usage—not only among non-experts but even among the most educated—religion is said to be exhibited to our blood-relatives and in-laws, as well as to anyone closely connected with us in any way, the word ‘religion’ does not escape ambiguity when the question turns to the worship of God, with the result that we cannot say with confidence that religion involves just the worship of God (*cultus dei*).” Therefore, the name ‘religion’ is predicated not only in relation to God, but also in relation to one’s neighbors.

Objection 3: Adoration (*latria*) seems to belong to religion. But as Augustine says in *De Civitate Dei* 10, “*Latria* is understood as service (*servitus*).” Now we ought to serve not only God, but also our neighbors—this according to Galatians 5:13 (“Serve one another with the charity of the Spirit”). Therefore, religion likewise implies a relation to one’s neighbor.

Objection 4: Veneration (*cultus*) belongs to religion. But a man is said to venerate not only God, but also his neighbor—this according to Cato’s dictum, “Venerate your parents (*cole parentes*).” Therefore, religion likewise orders us toward our neighbor, and not only toward God.

Objection 5: Everyone who is in the state of salvation is subject to God. But not everyone who is in the state of salvation is called ‘religious’; instead, the only ones called ‘religious’ are those who bind themselves by certain vows and observances and who bind themselves to obey certain human beings. Therefore, ‘religion’ does not seem to imply the subjection of a man to God.

But contrary to this: In *Rhetoric* 2 Tully says, “Religion is what involves solicitude for and ceremonies directed toward a higher nature that is called divine.”

I respond: As Isidore says in *Etymologia*, “A religious individual (*religiosus*), so called from ‘religion’ (*religio*), is, as Cicero points out, one who studies and reads again and again (*relegere*) what is relevant to divine worship.” And so ‘religion’ (*religio*) seems to be derived from *reading again and again* (*relegere*) things relevant to divine worship, since such things have to be turned over frequently in one’s heart—this according to Proverbs 3:6 (“Think of Him in all your ways”).

On the other hand, ‘religion’ (*religio*) can also be thought of as being derived from the fact that “we must *choose again* (*reeligere*) the God whom we have lost through negligence,” as Augustine puts it in *De Civitate Dei* 10.

Again, ‘religion’ (*religio*) can be thought of as being derived from *being bound back* (*religari*); hence, in *De Vera Religione* Augustine says, “Religion binds us back to the one almighty God.”

Now regardless of whether the name ‘religion’ is derived from (a) frequent reading, or from (b) choosing again what has been lost through negligence, or from (c) being bound back, ‘religion’ properly implies being ordered toward God. For it is He Himself (a) to whom we ought to be mainly bound as our unfailing principle, and (b) to whom, as our ultimate end, our choices should likewise be assiduously directed, and (c) whom we lose through negligence by sinning and whom we must recover by believing and bearing witness to our faith.

Reply to objection 1: Religion has two sorts of acts:

Some of the acts are *proper* and *immediate* acts which religion *elicits* and through which a man is ordered toward God alone, e.g., sacrificing (*sacrificare*), adoring (*adorare*), and others of this sort.

However, there are other acts that religion produces *by the mediation of the virtues that it commands*, ordering those virtues toward reverence for God (*ordinans eos in divinam reverentiam*), since the virtue that the end belongs to has command over (*imperet*) the virtues that the means to the end belong to. Accordingly, (a) visiting orphans and widows in their troubles, which is an act *elicited by mercy*, is posited as an act of religion in the mode of *commanding* (*per modum imperii*), whereas (b) preserving oneself unspotted by this world belongs to religion in the mode of *commanding*, while it belongs to *temperance* or some such virtue as its *eliciting principle* (*elicitive*).

Reply to objection 2: It is not insofar as the name ‘religion’ is used in its proper sense, but rather when we extend the name ‘religion’, that religion is related to what is exhibited in human relations. Hence, a little before the words that are quoted, Augustine prefaces them with, “‘Religion’ seems more distinctly to signify reverence for God (*Dei cultum*) and not just any sort of reverence.”

Reply to objection 3: Since ‘servant’ is used in relation to a master, it must be the case that where there is a proper and specific conception of a master, there is likewise a specific and proper conception of service or servitude (*servitus*). Now it is clear that dominion belongs to God in a proper and singular way, since He has made all things and holds the highest place among all things. And so a special kind of service is owed to Him. This sort of service is called ‘*latría*’ among the Greeks, and so it belongs properly to religion.

