

RELIGION AS A VIRTUE:  
THOMAS AQUINAS ON WORSHIP THROUGH JUSTICE, LAW, AND CHARITY

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A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctorate in Theology

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Ave Maria University

2008

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE: THE CLASSICAL AND PATRISTIC TRADITION

CHAPTER TWO: THE MEDIEVAL CONTEXT

CHAPTER THREE: WORSHIP IN THE WORKS OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

CHAPTER FOUR: JUSTICE AS ORDER TO GOD

CHAPTER FIVE: GOD'S ASSISTANCE THROUGH LAW

CHAPTER SIX: TRUE WORSHIP IN CHRIST

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ABBREVIATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

Aquinas refers to religion as virtue. What is the significance of such a claim? Georges Cottier indicates that “to speak today of religion as a virtue does not come across immediately as the common sense of the term.”<sup>1</sup> He makes a contrast between a sociological or psychological evaluation of religion, which treats it as “a religious sentiment,” and one which strives for truth.<sup>2</sup> The context for the second evaluation entails both an anthropological and Theistic context as the two meet within the realm of the moral life. Ultimately, the study of religion as virtue within the moral life must be theological since it seeks to understand “the true end of humanity” and “its historic condition, marked by original sin and the gift of grace.”<sup>3</sup> Aquinas places religion within the context of a moral relation to God, as a response to God’s initiative through Creation and Redemption.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Georges Cardinal Cottier. “*La vertu de religion.*” *Revue Thomiste* (jan-juin 2006): 335.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Bobik also distinguished between different approaches to the study of religion, particularly theological, philosophical, and scientific, all of which would give different answers to the question “what is religion?.” *Veritas Divina: Aquinas on Divine Truth: Some Philosophy of Religion.* (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2001), 19. See also page 24. For an example of different approaches to the study of religion see *What is Religion? An Inquiry for Christian Theology.* ed. Mircea Eliade and David Tracy. (New York: The Seabury Press, 1980). This work (an issue of *Concilium*) includes essays that approach religion from a theological, sociological, cultural, philosophical, anthropological, and historical context. In the editorial David Tracy notes that “no clear consensus on the nature of religion emerges from these studies. What does emerge, however, is a clear vision of the importance of heightening Christian theological consciousness on these issues as well as an analysis of some major contemporary ways by means of which the question of religion is focused for Christian thought and praxis in both context-dependent and cross-cultural manners.” ix.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Robert Sokolowski makes a key distinction, which provides an important backdrop for understanding Aquinas’ treatment of religion. He states: “Religion is not simply a genus for Christianity as a species. The way Christian religion and its discourse differ from religion and its discourse is complex, and this difference is based on the way the divine is understood in both cases. Sociologically or anthropologically, natural religion might be considered a genus for Christianity, but it cannot be so considered theologically.” “Christian Religious Discourse.” in *Religions and the Virtue of Religion.* ed. Thérèse-Anne Druart and Mark Rasevic. (Washington, D.C.: The American Catholic Philosophical Association, 1992), 45. Aquinas places religion within the moral life as part of a response to God’s initiative in the world. Religion does not refer to a human phenomenon or religious body primarily for Aquinas, but entails the way in which one relates to God.

At its very core, this dissertation concerns the relation between humanity and God.<sup>5</sup>

There is a natural order toward God established through Creation. This forms the foundation of the moral life insofar as human nature provides the rationale by which to understand the order of the intellect and will toward God. Justice is the virtue by which the soul orders all of its life to God, justly acknowledging and advancing toward Him as its end. However, this order runs up against a twofold limit: the distortion of sin and the intrinsic limits of nature. The true relation through which one must examine the state of the soul in relation to God is that of grace. It is charity which orders the soul toward God in a supernatural manner as its happiness in the beatific vision. Both justice and charity express themselves in worship, by which the soul acknowledges the greatness of God and gives oneself and one's goods to Him in sacrifice.

Worship holds a prominent place in the thought of Aquinas. He treats this topic in almost all of his major works and it comprises a large number of questions in the *Summa Theologiae*. The topic is multi-faceted, finding a place within discussions of natural law, virtue, Old Law ritual, the Ten Commandments, the religious state of life, the theological virtues, Christ's priesthood and the sacraments. The word for worship also varies widely: *religio, cultus, latria, pietas, adoratio, servitus, laudatio, eusebia, and theosebia*. Thomas treats this topic as part of a long tradition stretching from pagan understandings of justice to the textbook treatment found within medieval commentaries on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. This crucial and complex topic comprises a significant portion within Aquinas' account of the way in which one relates to God and therefore deserves a thorough exposition.

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<sup>5</sup> In his introduction to *The Worship of God*, M.-D. Philippe stresses the supreme importance of understanding the proper relation to God. He does so as follows: "Only in so far as he recognizes his Creator's sovereign rights over him can man fully realize his own nature. If he does not discover God, and does not recognize God's rights, but looks at himself as his own master, he fails to discover the source and object of his being, and then he is like a traveler who has lost his way, knowing neither where he comes from nor where he is going." trans. Dom Mark Pontifex. (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1959), 7. Worship reveals the fundamental reality of humanity as dependent upon God for its existence and ordered toward Him as its end.

The most prominent treatment of worship in Aquinas' thought comes with his exposition of the virtue of religion, which stands at a crucial juncture in his account of the moral life. It is indeed through this virtue that all of one's actions are devoted to God as an offering for His praise and glory. This is something justly demanded due to the debt that exists from having received one's life and sustenance from God and from the ordering of human life to God as its end. Furthermore, the just ordering of one's life to God arises from the natural law, which has been instilled into Creation and has been developed by human and divine law, which gives it its determinate shape. The virtue of religion's relation to the New Law brings about discussion of the way in which religion orders one to God: while it is the chief of the moral virtues due to its proximity to God, nevertheless, it cannot bring about final union with God, the beatitude which comes from a direct vision of God. Therefore, these three themes of religion—as a part of the virtue of justice, its relation to law (of all kinds), and its relation to the Christian life of grace—will be discussed as the key themes of Aquinas' treatment of religion.

Before engaging in this discussion, however, it is crucial to recognize that Aquinas built upon and synthesized many elements of the Classical and Christian tradition to arrive at this treatment of religion. Servais Pinckaers argues for the need to study Aquinas' sources to better understand his own thought. He states that

a speculative examination of his work is rounded out by a historical consideration that reveals the genesis and unfolding of his thought, helping us to perceive better its vitality and richness. Such a study also aids us discovering the timelessness of a teaching nourished by the great scriptural and patristic traditions and those of Augustine and Aristotle.<sup>6</sup>

In particular this study takes into account his major influences in the area of virtue, law, and religion. His main Classical source on religion was Cicero, who himself drew upon many

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<sup>6</sup> “The Sources of the Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas.” in *The Pinckaers Reader: Renewing Thomistic Moral Theology*. ed. John Berkman and Craig Steven Titus. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 3.

strands of the Greek philosophical tradition. Through the writings of Cicero, the Latin West gained inspiration for its own conception of law in its relation to justice, of the connection between reason and action, and of the role of nature in disposing toward virtue. Significantly, it is also from Cicero that Western theology drew its definition of religion. Nevertheless, it would not be appropriate to say that Latin Christianity merely appropriated the writings of Cicero without its own significant contributions.

Chief among Aquinas' influences on religion from within the Church stands St. Augustine. St. Augustine did draw upon Cicero for inspiration, yet he insisted that the deepest understanding of religion must come from Scripture. Therefore, while he recognized Cicero's definition of religion as valid, he nevertheless turned to the word *latría* to more adequately describe the Christian religion in distinction from the idolatrous practices of the pagans. Furthermore, Augustine points to Christ as the true embodiment of religion, who offered Himself on the Cross as a true sacrifice, and who enables humans to engage in a similar offering and surrender of self to God.

Aquinas stood within a tradition that received both of these definitions of religion and initiated a synthesis of the two. Notions of justice, law, and charity emerged early in the discussion, as seen in Abelard's *Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian*. Other theologians placed the discussion of worship within a deeper spiritual context such as William of St. Thierry's treatment of piety in the monastic life and Hugh of St. Victor's account of the sacraments. Cicero took a more prominent role in the accounts of William and Auxerre and Philip the Chancellor, though this was followed by a more biblical approach by Alexander of Hales and Bonaventure. Albertus Magnus returned to a strong emphasis on Cicero, which remained throughout Aquinas's thought. Thus it is important to recognize the diversity and

fluidity in the treatment of religion throughout the Middle Ages. Aquinas' own exposition both synthesized and advanced the thought of his contemporaries. This began in his *Commentary on the Sentences* and continued throughout his major works, his polemical writings on the religious life, and his biblical commentaries.<sup>7</sup>

This work is meant as a guide in reading the *Summa Theologiae* so that one may recognize and place within their overall context the many references to worship. It would be a mistake to solely emphasize the virtue of religion to the exclusion of the detailed analysis of the worship of the Old and New Law. It is also important to place the virtue of religion within the overall context of the moral life.<sup>8</sup> Moral theology must also be recognized within its place in theology as a whole, that is, its relation to Christ's saving work made present within the Church.<sup>9</sup> While these elements shed light on the nature of religion, it is also true that a better

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<sup>7</sup> The layout of this dissertation generally follows the points laid out by Servais Pinckaers for a methodology that combines historical and speculative approaches: 1) research into Aquinas' sources 2) knowledge of Aquinas medieval setting 3) attentiveness to the "historical sequence" of his work and 4) an attempt to appreciate Aquinas without the constriction of modern "problematics, categories, and subtly different concepts." *The Sources of Christian Ethics*. trans. Sr. Mary Thomas Noble. (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 238. In "The Sources of the Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas" Pinckaers elaborates: "The reading of St. Thomas directly and deeply enriched by the concomitant reading of his scriptural, patristic, and philosophical sources is certainly a good way to overcome the narrowness of a rationalistic theology and to rediscover in ourselves the spiritual sources that have nourished all renewals throughout the course of history, in theology as well as philosophy." in *The Pinckaers Reader*. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Lawrence Dewan makes the following note about finding a coherent philosophy of religion in Thomas' thought: "In short, there is work for the philosopher of religion which consists in a certain sifting of the texts of the second part of the *Summa theologiae*." *University of Ottawa Quarterly* 51 (1981): 644-653. Dewan notes that a philosophy of religion from a Thomistic perspective must shift from an exclusive emphasis on metaphysical questions (such as God's existence) to focus on the moral life. Though I will not attempt to form a philosophy of religion out of Thomas' thought, I do propose to lay out a coherent theological vision of religion from within the *Summa*. This will certainly include "sifting" through the text for relevant passages, which find their place within an overall account of how religion relates to the moral life and God's work of salvation.

<sup>9</sup> Romanus Cessario rightly points out that "moral teaching is located within a larger picture of saving doctrine." He appeals to Veritatis Splendor as an example as its appeals to "the new law of grace revealed in the Incarnation; to the dynamics of the specifically Christian virtues of faith, hope, and love; to the special states of life within the Church; and finally, to the seven sacraments of the Christian Church. These theological coordinates locate moral theology within its proper place in Christian instruction and enable it to provide the Christian people not only with a teaching about their common end and *salus*, but also about the means available to them to achieve it." *Introduction to Moral Theology*. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), xiii; 16. See also Louis Gillon. *Christ and Moral Theology*. (Staten Island, New York: Alba House, 1967), especially 99-103. Gillon argues that one must see St. Thomas' view of the moral life in light of the Christian's participation in the "plentitude of Christ." 103.

understanding of worship in light of the moral ordering to God may help to deepen reflection on other areas, such as the relation of law to God, Christ's sacrifice, and the sacraments.<sup>10</sup> Aquinas' treatment within the *Summa* also gains better understanding when seen within the backdrop of earlier theology and even his own previous thought. Doing so makes clear why he asks certain questions and also highlights the advancements which he puts forward. Therefore, one could look at this dissertation as an attempt to weave one coherent account from the disparate and sometimes brief references to worship throughout the entire body of the *Summa Theologiae*.

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<sup>10</sup> Gérard Gilleman relates religion to the nature of morality arguing that "if morality puts us in intimate contact with the divine Persons, it must necessarily be religious," that is, in religion's "wider sense, which comprises all activities putting us in relation to God. . . . The principle of union between morality and religion is essential to Christian revelation." *The Primacy of Charity in Moral Theology*. trans. William F. Ryan, S.J. and André Vachon, S.J. (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1959), 216-17. Since moral virtue seeks to advance one toward the end of happiness, it shares the common goal of ordering one's toward God with the virtue of religion.



## CHAPTER ONE: THE CLASSICAL AND PATRISTIC FOUNDATION

It is from the Classical period that the Christian theological tradition of the West drew its definition of religion. The philosophers' view of religion provided the initial basis for dialogue between the first apologists and their opponents. Within the pagan articulation, therefore, early Christians recognized the seeds of truth, to use Justin's terminology, which could then be opened up and brought to fruition in contact with the Gospel. Of course, this was no easy task, for even though the philosophers opposed the superstitious elements of paganism, they fell far short of the understanding of God provided by Scripture and the practice of the moral life initiated by grace. Nevertheless, there are a few elements which clearly emerged from classical thought that took firm root in the Christian tradition. Foremost among them is the recognition of an intelligible order latent within the universe. This order speaks of the wisdom of God and also points to the necessity of having a right relation with God.

Cicero (106-43 BC), known in the Middle Ages as Tully, provided a crucial link in bringing Greek philosophical contributions on these points to the Western Fathers.<sup>11</sup> Both Augustine and Ambrose were significantly influenced by Cicero, which granted him an enduring place within the theological tradition of the West. In his earliest work, *De inventione*, Cicero provided an account of the four cardinal virtues. Under justice he lists a series of other virtues which fall within the scope of justice, the first of which is religion. Just as there are duties toward one's parents, country, those who excel, and to those generally to whom one is indebted, so there is a special duty toward God. Like all virtues, there is a vice opposed to religion,

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<sup>11</sup> Servais Pinckaers goes so far as to state that "we might even say that the philosophical works of Cicero were the foundation of the thought of the Latin Fathers." *The Sources of Christian Ethics*. 203. His writings were so essential for medieval philosophy and theology since both he and Seneca were the primary transmitters of Stoic thought. Gerard Verbeke notes that "not a single writing from the earlier Stoics has survived." *The Presence of Stoicism in Medieval Thought*. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1983), 6-7. On the role of Seneca and Cicero, cf. 8-16.

namely superstition. While Cicero goes to great lengths to commend religion, particularly in its relation to law, he focuses more on superstition. His three great works on religion—*De natura deorum*, *De divinatione*, and *De fato*—have as their intention to destroy superstitious beliefs and practices concerning God. However, the only positive exposition of religious practices, in his *De legibus*, clearly seems to fall within the very description of superstition against which he argued.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, while Cicero provides a basis for religion within the Aristotelian tradition of virtue and the Stoic tradition of natural law, he nevertheless remained a skeptic concerning the actual practice of religion.<sup>13</sup> Following his account of religion will prove useful in examining the contribution, in both a positive and negative sense, of classical thought to Aquinas' own articulation.<sup>14</sup>

While *De inventione* is an early work of Cicero's, one with which he seemed slightly embarrassed,<sup>15</sup> it is this work that provided both the foundation for his later thought and for the Christian appropriation of his thought on religion.<sup>16</sup> He establishes there the key points of his

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<sup>12</sup> In *De divinatione* (II. xii) he explicitly admits that soothsaying needs to be cultivated to uphold political expediency and popular religion, even though he thoroughly proves its falseness. It is important to remember that Cicero himself served as an auger, and, thus, himself engaged in deceitful religious practices in the name of politics.

<sup>13</sup> Michael Gass makes clear that the Stoics bound their account of virtue to their larger theological beliefs. He states: "Specifically, virtue is revealed to consist in a conscious and deliberate harmonization of one's actions with the purposes of the divine architect. Thus, under this interpretation of their ethical intentions, the Stoics thought of the initial, analytical approach to ethics as necessarily incomplete even in its treatment of strictly ethical topics; the systematic study of nature was thought to impart additional wisdom regarding ethical matters." "Eudaimonism and Theology in Stoic Accounts of Virtue." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 61 no 1 (Jan., 2000): 20. Using their ethical theory provides Cicero some of the ground for his engagement of religion. It should be noted that theology for the Stoics, and in classical thought more broadly, includes the physical study of the universe, which includes its *ratio* and laws, which are deemed to be divine principles.

<sup>14</sup> J.-P. Torrell notes that Clement Vansteenkiste has found three hundred references to Cicero in Aquinas' *Summa*. "Thus, of the 300 citations... 168 are in the Second Part of the work (48 in Ia IIae; 120 in IIa IIae). As M. Spanneut underscored, this influence is especially evident in two major areas: that of virtue and the virtues and that of the moral and natural law." *Aquinas' Summa: Background, Structure, and Reception*. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 80.

<sup>15</sup> *De oratore*, I. v.

<sup>16</sup> Given the wide diffusion of florilegia, one may wonder how often this work was read in its entirety. It may be probable that the short section on virtue may have been circulated in small passages apart from the rest of the text. Michael Lapidge describes this phenomenon in relation to Cicero: "One of the principal means by which Stoic ethics (as conveyed by Cicero, Seneca, and Martin of Braga) became known during the twelfth century was through the compilation and circulation of florilegia. In particular a number of florilegia were assembled and devoted to

moral theory: its dependence upon virtue, the role of reason, and the guiding norm of the natural law. His treatment of religion as a part of justice deserves to be quoted in its entirety:

Justice is a habit of mind which gives every man his desert while preserving the common advantage. Its first principles proceed from nature, then certain rules of conduct became customary by reason of their advantage; later still both the principles that proceeded from nature and those that had been approved by custom received the support of religion and the fear of the law. The law of nature is that which is not born of opinion, but implanted in us by a kind of innate instinct: it includes religion, duty, gratitude, revenge, reverence and truth. Religion is that which brings men to serve and worship a higher order of nature which they call divine.<sup>17</sup>

In Cicero's account religion has a reciprocal relation to law. First, religion springs forth from an innate instinct of the law of nature and secondly gives its sanction to those laws which have sprung up from this same source in nature. Furthermore, there is something both natural and cultivated in religion. Since Cicero describes it as a part of a virtue, it therefore falls under his definition of virtue as "a habit of mind in harmony with reason and the order of nature."<sup>18</sup> In this sense it will be something to which all are disposed and that needs the proper guidance of reason. Therefore, it is not simply natural, for the instinct of nature still needs to take specific form, as Cicero describes in service and worship. As this determination of the instinct occurs, religion is susceptible to vice, which Cicero defines as "superstition," insofar as it gravitates from

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matter of ethics, and Cicero and Seneca inevitably figured largely in these." He notes the principal florilegia: the *Florilegium Gallicum*, the *Florilegium Duacense*, the *Florilegium Angelicum*, and the *Florilegium morale Oxoniense*. "The Stoic Inheritance." in *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 94-95.

<sup>17</sup> *De inventione*. trans. H.M. Hubbell. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949), II. liii. Odon Lottin notes that this definition of justice was definitive for the West until the reintroduction of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. *Psychologie et morale aux XIIIe et XIVe Siècles*. Tome 3. *Problèmes de Morale*. Part 2. Vol. 1. (Bembloux, Belgium: J. Duculot, 1949), 284. For background on Lottin and his contribution to the study of Thomistic ethics, see Clifford Kossel's "Thomistic Moral Philosophy in the Twentieth Century." in *The Ethics of Aquinas*. ed. Stephen J. Pope. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 385-88. There is a somewhat similar passage in the work entitled *On Virtues and Vices*, attributed to Aristotle. "First among the claims of righteousness are our duties to the gods, then our duties to the spirits, then those to country and parents, then those to the departed; and among these claims is piety, which is either a part of righteousness or concomitant of it. Righteousness is also accompanied by holiness and truth and loyalty and hatred of wickedness." trans. H. Rackham. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), V. It should be noted that the text *De Affectibus (Peri Pathon)*, attributed to Andronicus, a contemporary of Cicero, bears some similarity to the passage quoted above, for instance, in the reference to holiness (cf. ST II-II. 81.8, obj. 1). Andronicus has been suggested as a possible author of *On Virtues and Vices*.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid*.

something “honorable... sought... for its own sake,”<sup>19</sup> to something opposite to it “to be avoided for... [its] own sake.”<sup>20</sup> In this way Cicero laid down the basic principles of religion and superstition. His eclectic style brought together Aristotelian virtue ethics<sup>21</sup> and the Stoic principle of natural law, and laid down a general outline of religion, which lasted for centuries.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, Cicero’s contribution to both the understanding and practice of religion runs much deeper than his initial cursory attempt at a definition. He explored the foundation of religion in both reason and nature in greater length in his *De legibus*<sup>23</sup> and *De officiis*. The key for Cicero was laid out above, namely, that the first principles of justice are from nature. Cicero in *De legibus* describes how these principles have not only been implanted in nature, but have also been instilled more directly into the mind itself. First, he states: “Law is the highest reason, implanted in Nature, which commands what ought to be done and forbids the opposite.”<sup>24</sup> Thus, he argues that nature intelligibly plants within the mind direction concerning what ought to be done and avoided. This gives justice an objective foundation, which, as in *De inventione*, is not based upon human opinion.<sup>25</sup> It is precisely the shared possession of reason that Cicero argues

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<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.* II. liv.

<sup>21</sup> There is one reference to worship in Aristotle’s thought worth noting here. It is from *Topics* I, xi. “For people who are puzzled to know whether one ought to honour the gods or love one’s parents or not need punishment.” For a short treatment on prayer and praise of the gods in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, see Harry Jaffa’s *Thomism and Aristotelianism: A Study of the Commentary by Thomas Aquinas on the Nicomachean Ethics*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952), 116-23.

<sup>22</sup> On the fusion of Stoicism and Aristotelianism in Cicero, cf. Marcia Colish. *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to Early Middle Ages*. Volume 1. (Leiden, Netherlands: EJ Brill, 1985), 85. Even though the Stoics popularized the theory of natural law, Heinrich Rommen looks back to Heraclitus for its first articulation. *Natural Law: A Study in Legal and Social History and Philosophy*. trans. Thomas R. Hanley. (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1947), 5-6. Michael Crowe confirms this point. *The Changing Profile of the Natural Law*. (The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), 3-4. See also Crowe’s treatment of the Stoic contribution to the theory of natural law and Cicero’s appropriation of it, 28-41. Crowe claims that it “is certain... that it was largely due to the writings of Cicero that the Stoic theory of laws made its impact upon Roman law and, later, upon Christian legal thought.” 37.

<sup>23</sup> For a brief and straightforward exposition of religion in the *De legibus* see John E. Rexine’s *Religion in Plato and Cicero*. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959).

<sup>24</sup> *De legibus*. trans. Clinton Walker Keyes. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), I. v. In his dialogues, it will be assumed that Cicero is the speaker unless otherwise noted.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.* I. x.

unites all humans “to share the sense of Justice with one another and to pass it on to all men.”<sup>26</sup> Nature kindles in humans “sparks of fire,” though these can be “extinguished by this corruption, and the vices, which are their opposites, spring up and are established. But if the judgments of men were in agreement with Nature... then Justice would be equally observed by all.”<sup>27</sup> The foundation of justice, therefore, is in nature itself, which is understood as being specially planted within the human mind.

From this vantage point, Cicero develops his theory of natural law and virtue, both of which flow from nature as the proper development of laws latent within it. His *De officiis* provides the fullest account of the principles provided the mind by nature, which is taken up by Aquinas almost verbatim.<sup>28</sup> Cicero speaks of nature as an active force, describing it as follows : as *endowing* instincts, *associating* humans through reason, *implanting* love for offspring, *prompting* men to societal relations, and *dictating* preservation.<sup>29</sup> Thus, nature plays an active role in the moral life, disposing humans toward what is right. From these dispositions, particularly that of rational enquiry, “morality and propriety are derived, and upon it (reason) depends the rational method of ascertaining our duty.”<sup>30</sup> The very order of nature proscribes human duty, and since humans have reason, they can recognize this duty and act accordingly. Cicero goes to great pains to argue for the foundation of duty, springing forth from the cardinal virtues. Of all duties he describes, he states that “our first duty is to the immortal gods.”<sup>31</sup> He lists duties so that one can recognize the moral priority of these duties when there is a conflict.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *ibid.* I. xii.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> ST I-II. 91.

<sup>29</sup> *De officiis*. trans. Walter Miller. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941), I. iv.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.* I. xxx.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.* I. xlv.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

Therefore, the justice which humankind rationally receives from nature points toward the fulfillment of religious duty as a primary moral obligation.

We are now in a position to see how it is that religion comes forth as a part of justice. Admittedly, based on the definition of justice put forth by Cicero (drawing on Aristotle), of giving to each his due, it is difficult at first to see how this could apply between humans and God. For instance, Aristotle states: “The just, therefore, involves at least four terms; for the persons for whom it is in fact just are two, and the things in which it is manifested, the objects distributed, are two. And the same equality will exist between the persons and between the things concerned.”<sup>33</sup> In the case of what has been bestowed upon humans, the gods have given life, reason, and care through providence. As Cicero states, humans are to return service and worship. While Cicero at times described this as a type of transaction fitting both because the gods love humans and humans rightly honor the gods, it is nevertheless clear that there is a serious element of disproportionality.

As we will see below, Aquinas has his own solution to this dilemma, but in the meantime, it is helpful to examine the connection between humans and the gods in Cicero’s thought. In doing so it will be important to keep in mind Robert Sokolowski’s distinction between the Christian and pagan understanding of the nature of divinity:

In Greek and Roman religions, and in Greek and Roman philosophies, god or the gods are appreciated as the most powerful, most independent, and self-sufficient, most unchanging being in the world, but they are within the context of being.... The being of pagan gods is to be part, though the most important part, of what is; no matter how independent they are, the pagan gods must be with things that are not divine.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. in *The Basic works of Aristotle*. ed. Richard McKeon. (New York: The Modern Library Classics, 2001), V. ii.

<sup>34</sup> *The God of Faith and Reason: Foundations of Christian Theology*. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 12.

This insight of Sokolowski is evident in its application to Cicero, for whom humans and the gods share together the bond of reason, which creates a natural fellowship between them.

Cicero advances his argument as follows:

Therefore, since there is nothing better than reason, and since it exists both in man and God, the first common possession of man and God is reason. But those who have reason in common must also have right reason in common. And since right reason is Law, we must believe that men have Law also in common with the gods. Further, those who share Law must also share Justice; and those who share these are members of the same commonwealth. If indeed they obey the same authorities and powers, this is true in a far greater degree; but as a matter of fact they do obey this celestial system, the divine mind, and the God of transcendent power.<sup>35</sup>

And further:

...the soul was generated in us by God. Hence we are justified in saying that there is a blood relationship between ourselves and the celestial beings; or we may call it a common ancestry of origin.... and among men themselves there is no race either so highly civilized or so savage as not to know that it must believe in a god, even if it does not know what sort of god it ought to believe. Thus it is clear that man recognizes God because, in a way, he remembers and recognizes the source from which he sprang.<sup>36</sup>

The use of justice in the relation of humans and god(s) does not seem quite as inappropriate given the common nature the two share. While it may be tempting to attribute this to Stoic pantheism, Cicero critiqued such a view in his *De natura deorum*. While the world itself may not be God, nevertheless, Cicero makes clear that the human being has a “divine element within,”<sup>37</sup> which links humankind to the divine in such a way that there is a natural fellowship of reason, which enables there to be a common rule and measure, even shared virtue (here defined as “Nature perfected and developed to its highest point”).<sup>38</sup> Cicero makes it clear that the gods

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<sup>35</sup> *De legibus*. I. vii.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.* I. viii.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.* I. xxii.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.* I. viii.

have providentially cared for humankind so that it may attain to knowledge and virtue,<sup>39</sup> thus enabling it to develop to the point of real fellowship.

Cicero develops the notion of fellowship in line with a Neo-Platonic egress-regress scheme.<sup>40</sup> He describes the movement back toward the source as a process which occurs through the attainment of knowledge, the “perception” of virtue, withdrawing from pleasure and fear, entering “into a partnership of love” with all to which one is joined by nature, and finally by engaging in “worship of gods and pure religion.”<sup>41</sup> By engaging in this ascent, the mind comes to choose the good and reject the opposite and therefore to reach happiness. The basic precept of the natural law, to do good and avoid evil is the goal of human life, which is attained by focus on the mind on the source from whence it sprang. This is a moral ascent with the duty of religion at the top, since it is a matter of justice that honor be given in recognition of the subordinate relationship in the commonwealth of the universe. This subordination is based upon an inner propulsion toward the good and the true implanted in the soul by the rational law of God, which is nature. Religion comes from nature insofar as nature makes clear to the individual his or her divine origin and end and the bond of fellowship that exists providentially in human life, in the midst of the trials of material existence.

Therefore, nature makes it clear that humans have a relationship with the divine. It does this both in the very makeup of reason, which has a natural instinct of the divine, and through rational reflection, which realizes that humans are part of a unified whole, with reason at the summit. The question remains as to the mode of the gods’ providence. It appears that at the least, Cicero takes the active relationship of the divine toward humans to be the instillation of reason into the mind and also the establishment of a suitable environment for virtue. If this is the

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<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Cicero states that the mind “understands whence all these things came and whither they must return.” *ibid.* I. xxiii.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*



case, then human life itself is religious, that is, a just response to the divine, which recognizes the common bond of reason, and acts accordingly. The highest way of acting rationally is through the establishment of laws. Law flows from nature, insofar as it expresses rational commands, which flow the foundation of justice in the commonwealth of the universe. Law is the “principle of choosing what is just and true.”<sup>42</sup> This choosing is “not the product of human thought... but something eternal which rules the whole universe by its wisdom in command and prohibition.”<sup>43</sup> The law which stands as the foundation of the universe serves as the basis for human laws as the mind holds firm to reason: “Therefore, just as that divine mind is the supreme Law, so when [reason] is perfected in man.”<sup>44</sup> Law makes the divine mind accessible to human action, manifesting the wisdom latent within nature as it is transmitted to human society and the moral life. Law then stands in necessary relation to the divine and thus has a religious basis.

Cicero makes this manifest with statements such as “the establishment of religion... [is] surely the most important in the formation of the commonwealth.”<sup>45</sup> Nature founds all of justice,<sup>46</sup> instilling a common love for men and for the gods “on account of the close relationship which exists between man and God.”<sup>47</sup> The divine, nature, justice, virtue, and law all exist in a unified whole, so that they truly depend upon each other for their coherence. This merging of eclectically gathered insights demonstrates Cicero’s unique contribution to the study of religion. Human society and religion are intricately bound up because humankind shares through nature

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<sup>42</sup> *ibid.* II. v.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.* II. iv.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.* The translator, Keyes, points out that “reason” is suggested by Johannes Vahlen to fill a gap in the text. Nevertheless, the passage could be understood without filling in a word in this sense: just as the divine mind is the supreme law, so is the human mind when it is likewise perfected. Even so, reason would have to be understood, which would be fitting, given its role in law. Cicero states: “Law is the highest reason, implanted in Nature, which commands what ought to be done and forbids the opposite. This reason, when firmly fixed and fully developed in the human mind, is Law.” *ibid.* I. v.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.* II. xxvii.

<sup>46</sup> “If follows that Justice does not exist at all, if it does not exist in Nature,” and without that principle, there will be a destruction of virtue. *ibid.* I. xv.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*

the divine principle of reason, upon which both religion and laws are formed. Thus, it is not surprising that religion would play a role in both the foundation and maintenance of the social order, since it entails a just and reciprocal relationship with the eternal source of law.

The overwhelming problem with Cicero's articulation of religion is that his own unique formulation is bound up with his defense of the Roman constitution, as articulated in *De legibus*.<sup>48</sup> In that work, Cicero uses his principles to justify the current practices of Rome, even religious ones which contradict his own view. At first his own theory seems to flow smoothly into a defense of religious practices. It is necessary to "persuade our citizens" that what is done has been willed by the gods, the benefactors of man, who reward and punish. Cicero reaffirms that by piety one "fulfills his religious duties" and that by rational reflection one sees common order and reason in the universe.<sup>49</sup> The primary shift, however, comes in the description of these beliefs as "useful," as in the confirmation of oaths and treaties.<sup>50</sup> While Cicero does defend virtue's utility, nevertheless, he argues that it must be pursued for its own sake. In this case we have something intrinsically false and harmful encouraged primarily for its civil utility. What follows in his *De legibus* is an elaborate classification of religious laws, which he explicitly disavows in his three works on religion. While Cicero goes to great lengths to prove that religion has a rational foundation, he succumbs to the acceptance of superstition within his own detailed articulation of one's service and worship of the divine.

Thanks to his three works on religion, but particularly to the *De natura deorum* and *De divinatione*, it is easier to arrive at a fuller understanding of Cicero's religious belief in relation to pagan religious practices. This brings up the critical issue of truth. Cicero at no time denies the existence of the gods and yet he recognizes the limits of one's capability to articulate their

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<sup>48</sup> cf. *ibid.* I. vi.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.* II. vii.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*

nature and the proper way to relate to them. He argues that knowledge of the gods is crucial: “The inquiry into the nature of the gods, which is both highly interesting in relation to the theory of the soul, and fundamentally important in the regulation of religion, [but, nevertheless] is one of special difficulty and obscurity.”<sup>51</sup> Since knowledge of the gods is so difficult, Cicero argues that the contradictions that arise from it may lead to religious “doubt,” which in turn would undermine “loyalty... and of justice itself, the queen of the virtues.”<sup>52</sup> Why? This is the crucial point. Gods and humans exist in a mutual relation of fellowship, bound by justice. This is the very justice which binds together the order of the whole universe. If knowledge of the gods is uncertain then would not one’s rational action then become obscure? Cicero examines the importance of knowing the nature of the gods through the notion of their providence:

For there have been philosophers who hold that the gods exercise no control over human affairs whatever. But if their opinion is the true one, how can piety, reverence, or religion exist? For all these tributes which it is our duty to render in purity and holiness to the divine powers solely on the assumption that they take notice of them, and that some service has been rendered by the immortal gods to the race of men. But if on the contrary the gods have neither the power nor the will to aid us, if they pay no heed to us at all and take no notice of our actions, if they can exert no possible influence upon the life of men, what ground have we for rendering any sort of worship, or honour or prayer to the immortal gods?<sup>53</sup>

This mentality certainly harkens back to Socrates’ dialogue with Euthyphro, which raises the question: how does one know what to offer to the gods? what is pleasing to them or of use to them?<sup>54</sup> Cicero examines two views in his *De natura deorum*, first of the Epicurean Velleius,

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<sup>51</sup> *De natura deorum*. trans. H. Rackham. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), I.i.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.* I. vi; ii.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.* I. ii.

<sup>54</sup> Euthyphro puts forth several arguments concerning what is pious: “to persecute the wrongdoer,” “what is dear to the gods,” and most interesting for our study “the part of just that is concerned with the care of the gods.” 5e; 7a; 12e. The last response came from the prompting of Socrates, who asked whether “the pious is a part of justice” and “what part of the just it is.” 12d; e. Socrates points out the contradictory opinions of the gods on wrongdoing, the circularity of Euthyphro’s arguments concerning the pious as dear to the gods, and the impossibility of serving them since they have no need. This translation is found in *Five Dialogues*. trans. G.M.A. Grube. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2002), 1-20. Rémi Brague examines impiety in Plato in both the *Laws* (885b 7-9) and *Gorgias* (82b 3). He states: “There are three levels of impiety: believing that there are no gods; believing that the gods exist, but

and then of the Stoic Balbus. Rather than attacking these positions himself, he uses his friend and fellow augur, the Academic Cotta to point out the shortfalls of these theories. It is crucial to remember that Cicero realizes that there must be religious worship, based on both human rationality and civic necessity. What will remain essential to examine throughout this discussion is to what extent Cicero affirms anything positive about the divine and the human worship of it.

Velleius first of all expounds a position to one extreme. Humans have an innate sense of the divine and it is just to worship the gods, yet there is no providence exercised by these gods at all, who are perfectly at rest and not interested in anything beyond themselves.<sup>55</sup> To the other extreme stands Balbus, who held that providence directs even the most minute of actions and that by religious actions, humans can gain access to the knowledge of providence, sharing as they do the identity of all of nature, which can resolve into the divine intelligence itself.<sup>56</sup> Both theories rely heavily on the fact that religious worship was universal and therefore must be innate in the human mind.<sup>57</sup> While Cicero shows what is problematic in these views, it is clear that his theory does have something in common with both. While Velleius denies having real knowledge of the gods and the ability to interact with them, he nevertheless recognizes the justice of worship: “If we sought to attain nothing else beside piety in worshipping the gods and freedom from superstition... the exalted nature of the gods, being both eternal and supremely blessed, would

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care nothing for humankind; believing that they exist and care about men, but that they can be swayed by prayers and sacrifices.” *The Law of God: The Philosophical History of an Idea*. trans. Lydia G. Cochrane. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 29.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.* I. viii-xx.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.* II. Balbus’ argument comprises the entire second book of the treatise.

<sup>57</sup> Velleius states that “the belief in the gods has not been established by authority, custom, or law, but rests on the unanimous and abiding consensus of mankind; their existence is therefore a necessary inference, since we possess an instinctive or rather an innate concept of them; but a belief which all men by nature share must necessarily be true.... we must admit it as also being an accepted truth that we possess a ‘preconception,’ as I called it above, or a ‘prior notion,’ of the gods. *ibid.* I. xvii. Likewise Balbus argues that “nothing but the presence in our minds of a firmly grasped concept of the deity could account for the stability and permanence of our belief in him,” and later, “all have engraved in their minds an innate belief that the gods exist.” *ibid.* II. ii, iv.

receive man's pious worship (for what is highest commands the reverence of what is due)."<sup>58</sup>

Thus Velleius sees the justice of worship without any relationship or reciprocity between humans and the gods. Cicero also relies on the Stoic view, insofar as we have seen above he draws on the Stoic conception of the role of nature and reason in the moral life. Thus, Balbus states that "contemplating the heavenly bodies the mind arrives at a knowledge of the gods, from which arises piety, with its comrades justice and the rest of the virtues, the source of a life of happiness that vies with and resembles the divine existence."<sup>59</sup> While Cicero ultimately dismantles both positions through the voice of Cotta, nevertheless, he admits that the Stoic view is closer to the truth.<sup>60</sup>

Cotta issues three main criticisms of common religious attitudes and practices. The first concerns the diversity and contradiction of religions. Cotta asks his dialectical opponents why they are so keen of using arguments to prove something that they hold to be self-evident.<sup>61</sup> What is held to be self-evident has rather led to such a great multiplicity of belief that one is actually led to doubt concerning the nature of the object of this belief.<sup>62</sup> Rather, Cotta states that any real knowledge of the nature of the gods must be rational, thus turning the Stoic principle of reason against Balbus. He states: inasmuch as every belief is an activity of reason—and of reason that is a good thing if the belief is true, but a bad thing if it is false."<sup>63</sup> Cicero, through Cotta, lays down the principle that it is not enough simply to accept the divine as a given, either of the mind or of society, but rather belief must be in accord with reason, i.e. true belief.

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<sup>58</sup> *ibid.* I. xvii.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.* II. lxi. Balbus also references a lost work of Aristotle to support his view of the realization of the divine through the contemplation of the skies. II. xxxvii.

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.* III. i.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.* III. iv.

<sup>62</sup> cf. Cicero's own argument in I. vi. "Surely such wide diversity of opinion among men of the greatest learning on a matter of the highest moment must affect even those who think that they possess certain knowledge with a feeling of doubt."

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.* III. xxviii.

Cotta leveled his second argument specifically against Velleius the Epicurean. It concerns the dignity of the gods to receive worship. How can the gods be worthy of worship if they do not possess excellence<sup>64</sup> (but are in absolute rest) and have no care for humankind? Both issues concern the nature of justice. The first issue flows from the previous argument: if the nature of the gods cannot be held to be innate in the mind, then what rational basis is there for admiration and religion, which Cotta states consists of pious worship?<sup>65</sup> It is just to honor those who are excellent, and furthermore, those from whom one has received benefit. Accordingly, the second issue concerns the reciprocal relationship of humans and gods, the very heart of religion. Cotta pointedly asks Velleius: “how can you owe piety to a person who has bestowed nothing upon you? or how can you owe anything at all to one who has done you no service? Piety is justice towards the gods; but how can any claims of justice exist between us and them, if god and man have nothing in common.”<sup>66</sup> In response, Cotta replies that the whole reason that “we worship and pray to them,” is that the gods shows the most excellent of all qualities, benevolence: who “although in need of nothing, yet both love each other and care for the interests of man.”<sup>67</sup> Religion is just because one is able to recognize that the divine is excellent, especially in the fact that it manifests its excellence through the love it bestows upon those in need. It is the reception of something beneficial from the gods that puts humans in a debt of justice toward them, and this debt is the foundation of worship justly offered to them.

After this argument it may appear that Cicero and Cotta are clearly in defense of religious practice. Nevertheless, the argument used to defeat the Epicureans that gods should be worshipped without benevolence is itself open to criticism if that benevolence has not been

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<sup>64</sup> *ibid.* I. xlii. “What reason is there for adoring the gods on the ground of our admiration for the divine nature, if we cannot see that that [i.e. the divine] nature possesses any special excellence?”

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.* I. xli.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.* I. xliv.

exercised. Balbus had argued that divine providence clearly manifested itself through the perfect care that both nature and divination demonstrated in human life. In some sense, Cotta's response may be seen as an argument against a perfect world through the existence of evil. He states that "indeed the gods ought to have made all men good, if they really cared for the human race," but rather the good suffer and the wicked prosper.<sup>68</sup> If the gods do not support the good, it is not necessary to turn to an extrinsic principle for the regulation and perfection of human life. Rather, Cotta argues, humans are responsible for their own internal perfection: "an innocent or guilty conscience [is] so powerful a force in itself, without the assumption of any divine design."<sup>69</sup> And further: "our virtue is a just ground for others' praise and a right reason for our own pride, and this would not be so if the gift of virtue came to us from a god and not from ourselves."<sup>70</sup> If virtue is true happiness, as Cicero maintained, and this arises only from one's own moral advancement through the direction of conscience, then religious worship cannot lead humans to their true happiness. Both the Epicureans and the Stoics are left with empty worship, one worshipping to gain nothing and the other attempting to gain something that is within one's own power.

What are the augurs Cicero and Cotta left with then for the purpose of religious worship? Cotta did not think that reason was sufficient to establish firm belief concerning the nature of the gods. He had used reason to criticize the religious view of others, but nevertheless found another source for the belief in the gods, namely from tradition: "For my part a single argument would have sufficed, namely that it has been handed down to us by our forefathers. But you [Stoics]

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<sup>68</sup> *ibid.* III. xxxii.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.* III. xxxv.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.* III. xxxvi.

despise authority.”<sup>71</sup> What then did the Romans receive in religion? Cotta states that for him it entailed to “uphold the beliefs about the immortal gods which have come down to us from our ancestors, and the rites and ceremonies and duties of religion.... The religion of the Roman people comprises ritual, auspices, and the third additional division consisting of all such prophetic warnings... [as] derived from portents and prodigies.”<sup>72</sup> These rituals Cicero clearly marked as superstitious and empty in his *De divinatione*, written as a sequel to *De naturam deorum*.

In *De divinatione* Cicero does not hold back his own opinion, but comes out clearly in his own voice and states that “soothsaying, which, accordingly to my deliberate judgment, should be cultivated from reasons of political expediency and in order that we may have a state religion.”<sup>73</sup> What is astounding is that he urges this practice even though he recognizes that the reasons given for divination are “unworthy of belief.”<sup>74</sup> Cicero holds that not only are divinatory practices founded on fictitious claims, but goes even so far as to state that they are impossible to accomplish. Divination undermines philosophy by stating that through the miraculous intervention of “some invisible power... the creation and destruction of things are not due to nature, and there are some things which spring from nothing.”<sup>75</sup> This is impossible because “whatever comes into existence, of whatever kind, must needs find its cause in nature; and hence, even though it may be contrary to experience, it cannot be contrary to nature.”<sup>76</sup> Therefore, divine intervention, in “prophecy and inspiration” does not benefit one in gaining knowledge and in the moral life and must be considered superfluous in all but maintaining the

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<sup>71</sup> *ibid.* III. iv. The only defense that he could seemingly provide would be that it is rational to respect the authority of one’s ancestors.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid.* III. ii.

<sup>73</sup> trans. William A. Falconer. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), II. xii. cf. II. xxxv.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.* II. xi.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.* II. xvi.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.* II. xxviii.



state religion. Nevertheless, Cotta had argued in *De naturam* thusly: “Take again those who have asserted that the entire notion of the immortal gods is a fiction invented by wise men in the interest of the state, to the end that those whom reason powerless to control might be led in the path of duty by religion; surely this view was absolutely and entire destructive of religion.”<sup>77</sup> Is this the position to which Cicero held?

First of all we must be clear that Cicero did not deny the existence of the gods, only that he was in doubt concerning their nature.<sup>78</sup> Cicero did hold that the existence of a divine being can be recognized (even if not known for what it is) through universal belief<sup>79</sup> and through the beauty and order of the universe.<sup>80</sup> This is not through an innate knowledge of God, but rather belief in God as “most thinkers have affirmed... is the most probable view and the one to which we are led by nature’s guidance.”<sup>81</sup> Throughout his works Cicero returns to the notion of God, though it is intrinsically bound up with nature. It is through nature that one has a link to the divine, that is, through the common reason within it that both gods and humans share.<sup>82</sup> It is truly difficult to state how much weight Cicero gave to the view that worship is due to the gods in return for benefits received. Cotta argued that the bestowing of reason was not to be seen as a gift in itself,<sup>83</sup> since it requires beyond itself that good use be made of it. If there is a debt to

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<sup>77</sup> I. xlii.

<sup>78</sup> That is, as an adherent to the New Academy, he withheld assent to any one position, not being convinced of its sufficiency. “Our position is not that we hold that nothing is true, but that we assert that all true sensations are associated with false ones so closely resembling them that they contain no infallible mark to guide our judgment and assent.” *De naturam deorum*. I. v; “Moreover, it is characteristic of the Academy to put forward no conclusions of its own, but to approve those which seem to approach nearest to the truth; to compare arguments; to draw forth all that may be said in behalf of any opinion; and without asserting any authority of its own, to leave the judgement of the inquirer wholly free.” *De divinatione*. II. lxxii.

<sup>79</sup> *De legibus*. I. viii. Even though, as seen above, it is not reliable concerning the nature of the gods

<sup>80</sup> *De divinatione*. II. lxxii. “Furthermore, the celestial order and the beauty of the universe compel me to confess that there is some excellent and eternal Being, who deserves the respect and homage of men.” Here at the end of one of his last works (a skeptical one no less), we see an affirmation of the definition of religion given in his first work.

<sup>81</sup> *De natura deorum*.

<sup>82</sup> He states that “true religion... is closely associated with the knowledge of nature.” *De divinatione* II. lxxii.

<sup>83</sup> *De natura deorum*. III. xxviii.

God, it would have to be seen as a subordination to One more excellent in the commonwealth of the universe. Cotta further argued that most prayers are directed toward the obtaining of material gifts,<sup>84</sup> which seems to fall prey to Plato's criticism of Euthyphro for appeasing the gods.<sup>85</sup> Rather, Cicero wants to purify religion from superstition, through true knowledge of the universe, withdrawal from what is base, and a life of virtue in harmony with the order of nature.<sup>86</sup>

The conclusion of the *De divinatione* is the clearest expression of his thoughts on religious practice. He states:

Speaking frankly, superstition, which is widespread among the nations, has taken advantage of human weakness to cast its spell over almost every man.... For I thought that I should be rendering a great service both to myself and to my countrymen if I could tear this superstition up by its roots. But I want it distinctly understood that the destruction of superstition does not mean the destruction of religion. For I consider it part of wisdom to preserve the institutions of our forefathers by retaining their sacred rites and ceremonies.<sup>87</sup>

One can never know for sure the extent to which Cicero sought to maintain religious practice and belief as a "noble lie" for the political expediency he advocated concerning divination. Though he states that he wanted to overturn superstition, he nevertheless justified the use of a false practice. Cicero always seems to be running "the risk of committing a crime against the gods if we disregard them [civil ceremonies], or of becoming involved in old women's superstition if we approve them."<sup>88</sup> Religion was clearly necessary for the proper functioning of the State, in Cicero's opinion. He saw this as a matter of upholding the justice that ran throughout nature and stood at the foundation of all law. Yet, with uncertain knowledge of the gods' nature, there was

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<sup>84</sup> *ibid.* xxxvi.

<sup>85</sup> cf. Michael L. Morgan. *Platonic Piety: Philosophy and Ritual in Fourth-Century Athens*. (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1990), particularly chapter one, "Socratic Piety as Plato Saw It."

<sup>86</sup> *De legibus*. I. xxiii.

<sup>87</sup> II. lxxii.

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.* I. iv.

no way to know whether proper worship was given to them or not. Therefore, while Cicero maintained that there is a God and that religion must be upheld, he opposed false beliefs and superstitious practices. Since he thought it harmful to loose the religion of his ancestors for political reasons, he also upheld their validity, even while recognizing them to be superstitious.

The foundation laid by Cicero for religion provides both enduring elements, such as religion's place within justice, and also leaves open ambiguities, particularly in regard to the truth of religion, which must be corrected by Christian theologians in the following centuries. While Cicero was not necessarily a dialogue partner for the earliest Christian Fathers, they immediately confronted the ideas put forward by Cicero.<sup>89</sup> Their response to pagan philosophy proved critical for Cicero's reception into the Christian heritage. These early Fathers, many of them considered to be apologists, did not hesitate to recognize truth within philosophical discussions of God, and yet they pinpointed the exact weakness exhibited by Cicero and others.<sup>90</sup>

Justin first began the tradition of recognizing the early seeds of Christianity within the philosophy of the pagans.<sup>91</sup> In his *First Apology* Justin states that Christ "is the Word of whom every race of men were partakers; and those who lived reasonably are Christians, even though

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<sup>89</sup> The presence of common themes may be due to the mutual influence of Stoicism. Gerard Verbeke points to the influence of Stoicism at least on Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian (amongst the Fathers treated below). 5. In regards to Clement Verbeke notes that he "unhesitatingly adopted the entire Stoic moral vocabulary, and especially its terminology concerning virtues." 48. On Tertullian, he notes the surprisingly strong influence of Stoicism as follows: "It is remarkable that a Christian writer such as Tertullian adopted Stoic materialism without hesitation, even though he did not accept the coincidence of human soul and divine Spirit." 23.

<sup>90</sup> Robert Grant traces the origin of the apologist movement and sees ground for it even in Paul. cf. Greek Apologists of the Second Century. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988). Benedict Ashley asks an important question for the Father's attempt in appropriating pagan philosophy: "[I]t is necessary to ask whether this schema of the cardinal virtues has any real basis in the Bible." He answers in the affirmative and speaks specifically of justice as follows: "Justice (Hebrew *sedaqa*; Greek *dikaioyne*) in the Bible is often translated 'righteousness' and is related to 'covenant-love.'" *Living the Truth in Love: A Biblical Introduction to Moral Theology*. (New York: Alba House, 1996), 35; 37.

<sup>91</sup> For background on Justin see L. W. Barnard. *Justin Martyr: His Life and Thought*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967). Barnard points out that for Justin "there was... but one wisdom, one philosophy, which had been revealed fully in and through Jesus Christ." 27. See also his treatment of the *logos spermatikos*, 96-99, especially in relation to Cicero's *semina justitiae*.

they have been thought atheists.”<sup>92</sup> Even those, who like Cicero, were seen to have doubt concerning the nature of the divinity could be considered Christians insofar as they lived according to reason. This move is possible since Christ is Logos, reason itself. As one lives rationally, as Cicero sought to, one lives in accordance with Christ, the intelligibility of human life. The short fallings of Cicero can be understood in the fact that “whatever either lawgivers or philosophers uttered well, they elaborated by finding and contemplating some part of the Word. But since they did not know the whole of the Word, which is Christ, they often contradicted themselves.... For all the writers were able to see realities darkly through the sowing of the implanted word that was in them”<sup>93</sup> Thus, while Cicero fell short of the truth concerning religion due to his partial and dim view of its true reality in Christ, his work could be appropriated, since “whatever things were rightly said among all men, are the property of us Christians.”<sup>94</sup> Justin embodies the spirit of Christian theology, which sought the truth wherever it could be found and brought it into harmony with the Gospel.

The question then arises as to how Cicero’s account of religion accords with the Gospel. The early Fathers recognized that God deserved to receive our worship, as attested by Psalm 116: 12, 16-18: “What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me?... O Lord, I am your servant.... I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people;” and Rev 4:11: “Worthy (*axios*) are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”<sup>95</sup> Commenting on the harmony which he

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<sup>92</sup> “The First Apology of Justin.” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. I. ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), xlvi.

<sup>93</sup> “The Second Apology of Justin.” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. I. x, xiii.

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.* xiii.

<sup>95</sup> RVS. Second Catholic edition. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006). Any Scriptural quotation I independently cite will be from this edition, though quotations drawn from other works will maintain the translation of that work. cf. Deut 6:13; 1 Chron 29: 10-13; Ps 50:12; Eccl 43:32; Mic 6:6; Matt 4:10; Rom 12:1; Rev 15: 3-4. It is also

recognized between the Gospel and philosophy, Clement of Alexandria argued that philosophy prepared for Christ and was perfected by Him, stating: “The way of truth is therefore one.”<sup>96</sup> To ground this claim scripturally, Clement turns to Paul, who “by availing himself of poetical examples from the *Phenomena* of Aratus, approves of what has been well spoken by the Greeks; and intimates that, by the unknown God, God the Creator was in a roundabout way worshipped by the Greeks; but that it was necessary by positive knowledge to apprehend and learn Him by the Son.”<sup>97</sup> What could better describe the object of Cicero’s worship than the unknown God! Thus, both Justin and Clement lay the foundation necessary to appropriate the thought of philosophy, consequently giving Cicero a legitimate place in Western theology.

Cicero’s thought cannot be given just a *carte-blanche* acceptance into the tradition, however, for his specific account of religion must be examined for its worth in relation to Christianity. While both Justin and Clement engaged the philosophy of the Greeks, Tertullian likely would have encountered Cicero’s thought on religion.<sup>98</sup> In his treatise against idolatry,

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important to note the influence of the early worship of the Church. Joseph Jungmann describes the origin of the first prayers of the Church, which includes the notion of prayer as justly owed to God. Jungmann describes that “within the Mass celebration, a primitive and apostolic liturgy survives, a liturgy adapted by the Apostles from the usage of the synagogue.... Thus with particular reference to the prayer of thanks, the general scheme remained unaltered.... For the opening formula of the prayer of thanks itself, the formula of the customary Jewish *berachah* did not persist; but even the opening with *Vere dignum justum est* must have been adapted by the primitive congregation from some older tradition.” Speaking more generally of the nature of Mass, he states: “Therefore a meal has always been the incentive to acknowledge one’s own creation by means of a prayer of thanks which is bound up with a meal. In Christianity man is a double receiver. Not only is he fitted out with goods of the natural order, but he is gifted beyond measure and beyond his capacity; because it is God who imparts Himself to man. That prayer of thanks is the right echo responding to God’s wondrous benefits to man. Nothing is therefore more natural than that thanksgiving to God should be the very basis of Christian conduct, that thanksgiving in the prayer of the nascent Church.” *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origin and Development*. Vol. 1. (Allen Texas: Christian Classics, 1986 [1951]), 19; 21. Jungmann reveals that the heart of Christian worship, as Eucharist, is thanks to God for the benefits received, as expressed by the phrase “It is proper and just.”

<sup>96</sup> “The Stomata, or Miscellanies.” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. II. I. v. Clement also further states that “the Greek preparatory culture, therefore, with philosophy itself, is shown to have come down from God to men, not with a definite direction, but in the way in which showers fall down on the good land, and on the dunghill.” *ibid.* vii.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.* xix.

<sup>98</sup> H. B. Timothy points out his reliance on Stoic philosophy in general. “It is, however, with regard to certain tenets of the Stoic philosophy, in which as a Roman lawyer he was trained, that the persisting influence of his intellectual heritage, the forces that had stamped themselves, in a sense, ineradicably on his mind and outlook, may be most

Tertullian states that “the essence of fraud, I take it, is that any should seize what is another’s due, or refuse another his due.... but idolatry does fraud to God, by refusing to Him, and conferring on others, His honours.”<sup>99</sup> Clement further supports the notion of religion, or piety as he expresses it, as something justly due to God. In his *Exhortation to the Heathen*, he exhorts that “though God needs nothing let us render to Him the grateful recompense of a thankful heart and of piety, as a kind of house-rent for our dwelling here below.”<sup>100</sup> Thus, he picks up on the theme both expounded and criticized by Cicero of the mutual relations between God and humans.<sup>101</sup>

There is a debt due to what one has received and the proper response is to worship and serve. Clement spiritualized the ceremonial aspect of worship, focusing on giving what is due to God, rather than seeking a return. He expounds on this as follows: “We rightly do not sacrifice to God, who needing nothing, supplies all men with all things; but we glorify Him who gave Himself in sacrifice for us, we also sacrificing ourselves.”<sup>102</sup> Thus, worship intends to glorify God spiritually, while the sacrifice of the body retains the element of service, which Cicero described. The shift to the interior will remain significant throughout the Christian tradition. However, Tertullian returned to a notion of religion as seeking something in return from God. In his *Apology* he makes clear that he cannot ask for good things except from God, “from whom I know I shall obtain them, both because He alone bestows them and because I have claims upon

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clearly seen.” *The Early Christian Apologists and Greek Philosophy: Exemplified by Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria*. (Assen, Netherlands: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 1972), 47.

<sup>99</sup> “On Idolatry.” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. III. i. In his *Apology* (contained in the same volume) he also remarks that pagans refused to honor “the God all should worship, to whom all belong.” xxiv.

<sup>100</sup> *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. II., xi. For a thorough overview of Clement’s thought on worship see Robert Daly’s *Christian Sacrifice: The Judaeo-Christian Background Before Origen*. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1978), 440-490. He summarizes his position as follows: “For Clement... the idea of the worship of the Gnostic is practically coterminous with that of the sacrifice and the prayer of the Gnostic. The sacrifice now offered by Christians is primarily of a spiritual nature. It is clearly not cultic in the pagan or Jewish sense of the word.” 466.

<sup>101</sup> Clement also lists reasons for worship such as God’s excellence and eternity, *Stromata* VII.i, and the acknowledgement of divine power through providence, *Exhortation* x.

<sup>102</sup> *The Stromata*. VII. iii.

Him for their gift, as being a servant of His, rendering homage to Him alone.”<sup>103</sup> To understand Tertullian’s method of thought, it may be helpful to return to the issue of benevolence put forward as most fitting to the gods in Cotta’s argument. God is not in debt to anyone and has no obligations to humankind other than one which would be taken on out of benevolence. Those who submit themselves to God in religious homage place themselves within God’s benevolence and thus are able to rightly claim the blessings which God wills for all.

The issue of benevolence arose in Cicero out of a view that humans share common reason and virtue with the gods. Like Cicero the early Fathers saw a connection between religion and the virtues, particularly justice, which has a basis in nature. Unlike Cicero, however, nature does not stand above both gods and humans as a standard for them all, but rather God is the one who imparts intelligibility and order within nature, which becomes the standard of virtue and justice. Clement clarifies this point as follows: “But the only just measure is the only true God, always just, continuing the self-same; who measures all things, and weighs them as in a balance, grasping and sustaining universal nature in equilibrium.”<sup>104</sup> Key elements of Cicero’s thought remain: there is a “general and primordial law of God... unwritten, which was habitually understood naturally,”<sup>105</sup> and furthermore, virtue “itself is a state of the soul rendered harmonious by reason in respect to the whole of life.”<sup>106</sup> Thus it is possible for anyone to recognize the order latent in the world and to act according to it. This is the foundation for relation with God and in light of this, Justin argues that: “we have received by tradition that God does not need the material offerings which men can give.... He accepts those only who imitate

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<sup>103</sup> xxx.

<sup>104</sup> *Exhortation to the Heathen*. vi.

<sup>105</sup> Tertullian. “An Answer to the Jews.” *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. III. ii. cf. Clement. *Stromata*. I. xxix. Here he argues for the unity of the law of nature and of instruction.

<sup>106</sup> Clement of Alexandria. “The Instructor.” *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. II. I. xiii.

the excellences which reside in Him, temperance, and justice, and philanthropy.”<sup>107</sup> Moral excellences, even if founded on a rational obedience to the principles within nature, arise within human beings insofar as they conform themselves to the order that God instilled into His creation as a participation in God’s own goodness.

