

QUESTION 35

The Person of the Son: The Name 'Image'

Next we have to consider the name 'Image'. On this topic there are two questions: (1) Is the name 'Image' said of God with respect to a person? (2) Is 'Image' a proper name of the Son?

Article 1

Is the name 'Image' said of God with respect to a person?

It seems that 'Image' is not said of God with respect to a person:

Objection 1: In *De Fide ad Petrum* Augustine says, "The divinity of the Holy Trinity is the same as the Image to which man was made." Therefore, 'Image' is predicated with respect to the essence and not with respect to a person.

Objection 2: In *De Synodis* Hilary says, "An image is an exactly similar species of the thing which is imaged." But 'species', i.e., 'form', is predicated of God with respect to the divine essence. Therefore, the same holds for 'Image'.

Objection 3: 'Image' derives from 'imitate' and so implies something prior and something posterior. But there is nothing prior or posterior in God. Therefore, 'Image' cannot be the name of a person in God.

But contrary to this: Augustine says, "What is more ridiculous than to predicate 'image' of oneself?" Therefore, 'Image' is predicated relationally in God, and so it is the name of a person.

I respond: It is part of the concept of an image that it is a likeness. But not just any likeness is sufficient for the concept of an image. Rather, an image is a likeness that exists within the same species as the thing [imaged], or at least has the appearance (*signum*) of the same species. Now among corporeal things, the appearance of the species seems especially to involve their shape (*figura*). For we see that it is different shapes, and not different colors, that correspond to animals differing in species. Hence, if the color of a thing is depicted on a wall, it is not said to be an image of that thing unless the thing's shape is also depicted. Still, even a likeness of species or shape is not itself sufficient. What is further required for the concept of an image has to do with its origin, since, as Augustine puts it in *83 Quaestiones*, "One egg is not the image of another, because it does not come from the latter." Therefore, in order for something to be truly an image, it must proceed from another thing that is similar to it in species or, at least, appears like it in species. But those things that imply procession or origin in God pertain to the persons. Hence, the name 'Image' is the name of a person.

Reply to objection 1: An image, properly speaking, proceeds in the likeness of the other. But that in whose likeness something proceeds is properly called an exemplar and only improperly an image. Still, it is in the latter sense that Augustine uses the name 'image' when he says that the divinity of the Holy Trinity is the image to which man was made.

Reply to objection 2: As it is used by Hilary in the definition of 'image', 'species' means a form in one thing that is derived from another thing. For an image is said to be the 'species' of a thing in the sense that what is made similar to a thing is called its 'form', because it has a form similar to that thing.

Reply to objection 3: Among the divine persons, 'imitating' does not signify 'being posterior to'. Rather, it means only 'being made similar to'.

Article 2

Is ‘Image’ a proper name of the Son?

It seems that the name ‘Image’ is not proper to the Son:

Objection 1: As Damascene says, the Holy Spirit is the Image of the Son. Therefore, ‘Image’ is not proper to the Son.

Objection 2: As Augustine says in *83 Quaestiones*, an image is a likeness together with derivation. But this belongs to the Holy Spirit, since He proceeds from another in a mode of likeness. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is an Image. And so it is not proper to the Son to be an Image.

Objection 3: According to 1 Corinthians 11:7 (“A man (*vir*) indeed ought not to cover his head: because he is the image and glory of God”), man (*homo*), too, is said to be the image of God. Therefore, it is not proper to the Son to be the Image of God.

But contrary to this: In *De Trinitate* 6 Augustine says, “The Son alone is the Image of the Father.”

I respond: The Greek doctors generally claim that the Holy Spirit is the Image of the Father and the Son. By contrast, the Latin doctors attribute the name ‘Image’ only to the Son, since in the canonical Scriptures it is attributed only to the Son. For Colossians 1:15 says, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature,” and Hebrews 1:3 says, “He is the brightness of His glory and the figure of His substance.”

Some claim that the explanation for this is that the Son agrees with the Father not only in nature, but also in the notion *principle*, whereas the Holy Spirit does not agree in any of the notions with either the Father or the Son.

But this explanation does not seem adequate. For in the same way that, as Augustine puts it, there is no equality or inequality with respect to the relations in God, so too with respect to the relations there is no likeness of the sort that is required for the concept of an image.

Hence, others claim that the reason why the Holy Spirit cannot be called the Image of the Son is that there is no image of an image. Nor is the Holy Spirit the Image of the Father, since an image is related directly to that of which it is an image, whereas the Holy Spirit is related to the Father through the Son. Again, the Holy Spirit is not the Image of the Father and the Son together, since if He were, then there would be one image of two [persons]—which seems impossible. Hence, it follows that the Holy Spirit is in no way an image.

But this argument comes to naught. For the Father and the Son are a single principle of the Holy Spirit, and so given that they are a single principle, nothing prevents the Father and the Son from having an image. After all, man is a single image of the whole Trinity.

So we must reply in a different way: Just as the Holy Spirit is not said to be begotten even though He receives the nature of the Father by a procession just as the Son does, so too He is not called an Image even though He receives a species similar to that of the Father. For the Son proceeds as the Word, and it is of the very nature of a word to be a likeness of the species with respect to that from which He proceeds. However, this does not belong to the nature of love—even though it does belong to the Love, who is the Holy Spirit, insofar as He is the divine Love.

Reply to objection 1: Damascene and the other Greek doctors generally use the name ‘image’ to mean ‘perfect likeness’.

Reply to objection 2: Even though the Holy Spirit is similar to the Father and the Son, it still does not follow that He is their Image—and this for the reason already explained.

Reply to objection 3: There are two ways in which an image of something may be found in a

given thing. In one way, it exists in a thing which has the same nature with respect to its species—in the way, for instance, that the image of a king exists in his own son. In the second way, it exists in a thing with a different nature—in the way that the image of the king exists on a coin.

It is in the first way that the Son is the Image of the Father, whereas it is in the second way that man is called an image of God. This is why, in order to signify the imperfection of the image in man, man is not only called an image (*imago*) but is said to be ‘to the image’ (*ad imaginem*) [of God], where this indicates a certain movement of something that is tending toward perfection. By contrast, it cannot be said of the Son of God that He is ‘to the image’ of the Father, since He is the perfect image of the Father.