Reply to objection 4: We are said to ‘worship’ or ‘cultivate’ (*colere*) men whom we call to mind often by honoring them, by remembering them, or by their presence. Certain things that are subject to us are also said to be cultivated by us; for instance, agricultural workers (*agricolae*) are so-called because they cultivate their fields, and men are said to be inculturated (*incolae dicuntur*) because they cultivate the places that they inhabit.

However, since special honor is owed to God as the first principle of all things, a special sort of worship or cultivation is due to Him as well. In Greek it is called by the name ‘*eusebia*’ or ‘*theosebia*’, as is clear from Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* 10.

Reply to objection 5: Even though everyone who worships God can generally be called ‘religious’, the ones who are called ‘religious’ in a special way (*specialiter*) are those who dedicate their whole lives to the worship and cult of God, withdrawing themselves from worldly affairs—just as, in the same way, the ones called ‘contemplatives’ are not those who engage in contemplation, but rather those

who give their whole lives over to contemplation. Moreover, these individuals subject themselves to human beings not for the sake of those human beings, but rather for the sake of God—this according to the Apostle in Galatians 4:14 (“You received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus”).

Article 2

Is religion a virtue?

It seems that religion is not a virtue:

Objection 1: Showing reverence to God seems to belong to religion. But as is clear from what was said above (q. 19, a. 9), to show reverence is an act of fear. Therefore, religion is a gift [of the Holy Spirit] and not a virtue.

Objection 2: Every virtue consists in a free act of will (*virtus in libera voluntate consistit*); this is why it is called an elective or voluntary habit. But as has been explained (a. 1), *latria*, which implies a certain sort of servitude or service (*servitudo*), belongs to religion. Therefore, religion is not a virtue.

Objection 3: As *Ethics* 2 points out, the aptitude for the virtues exists in us by nature, and this is why what belongs to the virtues is derived from the dictates of natural reason. But it belongs to religion to offer ceremonial worship to the divine nature. However, as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 99, a. 3), ceremonial worship is not derived from the dictates of natural reason. Therefore, religion is not a virtue.

But contrary to this: As is clear from what has gone before (q. 80), religion is numbered among the virtues.

I respond: As was explained above (q. 58, a. 3 and *ST* 1-2, q. 55, a. 3), it is virtue that makes the one who has it good and renders his action good. And so one must claim that every good act pertains to virtue.

Now it is clear that repaying a debt to someone has the character of something good, since by the fact that someone repays a debt to another, he stands in the appropriate relation to him and is, as it were, appropriately ordered toward him. But as is clear from Augustine in *De Natura Boni*, order belongs to the nature of the good, as do mode and species. Therefore, since it belongs to religion to render the honor that is due to someone, viz., to God, it is clear that religion is a virtue.

Reply to objection 1: To revere God is an act of the gift of fear. But it belongs to religion to do certain things out of reverence for God. Hence, it follows not that religion is the same thing as the gift of fear, but that religion is ordered toward fear as toward something more important (*ad aliquid principalius*). For as was established above (q. 9, a. 1 and *ST* 1-2, q. 68, a. 8), the gifts are more important than the moral virtues.

Reply to objection 2: Even a servant can voluntarily present to his master what he owes him, and so he “makes a virtue of necessity” by repaying his debt voluntarily. Similarly, rendering the service that is due to God can be an act of virtue insofar as a man does it voluntarily.

Reply to objection 3: It does belong to the dictates of natural reason that a man should do *something* to show reverence to God, but it does not belong to the dictates of natural reason that he should specifically do *these* things or *those* things. Rather, this belongs to the disposition of divine or human law.

Article 3

Is religion a single virtue?

It seems that religion is not a single virtue:

Objection 1: As has been explained (a. 1), through religion we are ordered toward God. But in God there are three persons and, again, many attributes that differ from one another at least conceptually (*quae saltem ratione differunt*). But as is clear from what was said above (q. 9, a. 1 and *ST* 1-2, q. 68, a. 8), diverse conceptions of the object are sufficient for diversifying the virtues. Therefore, religion is not a single virtue.

Objection 2: There seems to be a single act of a single virtue, since habits are distinguished by their acts. But religion has many acts, e.g., worshiping and serving, vowing, praying, sacrificing, and many others of this sort. Therefore, religion is not a single virtue.