These early Fathers are clear that inasmuch as one follows the law within nature and acts in conformity to reason there is already some knowledge and relation to God. For instance, Tertullian proclaims to Scapula in a letter that “we are worshippers of one God, of whose existence and character Nature teaches all men.”<sup>108</sup> The Christian religion,<sup>109</sup> while it cannot be equated simply to any natural knowledge and worship of God, nevertheless shares with them a common foundation in justice. Both Christianity and natural worship seek to honor the Creator and to rightly order human life to God. Thus, Minucius Felix, through the voice of Octavius, describes worship in a way that could apply to both: “he who cultivates justice makes offerings to God.... these are sacrifices, these are our rites of worship; thus, among us, he who is most just is most religious.”<sup>110</sup> It is Christians who rightly realized the proper mode of worship, though it lay accessible to all in the giving of the first law in Paradise,<sup>111</sup> since the human being “is constituted by nature so as to have fellowship with God.... [by] what is his sufficient provision for eternity, namely piety.”<sup>112</sup> The Fathers recognized that a position, such as the one held by Cicero, had a proper foundation in nature, since God is the author both of nature and what was given later in revelation.

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<sup>107</sup> *First Apology*. x. cf. *Stromata*. VII. iii.

<sup>108</sup> “To Scapula.” *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. III. ii.

<sup>109</sup> This term is used throughout the apologists’ writings.

<sup>110</sup> “Octavius.” *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. IV. xxxii.

<sup>111</sup> Tertullian. *An Answer to the Jews*. ii.

<sup>112</sup> Clement. *Exhortation to the Heathen*. x.



The fact that revelation was given demonstrates that nature itself was inadequate to fulfill the role of leading humankind to true worship through knowledge of God and the exercise of virtue. This is not the fault of nature, which clearly contains the Creator's mark of order, but of human sin. Justin Martyr makes it clear that human sin deliberately turns from the truth, which leads to false worship. He states that...

although human nature at first received a union of intelligence and safety to discern the truth, and the worship due to the one lord of all, yet envy, insinuating the excellence of human greatness, turned men away to the making of idols.... The truth is of itself sufficient to show forth by means of those things which are contained under the pole of heaven, the order [instituted by] Him who has created them.<sup>113</sup>

Clement concurs as he describes that humans "dragged religion to the ground," resulting in the "extremes of ignorance... atheism and superstition."<sup>114</sup> Clement pinpoints the origin of vice against religion even more firmly in the moral life, stating directly to the pagans: "you disbelieve everything that you may indulge your passions, and that ye may believe in idols, because you have a craving after licentiousness, but disbelieve God because you cannot bear a life of self-restraint."<sup>115</sup> Thus, religion is intricately bound to the moral life: piety flows from a life of justice in accord with the law of God (either natural or revealed), while atheism, superstition, and idolatry flow from a selfish turning inward, ignorantly making oneself the law of life.

It is precisely this point which necessitates a break from Cicero's theory of religion. He was correct to realize the connection of religion to justice, which in turn flowed from a rational appropriation of the eternal law in nature. Nevertheless, his ignorance of God's nature led to him to retain allegiance to ancient pagan customs and to remain unsure concerning the proper manner to approach God. Without proper knowledge of God true worship is not possible, as Tertullian

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<sup>113</sup> "On the Sole Government of God." *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. I. i.

<sup>114</sup> *Exhortation to the Heathen*. iii; ii.

<sup>115</sup> *ibid.* iii.

argues: “Does, then, a man worship that which he knows nothing of?”<sup>116</sup> Simply maintaining ancient customs does not help to advance the human race from ignorance and sin, but merely solidifies those positions and preserves doubt.<sup>117</sup> For “an unworthy opinion of God preserves no piety.”<sup>118</sup> It is crucial, beyond simply realizing the necessity of worship, to have true knowledge of God in order to worship properly.

The Fathers stressed the one sure way of gaining access to God through prophecy. Though Cicero rightly criticized superstitious means of divination, which claimed to have knowledge from the gods through dreams, séances, and ecstatic trances, he went even beyond that to even exclude the possibility of any supernatural communication.<sup>119</sup> Cicero may seem to be justified given the vain religious practices with which he was surrounded, yet his limited view of providence guided him to rule out even the possibility of expecting divine aid for right knowledge and practice in religion. Even though nature speaks clearly of humanity’s moral ordering to God, the weakness of sin had normalized idolatry to the point that, according to Justin, “in no other way than only from the prophets who teach us by divine inspiration, is it at all possible to learn anything concerning God and the true religion.”<sup>120</sup> The skepticism of Cicero can only be overcome definitively by the movement of God toward humanity in establishing true religion.

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<sup>116</sup> “Ad Nationes.” *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. III. Bk II. ix. Not surprisingly, Tertullian has an opposite reading from Clement of Paul’s encounter with the unknown God in Athens. Clement considered it as implicit worship of the true God, while Tertullian in the passage quoted attributed it to superstitious folly.

<sup>117</sup> cf. Clement. *Exhortation to the Heathen*. x. Also, Minucius Felix aptly summarizes the position held by Cicero concerning the preservation of custom in *Oct.* viii.

<sup>118</sup> Clement. *Stromata*. VII. vii.

<sup>119</sup> He argued that there was no need for any knowledge beyond sense perception (*Div.* II. iii) and the possibility of something occurring outside of the laws of nature (*ibid.* xvi, xxviii).

<sup>120</sup> “Hortatory Address to the Greeks.” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. I. xxxviii. Clement further states that “the oracles [of prophetic Scriptures] present us with the appliances necessary for the attainment of piety and so establish the truth,” so that those “who have become the disciples of God have received the only true wisdom; and that which the chiefs of philosophy guessed at, the disciples of Christ have both apprehended and proclaimed.” *Exhortation*. viii, xi.

True religion comes from true knowledge, which enables one to be united to God. When God is known then one is able to worship properly, which brings about union with God. While worship is founded on justice, it is always something more for the Christian. Clement describes how “the Gnostic (i.e. the Christian, the true knower of God) alone is holy and pious, and worships the true God in a manner worthy of Him; and that worship meet for God is followed by loving and being loved by God.”<sup>121</sup> The early Fathers are clear that the manner of worship worthy of God is spiritual: a sacrifice of prayer purified by justice. This is possible only by imitating and being united to God.<sup>122</sup> Clement exhorts to this end: “Better far, then, is it to become at once the imitator and the servant of the best of all beings; for only by holy service will any one be able to imitate God, and to serve and worship Him only by imitating Him.”<sup>123</sup> The union enacted by true worship surpasses the natural bond described by Cicero. Cicero pointed toward the achievement of a likeness to the divine by human action insofar as the gods and humans shared common reason and virtue. In the case of Christian worship a fellowship emerges based on the divine love, which draws humankind into friendship with its creator. The heart of religion is not justice, but love (though the latter presupposes the former). As Clement describes: “The service of God, then, in the case of the Gnostic, is his soul’s continual study [i.e. care] and occupation, bestowed on the Deity in ceaseless love.” The service that issues from love will be the underlying theme in the great appropriation of Cicero, which occurs in the thought of Augustine.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> *Stromata*. VII. i.

<sup>122</sup> Tertullian, in *An Answer to the Jews* chapter five, writes that “it is not by earthly sacrifices, but by spiritual, that offering is made to God.” He describes this spiritual sacrifice in great detail, describing the true worship (adoration) as a sacrificial victim of prayer, acceptable to God when offered flowing from the holy. “On Prayer.” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. III. xxviii.

<sup>123</sup> *Exhortation*. xi.

<sup>124</sup> For a thorough treatment of the influence of Cicero on Augustine, see Maurice Testard. *Saint Augustin et Cicéron*. 2 vols. (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1958). The first volume traces the role of Cicero in Augustine’s formation and writings. The second volume provides in full the many citations of Cicero in his corpus.

While Cicero's definition of religion remained normative throughout the history of Western Christianity, Augustine's exposition of specifically Christian worship provided essential clarifications and challenges to it. When the early Fathers encountered the idolatry of the pagans they recognized the rightness of their motivation to give just worship to God. However, it was Christians, they claimed, who really fulfilled this duty. Augustine takes this crucial insight from the early apologists and crafts his masterpiece *De civitate Dei* specifically on the way in which Christianity fulfills the noble aspirations of the pagans for justice and worship of God. Thus where there had been only an occasional and polemical critique of superstition, he provided a coherent and systematic exposition of religion, both in its distorted forms in idolatry and in the true worship of God. In doing so he advanced the theological understanding of religion in two principal ways: first in the infusion of faith, hope, and particularly charity into justice and religion and secondly by evaluating the notion of *religio* in light of the Biblical understanding of worshipful service of God in *latría*. This advancement was inspired not only by the tradition of the apologists, but also by his mentor Ambrose.<sup>125</sup>

St. Ambrose paved the way for a theological appropriation of Cicero in his *De officiis ministrorum*.<sup>126</sup> It is helpful to recognize that Ambrose deals with the duties specifically of the clergy and, therefore, unlike Cicero's earlier *De officiis*, he examines duty from the standpoint of

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<sup>125</sup> Ambrose's contribution to moral theology may be best known due to his coining of the term "cardinal virtue." This typically taken to mean that these virtues are the crucial or "hinge" virtues. While this is a possible interpretation of Latin word *cardinalis*, R. E. Houser argues that "the only way Ambrose himself used the word, *cardo* is a cosmological term, and such as it was applied to the earth's poles, points on the ecliptic, the days when seasons change, and the four winds.... When applied to the lives of men, *cardines* are those critical points which seem to sum up the meaning of a human life and often bring with them the fundamental transformations.... Ambrose did so (called the four virtues cardinal), first of all, because the four virtues gave Satyrus (his brother) the ability to face death.... The virtues which prepared him to face that 'cardinal' moment invested his brother's life with cosmic significance and so deserve to be called 'cardinal' themselves." "Introduction." in *The Cardinal Virtues: Aquinas, Albert, and Philip the Chancellor*. trans. R. E. Houser. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2004), 33-34.

<sup>126</sup> Vernon Bourke describes this work as the "first great moral treatise in the Latin Church.... It is not too much to say that no medieval work on morality is without some debt to this pioneer treatise of the Bishop of Milan." *St. Thomas and the Greek Moralists*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1947), 13.

right Christian conduct. This is not to say that Ambrose does retain continuity with Cicero, as this can be seen in the prominence of the cardinal virtues and the continuing role of the natural law. Nevertheless, Ambrose shifts the notion of duty, giving it primarily a spiritual ordering to God, by which it then receives the ability to be directed toward another.

First of all, it is important to note the significance of the fact that Ambrose chose Cicero as a model for his treatise on duty. Thus, he is stating that Cicero's conception of virtue is significant for the Christian life. One can see this esteem in the points of continuity between them. In particular, Ambrose picked up on one of Cicero's most fundamental themes, namely the natural law. He states the following: "Let us follow nature. The imitation of her provides us with a principle of training, and gives us a pattern of virtue."<sup>127</sup> Nature continues its normative role, defining what the human good should be. It is a standard with which one should be "in accordance," or one's actions will be considered "shameful."<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, Ambrose retains the principles of the natural law, such as preservation of life and mutual support that Cicero had outlined.<sup>129</sup> From the foundation of the natural law, Ambrose affirms Cicero's notion of justice insofar as it is ordered toward another. Or, as he states, it exists "rather for the good of others than of self."<sup>130</sup> Therefore, clear continuity exists in the fact that justice precedes from the natural law, as a bond between humans to dutifully render to each what is due for the good of all.

Ambrose builds upon the natural law for his account of religion. In his account, piety (which he uses in an encompassing sense to include both Cicero's notion of religion as well as piety toward parents and country) does not flow from justice, but rather is the very source of

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<sup>127</sup> "Duties of the Clergy." *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Second Series. Vol. 10. ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. trans. H. de Romestin. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2004), I. xix.

<sup>128</sup> *ibid.* I. xlvi.

<sup>129</sup> *ibid.* I. xxvii. cf. *De fuga saeculi*. iv, 17; vi, 35-36.

<sup>130</sup> *ibid.* I. xxviii.

justice and “the foundation of all virtues.”<sup>131</sup> Piety is the foundation because it is a primal duty: “For what is more of a duty than to give to the Creator all one’s devotion and reverence?”<sup>132</sup>

This may seem to venture away from Cicero’s notion of nature, since it rests the integrity of the virtues upon one’s reverence. On the contrary, he maintains piety’s relation to justice, stating that “the piety of justice is first directed towards God,” and furthermore, that “this, too, is in accordance with the guidance of nature. From the beginning of life, when understanding first begins to be infused into us, we love life as the gift of God.”<sup>133</sup> Ambrose argues that this primal knowledge that life is from God is necessary for the right knowledge of prudence, for “piety towards God is the beginning of understanding.”<sup>134</sup> When this understanding arises then prudence enables justice to see what is truly just. Thus, piety, prudence, and justice, and then piety again are pulled into a mutual relationship: the beginnings of knowledge have a religious underpinning, which (when accepted) should lead to the understanding necessary to know that what this knowledge presented is just, which in turn should lead to religious action. One can see how this is still very Ciceronian, in that, the beginnings of religion are from an infused moral principle, which when rationally appropriated lays the foundation for the development of virtue.

From this common vantage point, Ambrose takes the notions provided by Cicero and gives them a distinctively Christian interpretation. The notion of justice for Ambrose goes beyond giving merely what is due. The justice that flows from piety gives rise to “true love, which prefers others to self, and seeks not its own, wherein lies the pre-eminence of justice.”<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> *ibid.* I. xxvii.

<sup>132</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *ibid.* cf. Clement of Alexandria. *The Stromata*. VII. i. Here Clement makes a connection between religious piety and honor of father and between justice and love: “For as he who honors his fathers is a lover of his father, so he who honors God is a lover of God.” Piously honoring God is intrinsically connected to loving God.

Marcia Colish goes so far as even to call this a reversal of justice.<sup>136</sup> Though Ambrose does rely very heavily on Cicero for his account of duty, it is striking that he goes to great pains to show that duty is a truly biblical concept.<sup>137</sup> It is especially the Patriarchs who exemplify it for Christians to follow.<sup>138</sup> What is truly significant in his biblical exposition of duty is that while maintaining Cicero's terminology and even his understanding, he navigates it toward a Christian goal. For instance, he states that "we measure nothing at all but that which is fitting and virtuous and that by the rule of things future rather than things present; and we state nothing to be useful but what will help us to the blessing of eternal life."<sup>139</sup> While this sentence started out very Ciceronian, Ambrose truly took a leap from Cicero. No longer is justice merely about keeping peace and order for the flourishing of the commonwealth. Rather, it seeks the commonwealth of heaven. It is this reorientation that enables Ambrose to have a much more self-emptying view of justice: "he who denies himself is indeed a just man, is indeed worthy of Christ."<sup>140</sup> Christ is the standard of the just human being and it is therefore through Him that one learns to be just. Ambrose argues that "the foundation of justice therefore is faith.... [and] the Church is as it were the outward form of justice; she is the common right of all."<sup>141</sup> If, as Cicero argued, nature contains the eternal law within it, what more solid access could one have to the true meaning of justice than from its author. The faith of the Christian gives access to a deeper penetration of the meaning of justice and also enables one to see justice modeled in Christ and the Church.

Ambrose's account of Cicero is crucial in that he is the first thinker to attempt to synthesize his notion of religion with the Christian faith. It is clear that Ambrose found the

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<sup>136</sup> *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to Early Middle Ages*. Volume 2. (Leiden, Netherlands: EJ Brill, 1985), 64.

<sup>137</sup> He wants to demonstrate "that the word *officium*, 'duty,' may also be used with us." He goes on to give a scriptural citation as evidence: Zechariah's duty in the temple. *ibid.* I. viii.

<sup>138</sup> cf. Ambrose's exposition of the virtues of Abraham. *ibid.* I. xxv.

<sup>139</sup> *ibid.* I. ix.

<sup>140</sup> *ibid.* I. xxix.

<sup>141</sup> *ibid.*

notions of piety (with religion included within it), nature, reason, law, and justice to be useful in a biblically based understanding of the moral duties, which Christians, and in particular ministers, are to exhibit. What may have enabled him to arrive at such a synthesis was a coherent understanding of the way nature and the Christian life relate. He exhibits this coherence with his statement that “there is a twofold form of perfection, the one having but ordinary, the other the highest worth. The one availing here, the other hereafter. The one in accordance with human powers, the other with the perfection of the world to come.”<sup>142</sup> Thus, Ambrose prefigured what would become the nature/grace distinction of the Middle Ages. This distinction enables one to see the positive contribution of Cicero on the level of human nature and the foundation that religion receives from nature. On the other hand, it makes clear the limits of Cicero and the need for a deeper, biblical account, which can relate humankind to its true perfection in heaven.

St. Augustine clearly builds upon Ambrose’s key themes in his own moral theology. We know from his *De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII* that Augustine was very familiar with Cicero’s account of religion and that he relayed it to his followers.<sup>143</sup> He continued in Ambrose’s footsteps both in making use of Cicero and also of making clear the deeper significance of justice from a biblical basis. In *De civitate Dei*, Augustine states the following: “Consider the virtue of justice. The function of justice is to assign to each his due; and hence

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<sup>142</sup> *ibid.* III. ii.

<sup>143</sup> *Eighty Three Different Questions*. trans. David Mosher. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1982). Questions 30 and 31 both relate to Cicero. Question 31, “Cicero’s Opinion on the Division and Definition of the Virtues of the Soul,” gives almost exact rendition of *De Inventione* II. 53, where Cicero gives his account of justice and religion. In his *Retractions* (I. xxvi), Augustine makes clear that he was merely paraphrasing Cicero, since he was asked concerning him by his followers. We know, of course, the pivotal role of Cicero in Augustine’s intellectual conversion from his *Confessions*. III. iv. For a fuller account of Augustine’s use and criticism of Cicero on justice, see Robert Dodaro. *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of Augustine*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). He argues that “Augustine presents Christ as both the only completely just human being ever to have lived and the only exponent of virtue whose teaching establishes justice in other human beings. This relationship between justice and oratory in Augustine’s conception of Christ as the ideal statesman owes more to Cicero than has previously been acknowledged.” 26.



there is established in man himself a certain just order of nature, by which the soul is subordinated to God.”<sup>144</sup> Thus, there is a natural ordering of humans to God, which earlier, in his *De libero arbitrio*, he had described in terms of law. There he describes that the “eternal law... is stamped upon our minds: it is the law according to which it is just that all things be perfectly ordered.”<sup>145</sup> Therefore, in his work *De vera religione*, he argues that we “tend toward justice” and that in the midst of sin and hardships, this providential order should encourage us “to submit our necks to the one true God, to put no confidence in ourselves, and to commit the task of ruling and directing our lives to him alone.”<sup>146</sup> The order of nature, as established by the wisdom of God’s eternal law, directs humankind to submit itself to Him, and thus to realize the true purpose of justice.

Like we saw in Ambrose, this deeper understanding of justice in its order toward God comes from its relation to love. In his *De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae*, Augustine speaks of the “justice that pertains to God,” in the following terms:

The lover, then,... will get from justice this rule of life, that he must with perfect readiness serve the God whom he loves... and as regards all other things, must either rule them as subject to himself, or treat them with a view to their subjection. This rule of life, is, as we have shown above, confirmed by the authority of both Testaments (Rom 1:25 and Deut 4:5).<sup>147</sup>

The just, and even religious, ordering of oneself and all things toward God requires that we love Him above all things. Turning back to *De diversis quaestionibus*, Augustine elaborates that turning from pleasure to the contemplation of “the universal law” enables one to become “purer

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<sup>144</sup> trans. Henry Bettenson. (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), XIX, iv.

<sup>145</sup> trans. Thomas Williams. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1993), I. vi.

<sup>146</sup> in *On Christian Belief. The Works of Saint Augustine*. Part I. Vol. VIII. trans. Edmund Hill, O.P. (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2005), xv.

<sup>147</sup> *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. First Series. Vol. 4. ed. Philip Schaff. trans. Richard Stothert. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2004), xxiv.

in piety.”<sup>148</sup> Religion is based on a right moral ordering to God and requires a conversion from oneself to the service of God. This turning toward God, rightly orders the soul. In another point of connection to Ambrose, we see that for Augustine true virtue flows from a right relation to God. Augustine argues that the true good “is nothing else but to cleave to him whose spiritual embrace... fills the intellectual soul and makes it fertile with true virtues.”<sup>149</sup> True virtue comes from God and is received into a soul, who religiously submits itself in servitude to God.

In the *De moribus* Augustine further elaborates the connection between virtue and love of God. He states: “As to virtue leading us to a happy life, I hold virtue to be nothing else than the love of God. For the fourfold division of virtue (the cardinal virtues) I regard as taken from four forms of love.”<sup>150</sup> Obedience to the law of nature is not simply rational appropriation of abstract principles, but rather a relation to the Author of these laws. The appropriate response to the one who stands at the origin of virtue and at its end in happiness is love. Therefore, he describes justice as “love serving only the loved object, and therefore ruling rightly.”<sup>151</sup> Thus, Augustine makes explicit the connection between justice and religion. Religion does not derive from justice as merely one instance of giving each his or her due, but rather, justice itself stems from serving God alone. This service is the basis for every other act of justice. Thus, in answer to Cicero’s description of civil laws, Augustine argues that...

Justice is found where God, the one supreme God, rules an obedient City according to his grace, forbidding sacrifice to any being save himself alone; and where in consequence the soul rules the body in all men who belong to this City and obey God, and the reason faithfully rules the vices in a lawful system of subordination... so the association, or people, of righteous men lives on the same basis of faith, active in love, the love with which a man loves God as God ought to be loved, and loves his neighbor as himself.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Question 79. “Why Did Pharaoh’s Magicians Perform Certain Miracles in the Manner of Moses the Servant of God?” i.

<sup>149</sup> *De civitate Dei*. X. iii.

<sup>150</sup> xv.

<sup>151</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> *De civitate Dei*. XIX. xxiii. Herbert Deane attempts to note the difference between the true justice of the City of God and the limited form of justice in civil society. He argues that Augustine “speaks of the ‘image,’ ‘trace,’ or

God established the true religion, and by worshipping Him properly through it the soul is rightly ordered. The subordination and consequent right ordering to God through religion are essential for justice to exist in the individual and in the community.

This is a far cry from Cicero's pragmatic approach to civil religion, which Augustine aptly describes (with reference to Varro) as "lies about the gods [which] were thought to bring advantage to the citizens."<sup>153</sup> Augustine exposes the end of this civil religion as an endeavor that the divine may be "bought over to help," through the "worship [of] a god or gods so that with their assistance it (the city) may reign in the enjoyment of earthly victories and an earthly peace."<sup>154</sup> For Augustine, putting one's selfish desires and standards above God is nothing short of demonic, an imitation of the demons' revolt from God.<sup>155</sup> Further, in pursuing disordered desires, one's religious worship exposes itself to the influence of demons, who manipulate the senses with wondrous displays, making false promises and preying on moral weakness to seek worship for themselves.<sup>156</sup> He states that "the devil longs to ensnare men's wretched souls in the fraudulent ceremonies of all those false gods, and to seduce them from the true worship of the true God, by whom they are purified and healed."<sup>157</sup> Thus, while it is true that pagan religion mostly engaged in "fanciful products of our imaginations," nevertheless, it also consisted in worshipping something real, the *daimons* or heavenly intermediaries in the place of God.<sup>158</sup>

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'impression' of justice that exists even among sinful men. Whatever terms we use, we must remember that Augustine is referring to the elements of order, justice, and peace embodied in human society and in its institutions. Without these elements society would collapse into anarchy, and yet earthly peace and justice are always imperfect and always unstable and precarious; they are maintained by coercion and are constantly endangered by the disintegrating forces of self-seeking greed, and lust for power." *The Politics and Social Ideas of St. Augustine*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 99.

<sup>153</sup> *ibid.* III. iv.

<sup>154</sup> *ibid.* XV. vii.

<sup>155</sup> *ibid.* XIV. iv.

<sup>156</sup> *ibid.* X. x, xvi, xix; II. xxiv.

<sup>157</sup> *ibid.* X. x.

<sup>158</sup> *De vera religione*. lv.

Thus, it is through ignorance, along with moral aversion from God, that false worship arises. Augustine describes this as follows: “It should be obvious to you, a basic principle, that no error could have arisen in religion if the soul had not worshipped soul or body or its own fancies as God, or two of these jointly, or indeed all three together.”<sup>159</sup> Rather than recognizing the true end of human action in the just order of the soul to God, many chose to create objects of worship, through the inspiration of demons.

This is how Augustine describes the religion of the masses and the political religion used by rulers to manipulate them. Nevertheless, Augustine also goes to great lengths to criticize another form of religious perversion, that of the philosophers. While he praises the Platonists in particular “because they have been able to realize that the soul of man, though immortal and rational (or intellectual), cannot attain happiness except by participation in the light of God, the creator of the soul and of the whole world.”<sup>160</sup> However, these philosophers who have arrived at this knowledge have not engaged in the true worship of God. Therefore, Augustine makes clear that not only must the object of worship be true, but so also the means of worship as well.<sup>161</sup>

The complex state of affairs in pagan worship was described by Varro in his lost *Antiquities*, portions of which survive in quotations within the *De civitate Dei*. Augustine points out in particular Varro’s account of the civil foundation of religion and then the subsequent arise of three types of theology, “mythical, physical and civil.”<sup>162</sup> The first is dismissed as fabulous constructions and the third as necessary manipulation in the name of religion. Only physical theology is deemed adequate by Varro, yet Augustine points out even the inadequacy of this:

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<sup>159</sup> *ibid.* x.

<sup>160</sup> *De civitate Dei*. X.

<sup>161</sup> *ibid.* VII. xxvii. cf. Frederick J. Crosson. “The Analogy of Religion.” in *Religions and the Virtue of Religion*. Thérèse-Anne Druart and Mark Rasevic, eds. (Washington, D.C.: The American Catholic Philosophical Association, 1992), 6.

<sup>162</sup> *ibid.* VI. v.

first, for tying God's nature too closely into nature itself and, secondly, for sanctioning civil religion even though it was known to be false. In regards to the first point, Augustine states:

“Doubtless, the true God is God by nature, not in idea, but that does not mean that all nature is God.”<sup>163</sup> In regards to the second point, Augustine exposed the Platonists to ridicule: if they...

had acquaintance with God, had glorified him as God and given thanks to him and had not ‘dwindled into futility of thinking’ (Rom 1:21), and had not sometimes sponsored the errors of the people in general, and sometimes failed in courage to resist them, then they would straightway have admitted that there was one object of worship.”<sup>164</sup>

While knowing God existed and was the object of happiness, the Platonists refused to recognize and proclaim openly that only this God ought to be worshipped.

Due to the superstitious errors of mythical and civil religion coupled with the irreligious attitude of those who had some right knowledge, the general situation of paganism in late-Antiquity was marked by the skepticism shown in the thought of Cicero.<sup>165</sup> This general state of confusion brought about by false worship continues until, Augustine concludes, “finally the soul reaches the point that nothing at all is to be worshipped.”<sup>166</sup> Though this is an erroneous conclusion, it nonetheless is the inevitable result of the false beliefs and practices of sinful human beings. Religion that stems from the person in isolation from God can only end in disordered frustration. This is why Augustine urges the following: “Let us at least scold the fanciful products of our imaginations.... Let us make use of the steps which divine providence

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<sup>163</sup> *ibid.* VI. viii.

<sup>164</sup> *ibid.* X. iii. Thus the philosophers possessed truths “and yet they were ignorant of the end to which all these were to be referred and the standard by which they were to be assessed.” XVIII. xlii.

<sup>165</sup> Augustine describes the situation in greater detail in *De moribus* vii: “For in human things reasoning is employed, not as of greater certainty but as easier from use. But when we come to divine things, this faculty turns away; it is not able to behold; it pants, and gasps, and burns with desire; it falls back from the light of truth, and turns again to its wonted obscurity, not from choice, but from exhaustion.”

<sup>166</sup> *De Vera Religione*. xxxviii.

has been good enough to construct for us.”<sup>167</sup> To counter both the ignorance and superstitious practices of pagan religion, God had to intervene in history in order to lead toward true religion.

As opposed to the stumblings of the human mind and the absurdities of religious practice, Augustine makes clear that “the source of” true “religion for its followers is the history and prophecy of what divine providence has arranged to be enacted in the course of time for the salvation of the human race.”<sup>168</sup> In this passage Augustine was referring to Christianity, but in his *Retractions* he wanted to make clear that true religion has existed in all ages: “The thing itself, which is now called the Christian religion, existed also among the ancients, and was not lacking from the beginning of the human race, until Christ himself came in the flesh, from which point the true religion, which already existed, began to be called Christian.”<sup>169</sup> Though Christianity embodies the true religion, this religion in its essence entails a proper response to God. A proper response is distinguished from a false one in the sense that it follows from God’s own initiative. Augustine makes clear that from the beginning God has taken the initiative to restore humankind, leading it in a process of pedagogy from visible signs to the realization of their spiritual significance.<sup>170</sup> Further, anywhere along this process of being led by God, one could share in the fullness of religion through faith. Augustine states that “it was through faith in this mystery (the coming of the Mediator) that the righteous men of antiquity were able to be purified by living piously... for God never failed to instruct them.”<sup>171</sup> This is true both of those within the Law of Moses and even those before and outside of it. Even those engaged in pagan practices could have a right religious disposition toward God. For instance, in describing certain “heroes” of Roman history, he states that “the gods they worshipped were false; but their

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<sup>167</sup> *ibid.* I.

<sup>168</sup> *ibid.* vii.

<sup>169</sup> I. xiii, 3. translation from *The Works of Saint Augustine. On Christian Belief*. p. 41.

<sup>170</sup> *De civitate Dei*. VII. xxxii, X. xiv.

<sup>171</sup> *ibid.* X. xxv.

worship was genuine.”<sup>172</sup> What matters most in religion is not the actual outward practices (which is not to say they are not significant), but right relation to God, that is, submitting and offering one’s life to God.

It is in these terms that Augustine describes the true religion. In Book Ten of the *De civitate Dei*, Augustine offers his fullest and most coherent account of religion. In a description that harkens back to the essential role of charity described above, he states that “we offer to him, on the altar of our heart, the sacrifice of humility and praise (Ps 116:15) and the flame on the altar is the burning fire of charity. To see him as he can be seen and to cleave to him, we purify ourselves from every stain of sin and evil desire and we consecrate ourselves in his name.”<sup>173</sup> This description of religion is in accord with Augustine’s description of justice, as charity serving God and no other. The justice of this offering is that each human being should offer his or her life to God, clinging to Him above all of else.

The just aspect of what is due is clearly present in Augustine’s account. The central theme of Book Ten concerns whether it is the desires of angels “that we should offer ceremony and sacrifice, or consecrate with solemn ritual either our possessions or ourselves to their God, who is also our God, and to him alone? Or do they claim these honours also for themselves?”<sup>174</sup> As we saw in pagan worship, some angels, or rather demons, do seek this worship for themselves. Faithful angels, on the other hand, help lead us to worship God, to whom alone worship is due:

And on the subject of the true religion let us believe those blessed and immortal beings who do not claim for themselves the honour which they know to be due to their God, who is also our God, who do not bid us to sacrifice to any but him to whom we, with them, owe the sacrifice of ourselves.... this is the sacrifice offered through the priest who, in

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<sup>172</sup> I. xxiv. cf. I. xix, VII. xxiii.

<sup>173</sup> *ibid.* X. iii.

<sup>174</sup> *ibid.* X. i.

the manhood which he assumed and through which he willed to be also a priest, has deigned to become a sacrifice for us, even as far as death.<sup>175</sup>

The false worship of the pagans gave worship to intermediaries rather than to the true God. God's faithful ministers led humankind to the true worship of God by bringing God's messages to Israel and preparing for the coming of Christ.<sup>176</sup> Thus, angels (fallen and faithful) are at the source of both pagan and Jewish worship, both of which are superseded by the perfect sacrifice of Christ.

In His one sacrifice Christ unites both the individual sacrifice, the sacrifice of all, and the sacrifice of the Church. Augustine describes the "true sacrifice" as the one which "is offered in every act which is designed to unite us in a holy fellowship, every act, that is, which is directed to that final Good which makes possible our true felicity."<sup>177</sup> Further, "the soul itself is to become a sacrifice when it offers itself to God."<sup>178</sup> This offering can never be in isolation, but is meant to be united to "the whole redeemed community."<sup>179</sup> Thus, Christ offers "a universal sacrifice" in offering "himself in suffering for us."<sup>180</sup> Augustine powerfully describes how a Christian shares in this sacrifice:

This is the sacrifice of Christians, who are 'many, making up one body in Christ.' This is the sacrifice which the Church continually celebrates in the sacrament of the altar, a sacrament well-known to the faithful where it is shown to the Church that she herself is offered in the offering which she presents.<sup>181</sup>

The sacrifice offered by a Christian can therefore unite in fellowship and lead toward true happiness because it shares in the sacrifice of Christ. He gives to true worship its efficacy, which the individual receives from the Church.

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<sup>175</sup> *ibid.* X. xxxi.

<sup>176</sup> *ibid.* X. xv-xvii.

<sup>177</sup> *ibid.* X. vi.

<sup>178</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> *ibid.*



This is Augustine's account of true religion: worship justly given to God, which comprises of a sacrifice of our entire life offered meritoriously through Christ's own sacrifice. The question still remains as to how this description of religion compares with the one offered by Cicero. There are a few points of strong connection. First, Augustine validates Cicero's approach to religion as a part of justice, as piety owed to God. Religion has much akin to the honor due to one's parents, country, rulers, and those who are virtuous.<sup>182</sup> Thus, Augustine concedes that "there are in fact many ingredients in the worship of God which are found in the honour paid to human beings."<sup>183</sup> In any case, when just honor is given, it is because of some excellence which the recipient holds, either in themselves or through a relation of dependence. Both of these apply most fully to God. In particular, God "is acknowledged by the sincerest piety to be the source of all kinds of being, from which the universe derives its origin, in which it finds its completion, by which it is held together."<sup>184</sup> God stands above creation as its origin and end, the source of all its perfection, and therefore justly receives its homage and praise.

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<sup>182</sup> Clifford Kossel notes the connection of the various kinds of honor in Roman thought. He states that "the relation among gods, country and family (could we say altar, throne, and hearth?) reveals a sense of sacredness. Through its relation to the gods the whole order of man's basic communities is invested with the same sacredness. So the term 'piety' can include the virtues of all these communities." "Piety: The Debts which Precede Our Rights." *Communio* 12 (Spring 1985): 36. The later tradition, beginning with Augustine's distinctions, which attempt to separate these different types of reverence. However, Kossel notes that Aquinas did continue to see their connection, as evidenced in the honor owed to Father by the gift of piety. He notes the connection as follows: "Here we see a careful articulation, with a new dimension, of the ancient virtue of 'piety.' There is an orderly descent of sacredness from the Father to father (*pater*) to the country (*patria*, the fatherland, motherland) and to all who share in the transmission of these gifts to us. We are not only members of particular communities but of the 'community of the universe' under God." 41. (Quotation within text from I-II. 21.4). The benefits which God gives flow through the lower intermediaries of parents and country and thereby share in the debt of worship. cf. Gerald Malsbury. "*Pietas* and the Origins of Western Culture." *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 4, 2 (Spring 2001): 93-116. Like Kossel, Malsbury points to Aeneas as a model of Roman piety, combining devotion to family, *patria*, and the divine, which he notes served as a model for the foundation of civilization. 95. He provides a penetrating description of Roman piety: "[T]he right arrangement of social relations, the proper use of authority to create an approximation to the divine within the shifting demands of time; a relatively permanent, suprapersonal justice, effectively enforced within the human social order itself, and abiding through the generations." 103-04.

<sup>183</sup> *ibid.* X. v.

<sup>184</sup> *De vera religione.* i.

Therefore, in common with Cicero, Augustine regards worship as something “to be due” to God.<sup>185</sup>

Nevertheless, as outlined above, true knowledge makes all of the difference in worship. Augustine defines a key difference between superstition and true religion. He states: “for surely the supremely important thing in religion is to model oneself on the object of one’s worship.”<sup>186</sup> In permitting the worship of false gods, Cicero actually damaged the moral life of the city, in tying souls to the imitation of fables and demons. The pagans were led into disordered desires, basing their worship on the attainment of earthly ends. Augustine insists that “the one true God is to be worshipped for the sake of eternal life and everlasting gifts... not for earthly and temporal blessings, which divine providence bestows on the good and evil without discrimination.”<sup>187</sup> The true aim of religion is not earthly prosperity, but interior relation to God. There is no reciprocity here; only that soul receives God by subservience and imitation.<sup>188</sup> Even while Cicero himself did not hold to superstitious practices, his sanctioning of them made him responsible for their continued existence. This error arose from a false separation of belief and practice, which Augustine condemned in the following words: “There is not one thing called philosophy, that is devotion to wisdom, and another called religion.”<sup>189</sup> The philosophers were wrong to sanction false worship, while knowing that this would not lead to the good.

Therefore, in order to distinguish the Christian notion of worship from the pagan understanding of religion, Augustine initiated the use of another term. Turning back to the idea that religion is based upon relationships between humans, Augustine worried that terms such as cult, religion, and piety were too vague and open to misinterpretation. For instance...

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<sup>185</sup> *De civitate Dei*. X. i.

<sup>186</sup> *ibid.* VIII. xix.

<sup>187</sup> *ibid.* V. xviii.

<sup>188</sup> *ibid.* X. xvii.

<sup>189</sup> *De Vera Religione*. v.

the word ‘cult’ (*cultus*) by itself would not imply something due only to God.... this word is employed not only in respect of things which in a spirit of devout humility we regard above us, but even some things which are below us. For from the same word are derived *agricolae* (cultivators), *coloni* (farmers) and *incolae* (inhabitants).... Thus although it is quite true that ‘cult,’ in a special use of the term, is due only to God, still the word *cultus* is used in other significations.... The word ‘religion’ would seem, to be sure, to signify more particularly the ‘cult’ offered to God, rather than ‘cult’ in general... but... ‘religion’ is something which is displayed in human relationships in the family... and between friends... The word ‘piety’ (*eusebeia* in Greek) is generally understood as referring particularly to the worship of God. But this word also is used of a dutiful attitude towards parents; while in popular speech it is constantly used in connections with acts of compassion.<sup>190</sup>

Augustine does not deny that any of these words can rightly apply to the worship of God, but he regrets that none of them can capture in one word the essence of what it means to worship the true God rightly. Augustine’s response to this dilemma reads as follows:

The kind of worship which we owe to the Divinity.... I cannot think of a suitable Latin term to express it in one word, and so I shall be inserting, where necessary, a Greek word to convey my meaning. *Latreia* is the word represented in our translations by ‘service,’ wherever it is found in the Scriptures. But the service due to man, the service referred to by the Apostle when he says that servants should be obedient to their masters (Eph 6:5), is called by a different word in Greek, whereas *latreia*, according to the usage of the writers who preserve for us the words of God, is always, or almost always, the word employed for the service which concerns the worship of God.<sup>191</sup>

The use of a word that primarily emphasizes service above ceremony clearly indicates Augustine’s desire to express religion within the bounds of his treatment of virtue and justice under the aspect of love. For Augustine worship ultimately does not stem from nature and

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<sup>190</sup> *De Civitate Dei*. X. i.

<sup>191</sup> *ibid.* *Latreia* is derived from *latris*, hired hand, and thus does not originally have the significance of referring to service of God alone. It is used in the New Testament to refer to the divine service given in the law in Rom 9:4 and Heb 9:1. It is also used to indicate general service offered to God in Jn 16:2 and Rom 12:1 (the latter which Augustine quotes in this regard: X. vi). *Latreuein* has much wider usage to signify both service and worship. cf. H. Strathmann’s entries on *latreuo* and *latreia* in *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Vol. 4. ed. Gerhard Kittel. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans, 1967), 58-65. Strathmann indicates *latreuein*’s extensive use in the LXX. It is used interchangeable with *douleuein* and both render then Hebrew word *abar*. While *latreuein* predominates for worship in the Pentateuch, it is used only once in the prophets. In these latter books, *douleuein* is used to refer to both human service and worship. Robert Daly notes how the LXX translation influenced “the New Testament and early Christian theology of sacrifice.” While he does not deal specifically with *latreia*, it follows the same pattern, particularly in that “it translated some words into normal Greek equivalents found in pagan cultic practice.” *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*. (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1978), 37.

reason, though it may make use of them, but must flow from a graced interior relationship with God. Augustine insists so strongly about the priority of the internal relation that he put forward this maxim from his *Enchiridion*: “God is to be worshipped with faith, hope and love.... For these must be the chief, nay, the exclusive objects of pursuit in religion.”<sup>192</sup> This quote exerted great influence on medieval theology and enters into almost every discussion of religion and worship.

Thus, while Augustine provided key corrections to Cicero’s thought, he generally stood within the line with the notion that service and ceremony were justly due to God. His own advancement built upon the initial assessment of the early Fathers. They had recognized the crucial of reason, nature, and virtue, which produced key connections with the thought of Cicero on religion (they even used the inherited term “religion” to speak of Christianity). More specifically, Augustine relied upon Ambrose’s development of moral theology in direct dialogue with Cicero. Nevertheless, Augustine indicated that a more appropriate manner of speaking would free religion from the ambiguities with which it was enmeshed in the pagan world. The use of *latria*<sup>193</sup> did catch on in the tradition of Western theology and thus Augustine initiated an advancement of Cicero’s thought, tying true religion more closely to true knowledge and more importantly right relation to God.

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<sup>192</sup> *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love*. (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing Co., 1961), iii-iv.

<sup>193</sup> Note the spelling difference in Medieval Latin: the ‘ei’ transliterates to simply ‘i’ to preserve the long ‘e’ sound.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE MEDIEVAL CONTEXT

Medieval theologians inherited two ways of thinking about religion, one within the Ciceronian context of virtue, and the other an Augustinian account of spiritual service. These two threads were dealt with in many ways: taken in isolation, treated separately in the same work, and also as reconciled into one account. The ability to arrive at the last of these options was the fruit of a long process, which will be examined in this chapter. In order to highlight the way in which Cicero's *religio* came to be seen as analogous to Augustine's use of *latria*, I will take representatives of the period, who demonstrate the major points of development. While this treatment is by no means exhaustive, it will make clear both what Aquinas incorporated from his predecessors and what he uniquely contributed to the question of religion.<sup>194</sup>

The following chart presents an overview of this development:

Author	Work	Outline	Term	Placement of the term	Division of <i>Latria</i> /Religio
Peter Abelard	<i>Dialogue</i>		Religion	Virtue	
William of St. Thierry	<i>Epistle of Gold</i>	Stages of Perfection	Piety	Precept	
Hugh of St. Victor	<i>On the Sacraments</i>		Adoration	Commands Sacraments	
Peter Lombard	<i>Sentences</i>	Book III: 1. Christ 2. Virtue 3. Commandments	<i>Latria</i>	Christ	1. Same adoration of God and Christ 2. Distinction of <i>latria</i> and <i>dulia</i>
William of Auxerre	<i>Summa Aurea</i>	Book III: 1. Christ 2. Theological Virtues 3. Gifts	<i>Latria</i>	Virtue of Justice	1. What is <i>latria</i> ? 2. <i>Dulia</i> the same? 3. Idolatry the same? 4. Honor to creatures a. Angels

<sup>194</sup> Pinckaers notes in general that "St. Thomas's teaching on the virtues is the result of the patient search of medieval theologians guided by the gradually rediscovered works of Aristotle." "The Place of Philosophy in Moral Theology." in *The Pinckaers Reader*. 67. It should be noted that a significant thinker has been left out of the treatment of Aquinas' predecessors. Philo of Alexandria's treatment of sacrifice and worship accords with the medieval treatment of *religio* and *latria* on significant points. Robert Daly list some of Philo's major insights: "2) True sacrifice is an offering of the whole self—the soul, the mind, the heart. . . . 3) The acceptance of sacrifice and the primacy of dispositions becomes increasingly important for Philo as he shifts attention from ritual itself to the spiritual meaning. . . . 4) The purpose of sacrifice is, first, to honor God and, second, to benefit the worshiper." *Origins*. 108-09. These three points along with Philo's focus on the soul as the Temple of God would all find a place in medieval theology and Aquinas' thought in particular. While Philo has certainly exerted great influence on the Christian tradition, a more thorough treatment of his thought has been left out of this work due to the unlikelihood that these elements in Philo's thought directly entered into medieval theology.

		4. Cardinal Virtues 5. Commandments			b. Flesh of Christ 5. Mistakenly given to creatures 6. Sin of idolatry and unbelief
Philip the Chancellor	<i>Summa de Bono</i>	1. Good of Nature 2. Good of Grace a. Theological Virtues b. Cardinal Virtues	<i>Latria</i>	Virtue of Justice	1. <i>Latria</i> as a virtue 2. Relation to theosebia 3. On images 4. Honoring angels 5. Mistakenly honoring devil
Alexander of Hales	<i>On the Sentences</i>  <i>Summa Theologica</i>	(see Lombard)  Book III: 1. Christ 2. Law a. Eternal b. Natural c. Old -Precepts d. New 3. Grace and Virtues	<i>Latria</i>  Adoration	Christ  Precepts of Old Law	1. <i>Latria</i> as a virtue 2. Worship of Christ 1. Adoration same as <i>latria</i> ? 2. Exterior and interior 3. Reason it is owed to God 4. Worship of Trinity 5. Worship of Christ 6. Honor to creatures a. Angels b. Men i. Mary ii. Good men iii. Evil men iv. Prelates c. Irrational creature (images)
Bonaventure	<i>On the Sentences</i>	(see Lombard)	<i>Latria</i>	Christ	1. Adoration of Christ 2. Of Christ's Image 3. Of Mary 4. To the Cross 5. To the members of Christ 6. To an enemy of Christ 7. <i>Latria</i> a virtue? 8. General or special? 9. Cardinal or theological? 10. Distinct from <i>dulia</i> ?
Albertus Magnus	<i>On the Sentences</i>  <i>Summa de Bono</i>	(see Lombard)	<i>Latria</i>  Religion	Christ  Virtue of Justice	1. What is <i>latria</i> ? 2. A virtue? 3. Species of what virtue? 4. To whom it is owed 5. <i>Dulia</i> 6. Piety 7. Worship of Christ 8. Worship of Trinity
Thomas Aquinas	<i>On the Sentences</i>	(see Lombard)	<i>Latria</i>	Christ	1. <i>Latria</i> a virtue? 2. General virtue? 3. Theological Virtue? 4. Which cardinal virtue? 5. Worship of Christ 6. Honor given to

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Image of Christ</li> <li>b. Mary</li> <li>c. Cross</li> <li>d. Holy men</li> <li>e. Creatures</li> <li>7. <i>Dulia</i></li> </ul>
	<p><i>On Boethius' De Trinitate</i>  <i>Summa Contra Gentiles</i>  Works on Religious Life  <i>Scriptural Commentaries</i>  <i>Summa Theologiae</i></p>	Book II	Religion	Faith	
			<i>Latria</i>	Law	
			Religion	Precept	
			diverse	diverse	
		I-II: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Happiness</li> <li>2. Habit/Virtue</li> <li>3. Sin</li> <li>4. Law</li> </ul> II-II: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 7 virtues</li> </ul>	Religion	Law	
			Religion	Virtue of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Religion in Itself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. To God alone</li> <li>b. Virtue</li> <li>c. One virtue</li> <li>d. Special virtue</li> <li>e. Theological virtue?</li> <li>f. Relation to moral virtue</li> <li>g. External act</li> <li>h. Relation to sanctity</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Devotion</li> <li>3. Prayer</li> <li>4. Adoration</li> <li>5. Sacrifice</li> <li>6. Oblations</li> <li>7. Tithes</li> <li>8. Vows</li> <li>9. Oaths</li> <li>10. Adjuration</li> <li>11. Invocation</li> <li>12. Superstition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Idolatry</li> <li>b. Divination</li> <li>c. Vain observance</li> </ul> </li> <li>13. Irreligion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Temptation of God</li> <li>b. Perjury</li> <li>c. Sacrilege</li> <li>d. Simony</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		2. States of Life	Religion	Precept	
		III: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Christ</li> <li>2. Sacraments</li> </ul>	<i>Latria</i> Religion	Christ Sacraments	

The first representative of this group is Peter Abelard (1079-1142). His *Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian* arrives at the heart of the discussion of humanity's relation to God as the three figures debate the sufficiency of the natural law in relation to obedience to God and charity.<sup>195</sup> The Philosopher holds that the natural law is sufficient for salvation, the Jew focuses on the additional help given to it through obedience in the Old Law, while the Christian argues that the New Law perfects the natural law through charity.<sup>196</sup> What makes this fairly short debate so pertinent is that it seeks to answer the question concerning what makes worship acceptable to God.

In the preface, the Philosopher submits to Abelard as the judge of the debate and focuses the judgment on what kind of service pleases God: "To be sure, we all alike confess that we are worshippers of the one God, but we serve Him by different faiths and different kinds of life. One of us is a pagan, from among those they call philosophers; he is satisfied with the natural law. But the other two have Scriptures."<sup>197</sup> The Philosopher argues that the addition of these two Scriptures adds nothing essential to the natural law and is superfluous. Thus, both the Jew and the Christian must respectively argue for the necessity of their revelation.

First, the Philosopher challenges the Jew with three main contentions.

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<sup>195</sup> G. R. Evans attributes the origin of this genre to Peter Damian (1007-1072). "Peter Damian's Letter 1 is addressed to Honestus. It purports to be in response to a request from him for material with which he may meet the arguments of the Jews. The result is one of those dialogues with Jews which were to become a popular form of composition in the next generation." *Fifty Key Medieval Thinkers*. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 66.

<sup>196</sup> John Marenbon describes how Abelard uniquely situated the natural law in relation to Biblical law: "In the *Problemata* (no. 15) Abelard sets out very clearly the division between the figural precepts of the Old Law, which applied only to that particular period, and its moral precepts, such as loving God and one's neighbor, not killing, committing adultery and lying. These, he says, were supposed to be followed by everyone naturally, even before the written law was given. The main way in which Abelard's idea of the three laws differed from that of his contemporaries is that he shifted the emphasis in discussing natural law away from Adam's immediate progeny to the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome.... Indeed Abelard's reconstruction of the lives and cities of the Greek philosophers provided him, in his thought in the mid-1120s, with a moral ideal. What is important, however, for Abelard's theory of the ethical act is not the degree of excellence he attributes to the followers of the natural law, but the way in which Abelard makes clear the universality of that law." *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 269-270. Abelard's Philosopher serves as a literary example.

<sup>197</sup> Peter Abelard. "Dialogue Between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian." in *Ethical Writings*. trans. Paul Vincent Spade. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing, Co., 1995), ii.



1) The natural law is morally sufficient:

I say that the natural law is ‘primary,’ not only in time but in nature as well. For everything simpler is naturally prior to the more multiple. Now the natural law, the science of morals we call ‘ethics,’ consists of moral lessons alone. But your Laws’ teaching adds to them certain commands involving external signs. To us they seem altogether superfluous.<sup>198</sup>

2) The natural law is intellectually sufficient.

The Philosopher criticizes the Jew for not basing his religious belief on reason. He states the following: “Did some reason lead you into these religious beliefs, or are you following mere human opinion and the love of your own kind of people? If the first of these alternatives is so that is certainly to be highly commended, just as the other is to be utterly deplored.”<sup>199</sup>

3) The natural law is spiritually sufficient:

“It is agreed that before the Law or the legal sacraments were handed down, most people were content with the natural law, consisting of love for God and neighbor. They cultivated justice and were most acceptable to God.”<sup>200</sup>

As quoted under point one, the Philosopher believes these three points make the revelation of the Law superfluous. The natural law does stand against the Old Law as a contradiction of it, but rather aims at the very same goal of loving God and neighbor and can arrive at this goal through ethical and rational exertion.

The Jew’s response to the Philosopher shows that the latter’s account of the natural law does not sufficiently account for both God’s goodness and the evilness of humanity. He argues that “surely it is pious, entirely in agreement with reason, and in accord both with divine

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<sup>198</sup> *ibid.* xi.

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.* xiii.

<sup>200</sup> *ibid.* xlviii. It is interesting that the Philosopher lists Old Testament figures as examples of figures of the natural law, from Abel to Abraham. There is a tradition of linking the covenant with Noah and the natural law, yet this understanding of the natural would conflict with the Philosopher’s claim to the natural law’s self-sufficiency. In § lxxv, the Philosopher argues that anyone who believes and loves is sanctified, which sounds like an argument from implicit faith. This would point to God’s way of working outside of His covenants by mystically including others within them, not by negating their relevance.

goodness and human salvation to hold that God shows so much care for human beings that He also sees fit to instruct them by a written Law and to curb our maliciousness, at least by fear of penalties.”<sup>201</sup> The Jew points out that without revelation one cannot grasp the truth of God and humanity clearly enough, which consists of the depth of God’s love and humanity’s need for it. The Law provides a specific means for rectifying what is lacking to humanity first by giving clear commands, “for how can one govern a subject people without law if everyone, left to his own choice, pursues whatever he picks?”<sup>202</sup> Religion according to God’s covenant is not based on one’s own moral and intellectual effort, but is rather a relationship of receiving love so that one may be able to properly love. In this regard, the Jew does agree with the Philosopher, that love is the essential aspect of the moral law, but disagrees regarding the role of the written law:

Your law, which you call ‘natural,’ is included in ours. Thus if the other commandments were to cease to apply, these belonging to perfect love would be enough for our salvation, even as they are for yours. You don’t deny that our early fathers were saved by them, so that a greater certainty of salvation is passed on to us the more the Law’s additional commandments establish a more restricted life for us. In fact, this addition seems to me to pertain not so much to religion’s holy practices as it does to fortifying if more securely.<sup>203</sup>

The Philosopher was right that true love is the object of the moral law and that which brings about salvation, but lacked the realization that God must aid in removing obstacles and bestowing assistance.

Nevertheless, the Philosopher, not yet convinced, turns his argumentation toward the Christian. What is of most interest in their exchange is the Philosopher’s use of Cicero’s understanding of virtue and the Christian’s response to it.<sup>204</sup> The Philosopher narrows his

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<sup>201</sup> *ibid.* xxxiv.

<sup>202</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>203</sup> *ibid.* xcvi.

<sup>204</sup> Odon Lottin notes that “Abélard est le premier théologien du XIIe siècle qui ait exploité Cicéron. Dans son *Dialogus* (en 1141), il reprend la définition cicéronienne, soulignant à son tour l’obligation de tenir compte du bien commun dans la détermination des droits d’autrui, marquant la distinction entre justice naturelle et justice positive, et s’appropriant assez fidèlement la classification cicéronienne des vertus ou *partes* relevant de justice.”

argument concerning salvation with the following: “Certainly no view is held more strongly by those who embrace the natural law than that virtue is enough for blessedness.”<sup>205</sup> He defines virtue as “the study of moral literature or exercise in the taming of the flesh, so that the good will... is firmed up into a habit.”<sup>206</sup> Justice, in particular, stands as “the virtue that bestows on everyone his due while preserving the common benefit”<sup>207</sup> and whose parts are listed as reverence, beneficence, truthfulness, and justice.<sup>208</sup> Concerning the first part, our specific discussion, the Philosopher expounds thusly:

We call reverence that part of justice whereby on our own we show due veneration to all—that is, to God (this is called religion) as well as to people who deserve it either through power or through some merit (this is called deference). It’s clear, therefore, that the virtue of obedience, is included here, whereby we give honor to our superiors by complying with their commands because we don’t scorn their reasonable ordinances.<sup>209</sup>

Thus, religion is one sub-part of reverence, whereby “on our own” we give to God what is due to Him, namely veneration. Though the Philosopher does not specifically mention God under obedience, it does harken back to the Jew’s insistence on a more direct relationship with God through obedience. The kind of obedience the Philosopher propounds is indirect, stemming from innate principles. Religion is listed as one of these principles: “A natural law is one that reason itself, which is present in all people naturally and is therefore permanently in all people, persuades us must be fulfilled in practice. For example, worshipping God... and whatever things are such that their observance is so necessary for all people that no merits are sufficient without

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*Psychologie et Morale*. 284. See also 314-15. Marenbon points out that “Abelard’s Philosopher, though using Cicero’s words, relates the virtues in a hierarchic way,” “in which justice requires prudence (itself not a virtue) and is strengthened by courage and temperance.” 285; 286.

<sup>205</sup> *ibid.* cclii.

<sup>206</sup> *ibid.* clxxxvi.

<sup>207</sup> *ibid.* cclxiii.

<sup>208</sup> *ibid.* cclxxiii.

<sup>209</sup> *ibid.* cclxxiv.

them.”<sup>210</sup> Religion is one essential part of the natural law, necessary so that one can love God, yet it is not particular to revealed religion.

The Christian answers similarly to the Jew, by affirming the Philosopher’s core claim, this time that virtue leads to happiness, though he denies the context of the claim, that humanity is sufficient to achieve this goal. The Christian acknowledges that the Philosopher’s ethics aim at God and are the means to approach Him, but clarifies that “really, if virtue is understood properly—that is, as what obtains merit with God—then only charity is to be called a virtue. But if it’s understood as what makes one just or strong or moderate, then it’s correct to call it justice, strength or moderation.”<sup>211</sup> Through the Christian, Abelard points to what will become the distinction between perfect and imperfect virtue in Aquinas. The Philosopher’s argument rests on human effort alone and therefore, contrary to his claims, his virtue cannot merit anything with God. Even he admits that “knowledge of the natural law and of veneration of the divine had already died out.”<sup>212</sup> For this reason the Christian asserts that...

nothing in fact helps us now except partially, nothing is enough to bestow on us all the things needed. Whatever helps us now toward a teaching, toward some administering, acts imperfectly. For it’s God alone who can do all things. And so whatever things act imperfectly will cease, since He who can do all things will be enough by Himself.<sup>213</sup>

Though the Philosopher asserts that revealed Law is superfluous, the Christian answers that “both the natural law was restored and the perfect discipline of morals was handed down by no one but Him (Christ).”<sup>214</sup> The natural no longer had an integrity of its own and needed to be restored and enlivened by Christ, who enables the moral life to come alive by His gift of grace. Grace infuses charity, which enables the Law to be fulfilled, since “charity brings together all

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<sup>210</sup> *ibid.* cclxxxiii.

<sup>211</sup> *ibid.* ccxxxiv.

<sup>212</sup> *ibid.* clviii.

<sup>213</sup> *ibid.* cclxx.

<sup>214</sup> *ibid.* clix.

things.” What we see here in Abelard’s *Dialogue* is a clear articulation of and response to Cicero’s ethical theory. Religion finds its place within justice and is claimed to have its origin and end in natural, human effort. The Christian response uses Augustine’s emphasis on charity not to deny Cicero’s virtues, but to show that there can be no pagan autonomy of virtue, except in a very limited sense. Any virtue, including religion, has to have its origin in charity to have any merit of happiness before God.

William of St. Thierry (c.1075-1148), a contemporary and opponent of Abelard, had a very different discussion of worship.<sup>215</sup> Rather than speaking of religion within the virtue of justice, he spoke of the interior piety needed for union with God in the monastery. This demonstrates a mature reflection of the Augustinian tradition on the interior devotion of the heart in inclining itself completely toward charity. It is significant that William uses the word piety in favor of the word religion. Though, of course, Augustine preferred *latría*, the term piety denotes a more personal, even familial, relationship than the abstract religion, ordered to a being “that men call divine.” In the context of monastic prayer and perfection piety is held up as the “continual remembrance of God, an unceasing effort of the mind to know Him, an unwearied concern of the affections to love Him, so that, I will not say every day, but every hour finds the servant of God occupied in labor of asceticism and the effort to make progress, or in the sweetness of experience and the joy of fruition.”<sup>216</sup> This interior state seeking perfection is contrasted with “the outward form of piety,” which would perform cultic motions without true dedication.<sup>217</sup> Just as in Augustine’s *Enchiridion*, William links worship to the theological virtues, this time through piety: “For wisdom is indeed piety, that is, the worship of God, the love by which we

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<sup>215</sup> For background on William’s life and writings see Jean Marie Déchanet’s *William of St. Thierry: The Man and His Work*. trans. Richard Strachan. (Spencer, Massachusetts: Cistercian Publications, 1972).

<sup>216</sup> *The Golden Epistle*. trans. Theodore Berkeley, OCSO. (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1971), I. ix.

<sup>217</sup> *ibid.* cf. 2 Tim 3:5: “mórfosin eusebeias.”

yearn to see Him and, seeing Him in a mirror obscurely, believe and hope in Him and advance even to see Him as He reveals Himself.”<sup>218</sup> The interior disposition of desire, pointed out to the monastic novice, culminates in the theological virtues, which impel the worshipper toward God.

This model appears quite distinct from the notion of worship as a virtue justly owed to God, yet some hints of this order do run through the letter. One example is that William presents the fact that “creation affords some idea of the Creator. So it is that God’s justice is known.”<sup>219</sup> This is not tied immediately into worship, though can be seen as having an indirect impact on it through William’s notion of justice as one “defers to a superior” through the fear of God. In the context of the monastery, justice implies obedience to the Rule and to the superior, just as it would apply to God through His superiority and law recognized through nature. Nevertheless, William’s overwhelming emphasis on charity overshadows this slight reference to nature.