Objection 3: Adoration (*adoratio*) belongs to religion. But adoration is given to images under one conception and to God Himself under another conception. Therefore, since diverse conceptions make for distinct virtues, it seems that religion is not a single virtue.

But contrary to this: Ephesians 4:5-6 says, “One God, one faith ...” But genuine religion professes faith in a single God. Therefore, religion is a single virtue.

I respond: As was established above (*ST* 1-2, q. 54, a. 2), habits are distinguished by the diverse conceptions of their objects. Now it belongs to religion to show reverence to the one God in accord with a single conception, viz., insofar as He is the first principle of the creation and governance of things. Hence, Malachi 1:6 says, “If I am a father, then where is my honor?” For it belongs to a father both to produce and to govern. Therefore, it is clear that religion is a single virtue.

Reply to objection 1: The three divine persons are a single principle of the creation and governance of things, and so they are served by a single [virtue of] religion.

On the other hand, the different conceptions of the attributes come together in the conception of a first principle, since God produces all things and governs all things by the wisdom, will, and power of His goodness. And so religion is a single virtue.

Reply to objection 2: It is by the same act that a man *serves* God and *worships* Him, since *worship* has to do with God’s excellence, to which reverence is owed, whereas *service* (*servitus*) has to do with the subjection of man, who because of his condition as a subject is obligated to show reverence to God. And all the acts that are attributed to religion pertain to these two items, since through all of the acts a man professes God’s excellence and his own subjection to God, either by rendering something to Him or, again, by taking on something divine (*vel exhibendo aliquid ei vel iterum assumendo aliquid divinum*).

Reply to objection 3: The worship (*cultus*) that belongs to religion is not given to images insofar as they are considered in themselves as certain things; rather, it is given to them insofar as they are images that lead one to the incarnate God. On the other hand, the movement that is directed toward the image insofar as it is an image does not stop with the image, but instead tends toward that of which it is an image.

And so neither the conception of *latria* nor the virtue of religion is diversified by the fact that the worship that belongs to religion is shown to images of Christ.

Article 4

Is religion a specific virtue distinct from other virtues?

It seems that religion is not a specific virtue distinct from other virtues:

Objection 1: In *De Civitate Dei* 10 Augustine says, “True sacrifice is every work that is done in order that we might be joined to God in a sacred fellowship.” But sacrifice belongs to religion. Therefore, every act of virtue belongs to religion. And so religion is not a specific virtue.

Objection 2: In 1 Corinthians 10:31 the Apostle says, “Do everything for the glory of God.” But as was noted above (aa. 1-2), it belongs to religion to do things in order to give reverence to God. Therefore, religion is not a special virtue.

Objection 3: The charity (*caritas*) by which God is loved is not a virtue distinct from the charity by which our neighbor is loved. But as *Ethics* 8 says, “To be honored is close to being loved.” Therefore, religion, by which God is honored, is not a virtue that is distinct in species from the respect (*observantia*) or service (*dulia*) or piety (*pietas*) by which our neighbor is honored. Therefore, it is not a specific virtue.

But contrary to this: Religion is posited as a part of justice distinct from its other parts.

I respond: Since a virtue is ordered toward the good, it follows that where there is a specific conception of the good, there must be a specific virtue. But the good toward which religion is ordered is to give due honor to God. Now honor is owed to someone by reason of his excellence. But a singular excellence belongs to God insofar as He infinitely surpasses all things and exceeds them in every way. Hence, a specific honor is due to Him—just as we notice in human affairs that different types of honor are owed to the different types of excellence possessed by persons, so that one type of honor is owed to one’s father, another type to one’s king, and so on. Hence, it is clear that religion is a specific virtue.

Reply to objection 1: Every act of virtue is said to be a ‘sacrifice’ insofar as it is ordered toward reverence for God. Hence, it does not follow from this that religion is a general virtue; rather, what follows is that religion *commands* all the other virtues, as has already been explained above (a. 1).

Reply to objection 2: All things, insofar as they are done for God’s glory, belong to religion—not in the sense that [the virtue of] religion *elicits* them, but in the sense that it *commands* them.

By contrast, the acts that belong to religion in the sense that [the virtue of] religion *elicits* them are those that by the very nature of their species involve reverence for God.