It is charity, which is the focus of William’s treatment of virtue and worship. Virtue finds its context not in the law of nature, but in the personal relation of love. Therefore, William defines virtue as...

the daughter of reason, but still more of grace. It is a certain force issuing from nature but it derives from grace the fact that it is a virtue. The approving judgment of reason makes it a force, but the desire of an enlightened will makes it a virtue. For virtue is a willing assent to good; virtue is a certain balance of life, conforming to reason in all things.... In the love of God all reason and all discretion amount to this: as He in His love for us went to the limit of love so, if possible, we should love Him without any limit.<sup>220</sup>

Love reaches beyond in a “gift of self, which... should be without any limit or bound” though “external activity should be kept within certain fixed limits and governed by rule.”<sup>221</sup> It reaches beyond the merely natural, and thus the will must “be aroused and stimulated”<sup>222</sup> so that it

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<sup>218</sup> *ibid.* II. xx.

<sup>219</sup> *ibid.* I. xv.

<sup>220</sup> *ibid.* II. viii.

<sup>221</sup> *ibid.* II. ix.

<sup>222</sup> *ibid.* II. xi.

“mounts on high, like fire going to its proper place, that is to say when it unites with truths and tends to higher things.”<sup>223</sup> Then “it is ‘love.’”<sup>224</sup> Thus, the novice in the spiritual life begins with piety, a familial fear of God, through which he desires union with God. He is actually impelled toward Him in virtue when both will and truth “are in perfect accord, combining to form one principle;” “they contain in themselves all plenitude of virtue.”<sup>225</sup> This occurs through charity, which inflames the will in love of God, “for a will that is good is the source of all good in the soul and the mother of all the virtues.”<sup>226</sup> It enables one to overcome the effects of sin, through which the soul “lost its freedom to will and act,” and by rectifying the appetite in ordering it toward God alone.

This rectification in will and intellect by charity directs toward true worship, by which one should be led to God. Thus, the novice...

should be exhorted to direct his attention with all the purity of heart he can muster to Him to whom he is offering the sacrifice of his prayer, to advert to himself, the offerer, and to appreciate what he is offering and what is its quality. For to the extent that he sees or understands Him to Whom he is making his offering, he reaches out to Him with his affections, and love itself is understanding for him. And to the extent that love animates his affections, he realizes that his offering is worthy of God, and so all is well with him.<sup>227</sup>

This articulation truly deepens Augustine’s understanding of worship as a means of advancing toward God in love. The monk has devoted himself piously to this endeavor, seeking God’s assistance in advancing toward Him. His whole life is a gift and sacrifice offered to God, in which he seeks to advance toward Him in understanding and love. Worship marks the entire life of the monk. It is not one particular duty or virtue, but his entire way of life, seeking to “pay

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<sup>223</sup> *ibid.* II. x.

<sup>224</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> *ibid.* II. ix.

<sup>226</sup> *ibid.* II. viii.

<sup>227</sup> *ibid.* I. xliii.

every debt to God and the body to the spirit.”<sup>228</sup> This debt is not one particular act of material worship, but rather encompasses one’s whole life as the seed of piety blossoms forth in a loving union with God.

The distinction with Abelard is striking. While Cicero’s definition of virtue and religion were central in the *Dialogue*, William clearly emphasizes the interior state of purity and devotion necessary for union with God. It is clear that even Abelard strongly bore the mark of Augustine’s emphasis on charity since it dominated the debates on what is pleasing to God. Nevertheless, *The Golden Epistle* reflects a deeper contemplation on the meaning and fruit of what Augustine holds up as true religion. This points to the foundation for two particular aspects of Aquinas’ treatment. The first is that religion can be meant to refer to a state of life. A religious is one who devotes his or her whole life to knowing and loving God. Both this state and the freedom to enter this life, to enter religion, were defended by Aquinas in three tracts. Further, William’s description of piety bears similarity to Aquinas’ description of devotion, a part of religion in the *Secunda Secundae Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae*. Like William’s description of piety, devotion focuses on the will and its dedication to God.

Hugh of St. Victor (1078-1141) also continues many Augustinian themes, but does so in a more speculative manner. Like Abelard, Hugh, in his *De Sacramentis*, explores worship in relation to the natural law, written law, and through the law of grace. Rather than pitting individuals from these periods against one another, Hugh searches for a way of understanding worship that could be common to them all, that is when faith in God is joined to proper external expression. In doing so he pulls together, perhaps unwittingly, the Ciceronian and Augustinian tradition, by examining the natural structures of Creation and how God fulfills them in a

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<sup>228</sup> *ibid.* I. xxix.



supernatural manner. Like Cicero, Hugh strongly emphasizes innate principles, yet importantly clarifies their frustration by sin. For example:

God had placed two things in man from the beginning, by which his whole nature might be ruled and led to the fulfillment of its end. These two were desire for the just and for the beneficial.... But man... because he abandoned of his own accord the desire for the just, on this account rightly did lose both justice and benefit, retaining only desire for the beneficial unto the increase of unhappiness.<sup>229</sup>

What the Ciceronian approach lacked was an understanding both that the order of nature in man was corrupted by sin and also that it was not normative unto itself, but was ordered to something greater as its fulfillment. Left to itself, nature could not guide humanity to its perfection, but rather left it in a state of punishment. Hugh aptly describes this as follows: “Thus then, the time of the natural law was set that nature might operate by itself, not because it could do anything by itself but that it might recognize that it could not. So left to itself it began to wander from truth through ignorance and was convicted of blindness; afterwards it was also to be convicted of weakness.”<sup>230</sup> Humanity was not left in this state, but given two remedies, the first of which, “the written law,” “was given to illuminate ignorance but not strengthen weakness,” while the second, “grace,” “was fittingly given both to illuminate the blind and cure the weak.”<sup>231</sup> From these three states comes three types of men: those “who direct their lives by natural reason alone, or rather... the concupiscence in which they were born,” those who live “by exterior precepts,” and those “who are illumined to recognize the good which must be done, and are inflamed as

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<sup>229</sup> Hugh of St. Victor. *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith*. trans. Roy J. Deferrari. (Cambridge: Massachusetts: Medieval Academy of America, 1951), Bk I, part vii. xi. In this passage, Hugh also makes the claim that “to seek justice itself is to some degree to have justice.” Josef Pieper calls this work “the first Summa of the Middle Ages.” It moved beyond a mere collection of opinions and attempted “to comprehend these multifarious opinions, which at first glance seemed to be mutually exclusive.” *Scholasticism: Personalities and Problems of Medieval Philosophy*. (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2001), 94; 95.

<sup>230</sup> *ibid.* II, ii. i.

<sup>231</sup> *ibid.*

they love and strengthened to accomplish good.”<sup>232</sup> God is present to each in a different way, but only in the latter can He be approached properly.

Thus, though justice and the necessity to worship are present to man naturally, there is still a need for grace to raise humanity beyond sin and the imperfection of nature. Hugh argues: “Creating grace first implanted certain goods in founded nature, saving grace both restores the goods which nature when first corrupted lost and inspires those goods which nature being imperfect has not yet received.”<sup>233</sup> Now in relation to religion, we can see a threefold advancement in accord with nature, virtue, and grace. Hugh states that “reason investigates that author and first principle of things... and piety venerates Him when found, and faith declares Him God and to be adored.”<sup>234</sup> As reason naturally comes into contact with the Creator, it recognizes His excellence and the need for veneration.<sup>235</sup> Grace makes this possible by healing nature and allowing virtue, supernaturally illuminating reason to make God more present to the mind, and raising natural veneration to the true worship of adoration.

One of Hugh’s greatest theological contributions must be seen in his articulation of implicit faith. This teaching enables one to understand the reason why the ancients were able to perceive the nature of virtue and even live it out to some degree. Not everyone living in the time of the natural law was abandoned to nature without the assistance of grace. Some responded to God’s initiative even then, as Hugh expounds: “many before the savior’s coming holding to and loving [the] omnipotent God, the gratuitous promiser of their salvation, believing Him faithful to His promise, hoping for Him who most certainly pays, were saved in this faith and expectation,

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<sup>232</sup> *ibid.* I, viii. xi.

<sup>233</sup> *ibid.* I, vi. xvii. According to this division of imperfect and perfect, Hugh holds to two types of virtue. He states: “We indeed reply that virtues are possessed in a twofold manner, namely, according to nature and according to grace.” *ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> *ibid.* I, iii. ix.

<sup>235</sup> Hugh argues that “God from the beginning wished neither to be entirely manifest to human consciousness nor entirely hidden,” so that this partial knowledge would stand in need of faith as its completion. I, iii. ii.

although when and how and in what order salvation was promised they did not know.”<sup>236</sup> Hugh advances even further by listing the necessary criteria for one to have implicit faith: “To believe that there is one God, Creator of all things, Lord and Ruler of the universe, that in truth He is not the author of evil, yet that He would be the Redeemer of those who in their evils sought and expected His mercy.”<sup>237</sup> Thus, there may have been those practicing the natural law righteously, and therefore worshipping God correctly, but this would have been only through the aid of grace given to those who awaited redemption from God.

Hugh even ties implicit faith into worship. He states that “divine piety does not consider how much cognition there is [in] belief but rather with how much devotion that which is believed is cherished.”<sup>238</sup> Hugh expands on the need for piety under the commandments of the written law. The natural contained piety generally through its basic precept to do good, but the written law expands in the first three commands by describing the mode of worship. Hugh describes this as follows:

It must be realized that men in one way, God in another is ordered to be adored .... Now to adore God is to submit the whole mind to Him through humility and devotion and to believe Him [to be] the beginning and end of life. There is no one of sound mind who doubts that we owe this to Him alone.... Now concerning service exactly this can be understood fittingly: that everyone truly is said very rightly to serve God alone who subjects himself humbly also according to God [as] to a superior man and where the cause of God is impugned opposes courageously, who is on his guard solicitously lest in his service fear of earthly retribution intentionally places gain before heavenly reward. But in Greek the idea is expressed more clearly. For the Greek expression distinguishes divine service from human by a special word which Latin does not have. For in it service of God is *latria* and the human is *dulia*. And on this account they were called idolaters who showed to idols that service which they owed to God.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> *ibid.* I, x, vi.

<sup>237</sup> *ibid.* I, x, vii. It is clear that this teaching had a lasting impression on medieval theology as is clear from the direct quotation of this passage in the *Summa Fratris Alexandri* and Aquinas’ paraphrase in the *Secunda Secundae* when dealing with faith.

<sup>238</sup> *ibid.* I, x, vi.

<sup>239</sup> *ibid.* I, xii, vi.

This passage, which echoes Augustine's *City of God*, is significant for a few reasons. First, it presents again Augustine's distinction between *latria* and *dulia*, which will serve as the stimulus of renewed theological discussion of worship, as will be seen in the Lombard's *Sentences*. It also places the discussion of *latria* within the context of the commandments, which will bear fruit as later theologians ponder worship's relation to the natural and Old laws, and even place their own treatment in a similar context. Theologically, the passage is significant in that it ties interior devotion to knowledge, so that just as was seen in implicit faith, in order to approach God something must be known of Him. Hugh also uses the language of debt in that adoration is owed to God.<sup>240</sup> He also preserves the twofold order of ceremony (worship) and service that Cicero employed as parts of religion. What is striking is that the relation of service and worship appears in Deuteronomy 6:4. Hugh comments on the passage: "He alone is to be adored and to Him alone and to no other is service to be rendered."<sup>241</sup> This demonstrates a fundamental compatibility between Cicero's account and a Christian articulation of religion.

Another key contribution that Hugh of St. Victor provides concerns the outward specification of the act of worship. Hugh uses the term sacrament to describe not only Christian worship, but to describe any outward sign that manifests true faith. He states that "all those sacraments of earlier time, whether under the natural law or under the written, were signs, as it were, and figures of those which now have been set forth by grace," which "operated by that virtue and sanctification which they assume from these."<sup>242</sup> Hugh lists two reasons why external signs are necessary: first, by manifestation so that in response to God one may "prove the desire

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<sup>240</sup> Hugh has a very poetic description of justice: "Truly a work of justice is in the movement of the rational mind which advances according to God, arising from a conception of the heart and proceeding outside even to the completion of the corporeal act." There are three essential elements here: the mind's grasp of order, the movement of the will/heart which commands the act, and the completion within an exterior act.

<sup>241</sup> *ibid.* I, xii, vi.

<sup>242</sup> *ibid.* I, xi, i.

for this same election of His in the reception of His sacraments,<sup>243</sup> with a physical sign as a remedy for humanity in its bodily nature, “on account of humiliation... instruction... [and] exercise.”<sup>244</sup> In other words, one must submit to something inferior out of obedience to rectify disobedience, learn of God’s invisible power through the visible sign, and discipline one’s attention by external acts. Thus sacraments manifest interior devotion and serve as a remedy for fallen humanity.

In describing sacraments, Hugh lists many varieties. First, he describes sacraments of the natural law, such as tithes (portions), sacrifice (animals), and oblation (things), which he describes as personal exercises of devotion or akin to a vow.<sup>245</sup> Next, he examines the Old Law and sees three things contained within it: “precepts, sacraments, promises.”<sup>246</sup> He groups its sacraments under three headings: 1) remedy, which entails the remission of sin, as in circumcision, 2) obedience in exercising devotion, and 3) worship for fostering piety as through praise.<sup>247</sup> He also describes how the Old Law further specifies these sacraments, such as in ordering different kinds of sacrifice, such as holocaust, simple sacrifice, and pacific sacrifice.<sup>248</sup> Finally Hugh goes into great detail concerning the specific Christian sacraments and even many sacramentals and ceremonies. What is most important concerning the sacraments of the grace, however, concerns their cause, the event which they mediate and which flows out of them and even into those sacraments that had preceded them. Hugh makes clear that...

the passion of the Savior, which in the first place sanctifies sacraments of grace to effect salvation, through the medium of these sanctified also those sacraments of earlier time so that salvation was the same both for those who by right faith venerated the signs of the

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<sup>243</sup> *ibid.* I, viii. xi.

<sup>244</sup> *ibid.* I, ix. iii.

<sup>245</sup> *ibid. ibid.* I, xi. iii.

<sup>246</sup> *ibid.* I, xii. xxiv.

<sup>247</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>248</sup> *ibid.*

future in the earlier sacraments and for those who receive the effect of salvation in these.<sup>249</sup>

The Cross stands as the center of worship both in the sacraments of grace, which are signs explicitly mediating the grace Christ won there, and as the hidden focus toward which all preceding sacraments had been directed. In treating the Eucharist, Hugh makes this link even more explicit: “The sacrament of the body and blood of Christ is one of those upon which salvation principally depends... since from it is all sanctification. For that victim who was offered once for the salvation of the world gave virtue to all the preceding and subsequent sacraments, so that from it they sanctify all who are to be freed through it.”<sup>250</sup> The Eucharist is the height of all the sacraments since it contains the actual sacrifice, which sanctifies all sacraments. The devotion and holiness which they all symbolize and convey point toward that one perfect offering on the Cross as the Creator enacts His promised redemption. Thus, Hugh advances both Abelard’s and William’s articulation of worship. He more explicitly engages the details of the three laws addressed by Abelard, in particular by explicating their distinct modes of worship, which can be united by a common faith. Also, he adds flesh to William’s notion of devotion by demonstrating how it must be exteriorly manifested in a way that joins it to the expression of Christ’s offering on the Cross.

The most significant turning point in the medieval treatment of worship may have come from a theologian who offered little speculative advancement in his own articulation. Peter Lombard’s (1100-1160) *Sentences* provide no theological breakthrough, but significantly created the framework around which consequent theologians would construct their understanding of

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<sup>249</sup> *ibid.* I, xi. ii.

<sup>250</sup> *ibid.* II, viii. i.

worship.<sup>251</sup> Lombard's simple question in Book III, Distinction ix, as to whether *latria* is owed to Christ's humanity, set off a whole tradition of investigating *latria* and its proper object.<sup>252</sup> He poses the question as follows:

Furthermore, it is necessary to investigate whether the soul and flesh of Christ are to be adored with one and the same adoration with the Word, with that namely which is called *latria*. For if *latria*, which is understood as service or worship owed to Creator alone, is exhibited to the soul or flesh of Christ that which is owed to the Creator alone is exhibited to a creature, because the soul or flesh of Christ is a creature only.<sup>253</sup>

One solution, which Lombard ultimately rejects<sup>254</sup> entails giving to Christ a special species of *dulia* distinct from the *dulia* due to other creatures, but “not nevertheless to such an extent as worship (*cultus*) is exhibited to him as a debt to the divinity. That worship consists in love and in the offering of sacrifice and in reverence: which in Latin is called piety, in Greek *theosebia*, which is the worship (*cultus*) of God; or *eusebia*, which is good worship (*bonus*

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<sup>251</sup> Pieper explains the reason for such influence: Though “entirely mediocre,” “the success of the Sentences may well have been its easy comprehensibility, its calm, unhurried flow, intelligent organization, avoidance of needless subtleties, the good choice of texts... in short, the somewhat boring solidity which is after all one of the prime qualities of a good textbook.” *Scholasticism*. 97; 98. See also Philipp Rosemann's assessment: “To the eye of the untrained reader, the *Sentences* could appear as nothing but a string of quotations from Scripture and the Fathers, precariously held together by a few connecting words. What counts, however, is the selection of the quotations, their arrangement into a coherent theological system... and the attempt to distill doctrine out of the often discordant voices of tradition. This is where Peter Lombard's achievement lies... his genius.” *Peter Lombard*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 7.

<sup>252</sup> The question had already been decided *de fide* in the Second Council of Constantinople in 553, which issued an anathema to those who do not worship the Word made flesh with one adoration. The Council states: “If anyone says that Christ is to be worshipped (*proskunesthai*) in his two natures, and by that wishes to introduce two adorations, as separate one for God the Word and another for the man; or if anyone, so as to remove the human flesh or to mix up the divinity and the humanity, monstrously invents one nature or substance brought together from the two, as so worships Christ, but not by a single adoration God the Word in human flesh along with his human flesh, as has been the tradition of the church from the beginning: let him be anathema.” coll. viii. can. ix. in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*. Vol. 1. *Nicea I to Lateran V*. ed. Norman P. Tanner S.J. (London and Washington, D.C.: Sheed & Ward and Georgetown University Press, 1990), 118. Thomas was aware of this text and quoted it in a *sed contra* in the *Summa*. cf. ST III. 25.1.

<sup>253</sup> Peter Lombard. *Sententiae in IV Libris Distinctae*. (Grottaferrata (Rome): Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1981), Liber III, distinctio ix. “*Praeterea investigari oportet utrum caro Christi et anima una eademque cum Verbo debeant adoratione adorari, illa scilicet quae latria dicitur. Si enim animae vel carni Christi exhibetur latria, quae intelligitur servitus sive cultus soli Creatori debitus, cum anima Christi vel caro creatura tantum sit, creaturae exhibetur quod soli Creatori debetur.*”

<sup>254</sup> Marcia Colish points out that Lombard had actually held previously that only *dulia* belonged to the humanity of Christ: “This was a point on which the Lombard changed the position he had articulated early in his career in his Psalms commentary, under the influence of Damascene.” Peter Lombard. vol. 1. (New York: E.J. Brill, 1994), 428. Colish notes earlier that in the case of Damascene, Lombard was “the first Latin theologian to bring [his thought] to bear on Trinitarian and Christological debate.” 86.

*cultus*).<sup>255</sup> The second opinion put forward, which is supported by Damascene and Augustine,<sup>256</sup> reads as follows:

However, others maintain that humanity of Christ is to be adored with one adoration with the Word: not on account of itself, but on account of Whose footstool it is, to Whom it is united; neither the humanity itself alone or nude, but with the Word to Whom it is united: nor on account of itself, but on account of Him it is to be adored. He who does this is not able to be judged as one guilty of idolatry, because he neither serves the creature alone, nor for its own sake, but the Creator with His humanity and in His humanity.<sup>257</sup>

Thus, *latria*, or adoration as Lombard uses interchangeably, became a standard topic in the treatment of Christ, as can be seen even in Aquinas' *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae*.<sup>258</sup> However, Lombard's use of *latria* in Christology raised greater concern for treating both *latria* and *dulia*, and similar treatments began to spring up in distinct theological summas.

The first example of a summa to incorporate *latria* comes from William of Auxerre (d. 1231).<sup>259</sup> His *Summa Aurea* generally follows the outline of Lombard's *Sentences*: God,

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<sup>255</sup> *ibid.* "...non tamen adeo, ut cultus divinitati debitus ei exhibeatur. Qui cultus in dilectione et sacrifice exhibitione atque reverentia consistit: qui latine dicitur pietas, graece autem thesebia, id est Dei cultus; vel eusebia, id est bonus cultus."

<sup>256</sup> The works quoted are from the following: John Damascene. *On the Orthodox Faith*. III. viii. Augustine. *On the Words of the Lord*, sermon 246, v. and *Narrations on the Psalms*, 98, ix.

<sup>257</sup> *ibid.* "Aliis autem placet Christi humanitatem una adoratione cum Verbo esse adorandam: non propter se, sed propter illum cuius scabellum est, cui est unita; nec ipsa humanitas sola vel nuda, sed cum Verbo cui est unita: nec propter se, sed propter illum est adoranda. Nec qui hoc fact idolatriae reus iudicari potest, quia nec soli creaturae, nec propter ipsam, sed Creatori cum humanitate et in humanitate sua servit."

<sup>258</sup> ST III. 25.

<sup>259</sup> Since William of Auxerre may be the least known of the authors treated in this work, it is important to provide some background. Walter Principe describes William as follows: "William of Auxerre, a secular Master of Theology at the University of Paris, was one of the most prominent figures in the development of theology in the early thirteenth century.... There is some evidence that he was already a renowned teacher in 1189, but it is not clear whether at that time his work was being done in grammar, arts, or theology. Before 1228 and undoubtedly many years before, he had become a Master in Theology at Paris. At some uncertain date William became Archdeacon of Beauvais. At various times William of Auxerre was involved in administrative or diplomatic tasks on the part either of the University of Paris or of King Louis VII or of Pope Gregory IX.... William was appointed by Gregory IX to a commission charged with correcting the works of Aristotle in order that they might be safely used by Christian thinkers.... William's of Auxerre's major work, the so-called *Summa Aurea*, is placed by scholars somewhere between the years 1215 and 1225. Although it generally follows that of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, the *Summa Aurea* is neither a gloss nor a commentary on Lombard's text, but an independent work with its own organization.... That William of Auxerre's *Summa Aurea* exercised a decided influence on thirteenth-century theology has always been known to some extent; the range and import of this influence, however, have become more clearly understood from recent studies of particular topics." *The Theology of the Hypostatic Union in the Early Thirteenth Century*. Vol. 1. *William of Auxerre's Theology of the Hypostatic Union*. (Toronto: Pontifical



Creation, Christ, Sacraments, but also goes into much greater detail, particularly on the virtues.<sup>260</sup> Lombard composed only two short distinctions on moral virtue towards the end of the third book, one on the cardinal virtues (the “Four Principal Virtues,” d. 33) and the other on the connection of the virtues (d. 36). In the third part of his *summa*, however, William engages in a long exposition of the cardinal virtues and their subordinate parts. Significantly, he places *latría* as a part of justice and even engages Lombard’s same Christological question within this context. This shift is clearly influenced by the Ciceronian placement of religion as a part of justice. Rather than following Cicero’s division of justice completely, William created his own narrower list of justice’s parts: alms, obedience, *latría*, and prayer (though Cicero’s parts do come up in his treatment of justice). This clearly manifests William’s intention of viewing justly chiefly as a Christian virtue within the spiritual life.

While Lombard solely took up the question of *latría* in relation to *dulia* insofar as they apply to Christ, William took up the nature of *latría* in itself, then its relation to *dulia* and idolatry, then its application to creatures and Christ, and finally its subjective application by the individual through their intention (how it can be mistaken or inappropriately applied). Concerning *latría*, William immediately introduces a breakthrough in the treatment of worship by equating *latría* with religion (*religio*) instead of service (*servitus*), the meaning which Augustine had rightly ascribed to the word. After treating obedience, he turns to “that species of

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Institute of Medieval Studies, 1963), 14-16. See page 158 for Principe’s list of biographical sources on William and 160-61 for a list of works that touch on his influence in specific areas of theology.

<sup>260</sup> Maurice de Wulf makes the claim that William “elaborates the first treatise on free will, natural law, and virtues in general (nature, properties, divisions).” He also states that “the influence of the *Summa Aurea* was considerable, and often it was referred to under the simple title of the *Summa*.... The first Dominican masters, Roland of Crema, Hugh of St. Cher at Paris, Richard Fischacre at Oxford, all make use of it when writing their own works; Albert the Great quotes it several times; Philip the Chancellor refers to it fairly frequently, and Alexander of Hales also utilizes it in his *Summa*.” *History of Medieval Philosophy*. Vol. 2. trans. Ernest C. Messenger. (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1938), 39. William is also credited with being the first to treat natural law within a treatise on theology. cf. Odon Lottin. *Le Droit Naturel chez Saint Thomas d’Aquin et ses Prédecesseurs*. (Bruges: Beyaert, 1931), 33-35. Treatment of this part of *Summa Aurea* has been left out of this study since he did specifically tie religion into the natural law.

justice by which we are held to honor God, which is called *latría* or *latríosis* in Greek, though truly it is able to be called *religio* in Latin, which is a species of justice.”<sup>261</sup> In what must be seen as a gross, yet interesting, mistake, William attributes his definition of *latría* to Cicero: “As Tully says: ‘*Latría* is worship owed to God alone, and to Him it must be exhibited.... *Dulia* is honor owed to a creature.’”<sup>262</sup> There is a clear attempt here to reconcile the tradition. Rather than having Cicero’s account of virtue from the mouth of a pagan, as in Abelard, William now brings his thought directly into his theology, though he may appear a little over anxious to do so.

With his decision to link *latría* to Cicero’s understanding of religion comes the need to examine whether one can understand *latría* as a virtue. This is the first question taken up under the first heading “What is *latría*?” After conceding that *latría* is a virtue as something meritorious and responding to a divine command (“You will adore the Lord your God and Him alone will you serve.”), William engages in what will become a crucial question, the relation of *latría* to the theological virtues. Is *latría* a general virtue, as charity is commonly understood, commanding all the virtues to honor God, even the theological virtues? Part of the concern for the theological virtues comes from Augustine’s reference to worship in faith, hope, and love from the *Enchiridion*. William’s solution reads as follows:

It must be noted that *latría* properly is the confession of the divine majesty, so that the divine majesty is named not only the greatness of God, by which He fills the whole world... but also the divine majesty may be called His highest goodness, the highest power, the highest lordship, etc.; and thus there is a triple profession, namely by heart, mouth, and deed. In the heart we profess the divine majesty through faith and wisdom, by believing God to be the highest power, the highest good, etc. By mouth we profess the divine majesty, by praying to God as the source of all good works. By deed we profess by sacrificing, genuflecting, and similar things. Whence *latría* contains five:

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<sup>261</sup> William of Auxerre (Guillelmus Altissiodorens). *Summa Aurea*. (Grottaferrata (Rome): Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Clara Aquas, 1986), Liber III, Tomus II. Tractatus xxvi, prologue. “*Dicendum est de illa specie iusticie qua tenemur honorare Deum, que grece vocatur latría vel latríosis, latine vero potest vocari religio, que est species iusticie.*” It must be noted that the diphthong “*ae*” resolves to “*e*” in this edition of the *Summa Aurea*.

<sup>262</sup> *ibid.* “*Ut dicit Tullius: ‘Latría est cultus soli Deo debitus, et ei exhibendus.... Dulia est honor debitus creature.’*” The editors, of course, can find no reference for this quotation. It is clearly based on Bk 10 of the *De civitate Dei* and comes close even to the language of Lombard, who defined *latría* as “*servitus sive cultus soli Creatori debitus.*”

namely faith, wisdom, reverence, sacrifice, and prayer. And through this it is clear that *latria* is not a special virtue, nor is it general for all virtues, as indeed every vice would be idolatry, but it is a species of virtue, having under itself many species.<sup>263</sup>

A deeper resolution of this issue must wait for Aquinas, but in the meantime it will suffice to say that charity as a true general virtue is the *sine qua non* for all perfect virtue. *Latria* does not act with the same comprehensiveness, but commands certain virtues inasmuch as they are needed to profess the divine majesty.<sup>264</sup> There is no way in which one could understand faith to be a true part of the virtue of *latria*, unless it meant that faith is necessary for *latria* to act properly. To make clear that there is no confusion between *latria* and the theological virtues, William states the following: “Therefore, it is clear that to honor, inasmuch as it is a movement of *latria*, is not the same as to believe or love,”<sup>265</sup> but it can put forth “a general command over virtues, namely of faith or charity, by which someone proposes to honor God.”<sup>266</sup> As a part of justice, *latria* applies these virtues in a certain regard, namely as they are needed to profess God’s majesty.

This relationship to the theological virtues pushes William beyond a mere identification of *latria* with Cicero’s account. He is clear that he does equate *latria* and *religio* since they are not distinct virtues, but a Christian articulation of religion requires an advancement of Cicero’s

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<sup>263</sup> *ibid.* caput 1. “*Notandum quod latria proprie est confessio maiestatis divine, ut non solum appelletur maiestas divina magnitudo Dei, qua replet totum mundum... sed etiam vocetur maiestas divina summa eius bonitas, summa potentia, summum dominium, et sic de aliis; et est ita professio triplex, scilicet corde, ore, opera. Corde profiteamur divinam maiestatem per fidem et sapientiam, credendo Deum esse summum potentem, summum bonum, et sic de aliis. Ore profiteamur divinam maiestatem, orando Deum ut fontem omnium bonorum operum. Opere profiteamur sacrificando, genuflect[en]do et consimilibus. Unde latria comprehendit quinque, scilicet fidem, sapientiam, reverenciam, sacrificium, orationem. Et per hoc patet quod latria non est specialis virtus, nec est generalis ad omnes virtutes, sic enim omne vicium esset ydolatria, sed est species virtutis, habens sub se multas species.*” The three aspects of mouth, word, and deed become a regular part of medieval treatments of worship. For a treatment of Aquinas’ use of these terms in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, see Thomas Ryan. *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), 129-43.

<sup>264</sup> William explicates this relationship by describing interior and exterior *latria*: “*Latria* is twofold, namely interior and exterior. Faith and wisdom are interior *latria* and not exterior. Whence we concede well that faith and wisdom do not profess the divine majesty exteriorly, except by the mediation of another virtue, namely by exterior *latria*. And from this it does not follow: ‘therefore wisdom is not *latria*’; but it follows: ‘therefore wisdom is not exterior *latria*’. However exterior *latria* consists in exterior profession of the highest power, the highest lord, highest goodness and such about others.” *ibid.*

<sup>265</sup> *ibid.* “*Patet igitur quod honorare, prout est motus latrie, non est idem quod credere vel diligere.*”

<sup>266</sup> *ibid.* “*...tale velle est motus virtutis que habet generale imperium supra virtutes, scilicet fidei vel caritatis, quo aliquis proponit honorare Deum.*”

position. First he lays the Ciceronian foundation: “*Latria* is not just any virtue. According to the authority of Tully it is a special virtue, who said that religion is a species of justice, and thus *latria*, which is the same as religion.”<sup>267</sup> Next he clarifies the greater depth needed for a Christian account:

We say that *latria* according to a catholic includes more than religion according to the philosophers, because the philosophers did not attain to faith or the gift of wisdom, whence religion according to them included nothing except reverence, [through] which we owe to God both sacrifice and prayer; and thus it is true that religion is a special virtue, nevertheless according to this *latria* is not a special virtue, because it includes more.<sup>268</sup>

The portrayal of religion as simply a potential part of justice strikes William as insufficient. Worship is so essential to the Christian life that any account of it must examine its relation to and co-dependence on other virtues and the gifts of the Spirit.

Why then is Cicero so helpful? There are two main reasons that one can find in William’s thought. The first is in his insistence that *latria* is not a theological virtue. He states: “the soul is not moved through reverence into God, but rather from God, for reverence is a recoiling (moving back) from the loftiness of God into one’s own littleness... therefore we say that *latria* is not a theological virtue.”<sup>269</sup> Since *latria* is not a virtue made known by revelation, nor one that exists solely through the movement of grace, it can be studied philosophically. Even though William makes clear that philosophy is not enough, he still clearly relies on Cicero for his understanding of the nature of *latria*. Secondly, since *latria* is a part of justice one must understand justice to sufficiently explicate its nature. It is in his study of justice that William

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<sup>267</sup> *ibid.* “...*non quelibet virtus est latria. Ad auctoritatem Tullii, quae dicit quod religio est species iusticie, et ita latria, que idem est quod religio, est specialis virtus.*”

<sup>268</sup> *ibid.* “...*dicimus quod latria secundum catholicum plus comprehendit quam religio secundum philosophos, quoniam philosophi non attingunt fidem vel sapientiam donum, unde religio secundem ipsos non comprehendit nisi reverenciam, quam debemus Deo, et sacrificium et orationem; et sic verum est quod religio est specialis virtus, non tamen propter hoc latria est virtus specialis, qua plus comprehendit.*”

<sup>269</sup> *ibid.* “...*no enim anima per reverenciam movetur in Deum, sed potius a Deo, est enim reverencia resilio ab altitudine Dei in propriam parvitatem... dicimus ergo quod latria non est virtus theologica.*”

both makes clear that justice is a moral virtue of the intellect<sup>270</sup> (distinguished from prudence by its order toward exterior action) which renders to another what is one's own. Philosophically he is able to distinguish it from the theological virtues, yet he still discovers a profound link.

Inspired by Cicero's insight in *De Officiis* that faith is "the foundation of justice," William goes on to argue that "it is clear that" justice "contains faith, hope, and love, because in these three we are moved most greatly into God, giving to Him what is His own."<sup>271</sup> This reveals the heart of William's treatment of *latria*: Cicero's notion of justice enabled him to perceive how the worship owed to God must include the highest elements of the Christian life, revealing a strong link between the natural order and its supernatural realization by grace.<sup>272</sup>

The next major treatment of *latria* to be examined derives from Philip the Chancellor's (1160-1236) *Summa de Bono*.<sup>273</sup> This summa is quite distinct in its arrangement, organizing its content around goodness, the goodness of creation and grace. Virtue is treated under the section entitled "The Good of Grace," though Philip clarifies: "I respond that virtue is not grace, if the name of grace is accepted formally; but it is said to be grace because through grace it is made in

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<sup>270</sup> Note the difference from Aquinas, who places justice under the will.

<sup>271</sup> *ibid.* tract. xxviii, cap. 1. "*Quod autem contineat fidem, spem, caritatem, patet, quoniam in istis tribus maxime movemur in Deum reddendo ei, quod suum est.*" cf. Lottin. *Psychologie et Morale*. 288, 318-19. While the notion that religion contains the theological virtues is highly ambiguous and is open to misinterpretation, it can be interpreted benignly. If it implies that the theological virtues are parts of religion then it would be wholly unacceptable. If it signifies that religion must offer worship through the theological virtues then there would not seem to be any problem with this claim. It is the latter sense which gets taken up in later theology, as we will see below.

<sup>272</sup> William speaks further of justice: "...statuit iusticia animam sub Deo"; "*per speciem suam, que est religio, religat nos Deo spiritualiter, a quo et ex quo omnis perpetuitas habet esse*"; "*per iusticiam maxime assimilatur Deo*"; "*est ordinatio ad Deum... per modum subiectionem.*" *ibid.* cap. 2.

<sup>273</sup> Principe provides a very brief overview of his life: "The forceful but enigmatic person known as Philip the Chancellor united ecclesiastical administration with extensive preaching and theological study and writing in such a way that he become one of the most influential clerics of the early thirteenth century... [He] became a Master of Theology in 1206. We know that in 1211 he was already Archdeacon of Noyon. In 1218 he became Chancellor of Notre of Paris and thereupon became engaged in many of the conflicts that troubled the Church and the University of Paris in the following years." *The Theology of the Hypostatic Union in the Early Thirteenth Century*. Vol. 4. *Philip the Chancellor's Theology of the Hypostatic Union*. (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1975), 17. De Wolf situates the *Summa de bono* just ten years after the *Summa Aurea*. 39.

us.”<sup>274</sup> After treating the theological virtues, Philip moves on to the cardinal virtues, the last of which is justice. Whereas William of Auxerre began with the parts of justice and then moved to the justice in itself, Philip first treats of justice, then its parts of *latría*, *dulia*, and obedience.<sup>275</sup> First of all, it must be noted that Philip locates justice within the will, a crucial shift from Auxerre that will be of great importance in Aquinas’ thought.<sup>276</sup>

In his third question on justice, “Definitions of Justice,” Philip takes up the link between justice and the theological virtues. This arises under the question of justice’s definition, because it seems that Philip deems he must reconcile the Augustinian definition of justice with the classical definition. Does justice have its own integrity or is it simply an aspect of charity? The problem compounds when one considers *latría* a part of justice. Is justice as the will’s resolution to give each his own enough to account for worship? The first objection directly addresses this as it draws in *latría*:

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<sup>274</sup> Philip the Chancellor. *Summa de bono*. ed. Nicolai Wicki. (Bern: Editiones Francke, 1985), II. A. Q2. “*Ad hoc respondeo quod virtus non est gratia, si accipiatur nomen gratie formaliter; sed dicitur gratia quia per gratiam fit in nobis.*” For an overview of this work, see R. E. Houser’s “Introduction” to his translation of passages on the cardinal virtues in Philip, Albert and Thomas. *The Cardinal Virtues*, 42-56. Houser points out that “the structure of treating the virtues in general, then the three theological virtues and the four cardinal virtues... goes back to Philip.” 4. This would later be adopted by Thomas. Houser describes the link between Philip and Thomas through the cooperation the latter had with the Dominican order. He calls the latter a “patron of the Dominicans,” who “helped the friars obtain their two chairs in the Theology faculty, during the strike by masters and scholars (1229-1231)... The gratitude of the Dominicans manifested itself in the profound impact Philip’s *Summa on the Good* (1225-8) had on Dominican theologians, especially Albert and Thomas. They were enamored of his *Summa*, which moved far in the direction of realizing Lombard’s promise of a full treatment of the vast range of moral excellence and depravity, and all the stages between them. To do so, Philip had to move well beyond Lombard’s brief remarks about the cardinal virtues.” 42-43.

<sup>275</sup> Though Houser notes that Philip very successfully described the parts of courage and temperance, he notes that “when he came to prudence and justice, the Chancellor was without the relevant sections of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which had not been translated. Nor did he find the ‘parts’ Cicero had listed for them particularly helpful to his work as a theologian. So he turned away from the ‘philosophers’ and looked to the ‘saints’ and Scripture for help in understanding their parts.” 54. In particular, “in place of the many parts of justice which Cicero had ranged under the broad headings of ‘natural law’ and ‘customary law,’ which came from the source of knowledge of the law, the Chancellor chose a trinity of parts for justice, based on the object of the obligation: worship (owed to God), reverence (owed to prelates), and obedience (owed to both).” 55. While Philip clearly gives a theological presentation of these parts, the influence of Cicero is still clear, particularly in that he retained the first two parts, religion and *dulia* (seen as a rough equivalent of piety).

<sup>276</sup> *ibid.* II.C.IV.Q3. “*Anselmus: ‘Iustitia est rectitudo’ etc. Additur ‘voluntatis,’ quia probat Anselmus quoniam non est iustus qui facit quod debet, si non vult quod facit.*” Though it must be said that he did not completely break with the earlier identification of justice with reason. While speaking of the cardinal virtues, Philip states that “both prudence and justice are based on acts of reason.” trans. R.E. Houser. *The Cardinal Virtues*. 88.

Augustine in his book *De moribus ecclesiae* defines justice thus: ‘Justice is love serving only the one loved himself.’ It is seen that one may understand about justice alone that it orders to God. For it stands that the thing loved is the highest good. Therefore justice is not defined except according to its part which is called *latria*. For what is it to serve God except to worship God? and *latria* is worship owed and exhibited to God.<sup>277</sup>

Philip’s answer comes down strongly on the side of affirming justice’s integrity. It cannot be resolved into charity, or its part *latria*, though these both have an important role in its exercise. He states: “It must not be said that justice is defined according to its part, but according to [its own] rationale. But in that book [*De moribus*] it is defined through love, because in it one is led concerning the highest good to which all works are to be referred... because in every work of justice God is served principally.”<sup>278</sup> Justice can be defined as love only because Augustine was referring to love “by reason of debt.”<sup>279</sup> Charity enables justice to serve God by truly ordering all things toward Him, which would otherwise be impossible without God’s aid through grace (as Philip acknowledges when he states that grace creates virtue in us).

Further down, Philip has a more sophisticated answer as to how the theological virtues can pertain to justice. Justice as a moral virtue must account for the mean between extremes, which is not the case for the theological virtues since there is no extreme in God. However when “faith or charity is that which is rendered to God, God is the one to whom it is rendered, the medium through which it is returned is the act, as is the act of believing, and this nevertheless is

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<sup>277</sup> *ibid.* “Augustinus in libro *De moribus ecclesie* diffinit iustitiam sic: ‘Iustitia est amore soli amato propter ipsum serviens.’ Videtur quod de iustitia tantum intelligat que ordinat ad Deum. Constat enim quod illud amatum est summum bonum. Ergo sic non diffinitur iustitia nisi secundum partem illam que dicitur latria. Quid enim est servire Deo nisi Deum colere? et latria cultus Deo debitus et exhibitus.”

<sup>278</sup> *ibid.* “Nec dicendum quod diffinitur iustitia secundum partem, sed secundum rationem. Sed in illo libro diffiniture per amorem, quia in eo agitur de summo bono ad quod omnia opera referuntur... quia in omni opera iustitie principaliter Deo servitur.”

<sup>279</sup> Philip also states that “in one way, each and every virtue is love, or the completion of each and every virtue is love, though in another way this is not true.” Houser. 116. This quotation is from a previous question: “Does whoever has one virtue have them all?”

not a medium consisting of an extreme unless the intention be about debt as about debt.”<sup>280</sup>

Philip draws in three criteria “what is rendered, to whom it is rendered, and the act through which it is rendered.”<sup>281</sup> The theological virtues act through justice when regarded from the aspect of fulfilling a debt. What is crucial here is the distinction between a theological and cardinal virtue. While justice is a cardinal virtue, one of the moral virtues, which is ordered toward another, it holds a special role for Philip because God is another to Whom things are due, even the theological virtues. Therefore, he states the following in speaking of whether the cardinal virtues can be called divine:

They cannot be called divine because this denomination comes not in relation to the principle ‘from which’ something comes, but in relation to the term ‘to which’ something leads. Since these cardinal virtues concern what leads up to our end (*ad finem*), but not into our end (*in finem*), namely God, they should not be called divine. Justice, however, which orders things to our end holds a middle place, and therefore can be called both human and divine, since it orders things to our end.<sup>282</sup>

While Auxerre spoke of justice through reverence, recoiling from God out of humility, Philip points to justice’s role in directing things toward God, even in directing the things that lead into God, the theological virtues. This logic is applied directly to Philip’s treatment of *latria*.

*Latria* as a part of justice intends exactly what pertained to justice above: directing all one’s action toward the service of God inasmuch as they are owed to Him. As Philip states: “The parts of justice are distinguished according to those things which are owed and to whom they are owed. Certain things are owed to God, as worship, and this part of justice is called

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<sup>280</sup> *Summa de bono*. “Item fides vel caritas est id quod redditur Deo, Deus est cui redditur, medium per quod redditur est actus, ut est actus credendi, et hic tamen non est medium consonans extremis nisi intention sit de debito ut de debito.”

<sup>281</sup> *ibid.* “...quod redditur, cui redditur, actum per quem redditur.”

<sup>282</sup> Houser. 100.



*latria*.”<sup>283</sup> In explicating the nature of *latria*, Philip begins just as Auxerre had with “Whether *Latria* Is a Virtue.” His answer shows the broadness necessary when dealing with worship:

I respond that *latria* is able to be accepted in three ways. First for those things which are exhibited to God in divine worship and because these things are many, as sacrifice, burnt offering, and prayer and such things, according to this *latria* will be many things... and it is accepted thus when it is said: *latria* is worship, etc. Secondly it is said that *latria* is those things through which such [acts] are exhibited and according to these it names many virtues, namely faith, hope, and charity, and such. Thirdly, it is called that through which these things are ordered to be exhibited, namely the will of employing these things, as has been said about justice.<sup>284</sup>

It is through this third way of speaking of *latria* that one may speak of it as a virtue. Just as was seen in justice, *latria* as a virtue is named by the resolution of the will to render what is owed to God, not essentially by what is rendered (*quod redditur*) or the ancillary act, seen as a part of *latria* (*medium per quod redditur*). Philip clarifies the role of the will and also *latria*'s role in commanding other virtues:

But we say that *latria* is a virtue in the third sense, when it has a special and proper act according to which it is a will of employing worship owed to God. In another way we no less are able to say that it is a general virtue according to which it orders diverse virtue which follow from the worship of God, but is not the genus for these others, because faith or hope is not able to be named *latria*.<sup>285</sup>

These clarifications are significant. *Latria* as a virtue, which wills to render what is due to God, unifies the disparate physical and interior acts into one coherent whole. On its own “to worship is not a special act, but contains many, namely interior and exterior acts, as to believe, to love, to

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<sup>283</sup> *Summa de bono*. II. C. IV. Q6. “Partes iustitiae distinguuntur secundum ea que debentur et quibus debentur. Quedam debentur Deo, ut cultus, et hec pars iustitiae dicitur *latria*.”

<sup>284</sup> *ibid.* “Responso. *Latria* potest accipi tripliciter. Primo pro illis que in cultu divino exhibentur Deo et quoniam hec multa sunt, ut sacrificium, thurificatio, oratio et huiusmodi, erit secundum hoc *latria* multa... et sic accipitur cum dicitur: *Latria* est cultus etc. Secundo dicitur *latria* ea per que huiusmodi exhibentur et secundum hec dicitur plures virtutes, scilicet fidem, spem et caritatem et huiusmodi. Tertio dicitur id per quod hec imperantur exhiberi, scilicet voluntas impendendi hec, et est, sicut dictum est, de iustitia.”

<sup>285</sup> *ibid.* “Sed *latriam* dicimus esse virtutem in tertio sensu, cum habet specialem et propriam actum secundum quod est voluntas impendendi Deo cultum debitum. Alio modo nichilominus potest dici generalis virtus secundum quod imperat diversis virtutibus que cultum Dei exequentur, sed non est genus ad illas, quia non potest dici fides vel spes *latria* et huiusmodi.”

sing psalms, and to burn offerings.”<sup>286</sup> Therefore, worship takes shape by commanding other acts and virtues. These virtues are subordinate to it not as part of its genus, but only insofar as it commands them to a particular action justly owed to God. *Latria* does not give rise to these virtues but orders their acts when “they pertain to the worship of God.”<sup>287</sup> Thus, *latria* fulfills a general role, as did justice, in ordering one’s actions to God. Justice did so in a comprehensive way, while *latria* did so under the particular aspect of the debt of worship.

The movement from Lombard to Auxerre and Philip marks an incredible advancement in the study of worship both in the concern given to the topic and in the technical distinctions concerning its role as a virtue, its different forms (exterior, interior), and its relation to other virtues, particularly the theological. It is remarkable that both Auxerre and Philip placed *latria* under justice in a manner clearly following Cicero. With the influence of these two summas, one may have thought that the form used to treat worship may have begun to solidify. However, the appearance of the *Summa Fratris Alexandri* introduced a distinct manner of treating *latria* that would add to the complexity of its study.

While it is not clear who authored the third book of Alexander of Hales’ (1183-1254) *Summa*,<sup>288</sup> we can examine Alexander’s commentary on the *Sentences* for his own position.<sup>289</sup> It

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<sup>286</sup> “*Ad secundum respondendum quod colere non est actus specialis, sed plures continet, scilicet interiores et exteriores actus, ut credere, diligere, psallere, thurificare.*”

<sup>287</sup> *ibid.* “*Latria autem potest imperare actus theologiarum virtutum fidei etc. et que pertinent ad eas et actus qui non sunt proprii virtutum secundum quod pertinent ad cultum Dei.*” Consider also the following: “*Secundum quod fides et caritas exequentur quod pertinet ad latriam et illa imperat ille sunt posteriores et latria prior; sed secundum quod latria fundatur super fidem et caritatem ille priores sunt en non solum prior habitus habitu, sed actus actu. Velle enim credere, quod est fidei ut fides est amor, prius est quam velle creder eo quod debitum est sive velle reddere Deo fidem quia debita est et pertinens ad cultum, quia illud simplicius est et est fidei, illud magis compositum est et est latrie. Simpliter et credere simpliciter prius est quam credere eo quod debitum est et pertinens ad cultum Dei.*”

<sup>288</sup> John of La Rochelle (or Rupella) has been put forward as a leading possibility. See Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M. cf. *The History of the Franciscan School*. Part 1. *Alexander of Hales*. (St. Bonaventure, New York: 1943), 15 and also Part 2. *John of Rupella, Saint Bonaventure* (St. Bonaventure, New York: 1944), 1. Kenan Osborne also affirms the role of La Rochelle, though he notes that both Alexander and John may have assumed the role of editors over even more contributors, including Bonaventure. He points to a “collaborative form of authorship,” in which “Alexander was one fo the driving forces in the creation of the *Summa*.” “Alexander of Hales: Precursor and

appears that he leans heavily on both Auxerre and Philip, using themes in both of their *summas*:<sup>290</sup>

1) *Latria* as a species of justice: “The act of justice is to attribute to each, etc.; and it is subdivided in attributing to God the things of God and thus it is seen that *latria* is a species of justice when it is attributing to God the things which are of God.”<sup>291</sup>

2) The use of acts of heart, word, and deed: “The act of *latria* is threefold: namely as the act of the heart and of the mouth and of deed. However, the act of the heart consists in that which is to love, to believe; and of the mouth in that which is to sing a psalm; and of deed in that which is to exhibit sacrifice or genuflect.”<sup>292</sup>

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Promoter of Franciscan Theology” in *The History of the Franciscan Theology*. ed. Kenan B. Osborne. (St. Bonaventure, New York: The Franciscan Institute, 1994), 15-16.

<sup>289</sup> Alexander of Hales. *Glossa in quatuor libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi*. III. (Florence: Quaracchi, 1954), Distinction ix. For a short description of this work see Kenan Osborne, 9. Walter Principe explains that “Alexander’s lectures on the *Sentences* have been substantially preserved in what are probably notes made by a student. These extensive notes, whose discovery was announced in 1946, have been published.... The dates suggested by the editors for this remarkable addition to the literature of the period are the years 1222 to 1229.” *The Theology of the Hypostatic Union in the Early Thirteenth Century*. Vol. 2. *Alexander of Hales’ Theology of the Hypostatic Union*. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1967), 14. It should be noted that more than one student copied these lectures, which has led to varying manuscripts. Principe deals with these three redactions on pages 16-20 of the same work. In volume four of the same work, Principe notes that this work actually preceded Philip the Chancellor’s *Summa de bono*. It is presented after it in this work in order to preserve the connection of Alexander’s *Commentary* and his influence on the later *Summa*.

<sup>290</sup> Boehner affirms the influence of Auxerre and the Chancellor upon Alexander. 10.

<sup>291</sup> *ibid.* “*Actus iustitiae est attribuere unicuique etc.; et subdividitur in attribuendo Deo quae Dei sunt, et proximo quae proximi; et ita videtur quod latria, cum sit attribuens Deo quae Dei sunt, sit species iustitiae.*” This text (and others quoted from this work) is from manuscripts A and E, which concur in this distinction. Manuscript L presents largely the same content though with great variation. Principe lists the varying theories which attempt to situate these three redactions. He states: “The first redaction (Redaction A) is certainly authentic. The third redaction (Redaction E) is just as certainly inauthentic.” 16. Redaction E largely follows A, while L, composed at a later date, largely agrees with A, though it adds additional questions. This may have come from a combination of the notes of the student or a revision by Alexander. He concludes that “the question about the authenticity of the second redaction (L) of Book III of the *Glossa* remains unsettled and must remain so until fresh evidence appears to help answer it. Such uncertainty compounds the difficulty for anyone studying Book III of the *Glossa*.” 28. Principe generally follows manuscript A, though he points out areas of great divergence with L.

<sup>292</sup> *ibid.* “*Et triplex est actus latriae, scilicet ut actus cordis et oris et operis. Actus autem cordis consistit in eo quod est diligere, credere; et oris in eo quod est psallere; et operis in eo, quod est sacrificium exhibere vel genuflectere.*”

3) Relation to the theological virtues: “It must be said therefore that *latria* in one way is a general virtue, namely inasmuch as it is compared to faith and to charity; and special inasmuch as it is compared to justice.”<sup>293</sup>

These common points do show that the new insights on the nature of *latria* had become widely accepted, which makes it all the more remarkable to find a distinct treatment in the *Summa Fratris Alexandri* (to be referred to hereafter as the SFA).

The previous two *summas* examined engaged in long discussions on virtue, both theological and cardinal. However, the third part of the SFA turned from Christology to an elaborate treatise on law and only after that engaged in a very short discussion of grace and virtue, without treating the cardinal virtues in any detail. Its treatise on law entailed: 1) the eternal law 2) the natural law 3) the Mosaic law, subdivided into a) moral precepts (the 10 Commandments) b) judicial precepts c) ceremonial precepts and 4) the Law of the Gospel. Worship comes up often within this discussion, but the most significant places concern religion within the natural law, adoration within the moral precepts, and sacrifice within the ceremonial precepts.

The second part of the third book commences the SFA’s treatment of law.<sup>294</sup> It begins with the eternal law, which it bases on Augustine’s definition from *De Vera Religione*. The author describes it as an “immutable law of truth,” which “is just as all things are most orderly,” and quoting Augustine “appears above our mind... which speaks truth.”<sup>295</sup> This law derives

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<sup>293</sup> *ibid.* “*Dicendum ergo quod latria uno modo est virtus generalis, scilicet prout comparatur ad fidem et ad caritatem; et specialis est prout comparatur ad iustitiam.*”

<sup>294</sup> For a brief treatment of law in the SFA, cf. Rommen. *The Natural Law*. 42-45.

<sup>295</sup> Alexander of Hales (attributed). *Summa Theologica (Summa Fratris Alexandri)*. (Florence: Quaracchi, 1948), Liber III, Pars II, Inq. I, quaest. I, caput i. “*Dicendum, secundum quod dicit Augustinus, in libro De vera religione (30, 56): menti nostrae concessum est videre legem veritatis immutabilem. Mens enim nostra iudicat de veritate immutabili, ut iudicat istam propositionem: iustum est ut omnia sint ordinatissima. Cum ergo ipsa, scilicet ‘mens humana, mutabilitatem pati possit erroris, apparet supra mentem nostrum esse legem, quae veritas dicitur’; haec autem lex est aeterna.*”

from God's "will, which is [His] essence... and this is immutable."<sup>296</sup> The natural law, however, is within a rational creature: "one has as an innate rule for oneself through which one is led to the good."<sup>297</sup> Further, "it must be said that the law of nature is the principle for all moral law,

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<sup>296</sup> *ibid.* cap. v. "...voluntas, quae est essentia Dei, et haec est voluntas beneplaciti et haec est immutabilis."

<sup>297</sup> *ibid.* Inq. II, quaest. I, cap. i. "...regulam habet sibi innatam, per quam regulatur in bonum." Aloysius Obiwulu engages natural law in the SFA in his *Tractatus de Legibus in 13<sup>th</sup> Century Scholasticism: A Critical Study and Interpretation of Law in Summa Fratris Alexandri, Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas*. (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2003). While Obiwulu provides a thorough and impressive treatment of the development of law in Western thought from Plato to Aquinas, I would like to point out a few weaknesses in his treatment of the SFA (which he speaks of as the *Summa Halensis*), particularly in its relation to Aquinas' *Summa*. Two main issues concern the SFA's use of the Roman jurist Ulpian's definition of the natural law and its use of the work *ius*. On the first, Michael Crowe describes that "the place in the history of the natural law of Ulpian's definition was assured by its conspicuous adoption in the *Corpus Juris* of Justinianian." *The Changing Profile*. 46. Ulpian's definition emphasized that the natural law applies to all creatures. Therefore, Obiwulu argues that "in the discussion on natural law in n. 241 of the tract on law, the *Summa Halensis* extended the applicability or the scope of law to rational beings as well as sentient, non-sentient, non-rational beings.... Unlike Thomas Aquinas, who in following Cicero regarded law as applicable only to the human realm, the *Summa Halensis* argues that law, (in this context natural law) extends to all creatures." 100-01. The contention comes in when he states that "this extension of the scope of law to include practically all creatures is remarkably distinct in the *Summa Halensis*." 102. Though it is true that Albert resisted Ulpian's definition (*De Bono* V, q. 1, a. 3), the problem concerns a perceived distance between the SFA and Aquinas. One can resolve the difficulty when Ulpian's definition of the natural law is viewed to concern the applicability of the eternal law to all creatures, which pertains to their governance. Aquinas does narrow the scope of the natural law as a particular way that rational creatures receive the eternal law, but this does not exclude all creatures from the scope of the law instilled within all of nature by God. Obiwulu later admits the special emphasis on rational creatures in the natural law even in the SFA, though on the next page he again overemphasizes the perceived dichotomy on this issue. cf. 121-22. This time, he advances the problem even further by stating the use of Ulpian's definition impairs the natural law's ability to play a role in the moral life. He states: "It is our opinion that if the definition offered by Ulpian is to be accepted, that natural law is that which nature teaches all animals, then we shall have problem with the explanation, which maintains that natural law is a necessary law, for the reason that it moderates the appetite. This function of moderating that appetite applies only to rational creatures because they have a definite end to attain, unlike the lower animals that depend on instincts." 122. The problem here is once again the inability to recognize the broadness of Ulpian's definition and the way in which both the SFA and Aquinas recognize its validity and yet narrow it in a particular way suited for humanity. Rather than showing their distance, I rather agree with Obiwulu's later assertion that "in the discussion on natural law, one finds amazing similarities between the two *Summae*." 279. In fact, Crowe points out that "Aquinas shows a remarkable preference for Ulpian." "St. Thomas and Ulpian's Natural Law." in *St. Thomas Aquinas 1274-1974: Commemorative Studies*. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1974), 262. While Crowe recognizes that Aquinas must strain a little to reconcile Ulpian's definition to the rational nature of the natural law, he points to different "senses" of the natural law, particularly in Aquinas' Commentary on the Sentences (IV *Sent.*, d. 33, q. 1, a. 1 ad 4), one of which refers to the fact "it proceeds from or is impressed by nature." 273. Crowe finds it to be contradictory (or at least inconsistent) that Aquinas holds that the natural law is a rational participation in the eternal law, to which animals are excluded, and yet still quotes Ulpian's definition in the *Summa*. 276. If man is a rational animal, why must it be difficult to recognize that nature teaches man by providing him with the rational means of participating in the law of the Creator of nature. Animals share in the law of nature through instinct. Rather than Ulpian separating Aquinas from the SFA, he may actually have relied on Ulpian partly through the influence of the SFA. The second issue concerns confusion over the terms *ius*, which Obiwulu translates exclusively as right, and *lex*, which he renders law. He imposes a distinct difference in meaning between them so that *ius* entails that one "respect or obey a natural right," which he interprets "to do what is just to one's neighbor. *Lex* on the other hand concerns the relation that should exist between man and God. The tenets of this relationship are stated in terms called law (*lex*)." 129. While *ius* certainly can be used to refer to right, as Thomas uses it in the first question on justice in the *Summa*, when referred to in terms of law, both *ius* and

according to which human life must be ordered. However, the law of nature is threefold, namely natural (*nativus*), human, and divine.”<sup>298</sup> The first aspect pertains to all animals since it concerns procreation and the good of the species, while the second pertains to the good specifically of the human and dictates human law and law of the nations. The third is of particular interest since it contains “that by which the rational creature is ordered toward grace, and according to this the moral law of Moses emanates from the natural law.”<sup>299</sup>

What is fascinating, however, is that the author places religion, not under the third category, but under the second. The author turns to Cicero’s parts of justice for an exposition of what pertains to human law and states that “the nature of the individual is ordered in two ways through human law, namely toward God and toward neighbor. However, one is ordered to God through religion, because religion is, as he (Cicero) says, ‘that which offers worship and ceremony to something of a superior nature, which men call divine.’”<sup>300</sup> In contrast to this ordering to God through human law, the author points toward another ordering through nature itself. While the former remained solely on the human level, the latter is ordered toward something higher: “it (the natural law) orders us toward grace in two ways: either ordering us to

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*lex* may be translated “law.” This is not to say that there is no distinction between them. Isidore had referred to *ius* as “a general term,” while *lex* is a specific kind of *ius*... [particularly] a written regulation.” *Etymologies*. 2 vols. trans. Priscilla Throop. (Charlotte, Vermont: Medieval MS, 2005), V. ii. Oscar Brown points out, contradicting other views such as Vernon Bourke’s, that “Thomas himself use the two terms interchangeably – at least in large measure – as can be appreciated by attending to the actual texts, even those of the *Summa Theologiae*.” *Natural Rectitude and Divine Law in Aquinas: An Approach to an Integral Interpretation of the Thomistic Doctrine of Law*. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1981), 167. This phenomenon of equating the two terms may be a medieval occurrence as Harry Jaffa points out in stating that Aquinas misses “the tremendous difference between ‘*lex*’ and ‘*ius*.’” 177. While there may be a tremendous difference between them in different time periods, I believe it is a mistake to make a serious distinction between them in the SFA. Obiwulu shows difficulty in following this scheme, in the following presentation of the natural law. 129-32. See also his treatment of the relation of rights and law in his conclusion, 271-76.

<sup>298</sup> *ibid.* quaest. IV, membrum I, cap. i. “*Dicendum quod lex naturalis est principium ad omne ius morale, secundum quod vita hominis debeat ordinari. Est autem ius naturae triplex, scilicet nativum, humanum, divinum.*”

<sup>299</sup> *ibid.* “*Ius autem divinum dicitur quo ordinatur rationalis creatura ad gratiam, et secundum hoc moralia legis Moysi emanant a lege naturali.*”

<sup>300</sup> *ibid.* “*Natura autem singularis per ius humanum dupliciter ordinatur, scilicet ad Deum et ad proximum. Ad Deum autem ordinatur per religionem, quia religio est, ut ipse dicit, ‘quae superioris cuiusdam naturae, quam divinam vocant, cultum caerimoniamque affert.’*”

God or to neighbor. If to God, **as its sanction is the subjection** of the rational creature to his Creator; whence Eccl 17:9: ‘He inflicted discipline on them’ etc., the Gloss (*Glossa Ordinaria*) says: ‘Natural discipline, which he gave to men, as one is subjected to his Creator.’”<sup>301</sup> While human law seeks to direct one to God on a human level, the order toward grace stems from God’s own subjection and rule of humanity. Here the author creates a dichotomy between Cicero’s account of religion and the moral ordering to God taken up by grace. It would seem that the ordering of religion would be simply natural and left to remain so. The natural ordering toward grace, however, is taken up by the Mosaic Law, which enables it to be fulfilled in a supernatural manner.

Before turning to the SFA’s exposition of the way in which the Mosaic law fulfills this principle of the natural law, it is necessary to examine an additional question within the natural law on “whether the natural law has precepts ordering the rational creature to God.” First the author posits the natural ordering to God inasmuch as “man is toward the image and likeness of God,” through which the Ordinary Gloss states that he or she ““has a law by which he understands and is conscious himself of what is good or what is bad.””<sup>302</sup> The author continues: “For it is in this that man is toward the image [in that] he has cognition of the first truth, which is God, because, according to Augustine [*De anima et spiritus*, 10], he attends in potency of knowing. And this truly which is toward the likeness is the potency and debt of loving the highest goodness.”<sup>303</sup> The unique human constitution as a rational creature gives the human being the possibility of knowing God with a corresponding debt of loving Him. Here the SFA

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<sup>301</sup> *ibid.* “*Ordinat autem nos ad gratiam dupliciter: vel ordinando nos ad Deum vel ad proximum. Si ad Deum, sic sanctio eius est subiectio creaturae rationalis suo Creatori; unde Eccli. 17.9: Addit illis disciplinam etc. dicit Glossa: ‘Disciplinam naturalem, quam dedit homini, ut subiceretur suo Creatori.’*”

<sup>302</sup> *ibid.* membrum II, cap. i. “*...homo est ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei, ‘habet legem qua intelligit et sibi conscious est quid bonum et quid malum.’*”

<sup>303</sup> *ibid.* “*In eo enim quod homo est ad imaginem, habet cognitionem primae veritatis, quae Deus est, quia, secundum Augustinum, imago attenditur in potentia cognoscendi. Et hoc vero quod est ad similitudinem, est in potentia et debito diligendi summam bonitatem.*”

moves beyond simply the notion of owing God a debt by the fact of creation, but moves to a specific debt owed due to humanity's rational nature. Though the natural law is not able to lead one to fulfill this debt without grace, the author does speak of a natural faith "which is collected from reasonings," which he links to Hugh of St. Victor's doctrine of implicit faith.<sup>304</sup> Therefore, he concludes that "the law of nature has whence it is able to dictate to the soul all things that are necessary for salvation in the universal and implicitly, by making it to believe and to assent to the testimony of reason."<sup>305</sup> This may seem to grant too much to nature and to take away the need for grace. Rather, the author indicates that nature orients the soul toward God, teaching it that it should believe in Him from the testimony of creation and trust in Him as a savior. The author is not saying that nature leads to eternity as is clear from the following: "It must be said that to love God above all things and above oneself and for the sake of oneself is in the law of nature as insinuated and instigated but not as effecting it or leading to it.... and therefore the law of grace is necessary, which leads to it,"<sup>306</sup> and further: "God is not able to be naturally loved more than self, because nature does not extend beyond itself."<sup>307</sup> The role of the natural law, while not sufficient, is crucial, "preparing" for what is beyond.<sup>308</sup> It "dictates that God is to be honored always,"<sup>309</sup> by demonstrating what human nature justly owes to God through its natural orderings, but which can only come about as a gift.

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<sup>304</sup> *ibid.* cap. ii. "Dicendum quod fides dicitur dupliciter. Est enim fides quae colligitur ex rationibus et est fides quae homo assentit veritati propter se ex gratia."

<sup>305</sup> *ibid.* "Lex ergo naturalis habet unde possit dictare animae omnia necessaria ad salutem in universali et implicite, faciendo credere et assentire testimonio rationis."

<sup>306</sup> *ibid.* cap. iii. "Dicendum quod diligere Deum super omnia et supra se et propter se est in lege naturali tamquam insinuante et instigante, sed tamquam efficiente vel perducente.... et ideo necessaria est lex gratiae, quae ad istud perducat."

<sup>307</sup> *ibid.* "Et sic Deum naturaliter non potest diligere plus se, quia natura non se extendit supra se."

<sup>308</sup> *ibid.* "...non est in potestate nostra tamquam efficiente diligere Deum super nos et super omnia, est tamen istud in potestate nostra tamquam praeparante, faciendo quod in se est."

<sup>309</sup> *ibid.* membrum III, cap. i, art. iv. This article upholds matrimony as a way to perpetuate God's honor through offspring: "Lex enim naturalis dictat quod honorificetur Deus et semper; semper autem non potest nisi in prole. Unde lex naturalis dictat multiplicationem proles ad cultum Dei, et hoc servato ordine generationis."



The Law of Moses comes as an aid to the natural law since the law of sin thwarted its principles and their execution. Its threefold precepts were meant both as an aid and to prepare: “There were three in the law, namely the moral [precepts] which were for making evident the natural law.... the judicial for coercing the law of concupiscence.... the figurative or ceremonial for signifying the law of grace, because the figures were figures of the future.”<sup>310</sup> Worship comes into all three of these categories, but most significantly in the first, the moral precepts, by which the author means the Ten Commandments. It must be remembered that these commands are given to make evident the natural law and so the first command, which the SFA lists as adoration, builds upon the prior foundation of nature.<sup>311</sup>

The treatment of adoration within the first commandment of the Decalogue serves as the location for the SFA’s exposition of *latria*. The first chapter within section asks “whether adoration is spoken of univocally with *latria* and idolatry.” This draws upon Lombard’s own interchangeable use of *adoratio* and *latria* in the *Sentences*. The author describes the link between the words as follows:

Adoration is veneration and reverence exhibited by reason of dignity to one who is superior and excellent, and this through the former and the latter agrees [respectively] with *dulia* and *latria*. For the highest excellence of dignity is in God, and by reason of this, the adoration of *latria* is owed to God Himself; however the excellence of dignity, which is in the rational creature, is not highest, but rather is from the divine, under it and toward it, and by reason of that dignity the adoration of *dulia* is owed to a creature. For from this which is the highest in the Creator, the creature owes it in the highest, and by reason of this highest in the Creator he owes the adoration of *latria*; truly by reason of the

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<sup>310</sup> *ibid.* Inq. III, Tractatus I, quaes. I, cap. i. “*Et secundum hoc tria errant in Lege, scilicet moralia, quae erant ad dilucidandam legem naturae.... iudicialia, ad coercendum legem concupiscentiae.... figuralia sive caerimonialia ad significandam legem gratiae, quia figurae errant figurae futurorum.*”

<sup>311</sup> *cf. ibid.* Tractatus II, quaest. I, titulus I, cap. i. “*Notandum ergo quod morale legis naturalis dicit quid faciendum, quoniam bonum morale legis humanae dictat quo modo sit faciendum: et ecce additio aliqua. Sed morale legis divinae dictat cuius intuitu est faciendum, sed hoc dupliciter, quoniam morale legis Moysi dictat cuius reverential faciendum sit bonum, quoniam reverential Dei; morale autem legis Evangelii cuius amore sit faciendum.*”

dignity given by God to the creature *dulia* is owed to it, not of the dignity which is highest, but which is subordinate to that reason from which God is adored.<sup>312</sup>

Thus adoration appears as a term more general than either *latria* or *dulia* as a kind of reverence that can be applied in varying ways. This is why the author asks whether adoration, *latria*, idolatry, and *dulia* can be spoken of univocally, because they all entail reverence. The same outward act of adoration can be given to God, a human being, or to an idol. Therefore, the author notes that true adoration is interior, because...

adoration properly concerns intention, worship concerns affection, and service concerns the body.... However God is able to be venerated in two ways: either interiorly, and thus one is said to worship with interior affection; or exteriorly, and thus one is said to worship with affection in what is effected or in sign. Similarly adoration concerns intention, as was said, the authority of Rabanus having been cited previously, *On Genesis*:<sup>313</sup> ‘To adore is tend toward God, who alone is to be adored, with the whole mind in intention,’ and thus adoration concerns intention. But this is able to be in two ways: either according to which adoration is interior in the heart ‘in spirit and truth,’ and thus the authorities say that adoration is interior; or according to which adoration is exterior in sign and signification of intention, and thus it is an exterior act, when namely a rational creature gives his whole self to God as his principle and cause. However to serve concerns an exterior or bodily work; nevertheless service sometimes is called a (financial) transfer<sup>314</sup> of the rational creature or worshiping or adoring in affection and intention, and thus it is in intention and affection, and thus one says it is an interior act; however, according to this it is an expressed motion of veneration in body, thus it is an exterior act.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> *ibid.* sect. I, quaest. II, tit. I, cii. “*Adoratio est veneratio vel reverentia exhibita ratione dignitatis superioris et excellentis, et hoc per prius et posterius convenit duliae et latriae. Summa enim excellentia dignitatis est in Deo, et ratione illius debetur adoratio latria ipse Deo; excellentia autem dignitatis, quae est in creatura rationali, non est summa, immo ab illa divina et sub illa et ad illam, et ratione istius dignitatis debetur creaturae adoratio duliae. Ex hoc enim quod summum est in Creatore, debet ei creaturae summe, et ratione istius summi in Creature debet adorationem latriae; ratione vero dignitatis datae a Deo creaturae debetur ei dulia, non dignitatis quae summa sit, sed quae sub illa est ratione cuius adoratur Deus.*”

<sup>313</sup> The work is not extant.

<sup>314</sup> I should note that *latria* in Greek originally referred to hired service.

<sup>315</sup> *ibid.* cap. iii. “*Dicendum quod ista distinguuntur hoc modo, quia adorare proprie respicit intentionem, colere affectum, servitus corpus.... Venerari autem Deum secundum affectum potest esse dupliciter: vel interius, et sic colere dicit affectum interius; vel exterius, et sic colere dicit affectum in effectu sive in signo. Similiter adoratio respicit intentionem, sicut dicit praedicta auctoritas Rabani, Super Genesim: ‘Adorare est ad Deum, qui solus est adorandus, tota mentis intentione tendere,’ et sic adoratio respicit intentionem. Sed hoc potest esse dupliciter: vel secundum quod est interius in corde adoratio in spiritu et veritate, et sic dicunt auctoritates quod adoratio est interius; vel secundum quod adoratio est exterius in signo et significatione intentionis, et sic est exterior actus, quando scilicet rationalis creatura totam se donat Deo ut suo principio et causae. Servire autem respicit opus exterius vel corpus; tamen servitus aliquando appellatur mancipatio rationalis creaturae sive colendo sive adorando in affectu et intentione, et sic est in intentione et affectu, et sic dicit actum interiorem; secundum autem quod est expressus motus venerationis in corpore, sic est in actu exteriori.*”

Only outward action that is matched by a proper intention can be adoration in the fullest sense. An act of reverence, such as bending the knee, toward an idol does not stand the test of virtue, because the interior intention gives to a creature what is due to God. A human being may receive this same act of reverence, as long as it clearly respects the fact that only God receives the reverence due to one's principle and cause.

Under the section on adoration, the SFA continues to treat the normal topics which had previously come up under *latria*. For instance, the author lists three ways that *latria* can be taken: for outward acts, for subordinate virtues, or as a virtue in itself. The typical treatments as to whether Christ's flesh, angels, humans, and images are due adoration also occur within the first commandment. The only other new contribution is the an emphasis placed upon God's majesty:

It must be said therefore simply that adoration exists by reason of majesty, because majesty is said to be in respect of elders and those of superior status, which adoration always respects. And thus the reason of majesty remains more from the part of power than of truth or goodness, as it is more by reason of power that God is owed adoration than by truth or goodness, while by reason of majesty [adoration] is owed as service.<sup>316</sup>

Scholastic theology tended to understand God's simple nature through particular attributes, which correspond to human powers. For instance, the human intellect perceives God as truth and the will as desirable or good. The author here seems to present adoration as a type of service, which corresponds to God's majesty. The human stands in awe before God's power and responds by a reverential submittance.

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<sup>316</sup> *ibid.* membrum II. “*Dicendum ergo simpliciter quod adoratio est ratione maiestatis, quia maiestas dicitur respectu maioris et superioris status, quod semper respicit adoratio. Et sicut ratio maiestatis plus se tenet ex parte potestatis quam veritatis vel bonitatis, sic magis ratione potestatis debetur Deo adoratio quam veritatis vel bonitatis, cum ratione maiestatis debeatur servitus illa.*”

While the judicial precepts do touch upon worship, insofar as they include tithes, first fruits, and oblations,<sup>317</sup> the ceremonial precepts stand out for notice due to the role of sacrifice. Concerning the ceremonial precepts in general, the SFA reads: “It must be said that the teaching of the ceremonial is for many as much as it is of things and signs, but differently: of things it is of things ordered toward the *latria* of the Creator (*Conditoris*); of signs it is truly of the grace of the Savior.”<sup>318</sup> That is, these precepts served both a role for the present as they brought the Jews to worship the Creator properly; and also of the future, as they oriented them toward the grace of Christ. The author elaborates on both of these points when expounded on sacrifice, as may be seen in the following two quotations:

It must be noted that for the time [before Christ] the figures were said to please because of four utilities of man, as an enticement of pre-moving virtue, and this was from the beginning before the origin of the superstition of idolatry; after the introduction of idolatry truly these things were said to please God out of comparison on account of the caution of error. First therefore the utility was honoring the divine majesty; second, the signification of truth; third, the fear of severity; fourth, hope or the love of piety or goodness. Sacrifice therefore is said to be pleasing to God, because its institutions were from God in worship and honoring of His majesty, as it [reads] Prov. 3:9: ‘Honor the Lord from your substance;’ however all worship by which God Himself wills to be served honors Him. However, by such honors, such as sacrifice, God was honored, not of the preciousness of these things themselves, but by divine election and institution and of the ones offering in obedience and devotion.<sup>319</sup>

This quotation concerned the worth of the offering in itself while the following focuses on its foreshadowing of Christ:

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<sup>317</sup> cf. *ibid.* Liber III, pars II, Inq. III, tract. 2, sec. 2, quaest. 3.

<sup>318</sup> *ibid.* sec. III, quaest. I, cap. ii. “*Dicendum quod doctrina caerimonialium quantum ad plura est rerum et signorum, sed differenter: rerum ordinarum ad latriam Conditoris; signorum vero gratiae Salvatoris.*”

<sup>319</sup> *ibid.* quaest. IV, cap. ii. “*Notandum igitur est quod pro tempore figurae propter quatuor hominis utilitates dicuntur Deo placita, ut exercitia promovendae virtutis, et hoc ab exordio ante originem superstitionis idolatriae; post introductionem vero idolatriae dicuntur Deo placita ex comparatione propter cautelam erroris. Prima igitur utilitas fuit honorificentia divinae maiestatis; secunda significatione veritatis; tertio, timor severitatis; quarta spes sive amor pietatis seu bonitatis. Sacrificia igitur dicuntur Deo placita, quia institute fuerunt a Deo in cultum et honorificentiam suae maiestatis, iuxta illud Prov. 3, 9: ‘Honora Dominum de tua substantia’; omnis autem cultus quo Deus sibi vult serviri est ei honorificus. Talibus autem muneribus, qualia erant sacrificia, honorabatur Deus, non ipsorum pretiositate, sed divina electione et institutione et offerentium obedientia et devotione.*”

While sacrifice is twofold, as Augustine says, *De civitate Dei X*, visible and invisible, the visible sacrifice, which was made with cattle, was a sign of invisible sacrifice, which consisted in “the duties of a pure mind and good will,’ it must be said therefore that from the dictate of the natural law it (sacrifice) is simply and according to all time an oblation of invisible sacrifice.... Truly about this dictate of nature, not simply, but according to what even according to the state of nature after the fall of the expecting of liberation, there were visible sacrifices of cattle. Whence it must be noted that after the fall of human nature there always remained in man some spark of reason, which dictated that some reparation be made, and from this from the following it was dictated that there be made something in sign of future reparation. Therefore, after searching, a sign appeared by divine illumination, that a sign of future liberation may be made by an oblation of visible sacrifice.<sup>320</sup>

Even in these grotesque animal sacrifices there was some “similarity to the true sacrifice. And thus was found the reason that many were offered, as through the many was designated the plenitude itself of the grace of the Redeemer.”<sup>321</sup> And thus, the foreshadowing of the ceremonial points directly to the fulfillment of the grace of Christ.

The Cross fulfills the precept for sacrifice, which originated in the natural law and whose completion was foreshadowed by the law of Moses, and thus initiated the law of grace. This sacrifice came about also by a twofold sacrifice: “It must be said that the sacrifice of Christ for our redemption was twofold, spiritual and corporeal. The sacrifice of devotion and love for the salvation of the human race was spiritual, because he offered the sacrifice in mind; the sacrifice of the body was corporeal, which He sustained on the Cross or which is represented in the

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<sup>320</sup> *ibid.* cap. iv. “*Cum sit duplex sacrificium sicut dicit Augustinus, X De civitate Dei, visibile et invisibile, visibile sacrificium, quod fuit in pecoribus, signum fuit sacrificii invisibilis quod consistit in ‘purae mentis et bonae voluntatis officiiis,’ Dicendum ergo quod de dictamine legis naturalis fuit simpliciter et secundum omne tempus oblatio sacrificii invisibilis.... De dictamine vero naturae, no simpliciter, sed secundum quid et secundum statum naturae post lapsum expectantis liberationem, fuerunt sacrificia visibilia pecorum. Unde notandum quod post lapsum humane naturae semper remanist in homine aliqua scintilla rationis, quae dictabat quod per aliquid fieret reparatio, et ex hoc ex consequenti dictabat quod faceret aliquid in signum reparationis futurae. Quaerenti igitur signum accessit divina illuminatio, ut signum liberationis futurae faceret oblatio sacrificii visibilis, et ita quodam modo in generali de dictamine naturae erat oblatio visibilis sacrificii. In speciali vero illuniata ratio conferebat sub quadam similitudine signi ad signatum ultra hoc quod dictaverat natura in generali, quod aliquid erat Domino offerendum in signum.*”

<sup>321</sup> *ibid.* “*Addebat ergo ratio, ut ratio, et per collationem invenit quod offerenda erat ovis vel bos magis quam alia, propter quamdam similitudinem horum ad verum sacrificium. Et iterum inveniebat ratio quod plura erant offerenda, ut per plura designaret ipsam plenitudinem gratiae Redemptoris, quae, quamvis una esset simplicitate essentiae, multiplex tamen future erat in virtute.*”

Sacrament under the species of bread.”<sup>322</sup> The progression of sacrifice from the natural law (which *de facto* was the law of sin) to the Old Law and then to the sacrifice of the Church “was more and more a declaration of truth,” that is, a clearer expression of the true sacrifice.<sup>323</sup> Christ demonstrated what sacrifice means: total devotion, which loves God above all else, and which offers the body in total subjection. Sacrifice draws the Christian into Christ’s sacrifice through the law of the Gospel, expounded in the last section of the SFA’s treatment of law. The sacrifice of the Old Law finds its fulfillment as its rites “were material for the exercising of devotion, however devotion to God is ordered toward grace.”<sup>324</sup> The New Law fulfills this devotion, by infusing it with truth “because in the ceremonies the truth is veiled and hidden, which is revealed in the manifestation of the grace of the Gospel.”<sup>325</sup> As the author described when speaking of interior adoration in spirit and truth (Jn 4: 23), the new law brings spiritual worship acceptable to God in grace and the explicit truth concerning God’s nature and the means of redemption.

The SFA’s treatment of law offers a thorough, insightful articulation of worship. The author founds worship upon human nature, oriented by justice toward knowing, loving, and serving God. Sin hinders humanity’s ability to follow through with this natural precept to worship, though the natural law’s continual insinuation of the need to love God serves as a constant reminder and prod toward implicit faith. The Old Law clearly manifests the need to worship God through adoration and to refrain from worshiping any other as one’s origin and end, though there is a proper veneration due to creatures. Sacrifice in a particular points toward the true sacrifice of Christ, which fulfills the order of nature and the foreshadowing of ceremony.

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<sup>322</sup> cap. viii, art. i. “...dicendum quod sacrificium Christi ad nostram redemptionem duplex fuit, spirituale et corporale. Spirituale fuit sacrificium devotionis et amoris salutis humani generis, quod sacrificium obtulit in mente; corporale fuit sacrificium mortis, quam sustinuit in cruce vel quae repraesentatur in Sacramento sub panis specie.”

<sup>323</sup> ibid. art. ii. “magis ac magis esset declaratio veritatis.”

<sup>324</sup> ibid. Inq. IV, Tract. I, quaest. VI, membr. ii, cap. i. “...erant material exercendae devotionis, devotio autem ad Deum ordinat ad gratiam.”

<sup>325</sup> ibid. cap. iv, art. i. “...quia in caerimonialibus est veritas velata et obrumbata, quae in exhibitione gratiae Evangelii est revelata.”

This masterful account offers new details to the outline the author had inherited from the accounts described above. Though he does not emphasize justice, the moral order within the natural law serves the same purpose and the thorough treatment of the Mosaic Law adds new biblically based depth to the discussion. The author does distance his theological account from Cicero's philosophy. While he does give a place to his definition of religion, it does not taken on a central role as it had for Auxerre and Philip. Nevertheless, the author presents a clear emphasis throughout the entire treatment in that each kind of law points toward the necessity to worship God with one's whole self, which requires truth, love, and service.

St. Bonaventure, who may even have contributed to the SFA project, does show some striking similarities to this work both in his *Commentary on the Sentences* and in his *Collations on the Ten Commandments*. Two other of his works, however, the *Breviloquium* and the *Hexaëmeron* demonstrate great ingenuity on the topic and offer some boldly new insights, especially in the relation of piety to the Trinity. First, we must turn to his *Commentary on the Sentences*.<sup>326</sup> Bonaventure agrees with the SFA in a very significant regard, namely that he continues a dichotomy between types of worship, placing interior worship in the category of *theosebia* tied to the theological virtues and exterior worship to *latria* as a part of justice. This follows the separation in the SFA between religion as part of human law and the reverence toward God, which is ordered toward grace. Bonaventure comments as follows:

*Latria* is said to be service or worship owed to God, and thus the two (worship and service) are accepted for each other, though they differ according to their proper reception. For the worship of God concerns an interior and exterior act, though more interior than exterior; service truly concerns an exterior act. And therefore, while *latria*

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<sup>326</sup> In his *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, J. Guy Bougerol gives the background for his *Commentary on the Sentences*. trans. Jose de Vinck. (Paterson, New Jersey: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1964), 99-108. Bougerol notes the strong influence of Alexander on this work. For a brief overview of the virtue of religion in Bonaventure's *Commentary on the Sentences*, see Philippe Delhay. "La vertu de religion dans l'enseignement de S Bonaventure. En hommage au R P Victorin Doucet." *Culture* v 26 no 4 (1965): 387-398. Delhay also briefly investigates the relation of Bonaventure's exposition of religion to Augustine, Allain of Lille, Simon of Tournai, and Peter Lombard.

by reason of its name is the same as service... [it] properly concerns an exterior act; *theosebia* or *eusebia* truly are the same as divine worship, or good worship, and therefore concern an interior act. And because the virtue which concerns the exterior act is turned to that mode concerning action it is in the genus of cardinal virtue, from which it is that *latria* is a cardinal virtue. And because one considers the exterior act under the reason of debt and in compassion to another, and this is of justice itself, therefore *latria* is contained under cardinal virtue, of which indeed is justice.... However, *latria* and *theosebia* differ according to their proper reception, *it is permitted in some way that they be accepted for each other*, because he says *theosebia* is an interior worship, which properly tends toward the theological virtues, but *latria* [tends toward] the exterior servitude, which aims at justice, namely a cardinal virtue. It must be conceded therefore that *latria* is a cardinal virtue.<sup>327</sup>

The common link to the SFA does not deny Bonaventure's own contribution for this passage clarifies a few ambiguities in the previous tradition. By putting forth two types of worship, one linked to the theological virtues and one to justice, Bonaventure avoids the cumbersome and ambiguous attempt to explain how the theological virtues fall under acts of justice. For instance, Philip had called justice a divine virtue, yet not a theological one. Bonaventure clarifies the distinction even further by examining the way different kinds of virtue relate to God. He elaborates:

It must be said that *latria* names a habit, it also names worship of God, to which that habit is ordered. However the worship of God is able to be accepted in three ways: generally, properly, and more properly. In one way worship is called an act directed into God under the reason of end; thus is [said] of all virtue. By another way worship is called an act directed into God not only by reason of end, but also of object; thus is [said]

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<sup>327</sup> St. Bonaventure. *Opera Theologica Selecta*. Tomus III. Liber III. *Sententiarum*. (Florence: Quaracchi, 1941), dist. IX, art. ii, quaest. iii. "...ut dicatur *latria* esse *servitus* sive *cultus* Deo *debitus*, et *ista* duo quasi pro eodem accipiantur, differunt tamen secundum propriam acceptionem. *Cultus* enim Dei respicit actum interiorum et exteriorum et magis interiorum quam exteriorum; *servitus* vero proprie respicit actum exteriorum. Et ideo, cum *latria* de ratione sui vocabuli idem sit quod *servitus*... *latria* proprie respicit actum exteriorum; *theosebia* vero vel *eusebia* idem est quod *cultus* divinus, sive *bonus cultus*, et ideo proprie respicit actum interiorum. Et quoniam *virtus* quae respicit actum exteriorum versatur quodam modo circa actionem et est in genere virtutis cardinalis, hinc est quod *latria* est virtus cardinalis. Et quia considerat actum exteriorum sub ratione debiti et in comparatione ad alterum, et hoc est ipsius iustitiae, ideo *latria* continetur sub virtute cardinali, quae quidem est iustitia.... Differunt autem *latria* et *theosebia* secundum propriam acceptionem, licet aliquando accipiantur pro eodem, quia *theosebia* dicitur cultum interiorum, qui proprie spectat ad virtutes theologicas, sed *latria* servitutem exteriorum, quae spectat ad iustitiam, scilicet virtutem cardinalem. Concedendum est ergo *latriam* esse virtutem cardinalem." Bonaventure divides this distinction into two parts, the first of which deals with questions concerning the proper recipient of *latria* (Christ's flesh, Mary, even members of Christ's body, etc.) and the second deals with the nature of *latria* as a virtue (special virtue, cardinal or theological, etc.). Another prominent link with the SFA comes from Bonaventure's frequent usage of the term *adoratio*, which he defines with Rabanus.



of the theological virtues. In a third way the worship of God is called more properly an act direct into God, not only under reason of end and object, but also under the reason of honor; and such is the act of adoration.<sup>328</sup>

Therefore all virtue can be worship of God insofar as it orders one to God as end and does its proper act out of debt to Him as principle and end. The theological virtues worship God directly as their object, through this worship occurs through their proper acts for it falls to *latria* to have its proper act to honor God through worship. Though there may seem to be some confusion once again between the theological virtues and *latria*, Bonaventure describes the difference:

To that which is objected that *latria* has God as its object, it must be said that if *latria* has God as its object, nevertheless [it does so] in some way when this concerns something created... thus even *latria* itself concerns God as the one to whom honor is to be exhibited; it concerns also exterior worship to be exhibited; it concerns even the reason of exhibiting, namely the reason of debt; and this is like a formal reason and is something created. From this it is that, when a virtue is placed in a species or in a formal genus [it is] from the part of the object, which it has by reason of the form and motive, because *latria* is in the genus of cardinal virtue.... However if *latria* is called interior worship, when that consists in believing and loving and hoping in God, as Augustine said in his *Enchiridion*, thus it is not to be placed as a cardinal virtue, but theological.<sup>329</sup>

For Bonaventure, *latria* concerns only the worship of outward servitude and if one wants to use the word to refer to interior worship then it ceases to refer to a virtue underneath justice and begins to refer to the worship of the theological virtues. The created object of *latria* concerns the debt which one owes to God. It seeks to fulfill this debt with God's as the indirect object of this

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<sup>328</sup> *ibid.* quaest. ii. “*Dicendum quod latria nominat habitum, nominat etiam cultum Dei, ad quem ille habitus ordinatur. Cultus autem Dei potest accipi tripliciter: generaliter et proprie et magis proprie. Uno modo dicitur cultus actus directus in Deum sub ratione finis; sic est omnis virtutis. Alio modo dicitur cultus Dei actus in Deum directus, non solum ratione finis, sed etiam obiecti; sic est virtutem theologiarum. Tertio modo cultus Dei dicitur magis proprie actus directus in Deum, non solum sub ratione finis et obiecti, sed etiam sub ratione honorabilis; et talis actus est actus adorationis.*” There are three kinds of sacrifice, which correspond to these three types of worship. The sacrifice of all virtue is “of good work,” that of the theological virtues “of devoted prayer,” and of *latria* “of immolation.” *ibid.*

<sup>329</sup> *ibid.* quaest. iii. ad. 6. “*Ad illud quod obicitur, quod latria habet obiectum Deum, dicendum quod, si latria habeat obiectum Deum, aliquo modo tamen cum hoc respicit aliquod creatum.... sic et ipsa latria respicit Deum ut cui honor exhibendus est; respicit etiam cultum exteriorem exhibendum; respicit etiam rationem exhibendi, videlicet rationem debiti; et haec est quasi ratio formalis ipsius et est quid creatum. Hinc est quod, cum virtus ponatur in specie vel in genere formali ex parte obiecti, quod habet rationem formalem et motivi, quod latria est in genere virtutis cardinalis.... Si autem latria dicatur cultus interior, cum ille consistat in credendo et diligendo et sperando Deum, sicut dicit Augustinus, in Enchiridion, sic non ponitur esse virtus cardinalis, sed theologica.*”

act as the one to whom the debt is rendered with an exterior act of reverence. The theological virtues, on the other hand, act through human nature's interior powers of intellect and will and have God as the proper object of their act.

The *Collations on the Ten Commandments* continues the tradition of placing *latria* within the first commandment. This follows the SFA, yet in this later work, Bonaventure returns to a fairly straight forward explication of *latria*. He begins by noting that the whole Law commands nothing but justice.... on the first [tablet] are contained the commandments ordering us to God.”<sup>330</sup> The “first commandment teaches the humble adoration of the highest majesty”<sup>331</sup> in order to elicit the response: “Lord, it is you whom we ought to adore and whom we ought to serve; it is you who have created me; it is you who have redeemed me.”<sup>332</sup> This repeats the traditional formula of *latria/religio* through worship and service as owed to God for creation and redemption. What may be most significant from this short treatment concerns Bonaventure's linking of the first three commands to the three Persons of the Trinity. He states: “To the Father is attributed majesty; to the Son, truth; and to the Holy Spirit, goodness. In the Father the highest majesty is to be humbly adored; in the Son the highest truth is to be faithfully confessed; in the Holy Spirit the highest goodness is to be sincerely loved.”<sup>333</sup> Thus, the first commandment, which prescribes worship, focuses specifically on the Father (not of course to the exclusion of the Son and Holy Spirit). This attribution will prove significant when we turn to the *Hexaemeron*, where the Father receives veneration from the other two divine Persons. Before moving on, it is important to note once again how Bonaventure preserves insights from the SFA, such as the focus on majesty and adoration as the purpose of the first commandment.

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<sup>330</sup> Bonaventure. *Works of Saint Bonaventure. VI. Collations on the Ten Commandments.* trans. Paul J. Spaeth. (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1995), I, xxi.

<sup>331</sup> *ibid.* III, xv.

<sup>332</sup> *ibid.* II, xi.

<sup>333</sup> *ibid.* I, xxii.

By looking at the *Breviloquium* and *Hexaemeron* simultaneously one can perceive a holistic account of worship in Bonaventure. I will begin with the influence of his method on his account of worship, will then move to the role of the moral life, and will end with his rich theological account of worship.<sup>334</sup> Bonaventure lays out a theological vision, which recognizes the order of God's creation and extends that order toward union with God through wisdom.<sup>335</sup> The natural order assists in the ascent toward God since "the first Principle created this perceptible world as a means of self-revelation so that, like a mirror of God or a divine footprint, it might lead man to love and praise his Creator."<sup>336</sup> Before the Fall this occurred with great ease, though after the Fall this has been disrupted, as Bonaventure explains:

It is certain that as long as man stood up, he had the knowledge of created things and through their significance, was carried up to God, to praise, worship, and love Him. This is what creatures are for, and this is how they are led back to God. But when man had fallen, since he had lost knowledge, there was no longer any one to lead creatures back to God. Hence this book, the world, became as dead and deleted. And it was necessary that there be another book through which this one would be lighted up.... And so, Scripture has the power to restore the whole world toward the knowledge, praise, and love of God.<sup>337</sup>

Scripture enlightens humanity and moves it toward its true end in God, which sets all of creation on its proper trajectory toward God. Bonaventure uses language such as Scripture adapting

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<sup>334</sup> Bonnie Kent examines the *Hexaemeron*'s moral teaching in relation to Bonaventure's criticism of Aristotle. *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century*. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 46-59. She notes a discrepancy between the Quarrachi text and the one published by Ferdinand Delorme in 1934. In the former "the language is more violent, and the criticisms of Aristotle are more frequent." 49. The variants are "especially important when one attempts to determine his attitude to Aristotle's ethics." 50. Unfortunately, she notes that there does not seem to be an easy solution to this problem. However, regardless of which edition one uses, she argues that rather than condemning Aristotle outright, Bonaventure was more concerned to show his limits for his "contemporaries, who should know that the ethics of pagan philosophy has limitations." 58.

<sup>335</sup> John Quinn articulates the relation of philosophy and theology in Bonaventure's thought. He states: "Using philosophy, nonetheless, theology makes a substrate of philosophical knowledge and, taking what it needs from natural things, erects a ladder as it were with its feet touching earth and its peak touching heaven. The whole of the theology, therefore, is modeled after Christ, who is both human and divine." "The Moral Philosophy of St. Bonaventure." in *Bonaventure and Aquinas: Enduring Philosophers*. ed. Robert W. Shahan and Francis J. Kovach. (Tulsa: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 26.

<sup>336</sup> St. Bonaventure. *The Works of Bonaventure*. II. *The Breviloquium*. trans. Jose de Vinck. (Paterson, New Jersey: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1963), Part II, ch. 11, ii.

<sup>337</sup> *ibid.* *The Works of Bonaventure*. V. *Collations on the Six Days (Collationes in Hexaemeron)*. trans. Jose de Vinck. (Paterson, New Jersey: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1970), Collation XIII, xii.

creation to its final end<sup>338</sup> and theology erecting a ladder toward God, which points toward his use of philosophical knowledge of the natural order to mirror divine things.<sup>339</sup> Therefore, in order for creation to reach its goal of praising God through humanity, Scripture may set it aright and it does so since it “is essentially based on knowledge stemming from faith, which is the motive power and foundation of morals, justice, and all right living, [therefore] there can be no disassociation between knowledge pertaining to faith and that pertaining to morals.”<sup>340</sup>

Bonaventure is clear that worship does arise from the very natural order of creation, but that it cannot achieve its end without the enlightenment of knowledge and moral assistance that comes through faith. Thus, his method takes nature seriously, while grounding it strongly in a theological vision of redemption.

Bonaventure continues to build upon the natural in his account of the moral life. Grace models nature in its restoration of what has fallen:

As in the act of conveying life in the order of nature, the creating Principle, because of His own supreme perfection, conveys this life not only in its first perfection, which is life as such, but also in its second perfection, which is action; so also, of necessity, in the act of conveying life to the spirit in the order of grace, the restoring Principle conveys it both as being and as action.<sup>341</sup>

As grace enters the soul there are three levels of restoration to heal and perfect it. “Hence sanctifying grace branches out into the habits of the virtues, that set the soul aright, those of the gifts, that urge it on, and those of the beatitudes, that lead it to perfection.”<sup>342</sup> This grace conforms the soul to God as it lives in “perfect rectitude” both towards what is “high” and what is “low.”<sup>343</sup> “In the upward direction, the soul, being the likeness of the eternal Trinity, must be

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<sup>338</sup> cf. *Brev.* prologue 4, v.

<sup>339</sup> cf. *ibid.* prologue 3, i.

<sup>340</sup> *ibid.* prologue 1, ii.

<sup>341</sup> *ibid.* V, 4, iii.

<sup>342</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>343</sup> *ibid.* iv.

set aright through the three theological virtues.... Through these, the soul is carried straight up to the supreme Trinity in a way corresponding to the appropriated attributes of the three

Persons.<sup>344</sup> The correspondence to the three Persons will be treated below, but in the meantime let us note the role of grace toward what is lower:

On the lower level, also, the soul must be set aright, through the four cardinal virtues. Prudence rectifies the rational faculties, fortitude the irascible appetite, temperance the concupiscible appetite, while justice directs all these powers in their relation to a given person. And because this person may be either one's neighbor or oneself considered as the object of one's own action, or again, God, justice is said to embrace very possible power. That is why it is called, not only a cardinal virtue, but also a general virtue that comprehends the rectitude of the whole soul; wherefore it may be defined as 'rectitude of the will.'<sup>345</sup> Justice is not limited to those virtues which concern neighbor alone – for instance, equity and generosity; it applies also to those which concern oneself—for instance repentance and innocence—and to those which refer to God—for instance, adoration, dutiful love, and obedience.<sup>346</sup>

Once again, we see two distinct ways of relating to God, a more direct movement toward Him through faith, hope, and love, which “resembles God through a trinity of habits with unity of grace,” and a lower path of rectitude of the soul, which honors God. On this first level, the level built upon the powers of the soul, justice plays a crucial role in ordering all of one's actions toward God in a dutiful and reverent manner.

Justice plays an essential role in orienting one toward God. Bonaventure links justice to obedience to divine law and rectitude of the will, both of which are necessary for salvation. To make this clear Bonaventure states that “the purpose of Scriptural doctrine is that we become virtuous and attain salvation. This is effected, not by mere speculation, but by a disposition of

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<sup>344</sup> *ibid.* For Bonaventure's approach to the Trinity and the role it plays in his theology see Zachary Hayes “Bonaventure: Mystery of the Triune God.” in *The History of Franciscan Theology*. ed. Kenan Osborne (St. Bonaventure, New York: The Franciscan Institute, 1994), 53-61.

<sup>345</sup> cf. Philip the Chancellor's definition.

<sup>346</sup> *ibid.* v. The *Hexameron* states concerning the cardinal virtues that they “are impressed upon the soul by the said exemplary light, and they go down into the cognitive, the affective, and the operative faculties.... These are the four exemplary virtues with which the whole of Scriptures are concerned.” VI, x. Quinn notes that for Bonaventure “all four virtues flow into the soul from the eternal light and, taking the soul back to its origin, make it apt for contemplation or beatitude.” 53.

the will,<sup>347</sup> a disposition, which he links with “the order of justice.”<sup>348</sup> Justice orders the will not only in regards to the formation of habits, which guide the passions, but also in the total order of the soul toward God. Therefore, Bonaventure describes justice’s “main purpose, which is to safeguard the honor of God.”<sup>349</sup> Justice exhibits honor to God both by “compliance with the rules of law,”<sup>350</sup> and “in showing reverence.”<sup>351</sup> This can only be done with assistance of grace for before “supreme justice” must come “total submission.... Now, it is the function of grace to order our mind to due worship of the first principle.”<sup>352</sup> The submission of the will toward God, which gives Him true honor must come through the aid of grace. It is only “grace that makes our will conform to the will of God, it is grace also that disposes us to accept and follow the rules of justice imposed by the divinely given law.”<sup>353</sup> The natural order justly demands this conformity of the will as the soul humbly and reverently submits to the Creator. Grace enables this and through it justice orients one’s whole life toward the honor of God, rectifying human nature and contributing toward one’s worship of God.

Thus, it has been seen that Bonaventure proposes a general theory that nature’s end, which is to glorify God and lead humanity toward His praise. He further specifies that justice orients the will toward God and honors Him as one acquires virtue and submits to Him in obedience. In both cases, of nature and the will, Bonaventure demonstrates the natural order and then the supernatural manner of its fulfillment. This same patterns continues in his treatment of worship. Justice truly disposes toward it as a part of its own duty. This can be known naturally as even...

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<sup>347</sup> *Brev.* prol. v, ii.

<sup>348</sup> *ibid.* III, x, ii.

<sup>349</sup> *ibid.* VII, iii, iii.

<sup>350</sup> *ibid.* V, ix, ii. Bonaventure continues: “therefore divine justice must... impress judicial norms upon the minds of men.”

<sup>351</sup> *Hex.* VI, xviii.

<sup>352</sup> *Brev.* V, vii, iii.

<sup>353</sup> *ibid.* V, ix, ii.

all true philosophers worshipped a single God.... The worship of God is dutiful expression of faith. Thus Tully says that propriety consists in the cult of the gods.... Now the worship of God consists in praise and sacrifice. The manner in which sacrifice was introduced is seen in the fact that Abel offered a sacrifice by faith and so did Noah.... And these sacrifices represented that which Christ offered on the cross.... A man who makes such sacrifices offers the blood of Christ, in that it was shed in order to appease the Father. But the sacrifice of praise imposes upon the heart something naturally related to judgment: it is concerned with a command of nature; and in this all true philosophers agree. Hence he (Aristotle) says that ‘whoever doubts whether parents are to be honored and God is to be venerated, is deserving of punishment.’<sup>354</sup>

While Bonaventure speaks here concerning the teaching of philosophers (and even as a philosopher in this instance) in regards to the role of the rite of worship in politics, it is clear that even this discussion must include reference to the true nature of sacrifice, that of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross. It is the early patriarchs who demonstrate its proper nature, offered with faith in God, looking toward redemption. It does fulfill a natural precept, which the philosophers (Socrates, Plato, Cicero, and Aristotle are mentioned by name) recognized, though this precept requires a deeper connection to God that only grace can bring.

In describing how grace enables one to fulfill this natural precept, Bonaventure turns again to the appropriation of the Persons of the Trinity to the first three commandments. In the twenty-first collation of the *Hexaemeron*, he proposes a bold theory of piety, which turns to the Trinity as a model. This extraordinary passage must be quoted at some length.

It should be understood, then, that concerning God trine and one, there come about appropriations of essential properties appropriated according to this number nine. Some of them concern the Trinity as originating principle, others, as governing means, others, again, as final completion, in the act of beatifying all things.... The second appropriation is made to the Eternal Sun [Trinity] insofar as it is the medium that governs all things. In

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<sup>354</sup> Hex. V, xiv-xvii. What is extraordinary, in relation to the SFA, is that this quote concerns Bonaventure’s exposition of the dictates of political law, in which he speaks “as a philosopher.” This places the religion of the pagans within human law. The reference to Aristotle comes from *Topics*. I. xi. Quinn comments on this passage in the *Hexaemeron*, places it within the development of Bonaventure’s thought, and makes note of how he relates religion and piety. 48-49. He also notes the role of Christ in emulating the role of reverence for Bonaventure: “As a man, Christ gave us the most perfect example of observing the moral law by subjecting himself in worship to his Creator, in truth to his teachers, and in piety to his parents. Christ is the master or teacher of morals and of the whole of moral philosophy: He would direct us to order every good to the supreme and essential good.” 47. Quinn points the reader to Bonaventure’s *Commentary on Luke* (c 2 vv 39-52, nn 91-111) on this point.

this regards, three [attributes] are appropriated, to wit, piety, truth, and holiness, for all governing and law-giving is pious, true, and holy.... Out of these three come forth three laws, and there cannot be more; that is, of nature, of Scripture, and of grace. The law of nature is appropriated to the Father, the law of Scripture to the Word, and the law of grace to the Holy Spirit. The law of nature is the law of piety. Now piety is found to exist within every nature, even insensible.... Likewise, in animals, piety is seen in the relationship between parents and offspring, for whatever they taste and eat that is beyond their need—and even within their need—they convert into milk and food for their young. The law of Scripture is the law of truth, for it consists in a sense in a pronouncement of a true promise. The law of holiness is the law of grace.... Through these three, God the Trinity is pious, true, and holy, offering a pious law of nature, a true law of Scripture, and a holy law of grace. And through these three He governs the world, and according to these three, He imprints laws in the rational mind. For all moral law is dependent upon these three... And everyone of the Persons is in a state of piety, truth, and holiness in relation to Himself and in relation to the others: so that the Father is pious toward Himself, toward the Son, and toward the Holy Spirit, and true, and holy. And from this fact, that He is the pious worshipper of Himself, the true witness to Himself, and the holy lover of Himself, there comes down from heaven a threefold radiation in the mind, according to the three commandments of the first tablet. For the creature must behave in relation to God in a manner that is pious, true, and holy.<sup>355</sup>

Worship no longer stands as a mere precept of nature concerning the creature's relation toward the Creator, but rather stems from an imitation of the very Being of God. God justly honors Himself for His excellence and so the creature must honor Him as well, clinging to Him for life and redemption. This makes clear that for Bonaventure, nature exists as a reflection of God Himself so that it does not stand as something contradictory against Him, but rather as a reflection of Him through the laws which flow through it. The law of piety particularly runs throughout nature as all things point toward and glorify their maker. The human appropriates this law in a special way through a rational comprehension of it and therefore offers a free act of worship, which knows and loves the recipient.

Christ manifests perfect worship since His existence brings together both the perfect piety within the Trinity, but also the perfect expression of creation through His humanity. This is what Bonaventure describes as the union between “the adorable and the adoring,” a union brought

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<sup>355</sup> *ibid.* XXI, iv-viii.



about by “a grace above all grace, a grace worthy of worship.... whereby Christ the Man... is to be adored.”<sup>356</sup> Through the adoration of Christ, one is brought into the perfect adoration and honor that Christ gave to the Father. Christ’s actions serve as both example and exemplar in which we share by grace. He demonstrated “the perfect disposition of charity and the perfect practice of virtue in praying, acting, and suffering,”<sup>357</sup> which includes even piety.<sup>358</sup> Thus, the act of redemption must exhibit the proper piety and devotion, which humanity’s first parents failed to perform and which the law of sin distorted. Therefore, Bonaventure argues that “the work of restoration must respect the honor of God. Christ, therefore, brought it about by offering to the Father a fully satisfactory obedience.”<sup>359</sup> This obedience served not only to justify humanity before God through the perfect devotion of one of its members, but also initiated a new means of worship. This worship now enables one to fully and explicitly worship God by offering a true sacrifice. Bonaventure states that...

because the time in which grace was revealed demanded the offering, not of a victim of any kind, but of one that would be pure, acceptable, and all-sufficient; and none such exists but the one offered on the cross, that is the body and blood of Christ: the body and blood of Christ had to be present in this sacrament, not only figuratively but in reality, as a gift to suit the time.<sup>360</sup>

Through the Eucharist one can join in the perfect offering of the man Christ, the only one who was fully united to the piety of the Son of God. That piety enabled Him to exhibit perfect obedience, reverence, devotion, and love, which are bestowed on those with faith as gifts.<sup>361</sup>

Thus stands the movement from the order of creation and the principles of morality to perfect worship in the thought of St. Bonaventure. His writing on worship as a whole clearly

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<sup>356</sup> Brev. IV, v, iv.

<sup>357</sup> *ibid.* IV, vii, i. cf. *Hex.* XVIII, ix. Here Bonaventure points to Christ as the exemplar of all virtue.

<sup>358</sup> *ibid.* V, v, vi.

<sup>359</sup> *ibid.* IV, ix, iii.

<sup>360</sup> *ibid.* VI, ix, iii.

<sup>361</sup> *ibid.* I, ii, iii. “Since faith is the first condition of divine worship and the foundation of ‘doctrine which is according to godliness’ (1 Tim 6:3), it requires that our thinking about God be of the loftiest and most devout order.”

shows either his own contribution to the SFA or his close dependence on it. The common language and themes between them demand attention, such as the focus on interior and exterior worship, the distinction between religion as a part of human law and worship as ordered by grace, and the usage of adoration to describe worship. No matter their origin, Bonaventure draws on these themes in his own writing and takes them to a new speculative level. His conception of the relation between justice and the theological virtues (though not accepted by Aquinas) contributed new precision. He upheld the natural order without even the appearance of accepting its autonomy apart from grace. The two necessarily stand together in his thought, so much so that even the natural law's precept of piety stems from the inner life of the Trinity. Bonaventure's articulation compels attention due to the fact that he successfully pulls together natural principles, virtue, the Trinity, and Christ's redemption into one systematic vision of the role of worship.

It will appear as somewhat of deceleration to move from Bonaventure to Albert the Great. Bonaventure reached the height of complexity and creativity in his articulation of worship, while Albert focused primarily on explicating the role of justice and virtue. His sober account stands last in this tour of Thomas' predecessors since Albert taught Thomas and most likely exerted more influence on him than any other scholastic author. If nothing else, it appears likely that the crucial role of justice (as understood in an Aristotelian sense) and its parts (in the Ciceronian context) comes from his tutelage.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>362</sup> James Weisheipl complains "of the dreadful dearth of serious studies, particularly in English, about Albert," and that "certainly there is nothing written in English that can serve as a reliable guide." "Preface;" "The Life and Works of St. Albert the Great." in *Albertus Magnus and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays.* ed. James A. Weisheipl. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980), ix; 15. Though this collection of essays can be seen as move in the right direction for Albert's relation to the sciences, the dearth still exists in regards to his theological thought.

Before turning to his exposition of justice in the *De bono*, let us first examine his *Commentary on the Sentences*. Emphasis on philosophical precision marks his analysis of *latria*. First of all, though his predecessors subdivided *latria* into many aspects (interior and exterior, heart, word, deed, etc.), Albert makes clear that all of these parts truly adhere in one thing, which is the intention to worship. He states: “It must be said that worship has many material acts, but one formal, namely the exhibition of worship in testimony of owed honor to the Creator: because He Himself is God, or Creator. For there is one reason in all material acts, which unites all.”<sup>363</sup> The intention, previously deemed internal, now stands as the form, which imparts identity to the external, so that the many and diverse acts can be seen as constituting the same kind of act. Even internal actions such...

as to believe, to love, to hope, are said to be acts, which are able to be materially in the act of this virtue, namely if one believes or loves with the intention of professing oneself in those to worship God into the testimony of honor owed to Him: but nevertheless to believe, to love, to hope name the act of faith and charity and hope: and thus about others. Whence to believe from its own reason does not concern the obedience of worship, but rather the agreement of the first truth... And in that case they are separate from the act of *latria* for it is not fitting that one act be not proper, but common, diverse being informed by difference, as is of diverse virtues.<sup>364</sup>

Albert attempts to clear up any confusion caused by the association of the theological virtues and worship. The theological virtues had been subsumed under *latria* as its parts (Auxerre) or even

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<sup>363</sup> Albert the Great. *Opera Omnia. Volumen Vicesimum Octavum. Commentarii in III Sententiarum.* ed. S.C.A Borgnet. (Paris: Ludovicum Vives, Bibliopolam Editorem, 1894), dist. IX, art. i. ad. 3. “*Ad aliud dicendum, quod cultus in multis actibus est materialis, sed unus est formalis, scilicet exhibitio cultus in testimonium honoris debiti Creatori: quia ipse Deus est, vel Creator. Illa enim ratio in omnibus materialibus una est, et unit omnes.*”

<sup>364</sup> *ibid.* ad 5. “*Ad aliud dicendum, quod credere, diligere, sperare, dicunt actus qui materiales possunt esse in actu istius virtutis, scilicet si credit vel diligit intentione profitendi se in hoc colere Deum in testimonium honoris debiti: sed tamen credere, diligere, sperare nominant actus fidei et charitatis et spei: et sic de aliis. Unde credere de ratione sua non respicit obsequium cultus, sed potius consensum primae veritatis. Similiter charitas primae bonitatis respicit rationem, et sic de aliis. Et tunc distant ab actu latriae: non est enim inconveniens, quod actus non proprius, sed communis, diversis informatus differentiis, sit diversarum virtutum.*” Virtues are not only brought under this virtue to honor God, but can also be guided by the intention to give God glory, which Albert distinguishes from worship. “It is one thing to give glory to the Lord and another to render worship to God: because the first concerns the rectitude of intention only, while the second the rectitude of worship and honor owed and exhibited.” *ibid.* ad 6. “*Ad aliud dicendum, quod aliud est ad gloriam Domini facere, et aliud ad cultum Dei referre: quia primum respicit rectitudinem intentionis tantum, secundum autem rectitudinem cultus et honoris debiti exhibiti.*”

given their own kind of worship (Bonaventure). Albert distinguishes them based on their distinct acts. Turning back to the classic text of Augustine, in his *Enchiridion*, which initiated the question of the relation of theological virtues and worship, one could take worshipping in faith, hope, and love to mean that in order for worship to be proper it must presuppose these virtues or even that by believing, hoping, and loving one gives what is due to God. What Albert attempts to clarify is that the act of these virtues is quite distinct from the act of worship. For instance, he argues: “it is clear that faith manifests what must be worshipped, nevertheless it does move toward worshipping as the proper habit of its act; but rather it moves toward believing.”<sup>365</sup> Bonaventure had also made this distinction by recognizing that *latria* worships under the aspect of debt, but nevertheless he maintained distinct types of worship.

Albert’s other main contribution entailed making clear the implications of *latria/religio* as a virtue. First of all, Albert is clear that *latria* is a part of justice since it is “worship owed to God” and because it “orders to a superior.”<sup>366</sup> Not only this, but it “falls under the part of justice, which is religion.”<sup>367</sup> For Albert there is no distinction between religion and *latria* and in this he follows the tradition of Auxerre and Philip over the SFA and Bonaventure. He links the themes of intention and justice together in the following: “For the intention of the act is in that which ‘the act of what is being accomplished’ is terminated, and that is in the work of justice to render a debt... in the work of *latria* [this is] divine ceremony.”<sup>368</sup> *Latria/religio* is a virtue because it intends the worship of God and does so by terminating this intention in act. Therefore, Albert distinguishes the virtue, which concerns the intention, and the actual worship given. Though the

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<sup>365</sup> *ibid.* art. iii. ad 1. “*Dicendum ergo ad primum, quod licet fides ostendat quid colendum, tamen non movet ad colendum, ut proprius habitus hujus actus: sed potius movet ad credendum.*”

<sup>366</sup> *ibid.* *sed videtur.* “...*dicitur cultus Deo debitus.... ordinat ad superiorem.*”

<sup>367</sup> *ibid.* *solutio.* “*Dicendum cum Tullio, quod est pars justitiae, et cadit in partem justitiae quae est religio.*”

<sup>368</sup> *ibid.* art. vi. ad 1. “*Intentio enim operis est in quo terminator actus efficientis, et ille est in opera justitiae debitum reddere... et in opera latriae caerimonia divina.*”

two necessarily go together, they can be distinguished. For instance, one can give a proper act with a poor intention or a right intention could be expressed poorly. Therefore he states:

Religion and the worship of God are not the same: but religion is the observance (care) of the ones worshipping derived from worship, and by means of worship observed. Whence religion is named as binding: and it unites worshipping to the life of which worship concords. And Augustine notes this distinctly saying that *latria* is worship by which God is worshipped: however the religion which is in us is towards God.... it must be said that love is about worship materially, and thus it moves [toward it]. However sacrifice is *per se* as an act of worship.<sup>369</sup>

It is the concurrence of a right intention with actual acts of worship, which forms the virtue, since both must be present. Religion as a virtue cannot be constituted simply by acts of worship, since it also requires the intention of honoring God through them. Likewise, the internal intention must consummate itself in acts of worship; otherwise it would not truly give honor to God. Justice must actually give what is due. In this way, Albert does recognize the distinction between the internal and the external, but not as separate types of worship, but rather two aspects of the same whole. This unifying brought about a simplification of the account of *latria/religio*, which carried over into Aquinas' *Summa*.

Albert's treatise *De bono* marks a turning point in the sense that it stands completely within a philosophical context, treating religion solely as a part of justice.<sup>370</sup> For instance, in comparison with Philip the Chancellor's *Summa de bono*, where Philip included sections on grace and the theological virtues, Albert focuses solely on the nature of good and the cardinal

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<sup>369</sup> *ibid.* art. viii. ad 2 and 3. "*Ad aliud dicendum, quod religio et cultus Dei non sunt idem: sed religio est observantia colentium derivata ex cultu, et propter cultum observata. Unde dicit religio quasi religatio: et ligat colentium ad vitam quae culturae concordat. Et hoc notat Augustinus distincte dicens, quod latria est cultus qua colitur Deus: religio autem quae in nobis est erga Deum.... Ad aliud dicendum, quod dilectio est de cultu materialiter, et sicut movens. Sacrificium autem per se ut actus cultus.*"

<sup>370</sup> Weisheipl identifies the *De bono* as the sixth and final part of Albert's *Summa Parisiensis*, which "originated in Albert's public disputations as master in the University of Paris." 22. cf. Houser, "Introduction." 56-57. Houser identifies a major advancement from Philip's *De bono*, which he affirms as "clearly indebted to Philip's *Summa*, even down to its title." He argues: "By making the good of grace a species under the moral good Albert successfully made room in his general schema for acquired virtues in addition to infused ones. This produced a more satisfactory account of the three classes of virtue than had the Chancellor's scheme. Content with Philip's work on the theological virtues, Albert could then confine his *De bono* to the four cardinal virtues and include the specific 'political' virtues as their parts, since both are acquired." 57.

virtues. This certainly changes the tone of Albert's treatment, although he by no means excludes theological considerations. Concerning justice, the final treatise of the work, Albert's divides his treatment into two major points, both of which deal with religion. The first of which explicates law (both natural (q. 1) and civil (q. 2)) while the second deals with justice as a virtue (qs. 3 and 4).<sup>371</sup> The natural law concerns religion, even foundationally, because "the natural law is nothing another than the law of reason or debt, inasmuch as nature is reason."<sup>372</sup> Albert continues:

However, when I say 'Nature is reason,' [reason] is able to be understood more as nature or more as reason or as nature and reason equally. If it is accepted as nature, then it will be the principle of works pertaining to growth and health.... However, if it is understood more as reason, then it will be about those things which pertain to religion and justice and the virtue of man in himself and toward others.... The third way is of the reason of nature, which is equally reason and nature, and thus it pertains to the natural law, which is from right reason to provide for comfort and utility, and is always in genus in regards to the seeds of universal law.<sup>373</sup>

Nature provides a law, which regulates human action, in regards to every need, including the order toward God. This law provides the order toward virtue and the seeds for the establishment of human law. It must be stressed that the seeds of the natural law require right determination, which nature itself does not provide, which is why reason pertains equally to these seeds.<sup>374</sup>

Likewise, Albert stresses that the natural law cannot bring about the proper exercise of religion. It does, however, have a role to play. In articulating "which things are from the natural law," he notes the following objection:

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<sup>371</sup> It must be noted that question 4, on special justice, is found in only one manuscript (O).