Reply to objection 3: The object of love (*amor*) is the good, whereas the object of honor or reverence is something excellent. Now God’s *goodness* is communicated to a creature, but not the *excellence* of His goodness. And this is why the charity by which God is loved is not a virtue distinct from the charity by which our neighbor is loved, whereas religion, by which God is honored, is distinct from the virtues by which our neighbor is honored.

Article 5

Is religion a theological virtue?

It seems that religion is a theological virtue:

Objection 1: In *Enchiridion* Augustine says, “God is worshiped by faith, hope, and charity,” which are the theological virtues. But it belongs to religion to worship God. Therefore, religion is a theological virtue.

Objection 2: A theological virtue is one that has God as its object. But religion has God for its object, since, as has been explained (a. 1), it orders one toward God alone. Therefore, religion is a theological virtue.

Objection 3: As is clear from what was said above (*ST* 1-2, q. 57, a. 3 and q. 62, a. 2), every virtue is either a theological virtue, an intellectual virtue, or a moral virtue. But it is clear that religion is not an intellectual virtue, since its perfection does not involve a consideration of the truth. Similarly, it is likewise not a moral virtue, to which it is proper to maintain a mean between excess and defect; for one cannot worship God to excess—this according to Ecclesiasticus 43:33 (“Blessing the Lord, exalt Him as much as you can, for He is greater than all praise”). Therefore, what is left is that religion is a theological virtue.

But contrary to this: Religion is posited as a part of justice, which is a moral virtue.

I respond: As has been explained above (aa. 2 and 4), it is religion that offers due worship to God. Therefore, there are two things to consider in the case of religion:

The first is *what* religion offers to God, viz., worship (*cultus*), and this is related to religion as its *matter* and *object*.

The other is *the one* to whom worship is offered, viz., God. To Him worship is given, not in the sense that the acts by which God is worshiped attain to God Himself, in the way that when we believe God (*credimus Deo*), we attain to God by believing—for which reason, as was explained above (q. 2, a. 2), God is the object of [the virtue of] faith not only insofar as we *believe that God ... (credimus Deum)*, but also insofar as we *believe God (credimus Deo)*—but instead God is offered due worship insofar as certain of the acts by which God is worshiped are done out of reverence for God, e.g., the offering of sacrifices and other acts of this sort.

Hence, it is clear that God is related to the virtue of religion *not* as its *object* and *matter*, but as its *end*. And so religion is not a theological virtue, the *object* of which is the ultimate end, but is instead a moral virtue that has to do with the means to the end.

Reply to objection 1: It is always the case that a power or virtue that operates with respect to the end moves by its command a power or virtue that does those things that are ordered toward that end. Now the theological virtues—viz., faith, hope, and charity—have an act with respect to God as their proper object. And so by their command they cause an act of religion, which does things that are ordered toward God. And this is the reason why Augustine claims that God is worshiped by faith, hope, and charity.

Reply to objection 2: Religion orders a man toward God not as its *object* but as its *end*.

Reply to objection 3: Religion is neither a theological virtue nor an intellectual virtue, but is instead a moral virtue, since it is a part of justice. And in its case the mean is taken not, to be sure, from within the passions, but in accord with a certain equality or balance among the actions that are ordered toward God.

Now I say ‘equality’ or ‘balance’ here not absolutely speaking, since we cannot offer to God as much as we owe Him, but rather in accord with a consideration of human powers and divine acceptance. Now there can be excess in those things that pertain to the worship of God—not with respect to the circumstance ‘*how much?*’, but with respect to other circumstances, e.g., because the worship of God is offered to *someone* to whom it should not be offered, or is offered *when* it should not be offered, or is offered in other circumstances in which it should not be offered.

Article 6

Is religion preeminent over the other moral virtues?

It seems that religion is not preeminent over the other moral virtues (*non sit praeferenda aliis virtutibus moralibus*):

Objection 1: As is clear from *Ethics* 2, a moral virtue’s perfection consists in its attaining the mean. But religion falls short of attaining the mean of justice, since it does not at all repay God up to equality (*non reddit Deo omnino aequale*).

Objection 2: In what is given to men, something seems more praiseworthy to the extent that it is offered to someone who is more needy; hence, Isaiah 58:7 says, “Give your bread to one who is hungry.” But God does not need anything that is offered to Him by us—this according to Psalm 15:2 (“I said, ‘You are my God because you do not need my goods.’” Therefore, religion seems less praiseworthy than other virtues through which men are assisted.