<sup>372</sup> Albert the Great. *Opera Omnia*. Tomus XXVIII. *De bono*. (Monasterii Westfalorum (Münster): Aschendorff, 1951), Tr. V, Q I, art. ii. "*Est enim ius naturale nihil aliud quam ius rationis sive debitum, secundum quod natura est ratio.*"

<sup>373</sup> *ibid.* "*Cum autem dico: 'Natura est ratio,' [ratio] potest intellegi magis ut natura vel magis ut ratio vel aequae ut natura et ratio. Si autem accipiatur ut natura, tunc ipsa erit principium operum pertinentium ad consistentiam et salutem.... Si autem intelligatur magis ut ratio, tunc erit de his quae pertinent ad religionem et iustitiam et honestatem hominis in se et ad alios.... Tertio modo est naturalis ratio aequae ratio et natura, et sic pertinet ad ius naturale, quod ex ratione recta ad commodum hominis et utilitatem est provisum, et semper est in genere secundum semina iuris universalia.*"

<sup>374</sup> *ibid.*

The first of these things (the parts of justice) which Cicero puts forward, [is] thus: ‘religion is,’ as the same Cicero says, ‘service and ceremony one offers to some superior nature, which they call divine.’ It is seen that faith teaches religion; for indeed one is not worshiped, which is not known; it is not known, even just as what is worshipped, unless through faith; but faith is above reason; therefore religion is above reason. While therefore the law is natural, which is called the reason of nature, it is seen, that religion in no way is from the law of nature.<sup>375</sup>

While Albert does affirm some of this claim, this objection demeans the role of nature. He responds by discussing the role of nature in the parts of justice as follows:

For in the first way they (the parts of justice) are not from the natural except in its universal principles; as the principle of religion is that God is to be worshiped and honored, and this nature teaches and not faith; that however this or that is divine worship, this reason teaches and faith, and is under law of nature as a supposite under a universal, and nevertheless it is simply under positive law. And therefore Cicero even did not intend except about the principles of religion; and the same way must be said of the others.<sup>376</sup>

Albert then addresses the objection concerning how religion can be a universal principle with such diversity of religion. He notes that truly “in them (religions) there is variety and frequently even an error of reason.”<sup>377</sup> The principle of natural law concerning religion dictates the need to worship God, but does not supply the knowledge of God or moral rectitude necessary for proper acts of worship. In this sense any account of religion, which comes solely from the aspect of justice, will be insufficient.

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<sup>375</sup> *ibid.* art. iii. obj. 1. “...*et primo de his quae ponit Tullius, sic: ‘Religio est,’ ut idem Tullius dicit, ‘quae superioris cuiusdam naturae, quam divinam voant, curam caerimoniamque affert.’ Videtur, quod religionem docet fides; non enim colitur, ayod ignoratur; non autem sciture, quid vel qualiter colatur, nisi per fidem; sed fides est supra rationem; ergo religio est supra reationem. Cum igitur ius naturale est, quod dictat ration naturalis, videtur, quod religio nullo modo sit de uire naturali.’*”

<sup>376</sup> *ibid.* ad 1. “*Primo enim modo non sunt de naturali iure nisi in suis universalibus principiis; sicut principium religionis est, quod dues sit colendus et honorandus, et hoc docet natura et non fides; quod autem iste vel ille sit cultus divinus, hoc docet ratio et fides, et est sub naturali iure sicut suppositum sub universali, et tamen simpliciter est de iure positivo. Et ideo Tullius etiam non intendit nisi de religionis principiis; et eodem modo dicendum est de aliis.*” Houser notes that Albert attempted to incorporate Cicero’s parts of justice, while Philip had largely left them out. He states that “the Chancellor had refused to follow Cicero about justice, even though he made good use of his ideas concerning temperance and courage, but Albert would turn to Cicero to understand justice as well.” 62. While he makes use of Cicero’s parts of justice, “Albert did not develop a detailed consideration of the ‘parts’ of justice in his *De bono*. Though incomplete, it provided his student Thomas with a way of approaching justice, and with the materials for an even more thorough treatment of the subject.” 63.

<sup>377</sup> *ibid.* ad 2. “...*in illis est varietas et etiam frequenter error rationis.*”

Next Albert turns to the virtue of justice in itself. The virtue builds upon the natural order, though it entails a rectitude of the soul. In speaking of justice as a general virtue, he states: “all justice consists in debt. However a general debt makes general justice. However a general debt is of the rectitude of the whole soul according as men are ordered toward action, another, self, and God according to the order of rectitude in which man was created.”<sup>378</sup> It is justice, when conceived generally, that puts one in right relation to the order of virtue, which includes all relations, especially God. Albert goes on to argue that nature orders toward this rectitude, but, once again, to reach this state requires grace.<sup>379</sup> Though the fulfillment must come by grace, it is still nature, as understood through reason, that teaches of this debt and the need to fulfill it. In the last question of *De bono* on justice as a special virtue (which only occurs in the *Oxoniensis* manuscript), Albert speaks of this natural recognition:

Thus, some philosopher of the gentiles knowing God through natural reason spoken within and through creatures, knew himself to be in debt to God, from whom all good proceeds, and returns, that he knew himself to be of those returning. Therefore, he was being directed in this act through some habit, but not through faith, hope or love, because he lacked these, nor through another of any of the cardinal virtues, therefore through justice. Therefore to give back is an act of justice in relation to God.<sup>380</sup>

He continues by singling out Cicero for this recognition, but also adds a new insight. He asks how a servant can render anything to his master, when he possesses nothing except “in the name

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<sup>378</sup> *ibid.* quaest. III, art. i. “*Est enim iustitia generalis sicut omnis iustitia consistens in debito. Debitum autem generale facit iustitiam generalem. Debitum autem generale est debitum rectitudinis totius animae secundum vires ordinatas ad actum et ad alterum et ad se et ad deum secundum ordinem rectitudinis, in qua creatus est homo.*”

<sup>379</sup> *ibid.* art. ii.

<sup>380</sup> *ibid.* quaest. IV, art. iii. “*Item, aliquis gentilis philosophus cognoscens deum per naturalem rationem sibi inditam et per creaturas, cognovit se deo debere, a quo totum bonum procedit, et reddidit, quod se redditurum cognovit. Ergo dirigebatur in actu isto per habitum aliquem, sed non per fidem, spem, vel caritatem, quia his carebat, nec per aliquam aliarum virtutem cardinalium, ergo per iustitiam. Ergo reddere est actus iustitiae in comparatione ad deum.*”



of the master.”<sup>381</sup> Thus, anything rendered to God must be something, “which is the master’s,” which He enables us to give to Him.<sup>382</sup>

Though Albert was not the first to use Cicero in his treatment of worship, he takes this account more seriously, thinking through its implications and drawing out philosophical distinctions. In particular, he recognizes the implications of *latria* as a virtue, that this must entail the habitual disposition of the will, which intends to reverence God. This is implicit in previous thought, but the diversification of types of *latria* could mislead by not recognizing the connection between the outward and the inward. Albert brings precision by seeing the internal as formal for the external. He also appreciates the role of nature as a natural order of justice, which reason perceives but cannot actuate. While this element certainly existed previously by reference to the natural law, Albert emphasizes justice and reason to a greater extent. Theology is never far in the background as Albert recognizes the limits of nature in regards to knowledge and action. Thus, one can see that careful philosophical attention brings clarity concerning the nature of virtue and the order of justice, while a theological account explains the need for grace due to the limits of nature and the devastating effects of sin.

The whole tradition described in this chapter points toward a general convergence of the Ciceronian and Aristotelian philosophic account of justice with the Augustinian theology of sin and grace. These are the two major sources for Aquinas’ thought on the matter, which he took up in conjunction with the work of his predecessors. The role of law, examining worship as a part of justice, examining the parts of religion, its constitution as a virtue, and its application in the life of the Church are all elements which he received from previous theological tradition. He could build on this work by drawing out new distinctions, clarifying ambiguities, and

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<sup>381</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>382</sup> *ibid.* “...*quia apud servum potest esse aliquid, quod domini est, quod sibi reddere tenetur.*”

synthesizing disparate views into one coherent whole. This coherency would come in the *Summa Theologiae*, though this was preceded many other attempts.

### CHAPTER THREE: WORSHIP IN THE WORKS OF AQUINAS

Though Thomas' longest and most systematic treatment of worship comes within his *Summa Theologiae*, he dealt with the topic throughout his *corpus*. Aquinas' works which treat religion can be divided into three categories. First, those which treat it within a systematic whole. These include his *Commentary on the Sentences*, the *Commentary on Boethius' De trinitate*, the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, and the *Summa Theologiae* (which will be treated in the next three chapters). The next group constitutes his polemical works, written to defend the mendicant orders against criticism. Thomas wrote three such works, namely *Contra impugnantes Dei cultum et religionem*, *De perfectione vitae spiritualis*, and *Contra pestiferam doctrinam retrahentium pueros a religionis ingressu*. The final group, his Scriptural commentaries, includes a large number of works most of which deal with religion to some degree. In particular I will focus on parts of his commentaries on the Psalms, John, and Paul's epistles (which for Aquinas includes Hebrews).

In Aquinas' first major work, his *Commentary on the Sentences*, he continues the traditional approach to *latria*, while adding his own new insights. He divides his commentary on Book III distinction IX into two questions, the first on *latria* and the second on *dulia*. The first question has three articles, which concern the nature of *latria*, to whom it is due (Christ's humanity, etc) and how it is to be exhibited. The first article, which is our main concern, deals with whether it is a virtue, whether it is a general virtue, a cardinal virtue, and to which cardinal virtue it pertains. While much of what he writes comes largely from preceding tradition,<sup>383</sup> I will focus on what distinguishes his treatment.

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<sup>383</sup> For instance, Aquinas follows the tradition of seeing *latria* as used to refer to material actions, acts of other virtues, and a virtue properly (*quaestincula* 1).

First of all, Aquinas' treatment stands out from amongst his predecessors in his explicit use of Aristotle. One could see Aristotle's thought influencing earlier accounts, especially Albert's, but only Aquinas explicitly quotes him as an authority in his argumentation on worship. He brings Aristotle into his account of *latria* in three vital places. First in regards to "whether *latria* is a virtue," where he states:

Praiseworthy, according to the philosopher 1 *Eth.* is particular to virtue. But the act of *latria* is highly praiseworthy. Therefore, *latria* is a virtue. Further, every act which falls under a precept of the law is an act of virtue, because the intention of the legislator is to lead man to virtue, as is said in 2 *Eth.* But the act of *latria* is commanded through the first commandment. Therefore, *latria* is a virtue.<sup>384</sup>

The basis for this argument has not departed from previous accounts, which focused on merit and obedience to the commandments, but rather the logic has now shifted. Merit, focused on justification, has become praise, as described by Aristotle, and obedience to God has shifted to the role of commands or laws in forming virtue. There is no contradiction in this shift, but it does reveal a greater role for the intelligible, rational order in understanding worship.

The second place where Aquinas relies on Aristotle concerns *latria* as a part of justice. Aquinas recognizes that *latria* cannot properly be a part of justice, because, as Aristotle points out (*Ethics* V) justice concerns equality. Though he recognizes this problem in Aristotle, he also turns to the *Ethics* for the solution: "Whence the Philosopher says in VIII *Eth.* that 'one cannot render what is according to the dignity [of the recipient] in all things, just as in those honors which are for gods and parents. For nothing can repay another [of these] according to their

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<sup>384</sup> Thomas Aquinas. *Scriptum Super Sententiis Magistri Petri Lombardi. Tomus III.* ed. R. P. Maria Faianus Moos, O.P. (Paris, Sumptibus P. Lethielleux, 1933), distinction IX, *quaestio* I, *articulus* i, *questiuncula* i, *sed contra*. "Laudibile, secundum Philosophum, I *Eth.* est propriam virtutis. Sed actus latriae est maxime laudabilis. Ergo latria est virtus. Praeterea. Omnis actus qui cadit in praecepto legis, est actus virtutis; quia intentio legislatoris est inducere hominem ad virtutem, ut dicitur II *Eth.* Sed actus latriae praecipitur per primum mandatum. Ergo latria est virtus."

dignity.’ However, according to this ability the justice of the servant is recognized.”<sup>385</sup> Thomas elaborates on this form of justice, by which he reconciles *latría* to justice:

nevertheless there is some mode of justice, according to which the lord renders to the servant what it owed to him, or vice-versa: which is called the justice of the ruled. And this way *latría* is joined to justice, because it consists in that what is rendered to God is owed Him. Whence it is reduced to justice not as a species to a genus, but as a virtue annexed to a principal one, which participates in the mode of the principal.<sup>386</sup>

By use of this distinction from Aristotle, Thomas offers a true and significant advancement in the understanding of *latría*. Properly speaking, justice cannot strictly apply to *latría*, because it is not concerned with rendering what is due. What is exactly due to God could never be rendered to Him by a creature so that equality would arise between them as a result.<sup>387</sup> This does not mean that *latría* does not offer what is justly due to God. It does so, but in a way that falls short of what justice strictly requires. Nevertheless, while speaking of penance, Aquinas argues that “it must be said as the Philosopher says in VIII *Eth.* that virtue does not always require the equal, but what is possible suffices as in honors to parents and gods.”<sup>388</sup> God in His graciousness accepts what is possible for the creature to render for Him as an acceptable act.

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<sup>385</sup> *ibid.* quaestiuncula iv, ad 3. “Unde dicit Philosophus in VIII *Eth.* quod ‘non in omnibus reddendum est quod est secundum dignitatem, quemadmodum in his qui ad deos et parentes honoribus. Nullus enim secundum dignitatem alteri retribuit.’ Secundum potentiam autem famulans justus videtur esse.”

<sup>386</sup> “...tamen est ibi quidam modus justitiae, secundum quod dominus reddit servo quod sibi debetur, vel e converse: quod appellatur dominatum justum. Et hoc modo se habet ad justitiam *latría*, quia consistit in hoc quod redditur Deo quod sibi debetur. Unde reducitur ad justitiam non quasi species ad genus, sed sicut virtus annexa ad principalem, quae participat modum principalis.”

<sup>387</sup> No one except for one hypostatically united to Him. Equality between the humanity of Christ and God means that this man gives to God what is His due (honor and obedience) and God gives to this man His due (what He merited).

<sup>388</sup> *ibid.* Liber IV, dist. XIV, quaest. xiv, art. ii, q. v, ad. 1. “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod sicut dicit Philosophus in VIII *Eth.* virtus non requirit semper aequale, sed sufficit quod possibile est, ut in honoribus ad parentes et deos.” In the same question, concerning penance’s relation to justice, Aquinas states the following: “And similarly anyone who is brought about by God is a debtor through this that he receives anything from Him. And for this reason one renders a debt of honor to God by *latría* or religion. In another way from this that man sinned against God. And thus one renders the debt of penance to God. Whence as religion is placed as a part of justice by Tully, not as a species, but as a potential part, inasmuch as it participates in some mode of justice; thus even penance must be placed as a part of justice.” “Et Similiter aliquis efficitur Deo debitor per hoc quod ab eo aliquid recipit. Et hac ratione Deo reddit debitum honorem *latría* sive religio. Alio modo ex hoc quod contra Deum peccavit. Et sic reddit Deo debitum poenitentia. Unde sicut religio ponitur pars justitiae a Tullio, non quidem quasi species, sed quasi pars potentialis, in quantum aliquem modum justitiae participat; ita etiam poenitentia pars justitiae debet poni.” cf.

The third major use of Aristotle surprisingly comes from the question concerning “whether *latria* should be exhibited to the humanity of Christ.” In answering this question, Aquinas turns to Aristotle’s distinction between honor and praise. He states the following:

According to the philosopher in *I Eth.*,<sup>389</sup> praise and honor differ in this that praise is owed to someone according to the goodness that he has from an order to another, as when he does an act congruous to an end; honor however is owed to someone on account of the goodness which he has according to himself.... Therefore it is clear that the honor with which something is honored by reason of itself does not pertain to the humanity of Christ as by consideration of itself, but only as one is honored in the honor with the supposit in which it is; and thus *latria* is owed to it. But the honor, which is owed to it is by reason of another, pertains to it also in consideration of itself and thus *dulia* is owed to it. And because something is said to be honored more according to the first mode than according to the second, therefore it is more properly said that the humanity of Christ is adored with *latria* than *dulia*.<sup>390</sup>

It is remarkable that Aristotle could aid in distinguishing between different kinds of reverence, but even more so that this distinction could help to understand the way Christ is to be honored. Here one can see the way in which Aquinas uses philosophy as an integrated tool within his theology. This does not compromise the integrity of the question, but rather adds greater precision, as can be seen in this unique approach to the question of *latria* to Christ’s humanity.

The second major distinction in Aquinas’ treatment concerns the strength with which he equates *latria* and religion. In other accounts, the two were tied together in a more indirect and passing manner. Aquinas offers a significant advancement in that he tries to pull together the many different ways of speaking about religion into one coherent account. He states:

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Lawrence Dewan. “St. Thomas Aquinas and the Ontology of Prayer.” in *Divus Thomas*. Piacenza, Italy: Collegio Alberoni 77, 1974, 392-402. Here Dewan points out that Thomas treats prayer within the above mentioned section on penance, which later will be treated under religion in the *Summa*.

<sup>389</sup> a 12. 1101.

<sup>390</sup> *ibid.* Liber III. dist. IX, quaest. I, art. ii, q. I, solutio. “*Secundum Philosophum enim in I Eth., laus et honor in hoc differunt quod laus debetur alicui propter bonitatem quam habet ex ordine ad alterum, ut quando facit congruentem fini; honor autem debetur alicui propter bonitatem quam habet secundum se.... Patet ergo quod honor quo aliquid honoratur ratione sui, ad humanitatem Christi non pertinet ut per se consideratam, sed solum ut honoratur uno honore cum supposito in quo est; et sic debetur ei latria. Sed honor qui debetur ei ratione alterius, pertinet ad eam etiam in se consideratam; et sic debetur ei dulia. Et quia secundum primum modum proprie dicitur aliquid honorari magis quam secundum secundum modum; ideo magis proprie dicitur quod adoratur latria quam dulia Christi humanitas.*”

Similarly when diverse obedience can be exhibited, some special and supreme mode is owed to God, because in Him is the supreme reason of majesty and lordship. And therefore the obedience or servitude owed to Him is named by a special name and is called *latria*. . . . And this virtue is named with four names. For it is called piety inasmuch as it is ordered toward the bringing about of devotion, which occurs first. It is also called *theosebeia*, that is divine worship, or *eusebeia*, that is good worship, inasmuch as it is ordered toward an attentive intention; for that one is said to be worshiped/cultivated (i.e. cared for) to whom one is directed zealously, as a field or mind or some other thing. It is also called *latria*, that is service, in as much as it is ordered toward works which are exhibited in recognition of the lordship which are suitable to God from the law of creation. It is also called religion in as much as it is ordered toward the determination of works to which man determines himself by binding himself in the worship of God. Nevertheless, by all these names one and the same virtue is named according to diverse things which concur with themselves.<sup>391</sup>

Thus Thomas tries to draw together all the words named by Augustine in *De civitate Dei* X and which sprung up in an isolated fashion throughout subsequent theology. All these names denote different aspects of the same reality. All these terms concern worship justly owed to God and which ultimately can be understood as one virtue. Though he mentions four terms, he does single out religion:

Tully in *Rhetor.* placed religion as a species of justice. But religion, according to what is accepted about it, is the same as *latria*; because ‘religion’ according to him “is that which offers worship and ceremony to a superior nature which men call divine.’ Therefore *latria* is a species of justice. Further, to render a debt is an act of justice. But *latria* is worship owed to God; whence it exhibits to God what is owed to Him. Therefore, *latria* is a part of justice.<sup>392</sup>

Though this definition does not stand out for originality, it is significant to indicate that Aquinas chose to follow the path of Auxerre, Philip, and Albert in equating the two versus the approach

<sup>391</sup> *ibid.* q. i. *solutio*. “*Similiter cum obsequium diversis possit exhibere, speciali quodam et supreme modo Deo debetur, quia in eo est suprema ratio majestatis et dominii. Et ideo obsequium vel servitium quod ei debetur, speciali nomine nominatur et dicitur latria.... Et nominatur haec virtus quatuor nominibus—Dicitur enim pietas quantum ad effectum devotionis, quod primum occurrit—Dicitur etiam theosebeia, id est bonus cultus, quantum ad intentionem attentam. Illud enim coli dicitur cui sudiose intenditur, sicut ager vel animus vel quidquid aliud—Dicitur etiam latria, id est servitus, quantum ad opera quae exhibentur in recognitionem domini quod Deo competit ex jure creationis—Dicitur etiam religio quantum ad determinationem operum ad quae homo se obligando in cultum Dei determinat. Quibus tamen omnibus nominibus una et eadem virtus nominator secundum diversa quae ad ipsa concurrunt.*”

<sup>392</sup> *ibid.* art. i, q. iv. *sed contra*. “*Tullius in Rhetor., ponit religionem speciem justitiae. Sed, religio, secundum quod ipse accipit, est idem quod latria; quia ‘religio,’ secundum eum ‘est quae cuidam superiori naturae; quam divinam voant, cultum caeremoniamque affert.’ Ergo latria species justitiae. Praeterea. Reddere debitum, est actus justitiae. Sed latria est cultus Deo debitus; unde exhibit Deo quod ei debetur. Ergo latria est pars justitiae.*”

of the SFA and Bonaventure, which chose to distinguish between worship in the natural order and worship in the theological virtues. This passage sets up Aquinas for his treatment in the *Summa*, where the one reality of worship falls under the single term of religion (though piety becomes specified as either a separate virtue or a gift).

There are two further points, which Aquinas offers to clarify the previous tradition. The first concerns the much debated topic of the relation to the theological virtues. Thomas comes down strongly on the side that worship is not through the theological virtues, *per se*, but rather only, as we have seen before, as they either command worship or serve as the matter by which one worships. Therefore, “first it must be said that God is said to be worshipped by faith, hope, and love, not as if worship is elicited by these virtues, but because by a dictate these virtues order toward worship, or even because the act of the ordered virtue passes into worship.”<sup>393</sup> Thus, the theological virtues play only an indirect, dispositive role. Thus, the theological virtues are a necessary precedence to *latria*:

And again many other virtues are needed prior to its act, as faith which makes clear the one to whom *latria* is to be exhibited, and charity which binds toward Him to whom it is to be exhibited, and thus many others are able to concur. Even though, however, its acts are used materially by other virtues under the manner of its proper act, nevertheless it is used by certain acts which are not of the proper act of such other eliciting virtue, as to offer sacrifices, to make professions and such; unless perhaps as they are ordered by charity and are made clear by faith, not however [as] elicited [by them]. And these are seen to be of the proper act of *latria*.<sup>394</sup>

Thus, he affirms that the theological virtues do not properly worship God as their act, but rather contribute to this act by rectifying the intellect and will so that God may be recognized and

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<sup>393</sup> *ibid.* q. iii. ad 1. “*Ad primum ergo dicendum quod dicitur Deus coli fide, spe et caritatem, non quasi cultus his virtutibus eliciatur, sed quia dictae virtutes ordinant ad cultum, vel etiam quia actus dictarum virtutum materialiter cedunt in cultum.*”

<sup>394</sup> *ibid.* q. ii. *solutio*. “*Et iterum ad ejus actum praeexiguntur multae aliae virtutes, sicut fides quae ostendi cui exhibenda sit latria, et caritas quae afficit ad eum cui est exhibenda; et sic possunt multae aliae concurrere. Quamvis autem utatur materialiter actibus aliarum virtutum sub ratione proprii actus, tamen utitur quibusdam actibus qui non sunt proprii alicujus alterius virtutis elicitive, sicut offerre sacrificia, facere protestationes et hujusmodi; nisi forte sicut imperantur a caritate et ostenduntur a fide, non autem eliciuntur. Et isti videntur esse proprii actus latriae.*”



adhered as the one to whom worship is due. Aquinas also follows Bonaventure in attributing to *latria* a created object, namely of rendering owed servitude, which distinguishes it from the theological virtues. They both also concur on *latria*'s order toward God only as toward an end and not as its object, which is the unique claim of the theological virtue.

Aquinas ends his treatment of *latria* (*Quaestio I, articulus iii*) by examining how *latria* is exhibited. In the third *quaestiuncula* of this article, he indicates that *latria* must pertain the whole person. This may be in response to the division of *latria* into interior and exterior. Rather than dividing it into different types, Aquinas argues that...

because all things in us are from God, therefore according to all things we must exhibit *latria* to God. And according to the spirit we must exhibit to Him the debt of desire; according the body prostrations and song; and according to exterior things, however, sacrifices, candles and such things: which we do not exhibit because of His poverty, but in recognition that we have all things from Him. And thus out of all things we call Him to mind, thus also out of all things we honor Him.<sup>395</sup>

Rather than having an interior and an exterior *latria*, Aquinas points out that *latria* must necessarily entail the whole person, body and soul, because both of these and all earthly goods have come from God. This points out that all things are owed to God and, therefore, there must be at least some attempt to manifest their subordination to Him. The introduction of the bodily immediately enables Aquinas to draw in one of his most important realizations concerning the nature of *latria*. The way a Christian worships God to manifest thanks and to move toward Him as one's end comes about through the sacraments. In distinction from the Old Law, Aquinas states that in Christian worship "the bodily things that we exhibit to God are not purely bodily,

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<sup>395</sup> *ibid.* art. iii, q. iii, *solutio*. "Ad tertiam quaestionem dicendum quod in nobis est triplex bonum: scilicet spirituale, corporale et extrinsecum. Et quia haec omnia in nobis a Deo sunt, ideo secundum omnia debemus Deo latriam exhibere. Et secundum spiritum exhibemus ei debitam dilectionem; secundum corpus autem prostrationes et cantus; secundum exteriora autem, sacrificia, luminaria et hujusmodi: quae Deo non propter ejus indigentiam exhibemus, sed in recognitionem quod omnia ab ipso habemus. Et sicut ex omnibus eum recognoscimus, ita etiam ex omnibus eum honoramus."

but are sacraments containing grace.”<sup>396</sup> This simple phrase represents a huge advancement in that Aquinas draws sacramental theology into the order of justly manifesting service and ceremony owed to God. In introducing the sacraments at the opening of Book IV, Aquinas puts forth the following: “Augustine says (*Contra Faustum* I, xix, xi) that every religion has some exterior sign, in which things men must fittingly worship God. But in the Church of God, after sin, in this pilgrim world, there is the truest religion. Therefore it is fitting that in her there be some sign, and these are the sacraments.”<sup>397</sup> Most of this statement comes from Aquinas himself (cf. previous footnote), who by repeating this link between the sacraments and religion, demonstrates the necessity of drawing the sacraments into the discussion on the just order to God.

Though this commentary marks Aquinas’ first reflection on worship, it provides the foundation for all of his later work. Aquinas continued to reflect on religion’s relationship with justice and its convertibility with *latría*. There are other elements from this commentary, which remain almost intact in his account of religion in the *Summa*, such as certain aspects of religion’s relationship to the theological virtues. It is significant that only five years after this commentary’s completion (around 1261), Aquinas wrote another work that dealt with worship, his *Commentary on Boethius’ De Trinitate*, though this time he names it primarily by religion.<sup>398</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> *ibid.* ad 1. “*Sed corporalia quae nos exhibemus non sunt pure corporalia; sed sunt sacramenta continentia gratiam et sacramentalia.*”

<sup>397</sup> *ibid.* Liber IV, dist. I, quaest. I, art. ii, q. i, *sed contra*. “*Sed contra. Augustinus dicit Contra Faustum, quod omnis religio habuit aliqua signa exteriora, in quibus conveniebat ad Deum colendum. Sed in Ecclesia Dei, post peccatum, in hoc mundo peregrinante est verissima religio. Ergo oportet in ea esse hujusmodi signa, et haec sunt sacramenta.*” Augustine had written: “There can be no religious society, whether the religion be true or false, without some sacrament or visible symbol to serve as a bond of union. The importance of these sacraments cannot be overstated, and only scoffers will treat them lightly. For if piety requires them, it must be impiety to neglect them.” “Reply to Faustus the Manichaeon.” trans. R. Stothert. in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. IV. First Series. ed. Philip Schaff. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004).

<sup>398</sup> cf. Ralph McInerny. *Boethius and Aquinas*. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1990). See primarily chapters 3-5 which deal with Aquinas’ commentary on Boethius’ *De Trinitate*. McInerny notes that this commentary is unique in its form, though it has greatest similarity to the *Commentary on the*

Though this may seem insignificant, it does represent a shift in terminology. Whereas *latría* had been introduced into Western theology by Augustine and had hundreds of years of usage behind it, religion had been more of a philosophical term reserved for the study of the natural law or brought up in its relation to *latría*.

The topic of religion arises immediately at the beginning of the first chapter of Boethius' *De trinitate*. There Boethius states that "there are many who claim as theirs the piety of the Christian religion, but that faith is most valid and only valid, which both because of the universal nature of its rules, by which we recognize this religion's authority, and because its worship has spread almost to the ends of the earth, is called catholic or universal."<sup>399</sup> This short comment gave occasion for Aquinas to investigate the relation of religion to faith. Aquinas put forth four questions on faith, the second of which he named "how faith is related to religion." His literal commentary on chapter one indicates one aspect of the link between them: "'piety' [is] that [which] the Christian religion shows to God by believing what has been divinely taught."<sup>400</sup> This is directly in accord with what Aquinas asserted concerning faith in the fourth book of his *Commentary on the Sentences*, where he stated: "It must be said that faith is the first of those things which are required for religion, because all religion, or worship of God, is the same as protestation of faith. And therefore the truth of the faith is called the truth which is according to piety."<sup>401</sup> In this way, Aquinas agrees with Boethius in asserting that true religion or piety must be in accord with the faith.

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*Sentences*. Thomas does not do a strict *expositio* of the text, but rather treats the content of Boethius' argument through a series of questions and articles. cf. 106-09, 120.

<sup>399</sup> in: Thomas Aquinas. *Faith, Reason and Theology* (Questions I-IV of his Commentary on the *De Trinitate* of Boethius) trans. Armand Maurer. (Toronto: PIMS, 1987).

<sup>400</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>401</sup> IV, dist. XIII, quaest. II, art. i, ad 4. "*Ad quartum dicendum quod fides est primum eorum quae ad religionem requiruntur, quia omnis religio, sive cultus Dei, est quaedam fidei potestatio. Et ideo veritas fidei dicitur veritas quae secundum pietatem est, Tit., I. Ideo etiam ea quae heresies sunt, ad superstitionem pertinent.*"

This short article on religion serves as a compact summary of the material previously put forward in the *Sentences* commentary. While religion fell under *latria* in that account, now religion serves as the more general term for worship to which the others are fit in as “connected to the same thing, that is, devotion to God.”<sup>402</sup> Aquinas offers an account of *theosebia*, *latria* (translated as adoration), piety, and religion, which almost completely agrees with the previous account in the previous commentary. One important distinction concerns Aquinas shift in emphasis with regard to piety. Here he begins to move it away from worship and more towards reverence toward parents and country. He states that “piety, however, has to do with the soul of the worshipper, who pledges his service not by pretence or out of love of gain. And because a kind of divine reverence is due to those above us, even the favors we show to the unfortunate are in a way sacrifices to God.”<sup>403</sup> This concern for others which pertains to religion comes from an important quotation from the book of James (1: 27), which states the following: “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”<sup>404</sup> This quotation did not gain recognition in earlier accounts of religion, most likely because the connection between this kind of service to *latria*, which is service owed to God alone, does immediately stand out. Aquinas connects it to religion as follows: “But because those goods that are rendered to our neighbors for the sake of God are rendered to God himself, they clearly belong to the same act of submission in which the worship of religion consists.”<sup>405</sup> In addition to this insight, it appears, given the objections raised in the article, that Aquinas’ main objective in this section of his

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<sup>402</sup> *ibid.* question III, art. ii. Here Maurer translates *colere* as devotion in order to show consistency with the devotion shown to parents and country referenced below. *Colere*, as worship, would be used for any reverence shown to anyone, so that even parents would be worshipped. This is why Augustine chose to use the word *latria* to avoid this ambiguity.

<sup>403</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>404</sup> This is the translation from Maurer, which he notes derives from the Douay translation of the Vulgate. cf. 123.

<sup>405</sup> *ibid.*

commentary on Boethius was to demonstrate that religion cannot be reduced to faith, but has a distinct object.

Aquinas elucidates the relationship of faith to religion first by talking about religion's proper act:

Religion, accordingly, consists in the act by which we worship God by subjecting ourselves to Him. This act ought to be in harmony with the one who is worshipped and with the one who does the worshipping. Now He who is worshipped, being a spirit, cannot be contacted by the body but only by the mind. Consequently his adoration consists chiefly in the act of the mind, by which the mind is oriented to God. These are principally acts of the theological virtues; thus Augustine states that God is worshipped by faith, hope, and love. To these are added the acts of the gifts which incline us to God, for example, the gifts of wisdom and fear. But because we worshippers of God have bodies and receive our knowledge through bodily sense, some actions of the body are also required on our part for the worship of God, not only that we might serve Him with our whole being, but also that these bodily actions may arouse ourselves and others to acts of the mind directed to God.<sup>406</sup>

There are a few subtle distinctions here that add new depth to Aquinas' treatment. First of all this notion of harmony, which dictates the method of worship. Aquinas will later tie the notion of harmony to the need to worship "in spirit and truth." Though the distinction between interior and exterior had been common in previous treatments, the role of the exterior in stimulating the interior stands as a new contribution, which explains the unity of the two. Aquinas quotes Augustine from *De cura pro mortuis agenda* (V, vii), where he states that God "does not need these signs for the revealing of the human spirit, but rather by their means a person stirs himself to pray and to lament his sins more humbly and fervently."<sup>407</sup> Another contribution entails the use of the gifts for worship, which will take on more detail in the *Summa*. How then does faith come in? If the chief act of religion relates to the movement of the mind to God and this occurs through the theological virtues, it appears that the previous tradition of conflation may return.

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<sup>406</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>407</sup> *ibid.*

Aquinas' answer draws on the earlier clarification of religion's distinct object, but adds some new depth.

Religion is a special virtue, taking into account in all virtuous acts the special viewpoint of its object, namely what is owing to God. In this sense it is a part of justice. But those acts are especially allotted to religion that belong to no other virtue, such as prostrations and the like, in which the worship of God secondarily consists. From this it is evident that the act of faith belongs materially to religion, just like the acts of the other virtues, and even more so, inasmuch as the act of faith is the primary movement of the mind to God. But it is formally distinct from religion insofar as the viewpoint of its object is different. Besides this, faith is also connected with religion insofar as faith is the cause and source of religion for no one would choose to show worship to God unless he believed that God is the creator, governor, and rewarder of human acts. But religion itself is not a theological virtue, for it has as its subject matter almost all the acts either of faith or of some other virtue, which it offers to God as his due. It has God, however as its end, for the worship of God is the offering of acts of this kind to God as something owing to Him.<sup>408</sup>

Without reading this passage carefully one might conclude that Aquinas simply puts forth old conclusions. However, there are some remarkable clarifications here. Aquinas moves beyond the choice to either posit two separate types of worship, in the theological virtues or simply according to justice, or to state there is only one type. Rather, there are two aspects of the same worship. True worship is a movement of the mind in harmony with God. This kind of worship can only come through grace, which moves the mind to assent to God as truth. Even in this case, it is still a matter of justice to offer God this movement of the mind. The same movement can also offer something less fitting to God, such as bodily acts. These acts, such as sacrifice and genuflections, are the acts that are proper only to religion. What is remarkable, however, is that the acts proper to religion are not its proper act. Faith is the most proper and fitting act, while the others manifest this faith, which stimulates one's own and others' reverence. This points to religion's secondary role in the ordering of the soul to God. While it directs even faith to honor God, it must still be subordinate to faith due to its indirect approach to God.

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<sup>408</sup> *ibid.*

Aquinas' commentary on the *De Trinitate* demonstrates his uncanny ability to accomplish a speculative breakthrough while treating material already dealt with by himself and others. He puts forth the same distinctions as his *Sentences* commentary, while beginning the process of fine tuning that will culminate in the *Summa*. The distinction concerning faith as an act of primary importance also puts forth a distinction, which Boethius attempted to make concerning what distinguishes true religion. Other expressions of religion may manifest the secondary elements of reverence, such as sacrifice, but these expressions pale before what gives religion its life. Without faith in God one may attempt to render what is due to God, but this will always fall short of worship, which regards what is highest in human nature and what makes worship in accord with God.

The final systematic presentation of worship before the *Summa Theologiae* comes from his *Summa Contra Gentiles* (SCG). Here Thomas treats of religion within the context of law, which comes in the third book dealing with God's governance of His creation. Thomas makes clear that he intends to treat "in this third Book His perfect authority or dignity, inasmuch as He is the End and Ruler of all things."<sup>409</sup> Under the context of law, Aquinas demonstrates how God moves the rational creature toward Himself as end. He states: "The end for the human creature is to cling to God, for his felicity consists in this, as we have shown above. So, the divine law primarily directs man to this end: that he may cling to God."<sup>410</sup> Though Aquinas notes that one clings to God primarily by love, it must be noted that one possible etymology of religion comes from *religare* (to bind).<sup>411</sup> Thus after teaching how God has given a law to humankind and that

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<sup>409</sup> Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Contra Gentiles*. Book Three: Providence. Part I. trans. Vernon J. Bourke. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), I, x.

<sup>410</sup> *ibid.* Book Three. Providence. Part II. CXV, ii.

<sup>411</sup> Augustine repeats this etymology and it is also put forward in chapter 119 of Bk III of the SCG. Sarah Hoyt traces the connection of religion to *religare* to Lactantius' commentary on Lucretius' *De rerum natura*. This was later picked up by Augustine and transmitted to Aquinas through *De vera religione* (ch 55). Hoyt, however, prefers

this law orders to God through love and faith and toward love of neighbor, Thomas immediately turns toward religion as a way of clinging to God as one's end.<sup>412</sup> He links law to religion by using similar terminology for both of them. In speaking of religion he makes clear that through worship "we approach more closely to God by such acts," and that it helps us to "directly tend toward God."<sup>413</sup> Thus religion plays a central in the movement of humanity back to God, which Aquinas seems to indicate by its prominent placement within his treatment of law.

Aquinas deals with religion within two chapters of book three of the SCG. The first of which is entitled "That our minds are directed to God by certain sensible acts." It must be remembered that though the SCG's original title stood as "The Truth of the Catholic Faith," it received the name *Contra Gentiles* due to the fact that Aquinas constantly refers to the arguments of pagan philosophy and of heretics, which could be used to contradict the faith. Thus in this question, Aquinas directs his discourse against those who seek to deny the role of the body in both the acquisition and expression of truth. If the body was not essential in coming to know the truth, it would consequently play a much less significant role in worship. Thus, Aquinas bases his arguments concerning worship on the hylomorphic constitution of human

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Cicero's etymology from *relegere*, which Aquinas also presents as a possibility in II-II. 81.1, transmitted through Isidore. "The Etymology of Religion." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 32 no 2 (1912): 126-129.

<sup>412</sup> Oscar Brown also points out that a religious ordering toward God arises from being subject to His law. Quoting and then commenting on Thomas on this same section of the SCG, he states: "'But the divinely given law derives its efficacy among men from the fact that man is subject to God, for no one is bound by the law of a ruler if he is not subject to him.' Once again, this time in an expressly legal setting, the *fons obligationis* is the very fact itself of subjection – which is subjectively appropriated in and through religion, the virtue of cosmic hierarchy." 69-70. Brown situates his overall project in this work in appropriating Aquinas' theory of the natural law in light of his treatment of God's providence in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. The work has three major parts, examining the influence of Aristotle, Cicero (particularly on religion), and sacred doctrine respectively. Brown's work on the relationship of law, providence, and religion may suffice to counter the claim of Rémi Brague that Aquinas definition of law in the SCG "is pagan, in fact Stoic, in origin. The adjective 'divine' does not refer directly to the God of Revelation. Similar expressions can be found regarding the God-nature of the Stoics and the government of the cosmic city." 224. Brown does recognize the role of the Stoics and Cicero on Aquinas' treatment, but it is important to note that Aquinas does not separate the "God of providence" from the "God of revelation." They are the same one God, who for Aquinas draws humanity to salvation through the law of nature and the law of grace in unison.

<sup>413</sup> *ibid.* CXIX, vi.



nature: “For it is evident from experience that the soul is stimulated to an act of knowledge or of love by bodily acts. Hence, it is obvious that we may quite appropriately use even bodily things to elevate our mind to God.”<sup>414</sup> God created human nature as a body and soul composite and so religion must be mediated through the sensible so that by means of it one may recognize that God must be worshipped. Here Thomas responds the error of those who thought that the will of the gods could be manipulated through cultic ceremonies. He makes clear that worship takes its physical form solely for the sake of humanity:

Certain sensible works are performed by man, not to stimulate God by such things, but to awaken man himself to divine matters by these actions, such as prostrations, genuflections, vocal ejaculations, and hymns. These things are done not because God needs them, for He knows all things, and His will is immutable, and the disposition of His mind does not admit of movement from a body for His own sake; rather, we do these things for our sakes, so that our attention may be directed to God by these sensible deeds and that our love may be aroused. At the same time, then, we confess by these actions that God is the author of soul and body, to Whom we offer both spiritual and bodily acts of homage.<sup>415</sup>

Thomas offers this critical distinction, which points out the true nature of acts of worship. These acts do not have magical power over God, by which He could be manipulated for the purposes of humankind, as many pagans held. Physical acts of worship, such as sacrifice, have two main functions: to arouse people to worship and to manifest interior intention. In both cases these acts symbolize worship’s true meaning in a way that makes it clear to humankind, which needs visible signs to understand and express itself.

There are two other important insights in this chapter. The first concerns the specification of terminology, such as piety, which, in his commentary on Boethius, had moved in the direction of earthly honor to parents and country. In the SCG Thomas keeps this same signification, but also indicates how this could still be seen to include worship. He states:

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<sup>414</sup> *ibid.* v.

<sup>415</sup> *ibid.* iv.

“religion takes the name piety. For piety is the means whereby we pay due honor to our parents. Hence, the fact that honor is rendered to God, the Parent of all beings, seems appropriately to be attributed to piety. And for this reason, those who are opposed to these things concerned with the cult of God are called impious.”<sup>416</sup> This moves Thomas a step closer to his final presentation of piety as both a virtue ordered toward earthly reverence and gift ordered toward worship of God as Father. He makes a similar insight concerning the nature of *latría* as service, which he now puts forward as pertaining to God insofar as He is Lord: “Because we owe Him everything that is present in us, and as a consequence He is truly our Lord, what we offer Him in homage is called service.”<sup>417</sup> Sacrifice concerns yet another angle of relating to God: “And it was for this reason that sensible sacrifices were instituted: man offers these to God, not because God needs them, but so that man may be reminded that he ought to refer both his own being and all his possessions to God as end, and thus to the Creator, Governor, and Lord of all.”<sup>418</sup> These three different aspects, relating to God as Father, Lord, and Creator, manifest the underlying unity of worship, which in all of these expressions still seeks to render just honor to God.

The second insight that needs to be stressed concerns the role of nature. Thomas affirms that the origin of worship of God comes from nature. In distinguishing God’s lordship over humanity in comparison with any human lord, he states that “of course, God is not a lord in the accidental sense, as one man is over another; He is so through nature.”<sup>419</sup> Creation itself places one in the role of subjection to God as one’s Lord. Thus, the need to worship arises naturally through this relation. In describing how religion binds one to God, Aquinas explains the following: “this cult of God is called religion, because in some way man binds himself by such

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<sup>416</sup> *ibid.* viii.

<sup>417</sup> *ibid.* ix.

<sup>418</sup> *ibid.* ii.

<sup>419</sup> *ibid.* x.

acts, so that he will not wander away from God, and also because man feels that he is obligated by some sort of natural prompting to pay, in his own way, reverence to God, from Whom comes the beginning of man's being and of all good."<sup>420</sup> The role of nature in prompting one to recognize one's debt to God and to fulfill this debt through worship explains the universal existence of religion throughout history, which Cicero sought to explain. However, the mere recognition of debt and attempt to fulfill it are not enough in themselves.

Thus, in the following chapter, "That the cult proper to *latria* is to be offered to God alone," Aquinas outlines another error concerning worship. Here Thomas combats those who worshipped gods even though they recognized one Creator. This may be Thomas' response to the ambiguities in the thought of Cicero and others. This error puts forward that though there is one God, there are many intermediaries above, which provide care for humanity and which must be honored:

There have been some who have thought that the cult of *latria* should be offered not only to the first principle of things, but even to all creatures which exist above man. Hence, some, though of the opinion that God is the one, first, and universal principle of things, have nevertheless thought that *latria* should be offered, first of all, after the highest God, to celestial intellectual substances whom they called gods, whether they were substances completely separated from bodies or whether they were the souls of the spheres or the stars. Secondly, they thought that it should be offered also to certain intellectual substances united, as they believed, to aerial bodies; and these they called daemons. Yet, because they believed them to be above men, as an aerial body is above a terrestrial body, they claimed that even these substances are to be honored with divine cult by men. And in relation to men they said that those substances are gods, being intermediaries between men and the gods. Moreover, because the souls of good men, through their separation from the body, have passed over into a state higher than that of the present life, they held the opinion in their belief that divine cult should be offered to the souls of the dead, whom they called heroes, or manes. In fact, some people, holding the view that God is the World Soul, have believed that the cult of divinity is to be offered to the entire world and to each of its parts; not, of course, for the sake of the bodily part, but for the sake of the "Soul," which they said was God, just as honor is rendered to a wise man, not because of his body, but because of his soul. Indeed, some men said that even things below man's level in nature are to be honored with divine cult because some power of a higher nature is participated by them. Hence, since they believed that certain idols made by men

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<sup>420</sup> *ibid.* vii.

receive a supernatural power, either from the influence of celestial bodies or from the presence of certain spirits, they said that divine cult should be offered to images of this kind. And they even called these idols gods. For which reason they are also said to be idolaters, since they offer the cult of *latria* to idols, that is, to images.<sup>421</sup>

Here Aquinas lists what he sees are the five principal reasons that pagans may have rendered worship to inferior beings. Thomas points out a reason why these elements may have become so influential, using the key Ciceronian theme of custom. He notes that “we are easily moved toward objectives that have become customary.”<sup>422</sup> Cicero had sought to preserve customs in order to keep order. Aquinas rightly rejects this concern by using Cicero’s own theme of justice. To preserve customs which unjustly give to either fictitious or lesser beings what is due to another stands out as supremely unjust. He deems such practice “unreasonable” as “true opinion concerning the one principle is weakened if divine cult is offered to several beings.”<sup>423</sup> To encourage worship of lesser beings simply diminishes belief in one true God. Further, “*latria* implies service. But service is owed to a lord. Now, a lord is properly and truly one who gives precepts of action to others and who takes his own rule of action from no one else. On the other hand, one who carries out what has been ordered by a superior is more a minister than a lord.”<sup>424</sup> With this insight Aquinas begins to move toward a deeper explanation for erroneous worship. False worship, which serves a being superior to man though lesser than the true God, denies God the manifestation of His lordship by bestowing it on another.

Thus, after refuting each type of false worship, Aquinas concludes with Augustine that such honor bestowed on lesser beings must entail the influence of demons. He states the following:

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<sup>421</sup> *ibid.* CXX, i-iv.

<sup>422</sup> *ibid.* vi.

<sup>423</sup> *ibid.* v.

<sup>424</sup> *ibid.* ix.

So, since it is unfitting for the cult of *latria* to be offered to any other being than the first principle of things, and since to incite to unworthy deeds can only be the work of a badly disposed rational creature, it is evident that men have been solicited by the urging of demons to develop the aforesaid unworthy cults, and these demons have been presented in place of God as objects of men's worship because they craved divine honor.<sup>425</sup>

Thus, the error of false worship does not concern a mere mistake or intellectual confusion, but stands as part of what Augustine recognized as the ultimate struggle between those who love God and those who oppose Him. The response, then, cannot simply consist in knowledge, for even those who recognized the existence of the one Creator still endorsed demonic practices. The only fitting response must entail the saving work of God. Thus, Aquinas ends this chapter by arguing that the Old Law, through the bestowal of the commandments, initiated true worship by removing the Israelites from idolatrous practices. Thus he includes himself within the broader tradition of describing worship in relation to the Commandments:

Therefore, since this is the chief intent of divine law: that man be subject to God and that he should offer special reverence to Him, not merely in his heart, but also orally and by bodily works, so first of all, in Exodus 20, where the divine law is promulgated, the cult of many gods is forbidden....Secondly, it is forbidden man to pronounce vocally the divine name without reverence.... Thirdly, rest is prescribed at certain times from outward works, so that the mind may be devoted to divine contemplation.<sup>426</sup>

Thus, Aquinas places worship within the overall movement of salvation history. He portrays the manifold errors, which have led to false worship and ascribed them to the manipulation of demons. He demonstrated the need for God's response to rectify sinful religious practices so that humanity may be brought to true worship.

The implications of Aquinas' treatment of worship in the SCG is that while Cicero's treatment of religion serves as a crucial aid in describing worship, it must be recognized that his articulation stood within a corrupt tradition, which endorsed demonic practices. Using Cicero does not lead Aquinas to affirm his description of worship as a whole. What Cicero recognized

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<sup>425</sup> *ibid.* xxiv.

<sup>426</sup> *ibid.* xxv.

was the natural order, which points toward the necessity to worship one's origin and end. Cicero and other pagans could not properly describe or practice this worship. Thus Aquinas emphasizes the necessity of the divine law "to exclude false opinions about God and matters concerned with God;" furthermore, "through this consideration we exclude the error of those who say that it makes no difference to the salvation of man whatever be the faith with which he serves God."<sup>427</sup> There can be no purely natural fulfillment of the natural inclination to worship by simply offering outward acts, which are meaningless in and of themselves. True worship comes from a correct interior disposition, which manifests itself through the exterior act. Though he points out the falsehood of pagan worship, nevertheless, Aquinas' detailed account of false worship marks an advancement in the treatment of worship by actually engaging non-Christian practices. This will lead Aquinas to compliment his treatment of the virtue of religion in the *Summa*, with what Cicero described as its corresponding vice of superstition.

The next set of works which deal with religion consists of Aquinas' three polemical works written to defend the mendicant way of life from its detractors.<sup>428</sup> Religion comes up somewhat coincidentally in that he makes clear why it is that this vocational state takes the name of the religious life.<sup>429</sup> Thomas wrote the first of these three works, *Contra impugnantes Dei cultum et religionem*, in 1256 around the time he finished his *Commentary on the Sentences*. Here Aquinas uses the notion of religion to understand the way in which through the religious life one offers his or her entire life to God as a holocaust:

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<sup>427</sup> *ibid.* CXVIII, v, vii. The translator, Vernon Bourke, points out that the condemnation of 1277 included one that said that there were errors and fables in Christian religion like in others.

<sup>428</sup> For background on the mendicant controversy at the University of Paris and Thomas' response to it see chapter five of J.-P. Torrell's *Saint Thomas Aquinas*. Vol. 1. *The Person and His Work*, entitled "Defender of Mendicant Religious Life." trans. Robert Royal. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 75-95. See also Mark Johnson's introduction to the newly republished edition of these three works. *St. Thomas and the Mendicant Controversies. Three Translations*. trans. John Proctor, O.P. ed. Mark Johnson. (Leesburg, Virginia: Alethes Press, 2007). I use Proctor's translation for these three polemical writings.

<sup>429</sup> cf. *Commentary on Boethius' De trinitate*. question III, art. ii. *sed contra* iii; SCG. III, CXXIX, CXXXVIII.

Hence perfect religion is consecrated to God by a three-fold vow: by the vow of chastity whereby marriage is renounced, by the vow of poverty, whereby riches are sacrificed, and by the vow of obedience, whereby self-will is immolated. By these three vows man offers to God the sacrifice of all that he possesses. By the vow of chastity, he offers his body, according to the words of St. Paul, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Rom. xii. 1). By the vow of poverty, he makes an offering to God of all his external possessions.... By the vow of obedience, he offers to God that sacrifice of the spirit of which David says, "the sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit" etc. (Ps. l. 19). But these three vows are, in the sight of God, not a sacrifice only, but also a holocaust. This, in the Old Law, was the most acceptable form of sacrifice. St. Gregory says (8 Homil. II. part. on Ezech.), 'When a man vows to God one part only of his possessions, he offers a sacrifice. When, however, he offers all that he has, all that he loves, and his entire life to the Almighty, he presents to Him a holocaust.' Hence religion, understood in its secondary sense, in so far as it presents a sacrifice to God, imitates religion taken in its primary sense. There are some who renounce a part of the things which are sacrificed by the religious vows; but this partial renunciation is not perfect religion.<sup>430</sup>

The religious life takes the common aspects of religion, renunciation of goods, sacrifice, and the service by which one dedicates oneself to God in submission, and seeks to dedicate one's whole life to these objectives. The religious life, then, belongs to those who practice religion *par excellence*.

Thomas further describes how the common and perfect practice of religion are related:

Religion then bears a twofold meaning. Its first signification is that re-binding, which the word implies, whereby a man unites himself to God, by faith and fitting worship. Every Christian, at his Baptism, when he renounces Satan and all his pomps, is made partaker of the true religion. The second meaning of religion is the obligation whereby a man binds himself to serve God in a peculiar manner, by specified works of charity, and by renunciation of the world. It is in this sense that we intend to use the word religion at present. By charity, befitting homage is rendered to God. This homage may be paid to Him by the exercise of either the active or the contemplative life. Homage is paid to Him by the various duties of the active life, whereby works of charity are performed towards our neighbour. Therefore, some religious orders, such as the monastic and hermetical, are instituted for the worship of God by contemplation. Others have been established to serve God in His members, by action.<sup>431</sup>

Here we see again the use of the term "true religion," as a noun, which was also employed when speaking about the sacraments as the rites of the true religion. Making a similar connection,

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<sup>430</sup> "Against Those Who Attack the Religious State and Profession." I.

<sup>431</sup> *ibid.*

Aquinas here posits baptism as an initiation into the true religion, which must mean the religious body through which one may be united to God by faith and fitting worship. The religious order would be another means within this body through which one can achieve these same goals to a higher degree.

This serves as another example of the central role that worship plays in the Christian life. There is a way in which the Christian understands that his or her very life is the just offering which is rendered to God. Through faith one is initiated into a close relationship with God, based on revealed knowledge, and through this new relation one may offer pleasing offerings of sacrifice and charity. Thus, worship plays a crucial role in the movement of the creature back toward God, which Aquinas describes poetically in the following manner:

Now every creature existed, originally, rather in God than in itself. By creation, however, it came forth from God, and, in a certain measure, it began, in its essence, to have an existence apart from Him. Hence every rational creature ought to be reunited to God, to whom it was united before it existed apart from Him, even as ‘unto the place whence the rivers come, they return to flow again’ (Ecclesiast. i.).<sup>432</sup>

Religion is not meant only a sign of one’s interior homage, but also as an impetus, which impels one toward God as the end of one’s life. Religion is not sufficient to do so on its own, but it does incline one towards the complete dedication necessary for the theological virtues to enter into one’s life and to lead one to perfection.

The next work which Aquinas set forth to defend the mendicant orders came roughly between the years 1269-1270, entitled *De perfectione spiritualis vitae*. Here Thomas again speaks of the vows as means of perfection through sacrifice, though this time he goes into greater detail with a Levitical example and by specifying the will as the object of sacrifice.

According to the Levitical law the offering of sacrifice was ordained for the atonement of sin. Again, in Psalm iv, immediately after the verse, ‘the things you say in your hearts, be sorry for them upon your beds,’ we read, ‘offer up the sacrifice of justice,’ that is to say,

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<sup>432</sup> *ibid.*



as the Gloss explains, ‘perform works of justice after your lamentations of penitence.’ Since, then, a holocaust is a perfect sacrifice, a man who makes the religious vows, thereby offering, of his own will, a holocaust to God, makes perfect satisfaction for his sins. Hence we see, that the religious life, is not only the perfection of charity, but likewise the perfection of penitence, since, however heinous may be the sins committed by a man, he cannot be enjoined, as a penance for them, to go into religion; for the religious state transcends all satisfaction. We see, in Gratian, 33, Quest. II. cap. *Admonere*, that Astulplus, who had killed his wife, was advised to go into a monastery as the easiest and best course to pursue; for, if he remained in the world, a very severe penance would be imposed upon him. The vow which, of all the three religious vows, belongs most peculiarly to the religious life, is that of obedience. This is clear for several reasons. First, because, by obedience man sacrifices to God his own will; by chastity, on the other hand, he offers his body, and by poverty his external possessions. Now, since the body is worth more than material goods the vow of chastity is superior in merit to that of poverty, but the vow of obedience is of more value than either of the other two. Secondly, because it is by his own will that a man makes use either of his body or his goods: therefore, he who sacrifices his own will, sacrifices everything else that he has. Again, the vow of obedience is more universal than is that of either poverty or chastity, and hence it includes them both. This is the reason why Samuel preferred obedience to all other offerings and sacrifices, saying, ‘Obedience is better than sacrifices’ (1 Kings xv. 22).<sup>433</sup>

In addition to perfection in charity, now the religious vows take on the role of penance. It must be remembered that in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, Thomas included penance as a part of justice. Rather than a material offering offered on one’s behalf, Thomas puts forth the religious life as a more personal and complete form of religion. In this state of life, one makes a complete sacrifice of oneself and all that one has, especially in offering one’s will. The vows enable one to make the just offering owed to God by entering into a service, which subordinates one’s whole life directly to Him.

*Contra doctrinam retrahentium a religione*, Aquinas’ final work on the mendicants, came shortly after the second, between 1271-1272. This work had the specific aim of arguing against those who prevent those seeking to enter religious life. In the previous two, Aquinas had offered an exposition of religion, beginning with an etymology of the word and how the religious life

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<sup>433</sup> *ibid.* “On the Perfection of the Spiritual Life.” XI.

builds upon this foundation. Here, rather, he begins by speaking of “the religion of Christ,” which...

appears to aim chiefly in diverting the attention of mankind from material things, in order to concentrate their thoughts on the spiritual. Therefore did Jesus, ‘the Author and finisher of our faith,’ at His coming into this world, propose to His faithful followers the contempt of earthly things. He taught this lesson both by His life and by His words. He taught it by His life.<sup>434</sup>

Though the diversion from material things had not garnered much attention in the treatment of religion previously, it can be seen to fit into the general schema of sacrifice. The abnegation of goods, whether material or those of one’s own life, for the sake of one’s origin and end fits completely into the definition of religion. The fact that the Christian religion as a body puts forward this goal, doing so in imitation of Christ, marks a new contribution. Christ then demonstrates the model for true religion by His own way of life. Therefore, religion is meant to be conformity to Christ.

This insight will also be bourn out within the next group of works, Aquinas’ biblical commentaries.<sup>435</sup> Thomas deals with religion or worship in nearly all of his commentaries, at least in passing. Rather than treating each commentary distinctly, it is possible to recognize two central themes running throughout them all, by which a summary of Aquinas’ biblical exposition

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<sup>434</sup> *ibid.* “Against Those Who Would Deter Men from Entering Religion,” I.

<sup>435</sup> John Boyle succinctly summarizes Aquinas’ literal approach to interpretation, while introducing his commentary on John’s Gospel. He states: “Thomas’s conception of the literal sense of Scripture is not particularly novel; it is, however, articulated in a particularly clear way. Thomas says that the literal sense of Scripture pertains to those things that the words of Scripture signify. It is concerned with the *sensus*—let us translate *sensus* here as ‘meaning’—of the words. The task of the interpreter of the literal sense of Scripture is to articulate that meaning—the *sensus*—of the words.... As for how one is to read the literal sense of Scripture, Thomas proposes two negative principles [*De potentia* 4.1]: first one ought not assert something false to be found in Scripture, especially what would contradict the faith; and second, one ought not to insist upon one’s own interpretation to the exclusion of other interpretations which in their content are truth and in which what Thomas calls ‘the circumstance of the letter’ is preserved. I take this to mean, minimally, that the interpretation more or less fits the words and their context. Thus for an interpretation to be true it cannot be contrary to the truth, and it must fit the circumstance of the letter.” “Authorial Intention and the *Divisio textus*.” in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology*. ed. Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 3-4. For a more detailed exposition of the literal sense in Aquinas, see Robert G. Kennedy. *Thomas Aquinas and the Literal Sense of Sacred Scripture*. PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1985.

of religion may be expounded. The first theme entails a discussion of the three historical forms of religion, while the second deals with the way piety and justice relate to worship. In general Aquinas' biblical exposition of worship can be summarized with these words from his commentary on Hebrews 7:2: "the main reason for rendering worship to God is to signify that whatever a man has, he received from God and that he depends on Him for his entire perfection."<sup>436</sup> This reveals the underlying structure of worship: acknowledgement of one's dependence upon God. One's response to God's goodness forms the basis for any particular act of worship. Aquinas recognizes three main types of responses throughout history and to these we now turn.

Since this response is justly demanded, it must be fitting and appropriate. Aquinas gives two essential elements regarding the nature of worship in his commentary on Ephesians 5:6: "Now there is a twofold honor due God; we must establish Him as the goal of our life and we must put our trust of reaching the goal in Him."<sup>437</sup> From these two components comes Aquinas' derivation of three kinds of religion, which runs throughout his scriptural commentaries. The first type of religion originates from a distortion of its goal, the second from a distortion of the means, and the third from a right possession of both. Aquinas describes these three types in his commentary on John 4 while discussing Christ's encounter with the Samaritan woman.<sup>438</sup> In

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<sup>436</sup> *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Ca. 7. Lec. 1. trans. Fabian R. Larcher, O.P. Translation courtesy of the Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal.

<sup>437</sup> *Commentary on Ephesians*. Ca. 5. Lec. 3. trans. Matthew Lamb. (Albany, N.Y.: Magi Books, 1966).

<sup>438</sup> Robert Daly comments on this passage in *Christian Sacrifice*. 287-92. He makes a link between worship in spirit and truth and description of *logike latreia* (Rom 12:1) and *pneumatikai thusiai* (1 Pet 2:5). In *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*, he describes the thrust of the passage as follows: "The main point here is that true worship is in no sense a human work; it can never be done in the flesh (i.e., by merely human means) but only in the spirit (i.e., in Christ), with the help of God 'from above' (cf. John 3:3, 7, 31; 6:44; 9:11)." 79. Francis Moloney further describes that in this passage "the act of worshipping is described by the use of the verb *proskynein*. It implies the act of bending or prostrating oneself in the direction of the one worshiped. In this context, where holy mountains and their sanctuaries are being excluded, true worship is the orientation of oneself toward the Father in such a way that God becomes the imperative of one's life." *The Gospel of John*. Vol. 4 of *Sacra Pagina Series*. ed. Daniel J. Harrington, S.J. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 129. For a thorough exposition of key theological themes in Aquinas' commentary on John, see *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological*

response to the woman's "question about prayer," Jesus "mentions the three kinds of worship: two of these were already being practiced, and the third was to come."<sup>439</sup> The first concerns the idolatry "practiced by the Samaritans, who worshiped on Mount Gerizim," the second that of the "Jews, who prayed on Mount Zion," and the third, "the true worship of God established by Christ."<sup>440</sup> The shortfalls listed in Ephesians above pertain to idolatry and the worship of the Law: the former by not putting one's goal in God, but rather turning to creatures for aid, and the latter by trusting in ritual rather than in interior righteousness.

First, Aquinas explicates the nature of idolatry. Continuing to comment on John 4, he makes the links it to improper knowledge, based on Christ's words "You people worship what you do not understand." Drawing in Aristotle he states:

As to his saying, 'You people worship,' and so on, it should be pointed out that, as the Philosopher says (*Metaphysics*,  $\theta$ , 10), knowledge of complex things is different than knowledge of simple things. For something can be known about complex things in such a way that something else about them remains unknown; thus there can be false knowledge about them. . . . But there cannot be false knowledge of simple things: because they are either perfectly known inasmuch as their quiddity is known; or they are not known at all, if one cannot attain to a knowledge of them. Therefore, since God is absolutely simple, there cannot be false knowledge of him in the sense that something might be known about him and something remain unknown, but only in the sense that knowledge of him is not attained. Accordingly, anyone who believes that God is something that he is not, for example, a body, or something like that, does not adore God but something else, because he does not know him, but something else. Now the Samaritans had a false idea of God in two ways. First of all, because they thought he was corporeal, so that they believed that he should be adored in only one definite corporeal place. Further, because they did not believe that he transcended all things, but was equal to certain creatures, they adored along with him certain idols, as if they were equal to him. Consequently, they did not know him, because they did not attain to a true knowledge of him. So the Lord says, 'You people worship what you do not understand,' i.e., You do not adore God because you do not know him, but only some imaginary being you think is God.

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*Exegesis and Speculative Theology*. ed. Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

<sup>439</sup> *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. Ca. 4. Lec. 2. trans. James A. Weisheipl, O.P. Vol. 1 (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1980).

<sup>440</sup> *ibid.*

Thus, in order to worship God, He must be known. Without this knowledge, humans fall into the error of worshipping lesser creatures (either demons or figments) as if they were God and conducting this worship in a crude fashion. The futile ritual further demonstrates ignorance of God by not approaching Him in a fitting manner.

One must ask, however, why one would engage in this type of idolatry at all. Is there some distorted knowledge of God, which still directs one to engage in idolatrous worship?

Thomas takes up the issue in his *Commentary on Romans*, where he discusses the origin of idolatry in relation to the natural law. Commenting on chapter one, he argues the initial sin in idolatry consists in a prideful turning from God. He states:

That their (the Gentiles') basic guilt was not due to ignorance is shown by the fact that, although they possessed knowledge of God, they failed to use it unto good. For they knew God in two ways: first, as the Super-eminent Being, to Whom glory and honor were due. They are said to be without excuse, therefore, because although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God; either because they failed to pay Him due worship or because they put a limit to His power and knowledge by denying certain aspects of His power and knowledge, contrary to Sir 43:40: 'When you exalt Him, put forth all your strength.' Secondly, they knew Him as the cause of all good things. Hence, in all things he was deserving of thanks, which they did not render; rather they attributed their blessings to their own talent and power. Hence, he adds: nor did they give thanks, namely, to the Lord.<sup>441</sup>

God is known in two ways: as super-eminent being and source of all good things. Thus, God is naturally recognized as the principle of excellence and benefactor, Who, as Aquinas demonstrated in his exposition of the five ways, must stand as the origin of all things. Thus, complete ignorance of God cannot be claimed, as if by excuse, but, nevertheless, human folly distorted this natural basis for knowledge. Aquinas describes the distortion of the natural knowledge of God, driving it to futility, once again using Romans:

For something is futile when it lacks stability or firmness. But God alone is changeless.... Consequently, the human mind is free of futility, only when it leans on God. But when

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<sup>441</sup> *Lectures on the Letter to the Romans*. Ca. 1. Lec. 7. Fabian R. Larcher, O.P. ed. Jeremy Holmes. Translation courtesy of the Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal.

God is rejected and the mind rests in creatures, it incurs futility: ‘For all men who were ignorant of God were foolish and could not know God from the good things which are seen’ (Wis 13:1); ‘The Lord knows the thoughts of man, that they are vain’ (Ps 94:11). In their thinking they were futile, because they put their trust in themselves and not in God, ascribing their blessings not to God but to themselves, as the Psalmist says: ‘Our lips are with us; who is our master?’ (Ps 11:4). Secondly, he mentions the ignorance which followed, when he says, ‘were darkened,’ i.e., by the fact that it was darkened their mind became senseless, i.e., deprived of the light of wisdom, through which man truly knows God. For just as a person who turns his bodily eyes from the sun is put in darkness, so one who turns from God, presuming on himself and not on God, is put in spiritual darkness: ‘Where there is humility,’ which subjects a man to God ‘there is wisdom; where there is pride, there is a disgrace’ (Pr 11:2); ‘Thou hast hidden these things from the wise,’ as they seemed to themselves, ‘and revealed them to babes,’ i.e., to the humble (Mt 11:25); ‘The gentiles live in the futility of their mind; they are darkened in their understanding’ (Eph 4:17).<sup>442</sup>

The sinful turning away from God deprived the mind of the light needed to recognize the truth concerning God and human relation to Him. Further, by falling into base desires, humanity initiated the practice of idolatry, ascribing to God attributes inappropriate to His nature.

Continuing on later in the same lecture, Aquinas argues that...

they changed the true knowledge they received from God into false dogmas with their perverse reasoning, when they claimed that certain idols are gods or that God is not all-powerful or all-knowing.... In another way they exchanged the truth about God for a lie because they attributed that nature of divinity, which is truth itself, to an idol, which is a lie, inasmuch as it is not God.<sup>443</sup>

It seems that Aquinas is leading us through the origin of idolatry, not only historically but also within the life of the person: to be led into this kind of ignorance one must reject the truth of God made evident through nature.

Returning to his *Commentary on John*, Thomas tries to reconcile this chapter from Romans with the verse “the world has not known You,” (Jn 17:25). Here he further explicates the manner in which those practicing idolatry knew God, while truly remaining in ignorance of Him. He states:

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<sup>442</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>443</sup> *ibid.*

But this seems to conflict with Romans (1:19) ‘For what can be known about God is plain to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made.’ We should say to this that knowledge is of two kinds: one is speculative, and the other affective. Through neither of these ways did the world know God completely. Although some Gentiles knew God as having some of those attributes which are knowable by reason, they did not know God as the Father of an only begotten and consubstantial Son, and our Lord is talking about knowledge of these things. Again, if they did have some speculative knowledge of God, this was mixed with many errors: some denied his providence over all things; others said he was the soul of the world; still others worshipped other gods along with him. For this reason they are said not to know God. Composite things can be known in part, and unknown in part, while simple things are unknown if they are not known in their entirety. Thus, even though some erred only slightly in their knowledge of God, they are said to be entirely ignorant of him. Consequently, since these people did not know the special excellence of God, they are said not to know him: ‘For although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened’ (Rom 1:21); ‘Nor did they recognize the craftsman while paying heed to his works’ (Wis 13:1). Furthermore, the world did not know God by an affective knowledge, because it did not love him, ‘like heathen who do not know God’ (1 Thess 4:5). So he says, ‘the world has not known you,’ that is, without error, and as a Father, through love.<sup>444</sup>

Aquinas demonstrates the extent of the shortfall in the practice of idolatry. Knowing God as an abstract principle does not suffice. God must be known without any admixture of error and even then He must be clung to with love, with a knowledge that Aquinas describes as affective.

Speculative knowledge does not honor God, when the mind does truly cling to Him with the support of the will.

Therefore, idolatry entails a revolt of the will from God as one turns toward oneself and toward creatures. Aquinas describes this when commenting on Job 31 as follows: “For if it is evil to offer what is due to one man to another, it seems the greatest evil that the cult due to God

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<sup>444</sup> ca. 17, lec. 6. in *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. Vol. 2. trans. James A. Weisheipl and Fabian Larcher (Petersham, Massachusetts: St. Bede’s Press, 1999). On affective knowledge see Charles Journet. *What is Dogma?* trans. Mark Pontifex. (New York: Harthorne Books, 1964), 30-31. Here Journet speaks of a knowledge which is “preconceptual, prenotional, through the will,” which is “purely practical” and “able to exist in company with theoretical ignorance of God. Thus a man, in virtue of a first free act directed towards the good proper to him, can, without knowing God, tend towards God as the goal of his life, and at the same time know God without being conscious of it, and yet not know him consciously.” Journet alludes to I-II. 89.6 in relation to the first free act.

is offered to a creature.”<sup>445</sup> This greatest evil brings humanity into a state of sin so treacherous that one cannot be just in it regardless of other circumstances. Therefore Aquinas paraphrases Paul’s exhortation in Second Corinthians 7:

Let us be perfect, I say, because philosophers have tried to be perfect and have failed, because they were unable to avoid sins. For no matter how many other sins they avoided or how well they exercised the acts of the virtues, the sin of unbelief remained in them. Consequently, cleanness is made perfect only in the true worship of God.<sup>446</sup>

Idolatry stains the moral life so greatly that it becomes synonymous with sin itself. Since sin denies God His due by choosing a lesser good before Him, idolatry denies Him to the greatest degree, which is why “from the sin of idolatry all other sins arise according to Wis (14:27): ‘For the worship of idols not to be named is the beginning and cause and end of every evil.’”<sup>447</sup>

Worshipping God puts one in right relation to Him by justly acknowledging Him as the source of all one’s good and the goal of one’s life. It fixes God as the end toward which all things must be

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<sup>445</sup> *Commentary on the Book of Job*. Ch. 31. Lesson 2. trans. Brian Mulladay. [www.opwest.org/Archive/2002/Book\\_of\\_Job/tajob.html](http://www.opwest.org/Archive/2002/Book_of_Job/tajob.html). John Yocum situates the commentary’s predominant focus on providence in relation to reverence, showing how worship intrinsically relates to the central theme of the work. He states: “Providence, as Thomas will argue in the *Expositio*, is concerned with a just order in the affairs of human beings, in which consequences of human actions are not left to chance, nor governed by caprice, but by divine wisdom that includes appropriate rewards and punishments that culminate in the final attainment or non-attainment of one’s end.” Providence is crucial as “Aquinas says, because if belief in providence is taken away, ‘no reverence or fear of God based on truth will remain among men,’ [Prol., 41-46] and that will lead to an apathy toward virtue and a proneness to vice.... Thomas sees reverence and fear of God as itself the end of the human being.... Thomas must mean that a defect in this virtue is contributory to defects in all other kinds of virtues.... The kind of reverence and fear that Thomas is interested in is love based on a conviction about the truth of the relation between God and human beings.” “Aquinas’ Literal Exposition of Job.” in *Aquinas on Scripture: An Introduction of His Biblical Commentaries*. ed. Thomas G. Weinandy, Daniel A. Keating, and John P. Yocum. (New York: T & T Clark, 2005), 23; 24. Though reverence (or piety) is spoken of occasionally in the commentary, Yocum makes clear that it is intrinsically linked to the doctrine of providence and the attainment of virtue, all of which are commonly meant to lead toward happiness with God. Torrell notes that Aquinas wrote this commentary while at Viterbo, most likely in conjunction with the second section of the SCG, which also focused on providence. *The Person*. 120. It is significant to note the link of law as an expression of providence with reverence/religion in that treatment.

<sup>446</sup> *Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. ca. 7, lec. 1. trans. Fabian Larcher. Translation courtesy of the Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal. Russell Hittinger makes clear that in Aquinas’ mind the philosophers could not translate their limited natural knowledge of God into virtuous action toward Him. He states: “Thomas explicitly and emphatically denied that the philosophers were able to translate such scraps of theology into virtuous acts of religion. None of the pagan theologies satisfied the natural, not to mention supernatural, virtue of religion.” *The First Grace: Rediscovering the Natural Law in a Post-Christian World*. (Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books, 2003), 10.

<sup>447</sup> *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Ca. 12. Lec. 1. trans. Fabian Larcher. Translation courtesy of the Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal.



directed. Giving this place to any other constitutes a grievous offense against Him and typifies the very nature of sin.

Christ's encounter with the Samaritan woman symbolizes the advent of true worship and the fading of the ignorance and ill-will, which marked idolatrous worship. However, the woman does not only address her own religious practices, but knowing Jesus to be a Jew, she refers to the worship of the Law centered on the Temple. Jewish worship marks a great advance from idolatry in that it responds to the revelation of the true God. Due to this revelation, Aquinas could say that "through the law and the prophets the Jews acquired a true knowledge or opinion of God."<sup>448</sup> Nevertheless, though the worship of the Old Law contained true knowledge of God, it still exhibited worship in a bodily manner similar to idolatrous practices.

The Jews recognized that God is the giver of all goods things through their practice of sacrifice, which encouraged them to submit to Him in service. Nevertheless, these rituals did not achieve the perfection of worship, because the means used were bound to what Aquinas calls worship under the elements. For instance, in his commentary on Galatians 4:10, he describes the limits of the Old Law as follows: "I answer that the Jewish worship is midway between the worship of the Christians and that of the Gentiles: for the Gentiles worshipped the elements as though they were living things; the Jews, on the other hand, did not serve the elements but served God under the elements, inasmuch as they rendered worship to God by the observances of bodily elements."<sup>449</sup> While this mode of worship does not reach perfection, nevertheless, it stood as a

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<sup>448</sup> *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. ca. 4. Lec. 2. He continues in the next paragraph as follows: "He gives the reason for this when he says, 'since salvation is from the Jews.' As if to say: The true knowledge of God was possessed exclusively by the Jews, for it had been determined that salvation would come from them. And as the source of health should itself be healthy, so the source of salvation, which is acquired by the true knowledge and the true worship of God, should possess the true knowledge of God. Thus, since the source of salvation and its cause, i.e., Christ, was to come from them, according to the promise in Genesis (22:18): 'All the nations will be blessed in your descendents,' it was fitting that God be known in Judah."

<sup>449</sup> *Commentary on the St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*. Ca. 4. Lec. 4. trans. Fabian R. Larcher, O.P. (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1966).

necessary step in worship's restoration. It served two particular benefits. This bodily mode sought to oppose idolatry by taking on and purifying its practices and secondly it condescended to fallen humanity's mode of thinking. Again commenting on Galatians, Aquinas describes this as a form of pedagogy:

To the Jews was proposed the Old Law through which they would be brought to faith and justice: 'the law was our pedagogue in Christ' (3:24). Or, 'under the elements,' i.e., the corporeo-religious usages which they observed, such as days of the moon, new moons and the Sabbath. But one should not object that on this account they differed nothing from the pagans who served the elements of this world, for the Jews did not serve them or pray them worship; but under them they served and worshipped God, whereas the pagans in serving the elements rendered them divine worship: 'They worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed' (Rom 1:25). Furthermore, it was necessary that the Jews serve God under the elements of this world, because such an order is in harmony with human nature which is led from sensible to intelligible things.<sup>450</sup>

The Jews worshipped the one God and through their worship paid Him right honor.

Nevertheless, the insufficiency of the means arose not only in the fact that they were earthly, but also due to their inability to forgive sin and thus overcome the distance of humanity to God.

Commenting on Colossians 2:18, Aquinas describes the lack of justice of those who trust in the law: "their religion was useless... in vain, that is, doing things that were of no value for eternal life."<sup>451</sup> He describes this in greater detail commenting on Hebrews 9:

But the Old Testament was unable to make perfect those who served it, because the sacrifice had not yet been offered that would satisfy for the sin of the whole human race; hence, he says. According to this, namely, parable or figure, gifts and sacrifices are offered, which refers to the clause, accomplishing the offices of sacrifice, because gifts of all things and offerings of animals were not offered in the holy of holies, but in the holies or in the court of the tabernacle. But they were unable to cleanse, because they 'cannot perfect the conscience of the worshipper' that serves with the service of *latraria*, which pertains to divine worship.<sup>452</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> *ibid.* Lec. 1.

<sup>451</sup> *Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians.* Ca. 2. Lec. 4. trans. Fabian R. Larcher, O.P. Translation courtesy of the Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal.

<sup>452</sup> Ca. 9. Lec. 2.

Old Law worship was truly limited in its ability to unite its practitioners to God.<sup>453</sup> This is due to the fact that the ritual itself stood in need of interior rectitude, which had to come through grace. Thus, this kind of sacrifice stood in the need of the justification, which came from Christ and which could be obtained in the time of Old Law only implicitly.

Though the worship of the Old Law came from God its foundation still rested on the natural law. Thomas brought in the medieval tradition of ceremonial precepts in understanding Old Law worship (as was seen in the SFA). The ceremonial precepts give flesh to the precept of the natural, which binds one to offer just worship to God. Thus, as Aquinas says, again commenting on Hebrews 7:2, that...

I answer that the ceremonial precepts of the Old Testament are amplifications of the precepts of the natural law and of the moral precepts; therefore, in regard to what they had from the natural law, they were observed before the Law without any precept. For the fact that something is offered to God in recognition of His creation and dominion is natural; but that He should be offered goats and heifers is a ceremonial precept.<sup>454</sup>

Mosaic sacrifice could fulfill the natural law by worshipping the true God in a manner that, while imperfect, did not entail sin. Aquinas also points to the highest purpose of this ritual in that it pointed toward perfect worship by prefiguring the death of Christ, as Thomas comments on Psalm 39: “sacrifices were figures of the true sacrifice, namely of Christ.”<sup>455</sup> Therefore, the

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<sup>453</sup> The limit is not due to an deficiency of error only the lack of explicit knowledge of Christ and the emphasis on physical conformity to the Law. cf. ST I-II. 107.3, “Whether the New Law is Contained in the Old?”

<sup>454</sup> Ca. 7. Lec. 1.

<sup>455</sup> “...sacrificia erant figurae veri sacrificii, scilicet Christi.” For a thorough exposition of Aquinas’ *Commentary on the Psalms* see Thomas F. Ryan. *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms*. He describes the commentary as follows: “Although incomplete—Thomas broke off writing after the common on Psalm 54—*Super Psalmos* is a powerful work that deserves close scrutiny, in part because it is doctrinally rich. Covering a wide range of theological issues, it reveals Thomas’s mature teaching on themes as Christ, prayer, grace, and good works.” 1. Ryan notes that Aquinas recognizes the central themes of prayer and Christ throughout the Psalms. Drawing from Aquinas’ prologue, Ryan makes clear that “Christ as matter and prayer as form must be ultimately linked. From this perspective, then, the Psalms are not simply about Christ or prauer, but about Christ praying.” 108. Ryan illuminates this focus by relating Aquinas’ treatment of these themes in the *Summa* (chapter three) to their exposition in the Psalms commentary (chapter four). See also Henk Schoot and Pim Valkenberg’s comments on Aquinas’ Christological reading of the Psalms in “Thomas Aquinas and Judaism.” in *Aquinas in Dialogue: Thomas for the Twenty-First Century*. ed. Jim Fodor and Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt. (Malden, Massachussets: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 54-57. While this article in general draws some important distinctions regarding

worship of the Jews before Christ helped to fulfill the natural law, to withdraw from sin, and to point toward true worship in Christ. Nevertheless, this worship in itself could not be relied upon to lead one to true union with God.

Aquinas points toward the essential role of worship in leading toward this union in speaking of “salvation, which is acquired by the true knowledge and the true worship of God.”<sup>456</sup> Jewish worship played a pivotal role in bringing this about by serving as the source from which true worship would spring. In His conversation with the Samaritan woman, Christ indicated His intent to bring about a new and perfect form of worship, which He deemed one of “spirit and truth.” Aquinas comments on this passage as follows:

‘In spirit and in truth’ can be understood in a third way, as indicating the characteristics of true worship. For two things are necessary for a true worship: one is that the worship be spiritual, so he says, ‘in spirit,’ i.e., with fervor of spirit.... Secondly, the worship should be ‘in truth.’ First, in the truth of faith, because no fervent spiritual desire is meritorious unless united to the truth of faith.... Secondly, ‘in truth,’ i.e., without pretense or hypocrisy..... This prayer, then, requires three things: first, the fervor of love; secondly, the truth of faith, and thirdly, a correct intention. He says, the true worshipers will worship ‘the Father’ in spirit and in truth, because under the law, worship was not given to the Father, but to the Lord. We worship in love, as sons; whereas they worshiped in fear, as slaves. He says ‘true’ worshipers, in opposition to three things mentioned in the above interpretations. First, in opposition to the false worship of the Samaritans: ‘Put aside what is not true, and speak the truth’ (Eph 4:25). Secondly, in opposition to the fruitless and transitory character of bodily rites: ‘Why do you love what is without profit, and seek after lies’ (Ps 4:3). Thirdly, it is opposed to what is symbolic: ‘Grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ’ (above 1:17).<sup>457</sup>

The proper form of worship must conform to God. Therefore, Jesus describes this with the words: “Indeed, it is just such worshipers the Father seeks” (Jn 4:23). Here, Aquinas

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Aquinas’ treatment of the Jews, I believe that the authors may have understated the deep penetration of the Old Testament into Aquinas’ theology. The Law plays a pivotal role in the moral and religious progression to perfection and is continually referenced throughout Aquinas’ thought. This can be seen in the climactic role of the Decalogue in the treatment of the virtue of justice. This may be due to the article’s predominant focus on issues which shed light on relations with the Jews in the Middle Ages, such as the baptism of Jewish children. For an example of a study that demonstrates the essential role of Judaism in Aquinas’ theology see Matthew Levering’s *Christ’s Fulfillment of Torah and Temple: Salvation according to Thomas Aquinas*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002).

<sup>456</sup> *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. Ca. 4. Lec. 2.

<sup>457</sup> *ibid.*

indicates that Christ “shows that this third kind of worship is appropriate for two reasons. First, because the One worshiped wills and accepts this worship. Secondly, because of the nature of the One worshiped.” Aquinas expands on this point, commenting on Hebrews 9:14: “God is life.... Therefore, it is fitting that one who serve Him be alive.”<sup>458</sup> In order to worship God properly, one must have a right interior relationship with Him, which only comes through Christ. This is why He Himself initiates a new form of worship.

Aquinas argues that Christ has abrogated and fulfilled both previous forms of worship. The Gentiles may now know clearly what they sought to worship, no longer groping in the dark of sin. The Jews may now have more explicit knowledge of God as Father and worship in a spiritual manner more acceptable to Him. Christ unites both religions by bringing together the things they lacked into one, perfect expression.<sup>459</sup> This requires a movement from sin and ignorance into the righteousness of God. Aquinas describes this movement commenting on John 10:14:

In regard to the third he says, ‘and they will heed my voice.’ Here he mentions three things necessary for righteousness in the Christian religion. The first is obedience to the commandments of God. Concerning this he says, ‘and they will heed my voice,’ i.e., they will observe my commandments: ‘Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you’ (Matt 28:20); ‘People whom I had not known,’ i.e., whom I did not approve, ‘served me. As soon as they heard of me they obeyed me’ (Ps 18:43). The second is the unity of charity, and concerning this he says, ‘so there shall be one flock,’ i.e., one Church of the faithful from the two peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles: “One faith” (Eph 4:5); “For he is our peace, who has made us both one” (Eph 2:14). The third is the unity of faith, and in regard to this he says, ‘one shepherd’: ‘They shall all have one shepherd,’ that is, the Jews and the Gentiles (Ez 37:24).<sup>460</sup>

Thus, the proper worship Christ initiated requires two things, namely proper knowledge of God and a right interior disposition. The first comes through faith, while the second through

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<sup>458</sup> Ca. 9, Lec. 3.

<sup>459</sup> cf. Aquinas’ *Commentary on Ephesians*, Ch. 2. Lecture 5. “It follows that he ‘hath made both one,’ joining into unity both the Jews who worshipped the true God and the Gentiles who were alienated from God’s cult.”

<sup>460</sup> Ca. 10, Lec. 4.

obedience and charity. Christ's very presence is the means of attaining to the true knowledge and practice necessary for right worship. Commenting on the passage in John 14 where Christ affirms that He is the way, the truth, and the life, Aquinas explains that "because no one can know the truth unless he adheres to the truth, it is necessary that anyone who desires to know the truth adhere to this Word."<sup>461</sup> And further down, "This is the reason why Christ referred to himself as the way, united to its destination: because he is the destination, containing in himself whatever can be desired, that is, existing truth and life." Only in Christ's presence does the truth of God pierce clearly through the darkness of sin.

The need for a right disposition forms the second requirement for true worship, which is to be found in charity. The Law sought to approach God through ritual purity and obedience to outward commands. Commenting on Hebrews 12:28, Aquinas argues for a deeper understanding of worshipful service:

By that grace, namely given and to be given to us, 'let us offer worship acceptable to God, with reverence and awe.' For it is not enough merely to serve God, which can be done by outward action; we must also please Him by right intention and by love.... But God is especially pleased by inward service: 'Let us serve Him with holiness and justice' (Lk 1: 74).<sup>462</sup>

One's just response to God for the benefits rendered cannot stop at outward signs, such as a sacrifice, but must proceed more deeply from one's heart, flowing forth in rightness of life. The acts that proceed from this state are what make the secondary acts pleasing. Aquinas describes the primacy of virtue, commenting on Ps 39: "for certain things are acceptable to God on account of themselves, such as the work of justice, charity, faith, and virtue.... but He does not accept oblations on account of themselves."<sup>463</sup> Returning again to Hebrews, this time from 15:13,

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<sup>461</sup> Ca. 14. Lec. 2.

<sup>462</sup> Ca. 12, Lec. 5.

<sup>463</sup> "*quaedam enim sunt Deo accepta propter se, ut opus justitiae, charitatis, fidei et virtutis.... Sed oblationes non acceptat propter se.*"

Aquinas specifies two types of interior sacrifice acceptable to God: “We should sacrifice upon the altar and offer certain kinds of sacrifice. For there are two kinds of sacrifice that we should offer upon Christ’s altar, namely, devotion to God and mercy towards our neighbor.”<sup>464</sup>

Devotion is defined in the *Summa* as “nothing else but the will to give oneself readily to things concerning the service of God.”<sup>465</sup> This is the reason why religion must be seen as a part of the virtue of justice, since justice is not directed toward the passions, but the will in itself. Worship must flow from one’s right will to act justly toward God and neighbor. In order to achieve this God must stimulate the individual and elicit worship from him or her. Aquinas makes God’s initiative in bringing about worship clear commenting on John 15. He engages in a discussion of *colere* using a wordplay between its dual meaning of cultivation and worship:

God cultivates us to make us better by his work, since he roots out the evil seeds in our hearts. As Augustine says, he opens our hearts with the plow of his words, plants the seeds of the commandments, and harvests the fruit of devotion.<sup>466</sup> But we cultivate God, not by plowing but by adoring, in order that we may be made better by him: ‘If any one is a worshiper,’ that is, a cultivator, ‘of God and does his will, God listens to him’ (9:31).<sup>467</sup>

True worship of God responds to His initiative and approaches Him so as to conform more perfectly to Him. Thus, the interior disposition needed to approach God must flow from the gift of charity.

Left to oneself in a state of sin, the just command to worship would end in the frustration present in both previous forms of religion. The Christian fulfillment of religion does not just give a new command, but while building upon nature and previous revelation, it initiates into a new reality. The acceptable sacrifice of virtue and service that one offers flows directly from the one, true acceptable sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Thus, Christ brings about true worship by

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<sup>464</sup> Ca. 13, Lec. 2.

<sup>465</sup> ST II-II. 82.1, *corpus*.

<sup>466</sup> *Sermones de Verbis Domini* 61.

<sup>467</sup> Ca. 15. Lec. 1.

enabling one to participate in His own perfect worship. Insofar as believers share in Christ's Cross, they also are able to make sacrifices acceptable to God. Commenting on Hebrews 9:14, Aquinas demonstrates the efficacy of this Sacrifice by comparing it to sacrifice in the Old Law:

Yet it should be noted that the blood of those animals merely cleansed from outward stain, namely, from contact with the dead; but the blood of Christ cleanses the conscience inwardly, which is accomplished by faith: 'Purifying their hearts by faith' (Ac. 15:9), inasmuch as it makes one believe that all who adhere to Christ are cleansed by His blood. Therefore, He cleanses the conscience. It also cleanses them from contact with a corpse; but He 'from dead works,' namely, sins, which take God from the soul, whose life consists in union by charity. It also cleansed them in order that they might come to the figurative ministry; but the blood of Christ to the spiritual service of God.<sup>468</sup>

Christ's act of religion, the offering of His life on the Cross, moves beyond the symbolic by enacting what it symbolizes, which is the purification from sin by a vicarious sacrifice in charity. Thus, it has the efficacy of transferring its own merit to the one united to it and, furthermore, enables the one receiving its grace to make pure acts of religion. Especially in the Eucharist, but in all acts of worship, the Christian shares in Christ's sacrifice and priesthood so closely that he or she can offer to the Father His own Son.<sup>469</sup> This transforms the nature of worship, because as Aquinas comments on Psalm 39, "in another way it (the Old Law) concerns the sacrifice of the New Testament, which contains Christ Himself, Who in Himself is acceptable to God."<sup>470</sup> This worship truly honors God, is acceptable to Him, and draws the worshiper closer to the One to Whom it is directed.

Though the biblical commentaries offer a fresh perspective on worship, namely an account embedded within three historical forms, which are oriented toward Christ, nevertheless, in these commentaries Thomas still maintains worship's link to virtue and justice. First of all,

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<sup>468</sup> Ca. 9. Lec. 3.

<sup>469</sup> Robert Daly points out that "the central paraenetic or exhortatory purpose of Hebrews" can be seen in the Christian's share in Christ's priesthood, specifically in "the key phrase... 'draw near,' [4:16]" which is "a cultic technical term signifying the priestly action of approaching the altar in order to offer sacrifice." *Origins*. 72.

<sup>470</sup> *Secus est de sacrificio novi testamenti quod continet ipsum Christum, qui per se Deo est acceptus.*



Aquinas maintains the Ciceronian tradition in holding religion to be a natural dictate, which binds all to God. This binding occurs from a few different perspectives: as a benefactor God must be thanked, as a Father He must be loved, and as Creator and Lord He must be feared. Once again commenting on Hebrews, this time from 12:28, Aquinas portrays the comprehensiveness of one's obligation to God as follows:

For natural reason dictates that we are obligated to show reverence and honor to anyone from whom we receive many favors; therefore, much more to God, Who has given us the greatest things and has promised us an infinitude of them.... Now by reason of creation God is called Lord, but by reason of regeneration, Father. But to a Lord fear is owed, and to a Father love and reverence.<sup>471</sup>

This passage draws to mind human relations, that of a lord and a father, and intensifies these relationships by applying them to God. This is reminiscent Aquinas' use of the familial or servile justice in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, where he applied this form of justice to *latrìa*. In contrast to Augustine, who sought a strictly biblical term to describe worship, Aquinas does not prescind from natural relationships to explain worship, but rather uses them to specify the way in which we relate to God. In particular he relates religion to piety, as in his commentary on 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:

It is piety, or godliness, through which we pay our duty of benevolence to parents and fatherland, just as it is religion through which we show due worship to God. For piety signifies a certain affection for one's own beginning. Now, the beginning of generation is father and fatherland, and so a man must be of good will to them. And the father of all is God.<sup>472</sup>

Just as we have a bond to our parents through birth and thus a corresponding duty toward them, so with God, who must be approached with a reverent and worshipful service. The reason why Augustine shied away from terms such as religion and piety was that these words could be used

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<sup>471</sup> Ca. 12. Lec. 5.

<sup>472</sup> *Commentary on St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy*. Ca. 4. Lec. 2. trans. Chrysostom Baer. (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2007). For a treatment of the major themes of Aquinas' commentary on the pastoral epistles, see John Seward. "The Grace of Christ in His Principal Members: St. Thomas Aquinas on the Pastoral Epistles." in *Aquinas on Scripture*. 197-221.

to apply to honor given to human beings. Thus, in the classical understanding, one owed a kind of worship, though rightly understood as a strong reverence, to one's parents and fatherland. One incurred a debt to one's parents, which one could never be repaid, as they served as the source of one's existence and as one's caregiver. This is an exact model of worship given to God, which intends to be a sign of gratitude and a recognition of His excellence, which He has shared with His creation. Though Aquinas chose to build upon this similarity, he does caution against taking it too far. Commenting on Romans 1, he states: "Now, although we should show some reverence to those above us, it should never be the worship of *latría*, which consists chiefly in sacrifices and oblations, through which man professes God to be the author of all good things."<sup>473</sup> The reverence one exhibits to God must far exceed any earthly honor given to anyone.

Piety serves as a fitting example of the way in which justice plays a role in Aquinas' biblical commentaries. This virtue, while distinct from religion, plays an essential role in the latter's manifestation. The depth of Christ's great act of worship on the Cross manifested a justice representative not of a cold, legal transaction, but rather the loving honor of a son to a father, one which flows from a right relationship with him. As Aquinas states commenting on Titus:

Religion and piety according to Cicero are parts of justice; and they differ because religion is the worship of God. But because God not only is creator, but also is father, therefore not only do we owe Him worship as to a Creator, but love and worship as to a Father. And therefore piety is taken up whenever [one is] in the service of the worship of God.<sup>474</sup>

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<sup>473</sup> Ca. 1, Lec. 7.

<sup>474</sup> *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to Titus*. Ca. 1. Lec. 1. *Religio enim et pietas, secundum Tullium, sunt partes iustitiae; et differunt, quia religio est cultus Dei. Sed quia Deus non solum est creator, sed etiam est pater, ideo non solum debemus ei cultum ut creatori, sed amorem et cultum sicut patri. Et ideo pietas quandoque pro cultu Dei sumitur.*

Though God is the Father of all, He has become Father in a more particular way through adoption in grace, by which one is able to participate in Christ's relation to Him. Receiving God's grace places the believer back in a right relationship with the Father so as to receive His love and blessings. Aquinas describes this right relation as an interior state, which he compares to the state of the unbeliever. The believer exists in a state of true righteousness and thus can express the just relation one has to God. Commenting on Second Corinthians 6:14, he argues:

‘For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity’ (justice with injustice)? As if to say: you should not bear the yoke with unbelievers, because there is one habit in you and another in them. In you it is the habit of justice; in them it is the habit of iniquity. But the higher justice is to render to God what is his, and this is to worship him. Hence, since you worship God, the habit of justice is in you. But the greatest iniquity is to take from God what is his and give it to the devil.<sup>475</sup>

God enables one to worship Him in justice by providing the grace necessary to overcome the obstacles of sin and even the limits of nature. One can worship God most especially because God dwells within, thus making one holy and set apart from the profane. Continuing further with the distinction between the believer and unbeliever, Aquinas states:

As to the state of grace he (Paul) says, ‘What agreement has the temple of God with idols?’ As if to say: there is no agreement. Hence, you are a temple of God by grace: ‘Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?’ (1 Cor. 3:16). Therefore, you should not communicate with unbelievers, who are temples of idols. But it should be noted that in Ez. 25, the Lord forbids idols to be worshipped in God's temple. Much more then are men forbidden, whose souls are God's temple, to violate them by partaking of idols: ‘If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him’ (1 Cor. 3:17).<sup>476</sup>

The intimate relation that God has with the believer entails that God be the sole object of worship. It is a matter of justice that one's devotion be complete, which is made possible by God's grace, purifying and giving the gifts necessary for true worship: right knowledge and the right disposition. Thus, Aquinas remarks that one of the reasons that God dwells in the believer

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<sup>475</sup> Ca. 6. Lec. 3.

<sup>476</sup> *ibid.* Daniel Keating discusses Aquinas' commentary on this passage in “Aquinas on 1 and 2 Corinthians: The Sacraments and their Ministers.” in *Aquinas on Scripture*. See particularly 138-142.

as His temple “pertains to correct worship and service offered by the saints; as to this he says, ‘and they shall be my people,’ i.e., they will worship me and obey me as mine and not another’s.”<sup>477</sup> Thus, the justice of worship given to God culminates in the Spirit’s indwelling, by which He elicits the proper response from the believer. This justice flows from interior righteousness and is ultimately based on God’s own love communicated to us by our share in Christ.

Justice, one of the cornerstones of the medieval account of *latria*, takes on a new signification in Aquinas’ biblical commentaries. Justice does not only manifest the need to worship God by giving Him His due, but also entails a state of righteousness, which both initiates and is strengthened by worship. Thus, the service of God, signified in Greek by *latria*, directly concerns the justice of the soul. The just exterior manifestation of service must flow from interior justice, which Aquinas explicates while commenting on Psalm 2: 1:

Then, when he (the Psalmist) says, ‘Serve’ (servite), he suitably describes, after understanding, service, which is of God, and is adoration, the profession of faith. And thus it is appropriate first that he believe, and afterwards, confess and serve (Romans 10): ‘With the heart we believe unto justice; but with the mouth,’ etc. He says Lord: for it suffices the one who serves man that he be joined outwardly to him by obedience; but it is fitting for the one who serves God that he be joined inwardly to him with respect to his soul, by having a good desire (Psalm 61): ‘Shall not my soul be subject to God’ etc.<sup>478</sup>

One’s interior state and worship stand together in a close relationship. Worship will not take appropriate expression when offered in a state of enmity with God and also one in right relation with God must necessarily offer an expression of the filial love and friendship within. Aquinas links the two as follows: “But holiness consists of two things: a humble manner of life, and the worship of God.”<sup>479</sup> He makes this claim in his *Commentary on Colossians* while arguing

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<sup>477</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>478</sup> trans. Stephen Loughlin. *The Aquinas Translation Project*. [http://www4.desales.edu/~philtheo/loughlin/ATP/Psalm\\_2.html](http://www4.desales.edu/~philtheo/loughlin/ATP/Psalm_2.html).

<sup>479</sup> *Commentary on Colossians*. Ca. 2, Lec. 4.

against Judaizers who sought to maintain the religious practice of the Jews in the Christian life. Against this Aquinas wrote: “As to the justice of such persons he (Paul) says they were ‘puffed up without reason,’ in vain, although they pretended to be humble. And he mentions two things. First, that their religion was useless, because they went about without reason, in vain, that is, doing things that were of no value for eternal life.”<sup>480</sup> This conflict manifests the vanity of worship, which does not constitute service flowing from interior subordination (humility) to God.

When religion becomes simply exterior action, it loses its purpose and its real sense of justice, which is interior. Since the interior state and the exterior manifestation are so closely bound together, the Christian cannot simply exhibit the exterior signs of another mode of religion, without interior ramifications. Aquinas makes this clear when explicating the significance of circumcision: “For one who professes a religion makes himself a debtor to all that pertains to the observances of that religion.”<sup>481</sup> The signs of worship manifest belief and so the signs of Jewish worship were meant to manifest the expectation of the Jews. With the coming of Christ, Christian worship must reflect the redemption accomplished by Christ, which transforms one’s life and places one in a state of justice. This is precisely what is unique about the religion of the New Testament, which, quoting Aquinas’ commentary on Hebrews 7:16, “is not dispensed by carnal things, but consists of spiritual things: for it is founded upon a spiritual power [*secundum spiritualem virtutem*], by which a perpetual life is produced in us.”<sup>482</sup> Though the Christian religion does make use of physical means for worship, these are always subordinated to inner union with God. A perfect example of this are the Sacraments, which Aquinas states

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<sup>480</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>481</sup> *Commentary on Galatians*. Ca. 5. Lec. 1.

<sup>482</sup> Ca. 7. Lec. 3.

pertain to religion since they assume something divine, namely grace.<sup>483</sup> They use physical signs due to our bodily nature, yet are always focused on the reception of the grace of the Holy Spirit, the essence of the New Law.

While worship must reflect interior union with God, it must be remembered that worship does not bring this about on its own. As was seen in earlier mediaeval works, the discussion of worship under the aspect of justice must include the theological virtues. Aquinas addresses this in his commentaries insofar as he orders *latria* and piety toward the theological virtues. Earlier, it had been seen that *latria* used the acts of the theological virtues as its matter or as a subordinate virtue in regards to worship. However, here Aquinas shifts the focus to the way in which worship prepares one to believe. For instance, in his commentary on 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, he expounds:

Other virtues are for having the true faith, namely, the virtues by which we worship God, *latria* and the like. These are ordered to removing errors and strengthening the firmness of faith regarding God in men's hearts. For he who does not have true faith cannot love God, since he who believes falsely about God already does not love Him.<sup>484</sup>

Aquinas describes in more detail, in his *Commentary on Hebrews*, the way in which worship could aid in the development of faith. In describing the ways in which one could come to know the existence of one God, Aquinas specifically lists worship: "I answer that knowledge about God can be had in a number of ways.... In another way, that God alone is to be worshipped; this is the way the Jews believed."<sup>485</sup> The Jewish belief relied on their manner of worship to manifest His existence. Thus, the exterior act of one's worship may be a sign by which another is led to belief. Further down in the commentary on 1 Timothy, Aquinas also notes that "mercy and piety

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<sup>483</sup> ST II-II 89. prologue. cf. III 62.5, 63.2.

<sup>484</sup> Ca. 1. Lec. 2.

<sup>485</sup> Ca. 11. Lec. 2.

are immediately ordered toward charity, in which is the height of the Christian religion.”<sup>486</sup>

Thus, the virtues by which we are justly subordinated to God are ordered toward something even higher: supernatural union with God. It is through the theological virtues that one comes in supernatural contact with God.

There is one last aspect to address in relation to justice. While Aquinas mostly focused on justice as interior righteousness, which is manifested by worship and lived out through the theological virtues, he does introduce another aspect. While religion and piety received treatment in medieval theology under the aspect of the virtues, Aquinas points towards their relation to law as a means of inducement toward virtue. This link harkens back to Cicero, who recognized the essential link between worship and the well being of the polity. While discussing God’s justice in his *Commentary on Job*, Aquinas makes the assertion that those “acting against the piety of divine religion not only despise divine judgments, but also deny them or assert that they are unjust.”<sup>487</sup> Job’s friend Eliud wrongly asserts Job to be among this group and in his accusation Aquinas describes how he rightly points out that “God is himself the one to whom the worship of piety is due, and through his omnipotence he governs all things, establishing for men the laws of justice. Therefore it would be against his divinity if he were to favor impiety, and so he says, ‘Let impiety be far from God.’”<sup>488</sup> Through Eliud’s false attribution, Aquinas indicates how piety reflects one’s acceptance of God’s law and the one who rejects this attitude stands apart from God. Piety flows from God’s governance and contributes to the establishment of just law. Aquinas makes this link even clearer in his commentary on the next chapter:

As to the works of divine worship, he says, ‘Or what will he receive from your hand’, in sacrifices and oblations? He implies the answer is, ‘Nothing’, as Psalm 49 says, ‘I will not accept calves from your house.’ (v. 5) One could object that God did not care

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<sup>486</sup> Ca. 4. Lec. 2. Baer uses godliness instead of piety for *pietas* in his translation.

<sup>487</sup> Ca. 34. Lesson 1.

<sup>488</sup> *ibid.*

whether man acts justly or unjustly. To answer this he then adds, ‘Your impiety will harm man who is your fellow creature,’ because he can receive harm: and your justice will help a son of man,’ who needs the help of justice. This is why God prohibits impiety and commands justice, since God cares about men who are helped or hurt by this.<sup>489</sup>

God establishes worship not only so that the individual may stand in right relation to Him, but also as part of the order for human life. Not only does piety conform to God’s own justice, but this reverent attitude toward God also promotes justice to others. Aquinas affirms that worship does help constitute the good of the social order.

Thus, Aquinas’ scriptural commentaries offer a distinct and more theological approach to the exposition of worship. Though Aquinas’ exposition of religion in the *Summa Theologiae* may be organized more coherently, it closely models his treatment of worship in his scriptural commentaries in several aspects. It is clear that his discussion of themes such as Christ’s sacrifice fulfilling the ritual of the Old Law and of the interior nature of worship arose from deep scriptural reflection. These biblical insights are at the heart of his treatment of worship and show the depth he added to the tradition of a philosophical analysis of religion. Aquinas always retained the central insight that all of our worship is justly owed to God, though in these commentaries the way in which justice brings about worship takes a decidedly Christian expression. Justice cannot remain on the level of nature simply as a manifestation of a dictate, which moves toward worship. Alone, this dictate stands helpless unless it flows forth from interior justice, which in turn comes from grace.

The key development in Aquinas’ commentaries serves to highlight the manner in which the worship of the New Law arises from and far exceeds both pagan and Jewish worship. Worship in the New Law must spring forth from a deep union with God. Though it is not possible to give God exactly His due, nevertheless, by grace one can give Him one’s whole life

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<sup>489</sup> ca. 35. Lesson 1.



in service. This ability must come from God, who enables one to worship Him rightly. He makes Himself known as an object of knowledge and love, which then elicits the response of a loving son, devotedly offering his whole life to the Father. Thus the emphasis that Cicero put upon justice in his account of religion finds its ultimate fulfillment in the charity that Christ manifested on the Cross, which is the greatest act of worship.

Aquinas' thought on worship can be seen through this broad lens of the different modes of worship. Worship can be viewed abstractly insofar as it is a dictate springing forth from nature. However, this dictate must take a concrete form, which Aquinas makes clear will come forth either from humanity's own sinful exertion, namely idolatry, or from God's own initiative. Worship based on God's revelation can also be divided into two modes: imperfect and perfect. It is not a matter of judging between them, as the former is meant by God to lead directly into the latter. Christian religion reaches perfection when it receives its efficacy from Christ and thus proceeds from God. God alone gives the believer the rectitude and strength to manifest true worship, which actually pleases God and moves the offer toward Him.

This general framework will aid as we advance into Aquinas' treatment within the *Summa*. Though Aquinas treated religion specifically as a virtue and a part of justice, this treatment serves as only one aspect of his general treatment of worship. Thus, alongside of a treatment of justice, I will also examine the role of law, by which God moves humanity toward true worship, and then the form which this true worship takes within the Christian life. Therefore, this broader focus will incorporate Aquinas' work not only in the *Secunda Secundae's* treatment of religion, but also in the *Prima-Secundae* and the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa*.

## CHAPTER FOUR: JUSTICE AS ORDER TOWARD GOD

Thomas applies his knack for simplicity and organization by drawing together all the seeds pointed out in the previous three chapters into one coherent account of worship. This takes place in his *Summa Theologiae* as he fulfills the promise laid out in the preface of the work “to treat of whatever belongs to the Christian Religion,” or more specifically, “Sacred Doctrine as briefly and clearly as the matter itself may allow.”<sup>490</sup> This vision brings clarity and precision to his articulation of worship. Thomas has the most comprehensive and coherent account of worship, which falls under three main groupings: justice, law, and Christian charity. It is to the first of these groupings that we now turn.

In considering worship under the aspect of justice, there are a few main concerns to be addressed. These concerns deal with implication of treating worship through the virtue of religion. While the articulation of religion as a virtue comes from a previously established tradition, it is still necessary to grasp the exact significance of such a claim. Religion as a virtue habituates the will toward offering God ceremony and service. Therefore, the first investigation necessary to understand this claim must entail the role of the will in the moral life and nature of moral virtue, which habituates the will’s operation. Building from this foundation it will be necessary to examine how justice habituates the will in its own particular fashion. Finally, it will be examined how religion fits within the virtue of justice by examining the structure of Aquinas’ treatment of this virtue.

The heart of the issue concerns the will’s order toward God as the end of all human action.<sup>491</sup> The virtue of religion plays a crucial role in this direction. This chapter looks at how

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<sup>490</sup> ST Prologue.

<sup>491</sup> In order to contrast Aquinas’ approach with an alternative theory, one could turn to John Casey’s *Pagan Virtue: An Essay in Ethics*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). While Casey claims “a modest rediscovery and (hence) criticism of a tradition which we inherit.” ix. He turns to pagan virtue, which he claims, in speaking of the

Aquinas' articulation of the virtue of religion builds from the foundation of the natural order of the will through its perfection in virtue to the specific role religion plays in this perfection. The entire second part of the *Summa* examines the role of the will in the rational creature's movement toward God.<sup>492</sup> Of course, this does not demean the role of the intellect, by any means, since the intellect plays an equally essential role in knowing the end toward which the will inclines (thus intellectual virtues are treated in the second part, seen most significantly in faith and

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cardinal virtues, "are undeniably worldly. By that I mean that they include an element of self-regard, and that they rely upon material conditions for their fulfillment." viii. He contrasts this with Christian virtue, which focuses on desiring God alone and possessing a good will not restrained by desire of contingent goods (which he repeatedly links to Kantian philosophy, vi, 9, 49, 186). Casey appeals to Aquinas throughout his work, but it must be asked whether one can have a coherent account of virtue without the proper order toward God necessitated not only by gratitude, but also as the true happiness sought by the intellect and will. One need not contrast pagan and Christian virtue, but like Aquinas see the contingent goods chosen affirmed through their order and fulfillment in God. Christian virtue ethics is not akin to Kantianism, since the natural order itself directs toward virtue in the natural law and points toward God as the end of human action. It is interesting that Casey passes over the virtue of religion in silence in treating the parts of justice and even incorrectly claims: "Aquinas discusses the virtues, or parts of justice. The first of these is *pietas*." He does acknowledge that "homage owed to God is demanded by religion, which is a step above piety," and that "for Aquinas, *religio*, which binds us to God, is a higher form of *pietas*." While making these references he does not make clear that he deliberately leaves this out of his treatment nor does he give a reverence to Aquinas' previous (that is to piety) treatment of it (he only points to places within piety where Aquinas refers to *religio*). 194; 196. In conclusion, Casey points out the dichotomy between the Christian condemnation of pride and Aristotle's teaching on magnanimity. Though he frequently references Aquinas throughout the work, here his omission of Aquinas' treatment of magnanimity (ST II-II. 129) glaringly stands out.

<sup>492</sup> Aquinas noticeably expands upon the moral treatment in previous works, particularly in the length and organization of the *Secunda secundae*. Leonard Boyle provides context to Thomas' treatment of morals in the Papal mandate to hear confessions given by Pope Honorius III in 1221. He describes that "the *Secunda secundae* is, in its own right, a straight *summa de virtutibus et vitiis*, a *summa* of moral theology if you wish, although not at all of the *casus* or anecdotal type hitherto in vogue in the Dominican order.... His point of departure, and possibly the chief target of his strictures on works in this area, was, I suspect, the great and hallowed *Summa de vitiis et virtutibus* of his senior colleague, William Peraldus or Peyraut, the two parts of which were written over a span of thirteen or fourteen years between 1236 and 1249-50. In Dominican circles, it clearly had the role of 'speculative' companion to Raymond [of Pennafort]'s *Summa de casibus*." Boyle argues that William attempted to cover the same ground though with a different organization and effectiveness. Thomas "made sure that nothing Peraldus had touched upon did not find a place in the *Secunda secundae*.... There is, nevertheless, a world of difference between Thomas's approach to moral matters and that of Peraldus. This is not least the cause because Thomas relates the gifts, beatitudes, and vices to each of the seven theological and cardinal virtues where Peraldus simply takes the virtues, vices, gifts, and beatitudes in turn, each in their own right." "The Setting of the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas—Revisited." in *The Ethics of Aquinas*. ed. Stephen J. Pope. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 9-10. Due to the continuing need for moral theology for pastoral purposes in the Dominican Order, the *Secunda secundae* had a greater distribution than any other part of the *Summa*. cf. Boyle, 10-12. While Houser agrees that the Dominican manuals provided an essential backdrop for the *Summa*, he points out that Philip's the Chancellor's *De Bono* served as an important speculative and organizational guide. "Introduction." 3-4.

prudence).<sup>493</sup> Together the intellect and will direct one toward the end of human life, which is union with God. The will's particular role concerns the execution of action which moves one toward or away from this end.

Vernon Bourke provides an excellent summary of the interplay between the intellect and will in the execution of human actions. He describes the "structure of the moral act" as follows:

Man is described as using intellect and will in a progressive duality of functions, working to the completion of the moral action.... (1) the intellect apprehends the end and presents it to the will; (2) the will wishes (*velle*) this end; (3) the intellect judges that the end is to be sought by the agent; (4) the will then intends (*intendere*) this end.... (5) the intellect deliberates, or takes counsel (*consilium*) concerning the various possible means; (6) the will consents (*consensus*) to the previous judgment, which may simply mean an approval of several possible means; (7) the intellect judges that one means is preferable and should be used (*sententia*); (8) the will chooses, or elects, the one means to be used (*electio*).... (9) the intellect, in association with the will, orders that the means be used (*imperium*); (10) the will actively initiates the use of the means (*usus*); (11) the intellect apprehends the fittingness of the act being performed; and (12) the will rejoices in the performance of a good work (*fruitio*).<sup>494</sup>

Bourke gives an accurate and succinct overview of the interaction of intellect and will in choosing. In the midst of this backdrop I will focus on the role of the will in willing the end and the virtues, which perfect the will in this regard.

Thomas describes the nature of the will in the *Prima Pars*. There he indicates that one must understand the will as an appetitive power of the soul: "Through the will the [rational] animal is able to desire what it apprehends, and not only that to which it is inclined by its natural form."<sup>495</sup> Thus the will exists as a rational appetite, which inclines both toward the good of

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<sup>493</sup> On the role of reason in moral theology see Michael Sherwin. *By Knowledge and by Love: Charity and Knowledge in the Moral Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), especially 18-24.

<sup>494</sup> Vernon Bourke. *Aquinas and the Greek Moralists*. 15.

<sup>495</sup> ST I. 80.1, *corpus*. David Gallagher summarizes Aquinas' definition of the will as follows: "[T]he will may be understood simply as that power or faculty of the soul by which a human agent is in control of his actions." "The Will and Its Acts (Ia Ilae, qq. 6-17)" in *The Ethics of Aquinas*. 70. Leo Elders describes Aquinas' definition in relation to Classical thought. Aristotle does speak about appetite (cf. *De anima* 432s), though the term "will" is of later origin. Elders describes its origin as follows: "In Latin the term *voluntas* meant at first that power of faculty within us which is the starting-point for an activity. Under the influence of Stoic philosophy the term came to

nature, but also to a good presented to it by the intellect. Thomas clarifies that these two are not supposed to be seen in opposition, but rather the good of human nature is willed absolutely by the will, but it stands in need of receiving its specific object. Therefore, reason's role in aiding the will comes in by "presenting its object to it."<sup>496</sup> However, the will does have an intrinsic order toward human flourishing, the good, and the end or purpose of existence. This natural desire of happiness must still be seen in relation to the individual choices, which the will must make, which require the aid of the intellect. Thomas describes this as follows:

For there are certain individual goods which have not a necessary connection with happiness, because without them a man can be happy: and to such the will does not adhere of necessity. But there are some things which have a necessary connection with happiness, by means of which things man adheres to God, in Whom alone true happiness consists. Nevertheless, until through the certitude of the Divine Vision the necessity of such connection be shown, the will does not adhere to God of necessity.<sup>497</sup>

Due the weakness and obscurity of the human condition after the Fall, the will does not adhere specifically to God through necessity, but it does remain an implicit order toward Him through its necessary adherence to the human end of happiness.<sup>498</sup> Thomas makes this clear when he

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signify the will of man. Seneca repeatedly stresses the importance of the will in man's moral life.... Nevertheless Seneca did not think of the will as a faculty in its own right... The certitude that man has a free will is one of the basic presuppositions of the Christian faith. The one who contributed most to the development of the doctrine of free will as a special faculty in man was Augustine.... Augustine speaks of a fundamental appetite in the intellectual part of the soul, which precedes particular acts of knowledge and choice." *The Philosophy of Nature of St. Thomas Aquinas: Nature, the Universe, Man.* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 313-14. cf. Alisdair MacIntyre. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 154-57.

<sup>496</sup> ST I-II. 9.1, *corpus*.

<sup>497</sup> ST I. 82.2, *corpus*. Brown expands on Aquinas' claim that God is the only true end of the will, in which it reaches its happiness. He states: "For it can be shown, and Aquinas has so demonstrated, that man's very own good and happiness (*bonum proprium*) can be concretely located only in God. No other particular good, that is to say, is capable of satisfying the natural appetite of an intellectual creature, which is fundamentally a spirit open to the infinite and without any immanent end. That is to say, human nature is of itself (*per se*) end-less and 'requires' for its fulfillment that God give it an end – in Himself – if it is to have an end *at all* (i.e., an entirely conditional 'exigency'). Thus, precisely and by a constitutional priority, it is the enjoyment of God's goodness that is necessarily desired in the exorable pursuit of one's own good, inasmuch as God is at once the very nature of the good itself subsisting and, as such and *a priori*, the proper good of the spiritual creature." 83. Any end proportionate to human powers would not truly satisfy the human will due to the inability to achieve it on one's own and limited nature of a natural contemplation and love of God.

<sup>498</sup> Fulvio Di Blasi argues that the implicit knowledge of God, which comes from the natural order of the will to God, serves as an essential foundation for religion. After treating the will's order to God, he states: "To deny the existence of a natural knowledge of God would be to deny that man is naturally a religious being, which would be to

states that “the will must of necessity adhere to the last end. . . . For what befits a thing naturally and immovably must be the root and principle of all else pertaining therefore, since the nature of a thing is the first in everything, and every movement arises from something immoveable.”<sup>499</sup>

Therefore, the will is a rational appetite of the soul, which inclines one toward the end of happiness, which is God. Thomas makes clear that “to know God exists in a general and confused way is implanted in us by nature, inasmuch as God is man’s beatitude. For man naturally desires happiness, and what is naturally desired by man must be naturally known to Him.”<sup>500</sup> God is not always explicitly known to be that end and so the will is prone to error and even when He is known to be the end the will must still freely choose between many lesser and non-necessary goods as the means toward Him.<sup>501</sup>

Thomas does highlight the essential role of the will in moving the whole person with all his or her powers toward the end. “The will moves the other powers of the soul to their acts, for we make use of other powers when we will.”<sup>502</sup> All powers subject to rational control receive stimulus from the will and thus are moved not only toward their operation, but also toward the proper exercise of that operation. Thus the will moves the intellect toward the contemplation of the truth and consequently toward the acquisition of intellectual virtue. The will itself seeks to control the passions so that they do not cloud the role of reason in the process of deliberation. Therefore, the rectitude of the will constitutes a fundamental necessity in leading a life in conformity with the end of happiness since it plays such a crucial role for every power. Aquinas

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deny that the first signs of civility and humanity (such as burial of the dead) are accompanied by religious forms; and such a denial is foreign to Thomistic thought.” *God and the Natural Law: A Rereading of Thomas Aquinas*. trans. David Thunder. (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2006), 89.

<sup>499</sup> ST I. 82.1, *corpus*. Romanus Cessario describes this in the fact that “the will . . . possesses an out-going, tendential structure and therefore requires no special *habitus* in order to move towards its object, the good.” *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 62.

<sup>500</sup> ST I. 2.1, *ad* 1.

<sup>501</sup> cf. ST I. 83.1, *corpus*. “Now particular operations are contingent, and therefore in such matters the judgment of reason may follow opposite courses, and is not determinate to one.”

<sup>502</sup> ST I-II. 9.1, *corpus*.

addresses the pivotal role of the will in discussing the need for it to respond freely to God. He argues that “it was unfitting that man should be made righteous unless he willed: for this would be both against the nature of righteousness, which implies rectitude of the will, and contrary to the very nature of man, which requires to be led to good by free will, not by force.”<sup>503</sup> The will must properly and freely conform to the end for the righteousness of the whole soul. If the will falters in its duty then the proper exercise of the other powers must also falter.