Objection 3: Something is less praiseworthy to the extent that it is done out of a greater need—this according to 1 Corinthians 9:16 (“If I preach the Gospel, no glory comes to me, for a necessity lies upon me”). Now where what is owed is greater, there is a greater necessity. Therefore, since God especially is owed what is offered to Him by a man, it seems that religion is the least praiseworthy of the human virtues.

But contrary to this: In Exodus 20 the precepts pertaining to religion are posited at the beginning,

as the most important precepts. But the ordering of the precepts is proportionate to the ordering of the virtues, since the precepts of the Law are given concerning the acts of the virtues. Therefore, religion is the most important of the moral virtues.

I respond: The means to an end receive their goodness from their being ordered toward the end, and so the closer they are to the end, the better they are. Now as was established above (a. 5), the moral virtues have to do with things that are ordered toward God as their end. But religion approaches God more closely than the other moral virtues do, insofar as it does things that are directly and immediately ordered toward honoring God. And so religion is preeminent over the other moral virtues.

Reply to objection 1: The praise for a virtue rests in the *act of will* and not in the *power*. And so to fall short of balance or equality, which is the mean of justice, because of a defect in the *power* does not diminish the praise for the virtue, as long as the defect does not arise from an act of will.

Reply to objection 2: In case of things that are offered to another because of their usefulness to the other, the giving is more praiseworthy if it is done for someone who is more needy, and this because it is more useful to him. By contrast, God is not offered anything because of its usefulness to Him; instead, it is offered to Him for the sake of His glory and for its usefulness to us.

Reply to objection 3: Where there is necessity, the glory of supererogation is removed, but the merit of virtue is not excluded as long as the act is voluntary. And because of this the argument does not follow.

Article 7

Does adoration (*latria*) have any exterior act?

It seems that adoration (*latria*) does not have any exterior act:

Objection 1: John 4:24 says, “God is a spirit, and those whose adore Him must adore Him in spirit and in truth.” But exterior acts belong not to the spirit but instead to the body. Therefore, religion, to which adoration (*adoratio*) belongs, has interior acts and not exterior acts.

Objection 2: The purpose (*finis*) of religion is to offer God reverence and honor. But it seems to show irreverence for someone excellent if he is offered what properly belongs to lower men. Therefore, since what man offers by corporeal actions seems to be ordered toward the needs of men or toward reverence for lower creatures, it does not seem that it can be fittingly elevated to reverence for God.

Objection 3: In *De Civitate Dei* 6 Augustine commends Seneca for criticizing certain individuals who offered to idols what was customarily offered to men, since things that belong to mortals are unfitting for immortals. But, *a fortiori*, those things are unfitting for the true God, who is exalted above all gods. Therefore, it seems reprehensible for someone to worship God by means of corporeal acts. Therefore, religion does not have any corporeal acts.

But contrary to this: Psalm 83:3 says, “My heart and my flesh have exulted in the living God.” But just as interior acts belong to the heart, so exterior acts belong to the members of the flesh. Therefore, it seems that God should be worshiped not only by means of interior acts, but also by means of exterior acts.

I respond: We show God reverence and honor not for His own sake, since He is in Himself full of glory and His glory cannot be added to by a creature, but rather for our own sake, since by the fact that we revere and honor God, our mind is subjected to Him, and this is what the perfection of our mind consists in. For each thing is brought to perfection by being subject to its superior—in the way that the body is brought to perfection in being vivified by the soul, and in the way that the atmosphere is brought to perfection in being illuminated by the sun.

Now in order for the human mind to be joined to God, it needs to be guided by sensible things, since, as the Apostle says in Romans 1:20, “The invisible things are clearly seen, being understood by the

things that are made.” And so it is necessary to make use of certain corporeal things in order that a man’s mind might be aroused by them as signs to the spiritual acts by which it is joined to God. And so religion does, to be sure, have interior acts as the acts which are the principal acts and which belong to religion in their own right, but it also has exterior acts as secondary acts that are ordered toward the interior acts.

Reply to objection 1: Our Lord is talking about what in divine worship is principal and intended in its own right.