Beyond the will’s role in ordering the whole soul toward the end, it must also properly order itself. It does so in two ways, both of which are included within the category of moral virtue, by governing the sense appetite under its care and by properly ordering itself.<sup>504</sup> Aquinas defines moral virtue as follows: “It is evident that inclination to an action belongs properly to appetitive power, whose function it is to move all the powers to their acts.... Therefore not every virtue is a moral virtue, but only those that are in the appetitive faculty.”<sup>505</sup> Thomas distinguishes the different ways in which something may pertain to the appetitive faculty. He states that...

man’s good which is the object of love, desire and pleasure, may be taken as referred either to a bodily sense, or to the inner apprehension of the mind: and this same good may be directed to man’s good in himself, either in his body or in his soul, or to man’s good in relation to other men. And every such difference being differently related to reason, differentiates virtue.<sup>506</sup>

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<sup>503</sup> ST III. 44.3, *ad* 1.

<sup>504</sup> Cessario describe moral virtue as follows: “Altogether... moral virtues constitute the substance of a happy life, that is, a life which embodies every quality required for a complete and flourishing human existence. In other terms, the moral virtues embrace as their proper matter all the ordinary and extraordinary affairs which comprise the ethical life.” Important for this study, Cessario links these virtues to God in that “divine wisdom, not human reason, [is] the ultimate source of created morality.” *The Moral Virtues*. 4; 7.

<sup>505</sup> ST I-II. 58.1, *corpus*.

<sup>506</sup> ST I-II. 60.5, *corpus*.

The will pertains to any good which can be referred to the one end of life.<sup>507</sup> It plays a role in directing every power to its proper act, particularly in moving the passions, but also has habits, which guide it toward the proper execution of its own proper acts. It does not need a habit to be directed toward the good, for this is the nature of the will, but Aquinas does specify certain aspects under which it needs proper habituation:

Since the habit perfects the power in reference to act, then does the power need a habit perfecting it unto doing well, which habit is a virtue, when the power's own proper nature does not suffice for the purpose. Now the proper nature of a power is seen in its relation to its object. Since, therefore, as we have said above, the object of the will is the good of reason proportionate to the will, in respect of this the will does not need a virtue perfecting it. But if man's will is confronted with a good that exceeds its capacity, whether as regards the whole human species, such as Divine good, which transcends the limits of human nature, or as regards the individual, such as the good of one's neighbor, then does the will need virtue. And therefore such virtues as those which direct man's affections to God or to his neighbor are subjected in the will, as charity, justice, and such like.<sup>508</sup>

Even though the will desires God implicitly at all times, nevertheless, in order to relate to Him properly, it is necessary for the will to form a right habitual disposition toward Him through virtue. The natural order of the will toward God relates to Him only generally and implicitly and, therefore, it does not suffice for the will to actually love Him and give Him his due.

Once again it is necessary to stress the importance of the internal rectitude of the will for the whole of the moral life. In order for the will to conform to its end of the good, it must do so

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<sup>507</sup> On this point of ordering one's whole toward one end, I would like to point towards a different interpretation found in Steven Anthony Edwards' *Interior Acts: Teleology, Justice, and Friendship in the Religious Ethics of Thomas Aquinas*. (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1986). Edwards proposes a twofold theory of action in Aquinas, "an inner face by which the individual was related to God, and an outer face by which he was related to other human beings.... It was as if the individual lived two lives at once. Born with a will oriented both inwardly toward God and outwardly toward the external world, a human being existed in tension between the inner and outer sides of his life." ix, cf. 11-12, 40, 49, 67. By focusing on the primacy of the interior, Edwards argue that Aquinas held "an 'introvert conception of responsibility.'" I believe that this theory completely misses the unity of action in Thomas' theory. One relates to God and others both by interior acts of the will and the exterior manifestations of them. As will be argued, God is the common good of all creation and every act of the will must be ordered toward Him, even those directed toward fellow human beings. Further, one relates well with others in external action, because of the interior rectitude of the will. There is no duality in Aquinas' thought, as we will see in the fact that interior acts of worship must become expressed exteriorly. It is also interesting to note that though Edwards tries to explain justice in relation to God he only mentions religion in passing. 53.

<sup>508</sup> ST I-II. 56.6, *corpus*.



explicitly by relating to God directly. Aquinas makes this clear as he states that the “virtue and rectitude of the human will consist chiefly in conformity with God’s will and obedience to His command.”<sup>509</sup> Aquinas indicates the manner appropriate to the will in its relation to God, that of conformity and obedience. This provides the rectitude necessary for the will as it moves all the other powers toward their own acts. God must be the end sought in all human action for He comprises the good, the end toward which the will necessarily inclines. For the will to function properly it must act out of this proper relation to God.

Aquinas further makes clear the relationship between the general good, which is God as end, and the particular good, chosen in any individual act. He states:

Now it is the end that supplies the formal reason, as it were, of willing whatever is directed to the end. Consequently, in order that a man will some particular good with a right will, he must will that particular good materially, and the Divine and universal good, formally. Therefore, the human will is bound to be conformed to the Divine will, as to that which is willed formally, for it is bound to will the Divine and universal good; but not as to that which is willed materially.<sup>510</sup>

Justice plays a crucial role in establishing the general rectitude of the will.<sup>511</sup> It enables the will to conform to God and to the right rule of reason, which directs all action.<sup>512</sup> Religion, as a part of justice, plays a particular role in directing both particular acts and even all of one’s actions to

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<sup>509</sup> ST II-II. 104.4, ad 2.

<sup>510</sup> ST I-II. 19.10, *corpus*.

<sup>511</sup> For an overview of Aquinas’ teaching on justice, see Josef Pieper’s *The Four Cardinal Virtues*. (South Bend, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966).

<sup>512</sup> Pinckaers notes that God has been withdrawn from discussions of justice with devastating results on ethical theories. He argues that “modern theories... no longer take into account a person’s relationship with God. Deprived of these supports (natural law, rights, and relation to God), ethics clings to justice and law as the only foundations generally acceptable in the name of reason. Thus morality may hope to exercise once again a role in modern societies where, moreover, the need for ethical criteria is becoming more and more widely felt. But in doing this, ethics becomes subservient to theories of justice and society. I should like to clarify once more precisely what is meant by justice. In our liberal societies justice results from a rational organization that aims at establishing equality between the rights of individuals, that is, the right of each person to satisfy his or her needs. We are dealing here with a basically self-centered concept of man.... If we now consider the virtue of justice in the setting of a virtue-oriented morality.... it [is] clear that the virtue of justice is quite different from the balance of ‘egoisms’ discussed above. It could almost be called its opposite, since its focus is not the self but the other.” “The Role of Virtue in Moral Theology.” in *The Pinckaers Reader*. 294-95. To reduce justice to merely a relation between individuals without respect to God misses an essential aspect of the will’s proper order. Furthermore, one cannot properly relate to others or achieve the common good of the civil community without order to the true common good, which is God.

God. Therefore, both justice's and religion's role in ordering human life to God must be examined in detail (charity's role will be examined in chapter 6).

Justice as a virtue concerns relation to another. This relation implies some order between parties and this order entails equality of relation. This equality could be understood in a materialistic manner if there is a clear and substantial debt owed to another. In this case justice would create equality by rendering what is owed to the other so that there is a proper proportion between the two parties. However, the debt, or right, held could also concern something less tangible insofar as it would concern respect or honor owed to that one. In this sense the equality between the parties would arise through the proper relation between them, when both parties treat the other in the appropriate fashion.

Thus, justice must concern something objective and something subjective. The objective aspect concerns what is owed. This aspect of justice does not entail an interior or subjective disposition, but rather concerns something outside of oneself to which the individual must conform. The internal or subjective aspect enters in through the will's habitual resolve to conform to this objective and exterior standard. Thomas explicates this order toward another as follows:

It is proper to justice, as compared with other virtues, to direct man in his relations with others: because it denotes a kind of equality... for equality is in reference of one thing to some other. On the other hand the other virtues perfect man in those matters only which befit him in relation to himself. Accordingly that which is right in the works of the other virtues, and to which the intention of the virtue tends as to its proper object, depends on its relation to the agent only, whereas the right in a work of justice, besides its relation to the agent, is set up by its relation to others. Because a man's work is said to be just when it is related to some other by way of some kind of equality, for instance the payment of the way due for a service rendered. And so a thing is said to be just, as having the rectitude of justice, when it is the term of an act of justice, without taking into account the way in which it is done by the agent: whereas in the other virtues nothing is declared to be right unless it is done in a certain way by the agent. For this reason justice

has its own special proper object over and above the other virtues, and this object is called the just, which is the same as right.<sup>513</sup>

Justice entails the proper proportion of one to another, which concerns something external in that one can describe the object due to them, whether it be a financial transaction or personal deference. The act would be considered just when it conforms to this objective standard. Other moral virtues are concerned with “internal passions,” while “external operations” from the “matter of justice.”<sup>514</sup> Therefore, “the directing of operations in so far as they tend to external things belongs to justice.”<sup>515</sup> After the completion of this quantifiable act a sort of equality would arise between the parties, not in the sense that the two are now equal, but rather that the right proportion between them was observed in the given instance.

Though justice has this external aspect by which an action can be objectively judged concerning its proportion to the recipient, this does not mean that justice does not concern the interior state of the performer of the act. If justice did not require the right disposition of the agent then it would not concern virtue and would fall simply to the level of production, which regards the product of action not the performance. Virtue, however, primarily concerns the state of the one acting in that it perfects a power. Thus, Aquinas quotes Aristotle in affirming that “all are agreed in giving the name justice to the habit which makes men capable of doing just actions.”<sup>516</sup> Aquinas later puts forward another classical definition, which can be traced back to Justinian, which reads as follows: “Justice is a habit whereby a man renders to each one his due by a constant and perpetual will.”<sup>517</sup> Aristotle emphasizes that one would be incapable of performing a just act without the habit which enables this. Aquinas specifies that to render one

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<sup>513</sup> II-II 57.1, *corpus*.

<sup>514</sup> II-II. 58.9, *corpus*.

<sup>515</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>516</sup> ST II-II. 57.1, *sed contra*.

<sup>517</sup> ST II-II. 58.1, *corpus*. Leo Elders points toward the source in the *Digests*, I, 1, tit, 1, leg 10. *The Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas: Happiness, Natural Law and the Virtues*. (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 242.

what is due requires a firmness of will, to choose always to do what is just. This requires the strength of virtue, enabling the will to refrain from selfishness and to seek the good of the other.

R.E. Hauser points out the importance of Thomas' placement of justice within the will. He describes how Plato initiated a tradition that viewed justice as a virtue that concerns the functioning of the whole (which it does) and looks to justice more under the aspect of reason. Hauser explains that "having isolated the will as power distinct from the intellect, it was quite natural for him (Aquinas) to situate justice in the will. In this way, a philosopher finally succeeded in finding a home for Platonic justice."<sup>518</sup> As we saw in our treatment of Aquinas' predecessors, the movement to place justice in the will began with Philip the Chancellor, even though then he hesitated to do so absolutely.<sup>519</sup> Thomas makes clear that justice must be rooted primarily in the will:

*I answer that,* The subject of a virtue is the power whose act that virtue aims at rectifying. Now justice does not aim at directing an act of the cognitive power, for we are not said to be just through knowing something aright. Hence the subject of justice is not the intellect or reason which is a cognitive power. But since we are said to be just through doing something aright, and because the proximate principle of action is the appetitive power, justice must needs be in some appetitive power as its subject.<sup>520</sup>

Since justice concerns action it cannot reside primarily in the intellect. Of course this does not mean that justice does not concern the intellect for knowing what is due requires the judgment of reason.<sup>521</sup> In the *Disputed Questions on the Virtues*, Thomas makes clear that the moral virtues

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<sup>518</sup> Hauser. "Introduction." in *The Cardinal Virtues*. 70. Hauser states further that "Aquinas's elegant solution was simplicity itself: he moved beyond the Platonic assumption of a tripartite soul and added a fourth power to the faculties of the soul, a free will different from intellect, emotions, and desire;" "The ontological difference between intellect and will had not properly been recognized by Philip or Albert, nor by Plato, nor even by Aristotle. For Aquinas, then, emotion and desire are sense appetites because the other animals have them, while only human animals have free will or intellectual appetite.... In *On the Cardinal Virtues*, Art. 1, Aquinas presupposed this psychology and correlated the four parts of the soul with the four cardinal virtues. For the virtues to be cardinal, they must cover the whole range of human powers relevant to virtuous action, neither leaving any power out, nor situating two virtues in a single power." 69; 70. Hauser's introduction provides excellent background on the treatment of the cardinal virtues in classical philosophy, the Fathers, and on Lombard, Philip, and Albert.

<sup>519</sup> Prudence and justice were distinguished in the intellect in that prudence referred to oneself and justice to another.

<sup>520</sup> ST II-II. 58.4, *corpus*.

<sup>521</sup> "Judgment is nothing else but a decision or determination of what is just." ST II-II. 60. 5, *corpus*. cf. *ibid.* art. 1.

cannot be thought of apart from reason, even though they are rooted in the will. He states that “justice is included among the moral virtues, for the will like other appetites participates in reason in the sense that it is directed by reason.”<sup>522</sup> Thomas rightly recognizes that while justice resides in the will as a moral virtue, it requires the direction of reason in receiving its judgment concerning what is due to another. This judgment places the will under the compulsion to act in the sense that it must do so to preserve its own integrity. Justice acts so as to respond to one’s duty to another, which must be preserved for the good of order. On this matter Thomas demonstrates the unique position of justice:

Now it is altogether evident that the notion of duty... appears in justice, which is of one towards another. Because in those matters that relate to himself it would seem at a glance that man is master of himself, and that he may do as he likes; whereas in matters that refer to another it appears manifestly that a man is under an obligation to render to another what is his due.<sup>523</sup>

The duty of justice moves the moral life beyond the realm of the regulation of the passions and into the common good. Through justice one must look to one’s relationship to others and to preservation of the bonds of humanity. Therefore, “justice gives an inclination to the good of equality in things pertaining to common life.”<sup>524</sup> While the other moral virtues seek to perfect the rational control of the passions, justice looks to order and harmony of communal life. Justice promotes the right relation between individuals necessary for the flourishing of communal life and the promotion of the common good. In his commentary on Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aquinas describes this as follows: “It is by return of favors that men live together. Because of this they promptly express gratitude as if it were a sacred duty to make repayment—a thing characteristic of gratitude. It is fitting that a man should be of service to

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<sup>522</sup> *Disputed Questions on the Virtues*. trans. Ralph McInerny. (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 1999). Q. 1, art. v. reply to arguments on the contrary.

<sup>523</sup> ST II-II 122.1, *corpus*.

<sup>524</sup> *Disputed Questions on the Virtues*. Q. 1. art. 6.

others who have done him a favor and in return begin to do a greater favor.”<sup>525</sup> Justice should move beyond the mere repayment of duty to promote general good will and harmony between all.

While justice denotes the rendering of what is due to another, both Aristotle and Thomas point out that it can also refer to the general right order of the soul. This is consistent with justice’s order toward others, because Aquinas argues that the general rectitude of justice properly orders the individual toward the common good:

It follows therefore that the good of any virtue, whether such virtue direct man in relation to himself, or in relation to certain other individual persons, is referable to the common good, to which justice directs: so that all acts of virtue can pertain to justice, in so far as it directs man to the common good. It is in this sense that justice is called a general virtue.<sup>526</sup>

Justice plays a crucial role not only in the execution of individual acts, which render what is due to another, but in ordering of all one’s acts toward the common good. In this sense it can be understood as a general virtue or even as equivalent with virtue itself.<sup>527</sup> Here justice refers to the proper order of the individual so that not only the will but all of one’s powers and their respective virtues are ordered toward man’s end. Thus Thomas reflects on justice in terms of justification, that is a state of justice or righteousness. Justice plays a crucial role in this, which Aquinas describes in its various aspects as follows:

Justification taken passively implies a movement towards justice.... But since justice, by its nature, implies a certain rectitude of order, it may be taken in two ways:—First, inasmuch as it implies a right order in man’s act, and thus justice is placed amongst the virtues,—either as particular justice, which directs a man’s acts by regulating them in relation to his fellow-man,—or as legal justice, which directs a man’s acts by regulating them in their relation to the common good of society.... Secondly, justice is so-called

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<sup>525</sup> trans. C.I. Litzinger. (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1964), Ca. 5. Lec. 8.

<sup>526</sup> ST II-II. 58.5, *corpus*.

<sup>527</sup> For a concise overview of Aquinas’ appropriation of Aristotle on justice, particularly as a general virtue, see Lutz-Bachman, Matthias. “The Discovery of a Normative Theory of Justice in Medieval Philosophy: On the Reception and Further Development of Aristotle’s Theory of Justice by St. Thomas Aquinas.” *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 9 (2000): 1-14.

inasmuch as it implies a certain rectitude of order in the interior disposition of a man, in so far as what is highest in man is subject to God, and the inferior powers of the soul are subject to the superior, i.e. to reason.<sup>528</sup>

Rectitude of order establishes the common thread when justice is referred to as either a virtue or an interior disposition. Whether the order of the soul entails an act of justice or the interior justification, it must ultimately be seen as pointing toward the end of human action, which is God. God is the common good and the good sought in any moral action; therefore, justice must always be seen in relation to Him.<sup>529</sup>

Therefore, justice relates to God indirectly as the common good (general/legal justice) and as the end to which all actions are to be referred (happiness). However, justice has a more direct way of interaction with God, more akin to particular justice, which concerns relations between individuals. In this respect, one must justly orient oneself in relation to God on account of debt. Since Aquinas describes justice as pertaining to debt (which is the same as a right), therefore, justice pertains to God in a manner exceeding anyone else. In the question pertaining to thankfulness and gratitude (as a part of justice), Aquinas affirms that “the cause of debt is found primarily in chiefly in God, in that He is the first principle of all our goods.”<sup>530</sup> Aquinas describes the origin of debt in a little more detail when discussing piety (also as a part of justice): “Man becomes a debtor to other men in various ways, according to their various excellence and the various benefits received from them. On both counts God holds first place, for He is

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<sup>528</sup> ST I-II. 113.1, *corpus*.

<sup>529</sup> Oscar Brown describes the importance of Aquinas’ placement of God as the common end of the universe as follows: “Needless to say, the location of the common good of a multitude outside that multitude is an endeavor entirely alien to ancient – or to modern – cosmological and political speculation. But, of course, such a step was required not only by the imperatives of the Christian faith but, also, in Thomas’ case, by a metaphysics of the transcendentals in which even common being (*ens commune*) is not self-subsistent, not self-sufficient. Neither, then, can the common good of the universe be entirely self-contained and autarchic.” 75. Etienne Gilson speaks of the shift this entails for virtue: “So when Christianity substitutes God for the human city as the end of the moral life, it is obliged to add to the natural moral virtues an entirely new order of virtues as supernatural as the end whose attainment they make possible.” *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*. trans. L.K. Shook, C.S.B. (New York: Random House, 1956), 338. While this is true due to the supernatural end of humanity, even without this supernatural end the earthly good of the city would still need to be further ordered toward God in a natural manner.

<sup>530</sup> ST II-II. 106.1, *corpus*.

supremely excellent, and is for us the first principle of being and government.”<sup>531</sup> The reception of gifts by God, namely existence and any other good in this life, place all of humanity in a position of debt. One must be grateful for these gifts and also must use them in a manner proper to the bestowal. This more obviously pertains to justice in the fact that a debt may be clearly recognized. However, Aquinas also puts forward that there is a debt due to God’s excellence. This may strike some as applying less obviously to the common notion of justice, but as will be seen in dealing with the part of justice named observance, Aquinas holds to a debt of honor to superiors, both of authority and in those superior by merit.

No other debt, neither of gratitude nor of honor, could ever surpass the debt that any creature owes to God. The existence of this debt requires a response. Aquinas describes this in that “man ought to be faithful to God above all” since “we are under a very great obligation to Him.”<sup>532</sup> This obligation entails following the moral ordering which God instilled into humanity through creation.<sup>533</sup> This ordering leads towards Him so that one can share in His goodness. Therefore, the debt of gratitude entails that one live in a manner that conforms to God’s excellence. Aquinas links the gifts one receives and the response one makes in the following manner:

Now human nature from its beginning has a threefold subjection to God. The first regards the degree of goodness, inasmuch as the Divine Nature is the very essence of goodness as is clear from Dionysius (*Div. Nom.* i) while a created nature has a participation of the Divine goodness, being subject, so to say, to the rays of this goodness. Secondly, human nature is subject to God, as regards God's power, inasmuch as human nature, even as every creature, is subject to the operation of the Divine ordinance. Thirdly, human nature is especially subject to God through its proper act, inasmuch as by its own will it obeys His command.<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>531</sup> ST II-II. 101.1, *corpus*.

<sup>532</sup> ST II-II. 88.3, *corpus, ad 1*.

<sup>533</sup> Josef Pieper makes a strong connection between honoring God and recognizing His act of creation: “There can be no more radical assent to the world than the praise of God, the lauding of the Creator of this same world. One cannot conceive a more intense, more unconditional affirmation of being.” *In Tune with the World: A Theory of Festivity*. trans. Richard and Clara Winston. (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 1999), 31.

<sup>534</sup> ST III. 20.1, *corpus*.



The proper act of humanity entails obedience by which one's will conforms to God's will.

Justice orients one toward God in a way that the will's order toward God becomes fulfilled by interacting with Him.

This interaction cannot be conceived of as a strict transaction of justice by which the two parties end in equal status.<sup>535</sup> The "equality" striven for in the just response to God is rather to act in a manner which befits God. It can never be sufficient to fulfill the debt, but it can still orient one's life to God so as to manifest gratitude and to honor His excellence. For this reason Aquinas steers away from use of the word *jus*, something legally due, in referring to order to God, calling it by a special term, *fas*,<sup>536</sup> a moral or religious duty.<sup>537</sup> He states:

Since justice implies equality, and since we cannot offer God an equal return, it follows that we cannot make Him a perfectly just repayment. For this reason the Divine law is not properly called *jus* but *fas*, because, to wit, God is satisfied if we accomplish what we can. Nevertheless justice tends to make men repay God as much as he can, by subjecting his mind to Him entirely.<sup>538</sup>

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<sup>535</sup> Joseph Wawrykow does make clear that God acts justly toward His creation, but this is not because He owes it a debt. He states: "God's relations to the creature are characterized not only by love but also by justice. For Thomas, justice means to render what is owed (*debitum*) to another. On the basis of the divine goodness and wisdom, there is a twofold *debitum* in things. In the first place, there is the *debitum* owed to God. All creatures 'owe' to God that they fulfill the part assigned to them by the divine wisdom for the manifestation of God's goodness. Second, there is the *debitum* owed by God to creatures. God ought to render to each creature what it needs to fulfill its role in the divine plan. Thus, if God decides to create a human being, God owes to that creature that it be endowed with all that pertains to human nature. AS is clear, this second *debitum* ultimately is reducible to the first. Only because God has assigned a specific role to a creature in the divine plan is there anything 'owing' to that creature. Indeed, Thomas adds, because of the divine ordination it is really more correct to say that this second *debitum* is owed not so much to the creature as to God Himself.... In rendering what is 'owed' to the creature, God is ultimately remitting a debt owed to God on account of the determination of the divine wisdom." *God's Grace and Human Action: 'Merit' in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 161. The justice of God toward creation does not entail a mutual transaction which results in equality. Wawrykow affirms this point, stating that "the kind of justice involved in buying and selling or trading simply cannot enter into human-divine relations. Thomas's position on the impossibility of commutative justice between God and the human person is re-affirmed throughout his career." 206. This draws to mind Socrates' criticism of Euthyphro's definition of piety, quoted above. While there can be no proportion of justice between the individual and God, the justice of Christ does merit a proportion of friendship, which is bestowed upon the believer. cf. 198-99.

<sup>536</sup> cf. Isidore of Seville. *Etymologies*. V. ii. Heinrich Rommen points to the Romans for making the distinction between *fas* and *ius*, which is not surprising giving the nature of Isidore's *Etymologies* as an encyclopedic collection, which relied heavily on Roman sources. *The Natural Law*. 4.

<sup>537</sup> Under the potential parts of justice Aquinas examines the meaning of moral duty in contrast to a legal duty. ST II-II. 80.1.

<sup>538</sup> ST II-II. 57.1, ad 3.

The term *jus* implies a right that must be respected in its entirety, while *fas* in regard to religion implies God's satisfaction not with the exact fulfillment of the debt, but rather the total devotion of the soul. This complete orientation is all actions to their proper end and to express one's gratitude continually. God does not stand in need of this order, as one does who possesses a *jus* (right), but the exercise of this *fas* places one in right relation to Him.

This unique relationship of justice with God necessitates a shift in understanding from a legal transaction to a more personal relationship. Thus, Aquinas returns to the insight he put forward in his *Commentary on the Sentences* concerning the justice between a lord and a servant and a father and a son. These cases do not apply to "the just simply."<sup>539</sup> Commutative justice, or justice as commonly understood between equals, is only found only with "men neither of whom is subject to the other, and both of whom are subjects of the ruler of the state."<sup>540</sup> Only in this instance can there be true equality since both are equally subject to the law. Thomas describes a second way in which there can be "commensuration with another person."<sup>541</sup> He states:

Secondly a thing is said to be other [when it is] from something else, not simply, but as belonging in some way to that something else: and in this way, as regards human affairs, a son belongs to his father, since he is part of him somewhat, as stated in Ethic. viii. 12, and a slave belongs to his master, because he is his instrument... Hence a father is not compared to his son as to another simply, and so between them there is not the just simply, but a kind of just, called paternal. In like manner neither is there the just simply, but that which is called dominative.<sup>542</sup>

Unlike the reference in the earlier commentary, Aquinas does not here tie this insight into one's relation with God.<sup>543</sup> Nevertheless, the connection appears clearly enough in that every creature

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<sup>539</sup> Kossel makes clear that "the virtue of justice in its full meaning has three essential elements: alterity (*ad alterum*), debt (*debitum*), and equality (*ad aequalitatem*)." "Piety." 37. Filial and servile relations share in the first two aspects of justice, but fail in the third, which brings about their similarity to religion.

<sup>540</sup> ST II-II. 57.4, *corpus*.

<sup>541</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>542</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>543</sup> Walter Farrell, however, provides a clear link by treating religion as "a household virtue." Linking religion with the virtues which reverence others (piety, patriotism [though a part of piety for Aquinas, he treats it separately] and observance), he notes that "it puts man in his proper place as a servant in the divine household, busying him in that

belongs to God and stands in relation to Him as a child and servant. This reveals that the human relation to God does not consist in a relation of equals, but one which looks toward God as a superior to Whom deference is due.

There is another significant limit in the application of justice to God. Since justice toward God does not consist in a tangible or legal due, which could be exactly fulfilled, it cannot, on its own, achieve its ultimate goal of perfectly ordering all one's actions toward God as end. Given the restraints of justice as a moral virtue, it cannot sufficiently relate to God so as for one to arrive at the end of happiness with Him. Aquinas describes the limit of moral virtue by contrasting it with the theological virtues. Both of these virtues aim at happiness attained through union with God. While justice does aim at God, it can do so only indirectly, because "the object of the intellectual and moral virtues is something comprehensible to reason."<sup>544</sup> The will builds on its own "natural inclination" by which it "is directed" to its "connatural end."<sup>545</sup> A human being is directed morally to his or her end "through the rectitude of the will which tends naturally to good as defined by reason."<sup>546</sup> Therefore, the will tends naturally toward human

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humble service that is yet the greatest perfection and at the same time his full tribute of reverence and honor to the divine excellence. Religion is busy about the household tasks." "Virtues of the Household." *The Thomist* 9 no. 3 (July 1946): 348. The honor which one renders to God as part of his household enables one to properly reverence one's earthly father and fatherland. Therefore, Farrell argues for a "descent from religion through these other virtues," which "will be a gradual one proportioned to the lessening share in the divine principality enjoyed by these other principles." 351.

<sup>544</sup> ST I-II. 62.2, *corpus*.

<sup>545</sup> ST I-II. 62.3, *corpus*.

<sup>546</sup> ST I-II. 62.3, *corpus*. Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering make a link between the natural order of justice and the virtue of religion: "Justice thus includes the virtue of religion whereby we give to God the worship that is due him; religion, as an act of justice, is natural to the human creature." *Knowing the Love of Christ: An Introduction to the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 57. Leo Elders speaks of the way in which Thomas recognizes a natural ethics: "The *Commentary* [on the *Nicomachean Ethics*] shows that Aquinas does admit natural ethics, despite the fact that man's sole last end is supernatural contemplation and reason alone cannot answer questions about the precise nature of this contemplation of God and the way to attain it. Reason does, however, discover that we are ordained to the contemplation of God as to our last end. This insight entails the possibility of natural ethics: reason discerns the major obligations of natural law and tells us how to live in conformity with the exigencies of our human nature." "St. Thomas Aquinas' *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*." in *The Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas*. ed. L. J. Elders S.V.D. and K. Hedwig. (Citta del Vaticano: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 1984), 11. This discernment of major obligations would, of course, apply to the greatest of all one's obligations, which is to God. It is interesting to note, however, Bonnie

happiness only as to an object connatural to it, which is proposed by reason. This can be God, but only as He constitutes the object of happiness attainable “by means of... natural principles.”<sup>547</sup> Aquinas describes more fully the way in which human powers aim at God as follows: “The reason and will are naturally directed to God, inasmuch as He is the beginning and end of nature, but in proportion to nature. But the reason and will, according to their nature, are not sufficiently directed to Him in so far as He is the object of supernatural happiness.”<sup>548</sup> Justice directs all one’s action toward God as their proper end, but justice of itself cannot lead one into this happiness. Though the will can orient itself toward God as its happiness, it necessarily falls short of God, that is, unless He offers assistance. This distinction concerning the limits of justice in reaching the end toward which it reaches will be important in the consideration of the role of the virtue of religion.

Even though justice as a whole orders one’s life towards God as the end of all action, Thomas describes a way in which justice has its own proper way of relating to God. He places any relation which fails to meet the strict criteria of justice within a subheading of a potential part of justice.<sup>549</sup> The proper parts of justice are commutative, distributive, and legal as they

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Kent’s assertion that “some of the moral virtues discussed in the *Secunda secundae*—for example, the virtue of religion—must be supernatural.” 32. Jean Porter offers a similar assessment: “[T]hroughout his discussion of religion, Aquinas treats it as an infused moral virtue; that is to say, he assumes that true religion will be grounded in grace and guided in its expressions by the theological virtues.... Aquinas has very little to say about the possibility of a natural religion that avoids the sinful perversities of idolatry, although he seems to leave open the possibility that such might exist (IIa IIae, q. 94, a. 4, esp. ad 2).” “The Virtue of Justice (IIa IIae, qq. 58-122).” in *The Ethics of Aquinas*. 279. Gilson disagrees, however: “[T]he very fact that St. Thomas borrows his definition from Cicero is enough to show that for him the virtue of religion does not exclusively nor necessarily depend on Christian revelation.” Thus Gilson speaks of “natural religion” as a “natural moral virtue.” *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*. 334; 345. It is important to distinguish the recognition of the virtue (to which Gilson refers in part) and the acquisition of the virtue (to which Kent and Porter pointed). Since religion is ordered toward God directly (though not as its proper object), it may be true that grace is always needed to form this virtue after sin. Nevertheless, as a moral virtue, religion does stem from the natural order of the will, even if this order needs to be reawakened by God. If this is the case, it would appear that the virtue of religion must be infused or would be acquired through God’s assistance (for those with implicit faith).

<sup>547</sup> ST I-II. 62.1, *corpus*.

<sup>548</sup> ST I-II. 62.1, *ad 3*.

<sup>549</sup> Houser attributes the origin of subordinating virtues to a primary one to the Stoic Chrysippus. He states that “Chrysippus made a great contribution to virtue theory, by showing how to make room for more than Plato’s four

concern strict relations between individuals and the community. Potential parts are separate virtues “annexed to a principle virtue,” in this case justice.<sup>550</sup> Aquinas further describes these virtues: they “have something in common with the principal virtue; and... in some respect they fall short of the perfection of that virtue.”<sup>551</sup> All of these virtues share “a common aspect” with justice in that they “are directed to another person,” yet “fall short of the perfection of justice: first, by fall short of the aspect of equality; secondly, by falling short of the aspect of due.”<sup>552</sup> Aquinas provides a list of these virtues, which he bases mainly on the list provided by Cicero. Aquinas seems aware that this tradition sprang up among Stoic and Peripatetic philosophers as he also notes the lists provided by Macrobius and Andronicus. As can be seen in the chart below, Aquinas followed Cicero’s list much more closely than any of his medieval predecessors treated in chapter two.<sup>553</sup> He did take note of these earlier lists and incorporates their insights mainly by placing these additional virtues as sub-virtues annexed to one of the potential virtues. Therefore, Aquinas added three additional virtues to Cicero’s list of potential parts (one from Aristotle, Macrobius, and Andronicus) and twelve additional virtues beneath these nine.

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virtues while keeping those four. He did so by inventing the distinction between four ‘primary’ virtues and the other virtues ‘subordinate to them.’ Chrysippus thereby avoided two extremes: too much reductionism, as found in Socrates, Plato, and Zeno; and too little, as in Aristotle’s hodge-podge of virtues related only by prudence. This ‘moderate’ position would come to dominate Stoicism and prove attractive to virtue theorists from Cicero to Aquinas.” “Introduction.” 24-25.

<sup>550</sup> ST II-II. 80.1, *corpus*.

<sup>551</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>552</sup> *ibid*. Josef Pieper elucidates that there are varying ways that something may pertain to justice: “There are many degrees and grades of obligation.... Thomas has noted very clearly this distinction between a demand of justice that is legally binding and a demand of justice that is (only) morally binding. I can be compelled to fulfill the first obligation; carrying out the second depends only on my own sense of decency.” *The Four Cardinal Virtues*. 57. Rodolfo Vasquez divides the potential parts listed by Aquinas into two main categories: “Las virtudes de veneración (qq. 81-105)” and “las virtudes de cívicas (qq. 106-119).” “La religion segun Santo Tomas de Aquino.” *Revista de filosofia* 16 (May-Dec. 1983): 251. Vasquez situates religion not only within the parts that deal with veneration, but he further specifies the way in which religion is a part of justice. Since legal justice orders one’s actions to the common good, which ultimately is God, Vasquez argues that religion is a potential part of legal justice. 259-63, 268, 281. However, this equation of religion and legal justice may blur the distinction between them. Religion does aid legal justice in ordering all of one’s actions to God, but it does so precisely under the aspect of debt. This is way religion is a potential part of justice, that is, a distinct virtue annexed to justice, and not a direct species of justice.

<sup>553</sup> cf. E. K. Rand. *Cicero in the Courtroom of St. Thomas Aquinas*. (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1946), 28-32. Pinckaers thought that Thomas was too constrained by the classical lists of virtue. *Sources*. 228.

Author	Work	Numeration of Parts of Justice
Aristotle	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>	1. <i>Epikēia</i> (Equity)
Cicero	<i>De Inventione</i>	1. Religion 2. Piety 3. Gratitude 4. Revenge 5. Observance 6. Truth
Macrobius	<i>Super Somn. Scip.</i>	1. Innocence 2. Friendship 3. Concord 4. Piety 5. Religion 6. Affection 7. Humanity
Andronicus	<i>De Affectibus</i>	1. Liberality 2. Kindliness 3. Revenge 4. Commonsense 5. Piety 6. Gratitude 7. Holiness 8. Just Exchange 9. Just Lawgiving
Abelard	<i>Dialogue</i>	1. Reverence 2. Beneficence 3. Truthfulness 4. Vengeance
Philip the Chancellor	<i>Summa de Bono</i>	1. <i>Latria</i> 2. <i>Dulia</i> 3. Obedience
William of Auxerre	<i>Summa Aurea</i>	1. Alms 2. Obedience 3. <i>Latria</i> 4. Prayer
Thomas Aquinas	<i>Summa Theologiae</i>	1. Religion a. Devotion b. Prayer c. Adoration d. Sacrifice e. Oblations f. Tithes g. Vows h. Oaths i. Adjuration j. Invocation

		2. Piety 3. Observance a. Dulia b. Obedience 4. Gratitude 5. Vengeance 6. Truth 7. Friendliness 8. Liberality 9. <i>Epikeia</i> (Equity)
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Amongst all of these parts Aquinas affirms that religion stands as “the chief part of justice.”<sup>554</sup>

Religion must be superior since it most directly aims at the overall purpose of justice, which is rectitude of the will by direction toward the end of human action. Matthew Levering goes so far as to affirm that “the key to human excellence is right worship.”<sup>555</sup> Religion attempts to relate to “the other” of greatest importance, the one to Whom the greatest debt is owed. Religion must fall under justice only as a potential part. Even though it attempts to “render another his due” it is “unable to render the equal due,” because “whatever man renders to God is due, yet it cannot be equal, as though man rendered to God as much as he owes Him.”<sup>556</sup> Nevertheless, the attempt to render God His due locates religion centrally within justice’s order to God.

Aquinas presents a multitude of aspects under which worship may be seen as fulfilling justice’s order toward God by orienting one’s life and actions to God as end. There are many aspects of justice that illuminate the way in which religion relates to God. The following list attempts to highlight different ways of seeing how religion fulfills the just relation to God.

<sup>554</sup> ST II-II. 122.1, *corpus*.

<sup>555</sup> *Christ’s Fulfillment*. 114.

<sup>556</sup> ST II-II. 80.1, *corpus*. Pieper refers to this disparity as constitutive aspect of human life: “The fact that some debts are not and cannot be paid is essential to the world’s actual condition.” He states further that “man can never say to God: We are even. This is the way in which ‘religion,’ as a human attitude, is connected with justice. The significance of this connection—and incidentally St. Thomas has been taken to task for making it (the charge being that he ‘subordinates’ religion to one of the acquired virtues)—the significance of this connection is that the inner structure of religious acts first becomes intelligible when man, by reason of his relations with God, has recognized the disparity between himself and God something which simply cannot be obliterated, a disparity consisting in the fact that a *debitum* exists which his nature cannot repay by any human effort, no matter how heroic it may be, a disparity which simply cannot be overcome.” *The Four Cardinal Virtues*. 104; 105.

1. *Debt*. Worship gives God His due: “Religion pays due worship to God.”<sup>557</sup> The fundamental reason that worship falls under the virtue of justice stems from the fact that God deserves it.

Worship is so appropriately and necessarily given to God that it is spoken of as a debt. Every good thing that one possesses comes from God and must be referred to Him. Fundamentally this includes life itself: through creation one stands in relation to God as a son or daughter and therefore must relate to Him with the proper reverence and thankfulness. Further, one must act in a manner appropriate to the gift given, that is, to use one’s life for the purpose intended by God, namely to glorify Him.

2. *Order*. Worship entails direction and order toward God: “Man is directed to God by the worship due to Him.”<sup>558</sup> Worship does not entail a static recognition of God, but rather the very act relates one to God. By acknowledging Him as Father and Lord, one begins to live out the relationship of child and servant. The act of worship constitutes a constitutive element of human action since it manifests the purpose and goal of human life, which is to exist in a right relationship of dependence on God.

3. *Faithful adherence*. This direction entails being bound to Him as an unfailing principle. Religion “denotes properly order<sup>559</sup> to God. For it is He to Whom we ought to be bound as to our unfailing principle.”<sup>560</sup> Worship cannot be half-hearted but must truly manifest the fact that one’s entire life and all of one’s actions point toward God. Through the worship of religion, one attempts to bind (*religare*) oneself to God so that the true order of justice may come about. Justice demands this complete order and worship attempts to enact this, though it does stand in need of assistance in doing so.

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<sup>557</sup> ST II-II. 81.5, *corpus*.

<sup>558</sup> ST I-II. 101.1, *corpus*.

<sup>559</sup> The translation reads “relation” though the Latin word is *ordinem*.

<sup>560</sup> ST II-II. 81.1, *corpus*.



4. *End.* This unfailing principle guides choice of God as one's last end. It is to God "to Whom also our choice should be resolutely directed as to our last and end."<sup>561</sup> Every choice must have reference to God. In discussing the goodness of the will, Thomas argued, as quoted above, that in every act of the will, no matter the particular object, God must be willed formally.<sup>562</sup> Religion enables the will to focus on this formal intention by explicitly calling to mind that every act must refer to God so as to honor Him.<sup>563</sup>

5. *Reverence.* It reveres His unique excellence:

Honor is due to someone under the aspect of excellence: and to God a singular excellence is competent, since He infinitely surpasses all things and exceeds them in every way. Wherefore to Him is special honor due: even as in human affairs we see that different honor is due to different personal excellences, one kind of honor to a father, another to a king, and so on.<sup>564</sup>

We noted above that justice does not only render something tangible to fulfill a debt, but it also fulfills an obligation that exists to give honor to someone who stands out in excellence. This can be an excellence of authority or in action. God far exceeds any other in both regards and so it would be unworthy to give Him the same kind of honor bestowed upon lesser figures.

Therefore, the worship of religion enables the individual to recognize God's unique excellence in a distinctive manner.

6. *Subjection.* Religion should subject one completely to Him. Through devotion, a part of religion, individuals "devote themselves completely to God, so as to subject themselves wholly

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<sup>561</sup> ST II-II. 81.1, *corpus*.

<sup>562</sup> ST I-II. 19.10, *corpus*.

<sup>563</sup> Josef Pieper makes clear that the public celebration of festivals is one way to recognize how even what one would think of as a secular event should really be viewed in relation to one's worship of God. He states that his "purpose is only to make clear that Christian worship sees itself as an act of affirmation that expresses itself in praise, glorification, thanksgiving for the whole of reality and existence." He points to the totality of one's religious expression as it includes every aspect of life: "Real festivity cannot be restricted to any one particular sphere of life, neither to the religious nor to any other; it seizes and permeates all dimensions of existence-so that from a mere description of the proceedings we cannot easily tell whether a festival is 'really' a social, economic, athletic, or church event, a fair, a dance, or a feast." *In Tune with the World*. 38; 33. All of one's actions and life should be directed to God without clear demarcations of secular and sacred. The two interpenetrate each other when all becomes religiously ordered to God.

<sup>564</sup> ST II-II. 81.4, *corpus*.

to Him.”<sup>565</sup> It must be remembered that *latría*, worship in Greek, originally meant hired service, and when applied to God entailed a servitude by which one devoted one’s whole self to Him.

This is what makes worship of God different from any other kind of reverence. Only the worship of God entails the complete gift of oneself, for anything short of that complete devotion would withhold something fitting to the highest good and what is due to the originator and purpose of the gift.

7. *Obedience*. Even though Aquinas places obedience underneath the virtue of observance, honor due to “those who excel in some kind of dignity,”<sup>566</sup> he does refer to obedience to God as the proper act of humanity. Obedience plays an essential part in the order of justice to God, because it is necessary for the subjection of the will to Him. Aquinas states that “among the moral virtues, the greater the thing which a man contemns that he may adhere to God, the greater the virtue.... Therefore, properly speaking, the virtue of obedience, whereby we contemn our own will for God’s sake, is more praiseworthy than the other moral virtues, which contemn other goods for the sake of God.”<sup>567</sup> Obedience to God honors Him more than other exterior acts, because this obedience helps to rectify the will in its order to Him, by conforming to His perfect will, through which the whole order of the universe takes form.

8. *Union*. Religion aims to bring about union with God: “Interior worship consists in the soul being united to God by the intellect and affections.” This union culminates the movement toward God that began in giving Him His due and which required a rectification of the will. When God is chosen as the last end and offers God what is due to Him, this brings about a union in which the intellect and will cling to Him as their origin and end. The intellect and will are the highest aspects of the soul, and, therefore, are the greatest gifts to offer. As these are offered as

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<sup>565</sup> ST II-II. 82.1, *corpus*.

<sup>566</sup> Cicero. *De Inventione*. II.

<sup>567</sup> ST II-II. 104.3, *corpus*.

gifts, they are opened to their purpose of knowing the truth and loving the good. In itself this would be limited by the insufficiency of nature, but this union is drawn into the more dynamic union of grace.

9. *Relation to others.* It strengthens justice's particular relations to others. The worship of God expresses the very essence of justice insofar as it recognizes the ultimate debt. In attempting to render this debt the will becomes conformed to justice itself and therefore the will becomes more attuned to the fulfillment of any other debt. Therefore, Aquinas states that "just as the love of God includes love of our neighbor, as stated above (Q. 25, A. 1), so too the service of God includes rendering each one his due."<sup>568</sup> God stands at the foundation of justice, because it is He who ordered the universe, and He who holds the will to His standard of rectitude. Thomas feels so strongly concerning this point that he looks to Christ as the restorer of justice: "Faith in Christ is the origin and cause of justice... wherefore faith in Christ does not void the order of justice, but strengthens it."<sup>569</sup>

In the case of religion, the natural order of justice demonstrates the necessity to worship, insofar as God is perceived to be the source and end of all human good. Thomas demonstrates the role of nature both in making use of the classical definition by Cicero and making clear that religion falls within the limited order of justice to God. He states: "It belongs to religion to show reverence to one God under one aspect, namely, as the first principle of creation and government of things."<sup>570</sup> This relation to God, namely of origin and governance, can be

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<sup>568</sup> ST II-II. 58.2, *ad* 6. Oscar Brown describes religion in such a way that it involves both one's personal and public ordering to God, which it seeks to link more directly to God's ordering of the human race to Himself. Brown states: "Through *religio* both the interior psychic hierarchy and the external order of political society are connected to, and seen as somehow bound up with, the heavenly hierarchy and the universal divine order." 66.

<sup>569</sup> ST II-II. 104.6, *corpus*.

<sup>570</sup> ST II-II. 81.3, *corpus*. Joseph Bobik puts forward a more general definition of religion: "A simple, but useful, initial identifying description of what religion is, Aquinas would suggest, is the following. **Religion is a certain sort of relation, basically intellectual (knowing) and volitional (loving), between man and God.** Both man and God are persons, and as persons are capable of knowing and loving one another." Bold text original. 20. While

perceived philosophically, and thus derives Aquinas' dependence upon Cicero. It cannot be overlooked that Aquinas turns to a pagan author for his definition of the moral virtue by which the will relates to God. This definition provides the groundwork of Aquinas' account, but its ambiguity also reveals the necessity to fine tune it. Cicero's oft quoted articulation of religion reads as follows: "Tully says (Rhet. II. 53) that 'religion consists in offering service and ceremonial rites to a superior nature that men call divine.'<sup>571</sup> "*Religio est, quae superioris cuiusdam naturae, quam divinam vocant, curam caerimoniamque affert.*" The ambiguity here comes in as Cicero states that religion is offered to some (*cuiusdam*, not translated in the Blackfriars translation) superior nature, which is called divine. In the classical world there were many things that were called divine, some of which were superior in nature to humanity, such as *daimons*. This is not the kind of worship that Aquinas seeks to affirm. Therefore, the first article of his question, "Of Religion," (*Secunda Secundae* 81) is entitled "Whether Religion Directs Man to God Alone?"<sup>572</sup> Using Cicero's definition necessitates such a distinction, since the same type of ceremony and service could be offered to God or anything else.

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Bobik picks up on Aquinas' phrase that religion "denotes properly a relation to God," (II-II. 81.1, *corpus*) his definition may abstract too much from the aspect of debt, which Aquinas deems essential for religion considered as a virtue. It is true that knowing and loving are owed to God, but these acts are not the proper acts of religion. This is why Aquinas gives a more specific definition. Bobik explains the intentional broadness of the first view with the following: "Religion as a virtue is different from religion as a relation. As a virtue, religion is but one aspect of religion as a relation. It is one of the many aspects (of that complex relation) which originate in man and reach out toward, then terminate in, God." It is true that viewed from a more general perspective, one could see the heart of the Christian religion as focused on knowing and loving God. The role that knowledge and love play in religion will be examined in chapter six.

<sup>571</sup> ST II-II. 81.1, *sed contra*.

<sup>572</sup> Aquinas predominantly uses the term religion in the *Summa*, though he does in several places use *religio* and *latria* interchangeably. cf. ST II-II. 89.4, obj. 3. This interchangeableness further specifies religion to mean worship due to God alone. It is interesting, however, that in *ad 2* of Q 94, a. 1, Aquinas states that *latria* is an act of the virtue of religion. For a concise summary of question 81 as well as the subsequent questions on the parts of religion, see Odon Lottin's *L'ame du cultue: La vertu de religion d'après s. Thomas d'Aquin*. (Louvain: Bureau des Oeuvres Liturgiques, 1920). This short work emphasizes religion's relation to the theological virtues and offers a unique insight on the relation of religion to humility and obedience. On this latter point, he states: "Certaines vertus morales sont étroitement reliées à la religion, elles forment avec elle un faisceau très coherent de vertus toutes imprégnées de reverence vis-à-vis de Dieu." And further: "L'obéissance et humilité sont les conmpagnes habituelles de la vertu de religion." 40; 50.

Why then use Cicero's definition? In choosing the word religion over simply maintaining Augustine's usage of *latría* Aquinas indicates the importance of the role of justice in worship. In the *Secunda Secundae* Aquinas emphasizes worship's role as a virtue, that is, its influence in rectifying the will in relation to God. Religion stands as the most important part of justice, because as religion rectifies the will, the will in turn will rectify all other human acts and powers. Insofar as worship relates to God as first principle, governor, and end, Aquinas deems it important to refer to it as a moral virtue. In this regard, it is not so much what is offered, but rather the right relation of the will to God, which manifests itself in thankfulness, servitude, and honor.

Religion as a virtue comprehends any action which seeks to accomplish these goals. Aquinas asserts religion's comprehensiveness in the following way: "every deed, in so far as it is done in God's honor, belongs to religion;"<sup>573</sup> and "all those things through which reverence is shown to God belong to religion."<sup>574</sup> Any action which seeks to justly relate to God falls under the scope of religion. Aquinas describes two general ways that religion seeks to render its debt to God. This explanation builds upon Cicero's definition, which incorporated "*cura*" and "*caerimonia*." Aquinas builds on these terms by looking at religion through service and worship, one of which focuses more on the subjection of the will and the other, which entails offering a manifest sign of the interior state. He describes this as follows:

By the same act man both serves and worships God, for worship regards the excellence of God, to Whom reverence is due: while service regards the subjection of man who, by his condition, is under an obligation of showing reverence to God. To these belong all acts ascribed to religion, because, by them all, man bears witness to the Divine excellence and to his own subjection to God, either by offering something to God, or by assuming something divine.<sup>575</sup>

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<sup>573</sup> ST II-II. 81.4, *ad* 2.

<sup>574</sup> ST II-II. 83.3, *corpus*.

<sup>575</sup> ST II-II. 81.3, *ad* 2.

It seems that religion looks both to God, by manifesting His honor, and to one's relation to Him, by humbling oneself reverently before Him.<sup>576</sup> It both recognizes God's excellence and seeks to conform to it.

Thus, religion must be considered as a virtue in that it performs a just act in recognizing God's excellence and also perfects the moral life. Aquinas examines religion under the aspect of virtue in articles two through six of the Question 81. He begins in article two by stating:

As stated above 'a virtue is that which makes its possessor good, and his act good likewise,' wherefore we must needs say that every good act belongs to a virtue. Now it is evident that to render anyone his due has the aspect of good, since by rendering a person his due, one becomes suitably proportioned to him, through being ordered to him in a becoming manner. But order comes under the aspect of good.... Since then it belongs to religion to pay due honor to someone, namely, to God, it is evident that religion is a virtue.<sup>577</sup>

Everyone owes God service and worship and performing these duties makes the will morally right in relation to God. Any act of justice strengthens the will in its readiness to give what is due. Religion does this in an even greater fashion given the importance of right order to God for the entire moral life. Therefore, religion, as a virtue, perfects the will and contributes to the flourishing of the moral life.

Aquinas does offer one clarification that helps determine worship's quality as a virtue in distinction from worship viewed solely from an exterior point of view. Though Cicero had explained religion simply as offering ceremony and service to something vaguely understood as divine, Aquinas notes that virtue requires greater specificity. To give worship owed to God to another would not only not qualify as a virtue, but rather as an evil action it would greater hinder

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<sup>576</sup> Farrell unites the two modes of religion as ceremonial worship (reverence) and service (subjection) as follows: "This, then, is the double note of the religious debt man owes to God: reverence for the divine excellence and subjection to the divine principality. Actually, the two are different sides of one and the same act of worship; and this act, in its essential nature, is no more than an honest recognition of the first principle of man's being and government. By recognizing that divine principality, man is at the same time protesting the divine excellence which brought him into being and directs him to happiness, and his own orderly position beneath that supremely excellent Being." 345.

<sup>577</sup> ST II-II. 81.2, *corpus*.

the moral life. The problem arises in that both a true believer and an idolater could perform the same outward action. Aquinas poses an objection to this effect:

Further, *latría* pertains to the virtue of religion, to which superstition is opposed. But *latría*, apparently, is univocally applied to idolatry and to that which belongs to the true religion. For just as we speak univocally of the desire for false happiness, and of the desire of true happiness, so too, seemingly, we speak univocally of the worship of false gods, which is called idolatry, and of the worship of the true God, which is the *latría* of true religion.<sup>578</sup>

This objection compares worship to the desire for happiness. In all of one's actions there is an implicit order to happiness even when one acts contrary to it. One chooses a given action based on the notion that it will lead toward happiness, even if misguided. Does not worship always seek to give honor to God, even when it is misguided about its proper recipient? Aquinas distinguishes between *latría* and *idolatria* as follows:

The term *latría* may be taken in two senses. In one sense it may denote a human act pertaining to the worship of God: and then its signification remains the same, to whomsoever it be shown, because in this sense, the thing to which it is shown is not included in the definition. Taken thus *latría* is applied univocally, whether to true religion or to idolatry, just as the payment of a tax is univocally the same, whether it be paid to a true or false king. In another sense *latría* denotes the same as religion, and then, since it is a virtue, it is essential thereto that divine worship be given to whom it ought to be given.; and in this way *latría* is applied equivocally to the *latría* of true religion, and to idolatry: just as prudence is applied equivocally to the prudence that is a virtue, and to that which is carnal.<sup>579</sup>

The virtue of religion consists not in the outward action, but in the right order of the will, which properly relates to the true God, giving due to honor to the one Who truly deserves it. No other worship could be called virtuous except that which offers God fitting worship, flowing from a spirit of servitude.

While it is the nature of virtue in general to direct one toward God through right action, the virtue of religion exemplifies this order by making the implicit order of action toward Him

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<sup>578</sup> ST II-II. 94.1, obj. 2.

<sup>579</sup> *ibid.* ad 2.

explicit. Though every moral act will have bearing on one's relationship with God, Aquinas argues that religion has greater proximity to Him. Therefore, Aquinas makes the bold claim that "religion is the chief of the moral virtues."<sup>580</sup> Once again, this distinction derives from religion's explicit and direct ordering of the will to God. Aquinas explicates this point:

Whatever is directed to an end takes its goodness from being ordered to that end; so that the nearer it is to the end the better it is. Now moral virtues, as stated above, are about matters that are ordered to God as their end. And religion approaches nearer to God than the other moral virtues, in so far as its actions are directly and immediately ordered to the honor of God. Hence religion excels among the moral virtues.<sup>581</sup>

How does this compare to Aquinas' earlier (Q. 59) assertion that it is justice as both a general and particular virtue that "excels the other moral virtues"?<sup>582</sup> Justice as legal or general virtue can still be called greater than religion since it commends the whole person toward the common good. It is when justice is considered to be particular that it falls under the genus of moral virtue. Aquinas upholds justice's superiority for two reasons. The first deals with its "subject": "justice is in the more excellent part of the soul, viz. the rational appetite or will, whereas the other moral virtues are in the sensitive appetite."<sup>583</sup> Further: "The second reason is taken from the object, because the other virtues are commendable in respect of the sole good of the virtuous person himself, whereas justice is praiseworthy in respect of the virtuous person being well disposed

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<sup>580</sup> ST II-II. 81.6, *sed contra*. cf. Damascene. *On the Orthodox Faith*. "Through his power of reason man is akin to the incorporeal and intellectual natures, reasoning, thinking, judging each thing, and pursuing the virtues, particularly the acme of the virtues which is religion." trans. Frederic J. Chase, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1958), III. xii. It is precisely on this point of the crucial role of religion that Oscar Brown recognizes one of Aquinas' advancements beyond an Aristotelian account of virtue. He states: "St. Thomas completed the passage from Aristotelean ethics to higher law, and from moral immanence to transcendent hierarchy, not only in virtue of his biblical theism and his metaphysics of transcendent Existence but also through his masterful comprehension of religion as the *virtus virtutum* of the (natural) moral life of man. Significantly enough, that supreme moral virtue is not treated at all by Aristotle, and Aquinas must have recourse to Cicero when considering *religio* (as also, indeed, on some points of natural law doctrine). But, of course, there is an inevitable Christian coloring to St. Thomas' development of the Ciceronian conception of that virtue." 64-65.

<sup>581</sup> *ibid. corpus*.

<sup>582</sup> ST II-II. 58.12, *corpus*.

<sup>583</sup> *ibid.*



toward another, so that justice is somewhat the good of another person.”<sup>584</sup> In this particular sense, religion does not compete with justice for the place of superiority. On the other hand, religion enables justice to receive this excellence. This is why Aquinas refers to religion as the most important part of justice. If justice’s superiority has to do with its disposition toward another and its contribution to the good of others, religion enables justice to relate to God and through Him to others. Aquinas links these two goals together in the following way: “We ought so to perform our actions in God’s honor that they may conduce to our neighbor’s good, since God also works for His own glory and for our good.”<sup>585</sup> Religion acts justly in a supreme manner by relating to the most important personage and through this relation it contributes to the common good. Religion as a type of justice belongs to the public good and contributes to its flourishing, by the strengthening of justice and virtue.

The virtue of religion not only rectifies the will as a part of justice, but also takes on a role similar to justice as a general virtue. It does so in its ability to command the acts of the other virtues, when the act of these virtues shifts from an implicit to an explicit ordering toward God. This is not to say that these virtues become constitutive parts of religion, nor do the acts of these virtues become its proper acts. Thomas specifies religion’s two sets of acts as follows:

Religion has two kinds of acts. Some are its proper and immediate acts, which it elicits, and by which man is directed to God alone, for instance, sacrifice, adoration and the like. But it has other acts, which it produces through the medium of the virtues, which it commands, directing them to the honor of God, because the virtue which is concerned with the end, commands the virtues which are concerned with the means.<sup>586</sup>

What stands out for attention once again concerns the order toward God as end. Justice seeks to direct all the virtues so that through the proper rectitude of the will they point toward God as the reason for action. Religion makes clear that each and every action must become an explicit act

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<sup>584</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>585</sup> ST II-II. 89.4, ad 3.

<sup>586</sup> ST II-II. 81.1, *ad* 1.

that offers worship and service by honoring God. Therefore, a moral virtue such as temperance expands from the simple control of the sensual appetite to the honor of God when the former is done for the purpose of the latter. This is the case because “the more excellent the virtue the better and more meritorious the deed. Wherefore the act of an inferior virtue is the better and more meritorious for being commanded by a superior virtue, whose act it becomes through being commanded by it.”<sup>587</sup> Such acts begin to “belong to the divine worship, being like sacrifices to God.”<sup>588</sup> The secondary virtue remains intact as it belongs to religion only through its role of “commanding,” but to its proper virtue “as eliciting.”<sup>589</sup> This is the manner in which justice directs all human action to God as His due.

Though every action should have this explicit orientation toward God as its end (“whatsoever we do, we should do it in God’s honor”<sup>590</sup>), there still needs to be special acts dedicated to His honor.<sup>591</sup> The acts of religion help it to order the will toward God by giving Him His due. As discussed above, the debt owed to Him arises both from favors received and from the order needed toward Him as the object of one’s happiness. This debt cannot be fulfilled by humanity since God lacks nothing and, furthermore, no offering is truly worthy of God’s goodness. It falls to the act of religion to express this surpassing goodness and make as acceptable of an offering as possible. Aquinas makes clear that the way religion relates to God is through worship. Worship manifests the reverence and subjection necessary to God and makes

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<sup>587</sup> ST II-II. 88.6, *corpus*. Lottin picks up Thomas’ use of “superior virtue” to emphasize that “une vertu ne peut commander à une autre si elle lui est supérieure. Cette supériorité lui vient de la place qu’elle occupe dans la hiérarchie des vertus.” Religion can command all the moral virtues, because it is their superior, though Lottin makes clear that its inferiority to the theological virtues disables it from commanding them. *L’Ame du culte*. 57.

<sup>588</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>589</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>590</sup> ST II-II. 89.4, *ad* 3.

<sup>591</sup> Benedict Ashley examines the virtue of religion in Aquinas by illuminating it with references to Scripture, which give examples of the practice of religion in general and its particular acts. Cf. *Living the Truth*, 381-403.

an offering to Him. Ultimately this should be an interior offering of one's very life, which, however, cannot exclude physical signs to manifest and strengthen the interior.