Reply to objection 2: Exterior acts of the sort in question are not offered to God in the sense that He needs them—this according to Psalm 49:13 (“Will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?”). Instead, they are offered to God as signs of interior and spiritual works that God accepts in their own right. Hence, in *De Civitate Dei* 10 Augustine says, “The visible sacrifice is a sacrament, i.e., a sacred sign, of the invisible sacrifice.”

Reply to objection 3: The idolaters are derided because they offer to idols things that belong to men not as signs that spur them on to spiritual thing, but as things accepted in their own right by the idols—and especially because those things were ostentatious and shameful.

Article 8

Is religion the same as holiness?

It seems that religion (*religio*) is not the same as holiness (*sanctitas*):

Objection 1: As has been established (a. 4), religion is a *specific* virtue. By contrast, holiness is a *general* virtue, since, as Andronicus puts it, “it makes individuals faithful and makes them observe what is just in the sight of God.” Therefore, holiness is not the same as religion.

Objection 2: Holiness seems to imply cleanliness (*munditia*); for in *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 12, Dionysius says, “Holiness is freedom from every sort of uncleanness, along with perfect and altogether immaculate cleanliness.” But cleanliness seems to belong especially to temperance, which excludes corporeal disgracefulness. Therefore, since religion belongs to justice, it seems that holiness is not the same as religion.

Objection 3: Things that are divided off by an opposition are not the same. But as was established above (q. 80), in one of the enumerations of the parts of justice, holiness is divided off from religion. Therefore, holiness is not the same as religion.

But contrary to this: Luke 1:74-75 says, “... that we might serve Him in holiness and justice.”

I respond: The name ‘holiness’ (*sanctitas*) seems to imply two things: (a) *cleanliness (munditia)*, and the Greek name ‘*hagios*’ fits this signification, since ‘*hagios*’ means, as it were, without dirt (*sine terra*); and (b) *firmness (firmitas)*, and this is why among the ancients the things called holy were those that were fortified by the laws in order that they not be violated, and, hence, something is said to be made holy because it is fortified by the law. The name ‘*sanctus*’ in Latin can likewise pertain to cleanliness, so that ‘*sanctus*’ means, as it were, “sprinkled with blood” (*sanguine tinctus*)—because, as Isidore explains in *Etymologia*, “those ancients who wanted to be purified were sprinkled with the blood of the victim.” And both significations comport with holiness being attributed to things that are used for divine worship, so that not just men, but also the temple and the vessels and other things of this sort are said to made holy by being used for divine worship.

Cleanliness is necessary for the mind’s being directed toward God, since the human mind is rendered impure by being immersed in lower things, just as anything whatsoever is rendered unclean (*sordescit*) by being mixed with what is worse than it—in the way that silver is made impure by being mixed with lead. Rather, the mind must be abstracted from lower things in order to be able to be joined to the highest entity. And so a mind without cleanliness cannot be applied to God. Hence, Hebrews 12:14 says, “Pursue peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see God.”

Firmness is likewise needed for the mind to be applied to God. For the mind is applied to Him as the ultimate end and first principle; but things of this sort must be maximally unchangeable. Hence, in Romans 8:38-39 the Apostle said, “I am certain that neither death nor life will separate me from the charity of God.”

So, then, holiness means that a man’s mind applies itself and its acts to God. Hence, it differs from religion not in its essence, but only conceptually. For it is called religion insofar as it renders to God the service owed to Him in those matters that pertain specifically to divine worship, e.g., sacrifices, oblations, and others of this sort, whereas it is called holiness insofar as a man refers not only these actions but the acts of all the virtues to God, or insofar as a man disposes himself for divine worship by means of good works.

Reply to objection 1: Holiness is a specific virtue in its essence, and on this score it is in some sense the same as religion. However, it has a certain sort of generality insofar as by its command it orders all the acts of the virtues toward the divine good—in the same way that legal justice is called a general virtue insofar as it orders the acts of all the virtues toward the common good.

Reply to objection 2: Temperance does, to be sure, bring about cleanliness, but not in such a way that it has the character of holiness—unless it is referred to God. Hence, in *De Virginitate* Augustine says, “Virginitas is honored not because it is virginity, but because it is consecrated to God.”

Reply to objection 3: Holiness is distinct from religion because of the difference noted above—not because, as has been explained, it differs in reality from religion, but because it differs from religion merely conceptually.