Worship serves as a broad category, which covers many acts. Taken in a general sense, Aquinas states that "the worship of God is properly the act of religion."<sup>592</sup> As a moral virtue, religion offers this worship to God insofar as He is the end to which it is directed. Aquinas makes clear that God is not the object of the virtue, since it is worship which is directly chosen by the will.<sup>593</sup> This distinction enables Aquinas to distinguish religion from the theological virtues. He states:

Due worship is paid to God, in so far as certain acts whereby God is worshiped, such as the offering of sacrifices and so forth, are done out of reverence for God. Hence it is evident that God is related to religion not as matter or object, but as end: and consequently religion is not a theological virtue whose object is the last end, but a moral virtue which is properly about things referred to that end.<sup>594</sup>

While faith believes in God as its proper object, religion offers worship, and this worship is directed to God. Cajetan comments on this issue and points out that religion has "a double object: to whom [it is done] and what [is done]. And as far as God is the object of religion [He is the One] to whom [it is done], not what [is done]."<sup>595</sup> God is certainly related to this act, but He

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<sup>592</sup> ST II-II. 88.5, *sed contra*.

<sup>593</sup> Gabriel Bullet describes that "l'object immédiat des vertus morales n'était pas la fin ultime, mais bien les fins secondaires qui sont en vue de la fin." *Vertus morales infuses et vertus morales acquises selon Saint Thomas d'Aquin*. (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1958), 82. In the virtue of religion, one must consider the right ordering of the will (the formation of a virtuous disposition toward God), the object through which the will's order is expressed (the act of worship), and the end toward which it is referred (God's glory). For a detailed exposition of the object of the moral act see Steven Long. *The Teleological Grammar of the Moral Act*. (Ave Maria, Florida: Sapientia Press, 2007).

<sup>594</sup> ST II-II. 81.5, *corpus*. Oscar Brown does put forward a special role for religion as a link between the moral and theological virtues, almost reminiscent of Philip the Chancellor's description of justice as a quasi-divine virtue. 66.

<sup>595</sup> *Commentaria Cardinalis Caietani*. ST II-II. 81.3. In *Summa theologiae cum supplemento et commenatariis Caietani. Sancti Thomae de Aquino opera omnia. Tomus Nonus*. Rome: Editorio de San Thommaso, 1897. "Ad hoc dubium summarie dicitur quod obiectum virtutis est duplex: cui, et quod. Et quod Deus est obiectum religionis cui, non quod." In this passage, Cajetan refers to the fifth article, while commenting on the third. He attempts to resolve a seeming contradiction in that the third article refers to God as the object while the fifth denies it. Since God is so intrinsically related to the virtue of religion, Cajetan does make the bold assertion, while commenting on article 5 of this question, that religion "participates in the nature of the theological virtues (*participat naturam theologialium virtutum*)." He continues: "*Propter quod religio, quia moralis est, actibus suis non attingit Deum ut obiectum sue materiam circa quam operator, sed circa humanam mentem, humana opera reque exterioes, quas*

is not what the will directly encounters in its choice. The will aims at God by means of the acts of worship, which are what it directly chooses.

Worship orients the whole person to God by means of the will. Therefore, religion, as a virtue of the will which inclines it to honor God, moves every part of the human composite to honor God in its own way. Aquinas describes this as follows: “The will moves the other powers of the soul to its end, as stated above (Q. 82, A. 1, *ad 1*), and therefore religion which is in the will directs the acts of the other powers to the reverence of God.”<sup>596</sup> This includes the will and also the intellect and body so that all of man’s life may be oriented toward God as its end. It does so both by offering something to God, which includes sacrifice and service, and by assuming something divine. The former consists of devotion, prayer, adoration, sacrifice, oblation, tithes, and vows, while latter includes oaths, adjuration, praise, and the sacraments. All of these manifold acts, both interior and exterior, offered and assumed, together contribute to religion’s general act of worship by directing the human person to God in one particular aspect.

In the midst of these diverse acts, a clear priority emerges. Just as religion holds distinction among moral virtues for its proximity to God so do its parts stand in an order with those touching God most closely in the forefront. Aquinas expounds on this order:

In the Divine worship it is necessary to make use of corporeal things, that man’s mind may be aroused thereby, as by signs, to the spiritual acts by means of which he is united to God. Therefore, the internal acts of religion take precedence of the others and belong to religion essentially, while the external acts are secondary, and subordinate to the internal acts.<sup>597</sup>

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*offert Deo orando, adorando, sacrificando, offerendo: quia vero theologales participat, Deum habet pro obiecto non simpliciter, sed cui debitum cultum offert.*” Thus, it is clear that the virtue of religion does have the constraints of a moral virtue in that its object consists in a created object, and, yet, it exceeds the other moral virtues in that this created object is referred more directly to God than the object of these others.

<sup>596</sup> ST II-II. 83.3, *ad 1*.

<sup>597</sup> ST II-II. 81.7, *corpus*.

It is through the soul as the highest part of human nature that one can have the closest contact with God. There are two acts of religion which order the soul's faculties of will and intellect toward God, namely devotion and prayer.<sup>598</sup> Aquinas states that "among the other powers of the soul the intellect is the highest, and the nearest to the will; and consequently after devotion which belongs to the will, prayer which belongs to the intellective part is the chief of the acts of religion, since by it religion directs man's intellect to God."<sup>599</sup> Devotion consists in "the will to give oneself readily to things concerning the service of God,"<sup>600</sup> while "by praying man surrenders his mind to God, since he subjects it to Him with reverence and, so to speak, presents it to Him."<sup>601</sup> Religion moves the will to adhere to God firmly, while it moves the intellect to order one's life by seeking to conform to God. When the highest parts of the soul so order themselves to God this orients one life to Him so as to be united to Him. Through prayer, and with it all worship, one "ought principally to ask to be united to God."<sup>602</sup> Religion aims at God

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<sup>598</sup> For an overview of Aquinas' treatment of prayer see chapter three of Bobik's *Veritas Divina*. See also Thomas Ryan's *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms*, 66-77. It is also significant to note once again that Thomas moved the treatment of prayer from Penance in his *Commentary on the Sentences* to this location within the virtue of justice. cf. Dewan. "St. Thomas Aquinas and the Ontology of Prayer."

<sup>599</sup> ST II-II. 83.3, *ad* 1.

<sup>600</sup> ST II-II. 82.1, *corpus*. For a thorough exposition of the development of the concept of devotion in Thomas' thought, see John Curran. "The Thomistic Concept of Devotion." *The Thomist* 2 (July; Oct 1940): 410-443; 546-580. Curran notes that devotion had diverse use in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, being used in relation to charity, prayer, latria, and the Sacraments. What unites all of the usages is devotion's place in the will and its promptness in relation to worship. For instance, in treating Baptism, Aquinas states that devotion "implies the fervor of charity in reverence to God and the things of God." (IV *Sent.*, d. IV, q. 3, a. 2, qt. 2, Curran's translation, 418) Curran also finds a link of devotion and the sacraments in the *Summa*, particularly in the Eucharist in that one joins the sacrifice of Christ through one's internal sacrifice in devotion. 556-57. In both works, Aquinas specifically links devotion to the ability to obtain the grace conferred by the sacraments. He concludes his exposition on a similar note, though not tied to the sacraments in particular: "Devotion is not a mere intention to worship God. It is important to understand this. Neither is it like a vow which promises something to God. The greatest worship of which man is capable is realized in the very act of devotion. Devotion *is* the offering. Devotion has been defined as promptitude. It is of course a promptitude which is rather psychological than temporal. And it is this psychological readiness and completeness of offering with which devotion stamps all the acts which the virtue of religion commands. Devotion supplies the impulse to all the other acts of religion. They all exist for the sake of devotion. They are means of expressing interior homage—that is to say means of realizing devotion." 578.

<sup>601</sup> ST II-II. 83.3, *ad* 3.

<sup>602</sup> ST I-II. 83.1, *ad* 2.

as its end so as to be united with Him as the soul's happiness (though it cannot arrive at this goal on its own).

While this inner union of man's powers with God constitutes the heart of religion, this does not negate the need for involvement from the lower powers. Aquinas describes the necessity "that man may serve God with all that he has from God, not only with his mind, but also with his body."<sup>603</sup> Aquinas describes the acts which follow from the interior ones as secondary since primarily "outward worship is a sign of the inward worship."<sup>604</sup> There are two principle exterior acts, which roughly conform to the interior acts. Adoration, which Aquinas describes as that "whereby one uses one's body to reverence" mirrors devotion.<sup>605</sup> The relation exists in the following fashion:

Since we are composed of a twofold nature, intellectual and sensible, we offer God a twofold adoration; namely a spiritual adoration, consisting in internal devotion of the mind; and bodily adoration, which consists in an exterior humbling of the body. And since in all acts of *latría* that which is without is referred to that which is within as being of greater import, it follows that exterior adoration is offered on account of interior adoration, in other words we exhibit signs of humility in our bodies in order to incite our affections to submit to God since it is connatural to us to proceed from sensible to intelligible.<sup>606</sup>

Just as the will humbles itself in servitude and adheres to God through devotion so does the body do so through adoration. This both follows the lead of the will, in so far as the lower should conform to higher, and also helps to strengthen the will's resolve, since the symbolism and practice of the body should serve as a stimulus and reminder.

Sacrifice, the second major exterior act of religion somewhat follows prayer in the sense that it consists in the order of external things to God. Whereas prayer intended to order one's desires in conformity to God and to make them manifest to Him, so does sacrifice consist in

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<sup>603</sup> ST II-II. 83.12, *corpus*.

<sup>604</sup> ST II-II. 94.2, *corpus*.

<sup>605</sup> ST II-II. 84. preface.

<sup>606</sup> ST II-II. 84.2, *corpus*.

ordering one's possessions in a manner as to make it clear that God is their origin and end. It too serves as an outward sign of the inward offering of the soul which seeks union with God.

Aquinas makes clear that...

a sacrifice is offered in order that something may be represented. Now the sacrifice that is offered outwardly represents the inward spiritual sacrifice whereby the soul offers itself to God... Again the soul offers itself in sacrifice to God as its beginning by creation, and its end by beatification... Wherefore just as to God alone ought we to offer spiritual sacrifice, so too ought we to offer outward sacrifices to Him alone.<sup>607</sup>

Just as the soul must be ordered to God as its origin and end so must one's outward life conform to this order. Truly, through religion all things must conform to the order established by God that all things proceed from Him in Creation and are ordered toward Him as their good.

Sacrifice assists in giving even material things a more direct order toward God in that it deposes something for divine worship. For instance, when an animal is offered it is removed from the mundane purpose of human usefulness and elevated to the level of the sacred. Thus, Aquinas states that "there are acts that are not deserving of praise save through being done out of reverence for God: such acts are properly called sacrifices and belong to the virtue of religion."<sup>608</sup> Sacrifice further aids in religion's attempt to direct all to the honor and glory of God.

The next three acts of religion described by Aquinas (Q 86-88) constitute the last of the outward acts that offer something to God. They consist of oblations, tithes, and oaths, which

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<sup>607</sup> ST II-II. 85.2, *corpus*. Matthew Levering looks to Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac to explicate the nature of sacrifice. "Sacrifice embodies and enacts radical willingness to give up everything creaturely for the sake of the Creator; sacrifice is the true enactment, and therefore the true test, of right worship of God." He states further that "communion with God is not only life-giving; it is also life-taking, since our lives are owed to God, as expressed by Israel's sacrificial laws." *Sacrifice and Community: Jewish Offering and Christian Eucharist*. (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 35; 45. Ultimately sacrifice cannot constitute a single act in token of one's order to God, but must entail the offering of one's whole life to God, putting Him before all else with all the difficulty and suffering it entails. Therefore, "the sacrificial dimension – centered upon obedient giving up of life understood as enabling relationship with God – is at the center of Israel's and the Church's understanding of communion." *ibid.* 51.

<sup>608</sup> ST II-II. 85.3, *corpus*.

grant greater specificity to the duties associated with religion. While oblations and tithes form a part of the ceremonies of the Old Law, Aquinas argues that these acts still form a necessary part of worship insofar as they are demanded by the natural law. While the term oblation may be used generally for what “is common to all thing offered for the Divine worship,”<sup>609</sup> its particular act, as described by Aquinas, entails the offering of first-fruits “in recognition of divine favor, as though man acknowledged that he had received the fruits of the earth from God and that he ought to offer something to God in return.”<sup>610</sup> First fruits serve as one way in which one could express gratitude to God and demonstrate one’s continuing dependence upon Him. Similarly, tithes, which are “paid for the sustenance of the ministers of God,” offer an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of worship and the role of ministers in carrying out this duty.

Of these three acts, it is a vow, which appears to pertain most directly to the essence of religion, insofar as it strengthens the will in its resolve toward a good action for the reverence of God. Aquinas states that “a vow denotes a binding to do or omit some particular thing,”<sup>611</sup> which he further specifies as “a promise made to God.”<sup>612</sup> He continues: this “promise is nothing else than a directing of the thing promised to the person to whom the promise is made. Hence a vow is a directing of the thing vowed to the worship or service of God.”<sup>613</sup> While this promise could include anything good, Thomas argues that “absolutely speaking, the matter of a vow” should be the “acts of virtue,” which are good, whatever be their result.”<sup>614</sup> Thus, essentially vows are meant to direct the soul more strongly to God in order to honor Him by acts of virtue. This is expedient to do “in so far as by vowing we fix our wills immovably on that

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<sup>609</sup> ST II-II. 86.1, *corpus*.

<sup>610</sup> ST II-II. 86.4, *corpus*.

<sup>611</sup> ST II-II. 88.1, *corpus*.

<sup>612</sup> ST II-II. 88.5, *corpus*.

<sup>613</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>614</sup> ST II-II. 88.2, *ad 2*.



which is expedient to do.”<sup>615</sup> Therefore, just as religion helps justice to order the will toward God, so the vow enters in as a further aid in strengthening this order.

Finally, Aquinas treats of a group of acts, which he describes as “external acts of religion, whereby something Divine is taken<sup>616</sup> by man: and this is either a sacrament or the name of God.”<sup>617</sup> Aquinas puts off his treatment of the sacraments until the third part of the *Summa* (just as it will be delayed until sixth chapter of this work), but under the second heading, he describes three ways in which God’s name may be taken (or assumed). Though the first act of this group, the taking of oaths, may not seem to pertain to worship, it demonstrates the intrinsic link between justice and worship.<sup>618</sup> Aquinas builds upon Cicero’s earlier insistence on the necessity of oaths for the upholding of law. He states that “to call God to witness is named *jurare* (to swear) because it is established as though it were a principle of law (*jure*) that what a man asserts under the invocation of God as His witness should be accepted as true.”<sup>619</sup> In Cicero this took a pragmatic role, which seemed to subordinate religion to the necessities of the state. Aquinas does point to its usefulness, “since oaths are employed in order to justify men, and to put an end to controversy.”<sup>620</sup> Nevertheless, he makes clear the essential link to religion in a more positive light. An oath finds its constitution not only in its usefulness (its “end” as Aquinas describes it), but also in its “origin,” which depends upon God. He states: “Swearing owes its introduction to the faith whereby man believes that God possesses unerring truth and universal knowledge and

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<sup>615</sup> ST II-II. 88.4, *corpus*. Benedict Ashley makes clear that vows are actually essential to the Christian life, especially since vows form an essential part of the sacraments of baptism, marriage, and holy orders. *Living the Truth*, 396.

<sup>616</sup> cf. ST II-II. 81.3, *ad 2*. Here instead of the term “taken,” it reads “by offering something to God, or by assuming something divine.”

<sup>617</sup> ST II-II. 89. preface.

<sup>618</sup> Aquinas does point out that oaths do not apply to religion as the other acts. He states: “There is no parity between a vow and an oath: because by a vow we direct something to the honor of God, so that for this very reason a vow is an act of religion. On the other hand, in an oath reverence for the name of God is taken in confirmation of a promise. Hence what is confirmed by oath does not, for this reason, become an act of religion, since moral acts take their species from the end.” ST II-II. 89.5, *ad 1*.

<sup>619</sup> ST II-II. 89.1, *corpus*.

<sup>620</sup> ST II-II. 89.2, *corpus*.

foresight of all things;”<sup>621</sup> and furthermore, “in the very fact that man swears by God, he acknowledges God to be more powerful... and thus he shows reverence to God.”<sup>622</sup> Thus, the reverence that one has for God directly contributes to the order of society inasmuch as His truthfulness and knowledge serve as a foundation for the rule of law and justice. One can trust in His justice to be the ultimate force behind the justice at work in society.

The second act of religion which assumes God’s name directly builds upon the first. Adjuramentum entails the use of divine name to either command or to encourage another person to act. This is akin to a “promissory oath,” by which one publicly swears to undertake an action, although Aquinas points out that an adjuration only lawfully binds one’s subject.<sup>623</sup> This act of religion may also be useful to encourage others to perform good works. This can be done by “appealing to his reverence for a holy thing”<sup>624</sup> or simply insofar as one “can induce anyone to do a certain thing for the sake of God’s name.”<sup>625</sup> Thus, adjuration also contributes to the flourishing of virtue and society.

The final act by which one takes on God’s name most directly pertains to the act of worship. Aquinas names this act “the taking of the Divine name for the purpose of prayer or praise.”<sup>626</sup> Since he dealt with prayer earlier, he states his intention to “speak now of praise.” The act of praise falls in line nicely with the understanding of religion as the right ordering of the will toward God. Religion expresses and seeks to further cement this order through its acts. Aquinas describes the purpose of praise as follows:

We employ words, in speaking to God, not indeed to make known our thoughts to Him Who is the searcher of our hearts, but that we may bring ourselves and our hearers to

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<sup>621</sup> ST II-II. 89.2, *corpus*.

<sup>622</sup> ST II-II. 89.4, *corpus*.

<sup>623</sup> ST II-II. 90.1, *corpus*.

<sup>624</sup> ST II-II. 90.1, *ad 3*.

<sup>625</sup> ST II-II. 90.2, *sed contra*.

<sup>626</sup> ST II-II. 91. preface.

reverence Him. Consequently we need to praise God with our lips, not indeed for His sake, but for our own sake; since by praising Him our devotion is aroused towards Him, according to Ps xlix. 23: ‘The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way by which I will show him the salvation of God.’ And forasmuch as man, by praising God, ascends in his affections to God, by so much is he withdrawn from things opposed to God.... The praise of the lips is also profitable to others by inciting their affections toward God.<sup>627</sup>

When God’s name is taken in order to Him reverence, this awakens the worshipper to His greatness and kindness. While this praise is due to Him, it does not benefit God, but does morally benefit both the individual and others by providing an occasion to awaken and strengthen worship. Praise follows the general pattern of granting specificity to the virtue of religion. It does so in the following way, described by Aquinas: “We may speak of God in two ways. First with regard to His essence; and thus since He is incomprehensible and ineffable, He is above all praise. In this respect we owe Him reverence and the honor of *latria*.... Secondly, we may speak of God as to His effects which are ordained for our good. In this respect we owe Him praise.”<sup>628</sup> Before God’s essence when can only submit with humble service and reverence, though with respect to specific benefits received, one can thank God more clearly. This occurs by invoking His name, which manifests God’s love and care.

Aquinas asserted that praise exists to benefit the worshipper not the one worshipped. This begs the question concerning the purpose of worship. All of the acts of religion are meant for a twofold purpose: to glorify God and to move one closer to Him. This twofold end comes from the virtue of justice, which is focused by its nature on another, and yet as a virtue it perfects the moral life by making the will ready to give to each his or her due. In accord with this, Aquinas makes clear that “we offer a thing to God not on account of its usefulness to Him, but

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<sup>627</sup> ST II-II. 91.1, *corpus*.

<sup>628</sup> ST II-II. 91.1, *ad* 1.

for the sake of His glory, and on account of its usefulness to us.”<sup>629</sup> In a similar passage, the Aquinas again presents a double end though he specifies the second aspect: “Now the end of divine worship is that man may give glory to God, and submit to Him in mind and body.”<sup>630</sup> The usefulness of worship is not akin to the self-seeking mode of pagan sacrifice described by Cicero in which the worshipper seeks to manipulate the gods to grant benefits. Worship does not seek selfish ends by which humanity would be served by worship, for it clearly entails serving and honoring God. Its true utility refers to the fact that religion acts as a means of subjecting one to God in mind and body. As a virtue worship benefits the worshipper by morally ordering him or her to God.

There does not need to be a dichotomy between giving God glory and receiving a benefit from this act.<sup>631</sup> Aquinas describes the unity of these two ends in discussing the Lord’s Prayer, where he states the following: “Thus it is evident that the first thing to be the object of our desire is the end, and afterwards whatever is directed to the end. Now our end is God towards Whom our affections tend in two ways: first, by our willing the glory of God, secondly, by willing to enjoy His glory.”<sup>632</sup> Since religion exists as a virtue in the will, it enables one to give honor to God and through this act to move closer to Him. This occurs naturally in worship since “by the very fact that we revere and honor God, our mind is subjected to Him; wherein its perfection consists.”<sup>633</sup> When the will becomes habituated toward acting in this manner it makes the worshipper just as one’s whole life becomes oriented to this holy purpose.

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<sup>629</sup> ST II-II. 81.6, *ad 2*.

<sup>630</sup> ST II-II. 93.2, *corpus*.

<sup>631</sup> While some have contrasted religion’s focus on God and its benefit for the one who practices it, Joseph Lécuyer admirably holds the two together in a manner faithful to Aquinas’ thought. “Réflexions sur la théologie du culte selon saint Thomas.” *Revue Thomiste* 55 (1955): 339-362. Religion seeks to give God glory and to share in that glory. Lécuyer concludes with a powerful assertion on the unity of the two ends: “[L]e bien de l’homme se confond avec la gloire de Dieu.” 361.

<sup>632</sup> ST II-II. 83.9, *corpus*.

<sup>633</sup> ST II-II. 81.7, *corpus*.

The lengthiest account that Aquinas gives of the end of worship comes not in the treatment of the virtue of religion, but rather in the vice opposed to it, superstition. This points to the fact that the will's implicit order toward God easily becomes frustrated by sin. After the Fall, one cannot expect the will to advance toward God as one's happiness without the admixture of error and weakness. Therefore, the end of religion does not just consist in the will giving God glory and advancing toward Him, but also in the process of restoring the intellect and will to their proper relation to God. In the following passage, Aquinas describes the purpose of religion in relation to the sinful distortions which oppose it:

Accordingly the species of superstition are differentiated, first on the part of the mode, secondly on the part of the object. For the divine worship may be given either to whom it ought to be given, namely to the true God, but in an undue mode, and this is the first species of superstition; or to whom it ought not to be given, namely to any creature whatsoever, and this is another genus of superstition, divided into many species in respect of the various ends of divine worship. For the end of divine worship is in the first place to give reverence to God, and in this respect the first species of this genus is idolatry, which unduly gives divine honor to a creature. The second end of religion is that man may be taught by God Whom he worships; and to this must be referred divinatory superstition, which consults the demons through compacts made with them, whether tacit or explicit. Thirdly, the end of divine worship is a certain direction of human acts according to the precepts of God the object of that worship; and to this must be referred the superstition of certain observances.<sup>634</sup>

Even without sin the intellect and will would have to be properly ordered to God, but even more so with sin's distorting presence. Therefore, worship cannot exist in its proper fashion of glorifying and honoring God so long as both the intellect and will are not rectified in relation to God. Therefore, Aquinas refers to the fact that one must be taught by God, which rightens the intellect, and must act according to God's precepts, which rightens the will.

It is not enough to simply focus on the natural order of justice, which orders the will to God as its end. A full account of worship must take into account the limits which sin imposes on the will, crippling its ability to properly relate to God. Much more so, it needs to account for the

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<sup>634</sup> ST II-II. 92.2, *corpus*.

process by which God leads humanity to true worship. Thomas' account of worship as a virtue plays a central role in this overall account, but it must be framed within the general movement of the *Summa*, which aims at the salvation of humanity through revelation and the bestowal of grace.

While the virtue of religion does not comprise the whole of Thomas' teaching on worship in the *Summa*, it does provide a fitting frame through which to see the crucial role that worship plays in the ordering of one's life to God. This virtue orders the will to God in a manner suited to God's majesty and the goodness He bestows on humanity. Nevertheless, Thomas also treats religion from the viewpoint of the role of reason. Law, as a rational dictate, makes clear to the intellect its duty before God. God's Law does this not only by making His will clear to humanity, but also in bestowing assistance to those who receive it to enable them to follow it. Though Aquinas describes worship as a virtue, one finds the context for the formation and exercise of this virtue within salvation history, the unfolding of God's Law. John Yocum makes clear that Aquinas "brings both the Old Law and the New Law under the category of *religio* and places the two dispensations in continuity with one another as stages in a single *Heilsgeschichte*."<sup>635</sup> Therefore, the next section of this treatment of Aquinas' account of worship must engage his exposition of God's Law within His plan for salvation.

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<sup>635</sup> John P. Yocum. "Sacraments in Aquinas." in *Aquinas on Doctrine: A Critical Introduction*. ed. Thomas Weinandy, Daniel Keating, and John Yocum. (New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 160.

## CHAPTER FIVE: GOD'S ASSISTANCE THROUGH LAW

While the last chapter focused primarily on the will's order toward God, this chapter examines reason's crucial role, which complements it. Due to the will's own natural limits and to the effects of sin upon it, the will cannot reach its end of happiness with God. In its attempt to order all its acts toward God it needs assistance. God offers this assistance through the bestowal of His Law, which rectifies reason by clearly placing the goal of action within it and also by making the means clear. This enables the intellect to direct the will properly towards the end of human happiness.<sup>636</sup> However, even when this becomes clear the will still needs greater assistance in executing the order revealed to it. Therefore, God's Law does not only make Himself and His will for mankind known, but also contains within it the assistance of grace necessary for union with Himself and for the execution of His will.<sup>637</sup>

The rectitude of the will in its order toward God as end requires the rectitude of reason, which manifests its desired end. Thomas makes this clear with the following principle: "In

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<sup>636</sup> While law properly resides in the intellect, Michael Sherwin points out how the intellect and will cooperate, particularly in the execution of the natural law. He explains that "strictly speaking, since a law is an ordinance of reason, natural law properly exists only in the intellect. Nevertheless, in Aquinas' view the natural inclination of the will participates in a certain way in the natural law: the will's natural inclination enables the principles of practical reason to function. It is what enables them to regulate behavior. In other words, although the precepts of the natural law exist in the intellect, these precepts are able to regulate human action only because of the natural inclinations present in the will. The natural principles of intellect and will, therefore, together underlie and regulate human action." 59. While Sherwin speaks of the natural law, this cooperation will be present in any form of law. In light of this, it is important to remember that God's law, which commands worship, builds upon the order already present in the will naturally.

<sup>637</sup> It is important to note that the discussion of law is intrinsically tied to the previous discussion of justice. Law is the means by which the intellect guides the will to be just. It is important that Thomas, unlike Albert, does not place his treatment of law under justice as an internal order through virtue, but rather within his treatment of exterior influences on the moral life. John Tonneau speaks of the relation of law in justice in *Summa* as follows: "Now it is a fact that Saint Thomas did not make his tract on law a part of the study of justice and right. This is surprising. Some regret that the Thomist definition of law is too juridical, others feel that the plan of the *Summa* does not stress this characteristic enough and that the study of law should show a definite connection with that of justice and right, undoubtedly forgetting that, for Saint Thomas, law *'non est ipsum jus, proprie loquendo, sed aliqualis ratio juris.'*" "The Teaching of the Thomist Tract on Law." *The Thomist* 34 (1970): 29-30. He later ties this focus on reason to Christ's role as Logos, who contains the *ratio* for all creatures in Himself. This is expressed by the eternal law and appropriated by every other kind of law, which are meant to lead to happiness by sharing in Christ as the true means of ordering oneself to God. 50.

order for a thing to be done for an end, some knowledge of the end is necessary.”<sup>638</sup> While the will may contain an implicit order to God insofar as He constitutes human happiness, to order one’s actions to Him fully, He must explicitly constitute the end of one’s actions. Therefore, the role of knowledge becomes critical in the will’s order. Thomas again stresses the importance of reason, stating that “the will cannot desire a good that is not previously apprehended by reason.”<sup>639</sup> This reveals an inner dependence of the will on reason. Consequently, the proper moral ordering of one toward God requires both reason and will to be directed properly toward Him.

As the intellect rightly orders itself to God it also falls into the category of religion, by which God is acknowledged as origin and end. While the virtue particularly pertains to the will, the intellect still plays a crucial role in this overall ordering of the person. The intellect’s natural order consists in knowing being and truth, which directs it to God as “supremely knowable” as the one “Who is pure act” and the “cause of any effect.”<sup>640</sup> This particular intellectual relation forms one aspect of one’s religious ordering to God. Aquinas describes this as follows: “Now in order to direct his mind to God aright, man must recognize that whatever he has is from God as from its first principle, and direct it to God as its last end.”<sup>641</sup> This recognition plays the role of stimulating the will towards the honor of God, without which it will remain ignorant of its duty.

Aquinas spells out the role of reason in stimulating the will in regards to religion in this passage:

Now every act of the will proceeds from some consideration, since the object of the will is a good understood.... Consequently meditation must needs be the cause of devotion, in so far as through meditation man conceives the thought of surrendering himself to God’s service. Indeed a twofold consideration leads him thereto. The one is the consideration

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<sup>638</sup> ST I-II. 6.1, *corpus*.

<sup>639</sup> ST I-II. 19.3, *ad 2*.

<sup>640</sup> ST I. 12.1, *corpus*.

<sup>641</sup> ST I-II. 102.3, *corpus*.



of God's goodness and loving kindness.... The other consideration is that of man's own shortcomings, on account of which he needs to lean on God.<sup>642</sup>

Therefore, one needs both to come to know and contemplate both God's existence and one's own need for Him to be properly inclined toward the necessity of worship. The meditation of reason stimulates the will toward devotion through which it eagerly adheres to God in service and worship.

In contemplating both God and one's own shortcomings, the individual recognizes the gap between His perfection and human weakness. This insight points to both the need and the difficulty of acting so as to direct all one does toward God. Such order necessitates some proportion between the individual and God. Therefore, Aquinas describes the just rectitude of the will in relation to God as follows:

Therefore the goodness of the will depends on its conformity with the Divine will. *I answer that*, As stated above, the goodness of the will depends on the intention of the end. Now the last end of the human will is the Sovereign Good, namely, God, as stated above. Therefore the goodness of the human will requires it to be ordained to the Sovereign Good, that is God. Now this Good is primarily and essentially compared to the Divine will, as its proper object. Again, that which is first in any genus is the measure and rule of all that belongs to that genus. Moreover, everything attains to rectitude and goodness, in so far as it is in accord with its proper measure. Therefore, in order that man's will be good it needs to be conformed to the Divine will.<sup>643</sup>

It is the role of reason to order actions to their end by making this end clear to the will. The will's conformity to right reason plays a pivotal role in its own rectitude. However, as noted above, proper contemplation leads reason to recognize one's own limit in accomplishing real conformity with God. Therefore, God must be the standard by which reason judges both the end of human action and the way to arrive at such end.

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<sup>642</sup> ST II-II. 82.3, *corpus*.

<sup>643</sup> ST I-II. 19.9, *sed contra, corpus*. Aquinas refers back to article seven of the same question and then to I-II 1.8; 3.1.

Reason performs its role in directing the will by providing not only knowledge of the end, but also a firm rule through which it directs action. This rule of action takes the common name of law. Aquinas describes reason's role in the formation of law in this manner:

Law is a rule and measure of acts, whereby man is induced to act or is restrained from acting: for *lex* (law) is derived from *ligare*<sup>644</sup> (to bind), because it binds one to act. Now the rule and measure of human acts is the reason, which is the first principle of human acts... since it belongs to the reason to direct to the end, which is the first in all matters of action.<sup>645</sup>

If the will seeks to advance towards God as its end it needs proper knowledge of Him and guidance concerning the way to advance toward this end. It is reason's role to direct according to what is known to be the end. Thus, reason stands as the principle of action, because it makes clear both the end and the way to advance toward it. Specifically law leads the will on the way towards its end: "It is by law that man is directed how to perform his proper acts in view of his last end."<sup>646</sup> Since God is the last end, reason must stand in accordance with Him to direct the will properly.

It is the role of reason to conform itself to God so that He may be proposed as the end of human action and so that reason may formulate commands to stimulate the will toward that end.

Aquinas describes the way in which reason attains this rectitude:

Now it is from the eternal law, which is the Divine Reason, that human reason is the rule of the human will, from which the human will derives its goodness.... It is therefore evident that the goodness of the human will depends on the eternal law much more than on human reason: and when human reason fails we must have recourse to the Eternal Reason.<sup>647</sup>

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<sup>644</sup> Note the etymological connection to *religare*, the root of *religio*.

<sup>645</sup> ST I-II. 90.1, *corpus*. It is to be noted that reason does not simply command the will without its involvement. Rather, reason proposes the end, then will wills it, and only then does reason give its command to execute. Aquinas makes this clear in his response to the third objection of the same article: "Reason has its power of moving from the will, as stated above (Q. 17, A. 1): for it is due to the fact that one wills the end, that the reason issues its commands as regards things ordained to the end. In order that the volition of what is commanded may have the nature of law, it needs to be in accord with some rule of reason."

<sup>646</sup> ST I-II. 91.4, *corpus*.

<sup>647</sup> ST I-II. 19.4, *corpus*.

God's own knowledge serves as the true order by which He established and governs the world. Right reason acts in accord with this eternal law, which is the basis for any true law. Aquinas describes the eternal law in this manner: "The very Idea of the government of things in God the Ruler of the universe, has the nature of a law. And since the Divine Reason's conception of things is not subject to time but is eternal, according to Prov. viii. 23, therefore it is that this kind of law must be called eternal."<sup>648</sup> It is God's law which brings all things to their proper end, which is Himself, and through which He governs the world. "The law implies order to the end actively... But the end of the Divine Government is God Himself, and His law is not distinct from Himself."<sup>649</sup> God is the foundation on which reason judges and orders properly and humanity stands in need of His direction in formulating the rule of its action.

Aquinas emphasizes that reason, especially fallen reason, cannot sufficiently order action to God on its own. He states: "In order, therefore, that man may know without any doubt what he ought to do and what he ought to avoid, it was necessary for man to be directed in his proper acts by a law given by God, for it is certain that such a law cannot err."<sup>650</sup> God must actively lead one to Himself. Reason does not possess the strength or proportion to arrive at the order needed to direct one's life to God. This does not deny that the natural principles instilled into humanity give one the capacity to know and to love God in an indirect way.<sup>651</sup> However, this

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<sup>648</sup> ST I-II. 91.1, *corpus*.

<sup>649</sup> ST I-II. 91.1, *ad* 3.

<sup>650</sup> ST I-II. 91.4, *corpus*.

<sup>651</sup> Michael Sherwin points out the need to see the natural principles of reason as the foundation of moral thought. He states: "To understand how one avoids an infinite regress in the description of practical reasoning, where every cognitive act presupposes a voluntary act and vice versa, St. Thomas appeals to the level of nature and the action of the Author of nature. The grounds of free choice are the natural principles of cognition and appetite that underlie the intellect and will, placed there by God who creates and sustains each person in existence." 53. The first principles of practical reason come synderesis, which provides the fundamental axiom, "do good, avoid evil," upon which the natural law and dictates of conscience are based. For an excellent summation of Aquinas' teaching on synderesis, particularly in relation to conscience and prudence, see McNerny's *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* (revised edition). (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 103-113. McNerny provides a crucial correction to Josef Pieper, who equates conscience and prudence in his *Four Cardinal*

order is severely limited due to human weakness.<sup>652</sup> God's assistance becomes all the more necessary since God has called humanity to a supernatural union with Himself. Thus, God's governance of the world takes on a special significance for those rational beings capable of understanding His order and thus of entering into a deeper union with Him as end. Aquinas describes this under Providence, the execution of God's eternal law for His creation:

Now it belongs to providence to direct things toward their end, as was also said (Q 22, AA. 1, 2). The end towards which created things are directed by God is twofold; one which exceeds all proportion and faculty of created nature; and this end is life eternal, that consists in seeing God which is above the nature of every creature, as was shown above (Q. 12, 4). The other end, however, is proportionate to created nature, to which end created being can attain according to the power of its own nature. Now if a thing cannot attain to something by the power of its nature, it must be directed by another; thus an arrow is directed by the archer towards a mark. Hence, properly speaking, a rational creature, capable of eternal life, is led towards it, directed, as it were, by God.<sup>653</sup>

God does not abandon His creatures, but aids them in their advancement toward Him as their end. Thus, God actively governs His creation, which Aquinas explicates as follows: "It is not fitting that the supreme goodness of God should produce things without giving them their perfection. Now a thing's ultimate perfection consists in the attainment of its end. Therefore it belongs to the Divine goodness, as it brought things into existence, so to lead them to their end."<sup>654</sup> The will yearns for union with God as the fruition of its desire for happiness. God both implanted this natural order and in His abundant graciousness fulfills it in a manner surpassing it. He leads those who respond to His governance by His law, which was bestowed in Creation, distorted by sin, strengthened by the written Law, and perfected by spiritual union.

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*Virtues.* Though McInerney brings greater precision on this point, this does not diminish the otherwise authoritative status of Pieper's work.

<sup>652</sup> In the first article of the *Summa*, Aquinas puts forward the often repeated maxim that "the truth about God such as reason could discover, would only be known to a few, and that after a long time, and with the admixture of many errors." ST I. 1.1, *corpus*.

<sup>653</sup> ST I. 23.1, *corpus*.

<sup>654</sup> ST I. 103.1, *corpus*.

Law serves as the means by which reason can lead the will towards its end of happiness in God.<sup>655</sup> God's law manifests His wisdom as it expresses His own knowledge and love of creatures through which they were created and are continually sustained. It is this divine order of God's law that leads the human being toward true worship. Law does this by manifesting God clearly as the originator and goal<sup>656</sup> of human life and furthermore by enabling humanity to move toward this goal. In order to attain to God as one's end it necessary to "be taught by God,"<sup>657</sup> and also to "become like Him in goodness."<sup>658</sup> God must intervene in human life in order to direct properly both the intellect and the will to Him.

As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, this movement toward God intrinsically involves worship since this is the most direct way of relating to God. Therefore, God's law directs toward the worship of Him, justly inclining the will toward Him in servitude, worship, and also in love. The worship of God climaxes in a direct relation of the will toward God in love, which impels toward greater union, most especially when this love flows from the grace of God, which leads to supernatural union. The law of God is necessary to lead toward true worship through justice and love.

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<sup>655</sup> There has been much discussion of the way in which Aristotle's teaching on happiness has influenced Aquinas, especially given the very different nature of happiness in the two. It is generally posited that Aristotle held that happiness could only be realized in this life. McNerny points to Aristotle's exposition of happiness in I. x (1101a 14-20), which "Thomas takes... to be Aristotle's admission that the ideal of happiness can be imperfectly realized by us men in this life. And this opens the way for him to subsume what Aristotle had to say of the good life into a richer vision of the ultimate good that overcomes the vagaries and vicissitudes and contingencies of this life." "Thomistic Natural Law and Aristotelian Philosophy." in *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural Law Tradition: Contemporary Perspectives*. ed. John Goyette, Mark S. Latkovic, and Richard S. Myers. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 33. Servais Pinckaers describes that "in the five questions which make up the treatise on beatitude, the role of philosophy, represented primarily by Aristotle and Boethius, appears so substantial that certain interpreters have regarded these questions as purely philosophical. They have not seen, first of all, that the study of the ultimate end and of the different goods offered to humans form a threefold way—comparable to the five ways of leading to the existence of God—bringing us to the Christian response: the call to the vision of God beyond this life, for 'God alone' can fully satisfy the human longing for beatitude. In dealing with this high point of his reasoning, Thomas no longer relies on the philosophers, but on the theologian, on Augustine." "The Place of Philosophy in Moral Theology." in *The Pinckaers Reader*. 65. cf. Elders, "St. Thomas and the Nicomachean Ethics," particularly 15-22.

<sup>656</sup> The origin and goal are related as "the end of a thing corresponds to its beginning." ST I. 103.2.

<sup>657</sup> ST II-II. 2.3, *corpus*.

<sup>658</sup> ST I-II. 2.4, *ad* 1.

The *Summa Contra Gentiles* contains a striking passage linking God's law with the acts by which one both clings [*ligare*] to God and is subjected to Him. While Aquinas does not specify worship, both of these attributes pertain to religion [*religare*]:

It is evident that every lawmaker intends to direct men by means of laws toward his own end, principally. Thus, the leader of an army intends victory and the ruler of a state intends peace. But the end which God intends is God Himself. Therefore, the divine law principally looks to the ordering of man toward God.... Now, the end for the human creature is to cling to God, for his felicity consists in this, as we have shown above. So, the divine law primarily directs man to this end: that he may cling to God. Besides, the intention of every legislator is to make those to whom he gives the law good; as a consequence, the precepts of law should be concerned with acts of virtue. So, those acts which are best are chiefly intended by divine law. But of all human acts, those whereby man clings to God are best, in the sense that they are nearer to the end. Therefore, the divine law primarily orders men in regard to those acts. Moreover, that from which the law derives its efficacy should be the most important thing in the law. But the divinely given law derives its efficacy among men from the fact that man is subject to God, for no one is bound by the law of a ruler if he is not subject to him. Therefore, this should be of primary importance in divine law: that the human mind must cling to God. Hence it is said in Deuteronomy (10:3.2): "And now, Israel, what does the Lord Your God require of You: but that You fear the Lord Your God, and walk in His ways, and love Him, and serve the Lord Your God, with all your heart and with all your soul?"<sup>659</sup>

Religion pertains to the divine law since it falls under the acts by which one clings to God.<sup>660</sup>

The foundational role of worship in the law becomes clear as Aquinas comments on the Decalogue at the end of the treatise on justice. In discussing the order of the commands, he states that "the first thing necessary was, as it were, to lay the foundation of religion, whereby

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<sup>659</sup> SCG III. cxv. Alan Donagan provides a summary of Aquinas' moral teaching in SCG, which complements this passage. He states: "The structure of morality as St. Thomas presents in *Summa contra Gentiles* accordingly seems to be this. God, the first cause and first agent, is the ultimate pre-existing end of the whole of things, before all produced ends (*fines constituti*). Rational creatures also, by the providence of God, act for their own sakes. But what their own sakes require is that they obtain the ultimate end of the whole of things by loving and understanding it. A necessary condition for doing that is that their wills be good: that is, that they will according to law. Law is reason and rule. And reason and rule require, first of all, that they love God, and secondly, that they love their neighbors – all other rational beings." *Human Ends and Human Actions: An Exploration of St. Thomas's Treatment*. (Milwaukee, Marquette University Press, 1985), 14-15.

<sup>660</sup> Oscar Brown draws out this point as follows: "The religious man begins, at least, to escape the attitude of ethical autonomy in favor of some sense of allegiance to the cosmic justice of the universal order and its author. Like *lex* and *obligatio*, *religio* inevitably carries a connotation of binding and necessitation – just as *sanctitas* carries a correlative connotation of 'firmness' or reinforcement. So, in more ways than one, religion and its panoply of subordinate *habitus* are the moral virtues peculiarly apt to indicate the appetitive interiorization of higher law, the individual appropriation of the hierarchic bond of the *ordo sacer*." 85-86.

man is duly directed to God, Who is the last end of man's will."<sup>661</sup> God's law intends that its adherents become correctly ordered to Him so that one's actions may fulfill what is due to Him and also that one may arrive at happiness.<sup>662</sup> The supernatural happiness to which one is directed by God's law requires an even more direct order than simply that of the will's order to God as end. It requires a personal relation based on knowledge and love. To this God's law also induces humanity, which Aquinas makes clear, once again in the SCG:

Again, the divine law orders man for this purpose, that he may be entirely subject to God.... Consequently, he who believes something false does not believe in God.... However, the way in which a thing is known determines the way in which it is loved and desired. Therefore, he who is in error about God can neither love God nor desire Him as an end. So, since the divine law intends this result, that man love and desire God, man must be bound by divine law to hold a right faith concerning God.<sup>663</sup>

The law provides humanity with the knowledge and love necessary for worship. The revelation of His Law strengthens the natural order toward God, leading to the moral virtue of religion, and leads also to a supernatural union, brought about by grace and the theological virtues.

The law brings humanity to this supernatural union through a pedagogy, which begins in creation and climaxes in redemption. The order of creation does not fall by the wayside in this progression, but rather comes to its full life and fulfillment in its elevation to the supernatural. The story of God's redemption and its relation to worship can be seen in the progressive stages of the revelation of God's law. All law presupposes the eternal law of God's wisdom, which manifests itself in various degrees. In his *Explanation of the Ten Commandments (Collationes de decem praeceptis)*, Aquinas enumerates the different types of law: "As has been said, there is a fourfold law: the first, the law of nature which God implanted at creation; the second the law of concupiscence; the third the law of Scripture, and the fourth, the law of charity and grace,

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<sup>661</sup> ST II-II. 122.2, *corpus*.

<sup>662</sup> Matthew Levering makes clear that "for Aquinas, divine law is a pedagogy whose purpose is to form a holy community that embodies true worship." *Christ's Fulfillment*. 114.

<sup>663</sup> III. xxviii.

which is the law of Christ.”<sup>664</sup> This list roughly corresponds to the three types of worship, which Aquinas described while commenting on John’s Gospel. All worship builds from the foundation of the natural law, which provides the basis for the just order of the will described in the previous chapter. The law of sin distorts nature and forms modes of worship based on vice, corresponding to the false worship of idolatry. The revealed Law of Moses seeks to repair the damage of sin and to prepare for Christ, corresponding to the worship of the Jews. The final type of law, the law of grace, corresponds to worship in spirit and truth. God’s law unfolds itself within history, giving a response to the historical reality of sin as it leads toward salvation.<sup>665</sup>

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<sup>664</sup> trans. Joseph Kenney, O.P. Prologue. Kenney attaches his translation of the prologue to an earlier incomplete translation by Joseph B. Collins. (New York: 1939). As a series of collations, this work would have consisted of sermon-like addresses after Vespers given to the university community. For a similar enumeration of the types of law, cf. Aquinas’ *Commentary on Romans*, ca. 8, lec. 1, at no. 604. J. Mark Armitage highlights the role of the Augustinian tradition in the understanding of history in terms of law: “Augustine and his followers were accustomed to classifying human history according to the various ‘legal states.’ Most especially, Quodvultdeus (d. c. 454), in his *Liber promissionum et praedictorum Dei*, writes in terms of history *ante legem*, *sub lege*, and *post legem* (or *sub gratia*)—a scheme that also envisages periods corresponding with *dimidium temporis* and *gloria sanctorum*—and a reading of the *Summa* suggests that Aquinas viewed history within a similar framework.” “Aquinas on the Divisions of the Ages: Salvation History in the *Summa*.” *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2008): 253. Rémi Brague also points to the emergence of the distinction in the Fathers between various forms of law: “Gradually a theory began to take shape that aimed at the articulation of the various laws. By the Fathers count, there were three: natural law, the law of Moses, and the law of Christ. This three-part division occurs among such writers of the early fifth century as Pseudo-Cyril and Theodoret of Cyrrhus.” 212. While Aquinas will refer to both the law of Moses and Christ as divine law, Brague describes that earlier medieval jurists “did not maintain that the law derives its divinity from its origin as revelation, but rather held that it derives it from its natural character. Divine law and natural law tended to be considered one and same. ‘The divine law,’ the jurist Étienne de Tournay (Stephanus Tornacencis) writes in the twelfth century, ‘is also called natural, because the supreme nature (*summa natura*), that is, God, has educated us by the law and by the prophets, and has given us the Gospel.” 217. This can be seen in the most famous of the medieval canon lawyers, Gratian, who began his *Decretals* with this distinction: “The Human race is rule by two things, namely, natural law and usages. Natural law is what is contained in the Law and the Gospel. By it, each person is commanded to do to others what he wants done to himself and prohibited from inflicting on others what he does not want done to himself. So Christ said in the Gospel: ‘Whatever you want men to do to you, do so to them. This is indeed the Law and the Prophets.’” One of the glosses on this passage defines usages as “customary law or written or unwritten human law.” *The Treatise on Laws (Decretum DD. 1-20)*. trans. Augustine Thompson, O.P. with *The Ordinary Gloss*. trans. James Gordley. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1993), 3. While Thomas distinguishes the natural and divine law, he does state that the Law and the Gospel make the natural law clear, though he also argues that they elevate it. On this point in Gratian, see Crowe, *The Changing Profile*. 75-86. In relation the enumeration of different kinds of law, Fulvio Di Blasi argues for an analogical understanding of law since it is predicated both of God and humanity. “Law as ‘Act of Reason’ and ‘Command.’” *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, Vol. 4, No. 3 (2006): 515–528.

<sup>665</sup> Dauphinais and Levering provide an important insight on this point: “If the disease is historical, then the cure is played out in history as well.” 66.



Aquinas's treatise on law in the *Prima Secundae* includes all of these types of law, though it grounds them in the eternal law and adds human law to this list. This treatise, both in content and structure, shows great debt to *Summa Fratris Alexandri*.<sup>666</sup> Like the author of this summa, Thomas devotes much energy to the relation of law and worship, most particularly in his detailed description of the ceremonies of the Jewish Law. These ceremonies find their foundation in the natural law and their fulfillment in the New Law, which give coherence to the progression of worship. The way in which these different laws approach the need for worship differentiates the religious state they inculcate. Aquinas describes this through a general principle: "The state of mankind may change according as man stands in relation to one and the same law more or less perfectly."<sup>667</sup> The one law that remains the same is the eternal law, which reaches every individual through the natural law, is corrupted in its reception by sin, is clarified by the written law, and is perfectly interiorized by the law of the Spirit. The reception of these laws lead to various interior states, which express themselves in various ways of worship. Rémi Brague points out that "in the Middle Ages... the word 'law' was used to designate what we prefer to call 'religions.'"<sup>668</sup> This can be seen in Thomas as follows: "Now interior worship consists in the soul being united to God by the intellect and affections. Wherefore according to

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<sup>666</sup> Though John Tonneau points out role of the SFA in providing a general outline he also notes that Aquinas, with the help of Albert, fill in some of its gaps. He states: "The whole tract on law was therefore clearly drawn up before Saint Thomas. The *Summa* of Alexander, however, does not mention human law and omits giving a universal definition of law. On this last point Saint Albert will be the initiator." 24.

<sup>667</sup> ST I-II. 106.4, *corpus*.

<sup>668</sup> He ties this point specifically to Aquinas: "Latin Christianity used the word *lex* in this sense. For example, Thomas Aquinas speaks of the 'law' of the Moors or the Saracens, by which he means Islam. The usage passed into the vernacular, especially to compare beliefs of different communities." This was seen earlier in the dialogue presented by Abelard. He continues: "That some Christians should call Jewish or Muslim religion a 'law' is hardly surprising, given the importance of juridical regulations that these two traditions bring to bear, each in its own way. But isn't it a step backward, with respect to St. Paul, for Christians to speak of their own religion—and the New Testament that is its basic document—as a 'law'?" He describes the way law was seen to be appropriate as follows: "What since the start of modern times has been called 'religion' was perceived in the Middle Ages as an apparatus established by God within human history to serve as the framework for his encounter with humankind, which was to permit humans to accomplish what the divine design expected of them.... [A]s in Christianity, it can consist in an economy of salvation taking place through time to form a whole that comprises history." 107-08.

the various ways in which the intellect and affections of the man who worships God are rightly united to God, his external actions are applied in various ways to the worship of God.”<sup>669</sup> Nature inchoately relates to God as Creator and end, while sin manipulates one’s view of God by lowering the divine to material representations, which can be selfishly manipulated; the written Law binds one to God in obedience, while the interior law seeks supernatural union. These varying degrees of union found in the different forms of law produce different modes of worship, which will be described in turn.

The foundation of worship depends on the natural order of reason and will toward God instilled through Creation. This order gives the soul the capacity to act in a dutiful manner toward God, albeit in a limited and natural fashion. In discussing happiness, Aquinas stresses the role of nature, which even though it falls short of God, still provides the order toward Him. He states: “Man is ordained to happiness through principles that are in him; since he is ordained thereto naturally.”<sup>670</sup> The natural order that one has toward happiness comes from a rational participation in God’s eternal law. Aquinas expounds on this principle: “The light of natural reason, whereby we discern what is good and what is evil, which is the function of the natural law, is nothing else than an imprint of the Divine light. It is therefore evident that the natural law is nothing else than the rational creature’s participation in the eternal law.”<sup>671</sup> Aquinas ascribes

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<sup>669</sup> ST I-II. 101.2, *corpus*.

<sup>670</sup> ST I-II. 2.4, *corpus*.

<sup>671</sup> ST I-II. 91.2, *corpus*. Russell Hittinger provides a helpful distinction in understanding the way in which one can understand the relation of the natural law to nature in Aquinas. He turns back to Tertullian, who “used the adverb *naturaliter* (naturally) not to characterize the law but rather to describe how it is known. Nature is not the law but the mode of knowing it.” *The First Grace*. 10. While it is true that the natural law consists primarily in rational participation in the eternal law, Maritain makes the distinction that the natural law contains both an ontological andgnoseological element. He describes the first element in “that the natural law of all beings existing in nature is the proper way in which, by reason of their specific nature and specific ends, they *should* achieve fullness of being in their behavior.” Therefore, the foundation of the law is in man’s very nature. Maritain further states that “the law and the knowledge of the law are two different things. Yet the law has force of law only when it is promulgated. It is only insofar as it is known and expressed in assertions of practical reason that natural law has force of law.” The two elements unite in that the inclinations by which we realize the natural law arise from our being. “Natural Law in Aquinas.” in *Natural Law and Theology*. ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, S.J. (New York:

to rational creatures a share in God's providence through the free direction of action. Even though rational creatures act with free deliberation, the natural law serves as the foundation of all action. Aquinas stresses this point as he states that...

every act of reason and will in us is based on that which is according to nature, as stated above (Q. 10, A. 1): for every act of reasoning is based on principles that are known naturally, and every act of appetite in respect of the means is derived from the natural appetite in respect of the last end. Accordingly the first direction of our acts to their end must needs be in virtue of the natural law.<sup>672</sup>

The principles of nature do not suffice to sufficiently guide the agent through every detail of action, but rather provide the ground work, the "first direction," in the basic principles of knowledge and action.

Even with its crucial role, it is important to recognize the limits of the natural law. The natural law, as any law must be, consists in a limited participation of the eternal law. In particular, its participation concerns only general principles, not particular directives. This is clear since "on the part of the practical reason, man has a natural participation of the eternal law, according to certain general principles, but not as regards the particular determinations of individual cases, which are, however contained in the eternal law."<sup>673</sup> The eternal law contains the perfect ordering of all things, even in the particular, though God's providence allows for contingency in regards to rational creatures. Therefore, individuals must decide on each particular and contingent choice, making use of and determining the general principles of the natural law. Aquinas argues that "it is from the precepts of the natural law, as from general and

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Paulist Press, 1991), 116; 119. This essay originally appeared as a chapter of *Man and the State*. Returning to Hittinger, he clarifies that both of these elements must be placed within their proper subordination to the eternal law. He affirms that the "natural law is never (and I must emphasize *never*) defined in terms of what is first in the (human) mind or first in nature." The natural law has its origin in God's eternal law and, therefore, "Thomas defines the law from the standpoint of its causal origin (that is, what makes it a law), not in terms of a secondary order of causality through which it is discovered (the human intellect)." 9. Human nature reflects the ordering of God and reason perceives this order as it participates in the eternal law. Reason is not the source of the natural law, but the mode by which it is realized.

<sup>672</sup> ST I-II. 91.2, *ad* 2.

<sup>673</sup> ST I-II. 91.3, *ad* 1.

indemonstrable principles, that the human reason needs to proceed to the more particular determination of certain matters.”<sup>674</sup> In this particular case Thomas refers to human law, but this is also the case concerning the role of prudence in individual action. This does not leave particular choices completely open ended, for it concerns the proper exercise of the powers of the soul. The natural law prescribes the exercise of reason as the rule of human action. Aquinas states that “since the rational soul is the proper form of man, there is in every man a natural inclination to act according to reason: and this is to act according to virtue. Consequently, considered thus, all acts of virtue are prescribed by the natural law: since each one’s reason naturally dictates to him to act virtuously.”<sup>675</sup> The key aspect here is that God has instilled natural principles into all of His creation to incline it to act for its good. In the case of human beings this above all includes the attainment of the truth to which reason inclines and the good which the will desires. Virtue, as the excellence of the soul’s powers, enables the powers to achieve their good.

The virtue of religion serves as one particular example of the way in which nature inclines the will to its perfection. Aquinas states that “the first precept of law” is “that good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided. All other precepts of the natural law are based upon this.”<sup>676</sup> Both this general precept and the ones that follow (preservation of life, procreation, social good, truth about God) come almost word for word from Cicero’s *De Officiis* (I. iv). Later, Aquinas does advance further by tying the natural law into revealed truth, by arguing that the love of God and neighbor “are the first general principles of the natural law, and

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<sup>674</sup> ST I-II. 91.3, *corpus*. Ralph McInerny describes these precepts as follows: “Natural law precepts are absolute guides for human conduct that do not admit of exceptions. Other moral precepts express ways of achieving the end or good envisaged by natural law precepts, and these principles can admit of exceptions.” *Ethica Thomistica*. 58.

<sup>675</sup> ST I-II. 94.3, *corpus*.

<sup>676</sup> ST I-II. 94.2, *corpus*.

are self-evident to human reason, either through nature or through faith.”<sup>677</sup> Thus, the love of God, which contains acting for His honor, constitutes a general principle of the natural law, on which virtue builds.

The virtue of religion builds upon the natural foundations found within the natural law.<sup>678</sup> Aquinas argues that “all virtues, intellectual and moral, that are acquired by our actions, arise from certain natural principles pre-existing in us.”<sup>679</sup> The general principles at work in religion concern the order toward God as end, which contains the need to love and honor Him. However, Aquinas warns that “the natural inclination to a good of virtue is a kind of beginning of virtue, but is not perfect virtue. For the stronger this inclination is, the more perilous may it prove to be, unless it be accompanied by right reason, which rectifies the choice of fitting means towards the due end.”<sup>680</sup> It will be important to remember that in speaking of worship through the natural law, what is being discussed concerns principles that lead one to worship, not the actual exercise. The natural law inclines all to worship, but religious practices pertain to other laws, which specify its general principles. As Aquinas notes, these principles can prove treacherous when not adequately formed by right reason, as will be seen in the discussion of sin.

In laying the foundation for the natural principles of worship, Aquinas speaks of a dictate of reason. In general he speaks of the issue of debt: “It is a primary dictate of reason that man is a debtor in the point of rendering service or kindness to those from whom he has received

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<sup>677</sup> ST I-II. 100.3, *ad* 1.

<sup>678</sup> Obiwulu asserts that “one of the differences between the *Summa Halensis* (SFA), *De bono* (of Albert) and *Summa Theologiae* is that for the *Summa Halensis* there is a vital connection between religion and the natural law, in the *De bono* and the *Summa Theologiae*, there is an implicit weak connection between religion and natural law, although an explicit connection is present.” 290. While it is true that the SFA treats religion under the natural law and Thomas under the virtue of justice, there may not be a great difference on that score. It is clear the natural law provides a fundamental precept to worship. The virtue of justice develops this precept as a virtue of the will. It does not do this apart from the natural law, but as its fulfillment. The real difference between the two accounts is that the SFA does not engage in a sustained treatment of virtue and treats *latría* under the Decalogue as a reality separate from religion.

<sup>679</sup> ST I-II. 63.3, *corpus*.

<sup>680</sup> ST I-II. 58.4, *ad* 3.

kindness, if he has not yet repaid the debt. Now there are to whose favors no man can sufficiently repay, viz., God and man's father."<sup>681</sup> He specifies this to specifically include worship: "It belongs to the dictate of natural reason that man should do something through reverence for God."<sup>682</sup> Clifford Kossel describes this dictate of religion as "a natural law requirement, i.e., it is a correctly reasonable attitude recognized by anyone who reflects on the matter."<sup>683</sup> The most definitive exposition of this dictate comes while Aquinas speaks of sacrifice:

At all times and among all nations there has always been that offering of sacrifices. Now that which is observed by all is seemingly natural. Therefore the offering of sacrifices is of the natural law. *I answer that*, Natural reason tells man that he is subject to a higher being, on account of the defects which he perceives in himself, and in which he needs help and direction from someone above him: and whatever this super being may be, it is known to all under the name of God.<sup>684</sup>

This needs clarification since it may seem odd that one would have a natural dictate to worship God when God may not be known by all. Lawrence Dewan deals with this text as part of an exposition of how one can be said to naturally love God more than self. He argues:

My understanding is, then, that Thomas presents the existence of God as naturally known to all, even though naturally reasoned to. That someone professes ignorance of the existence of God stems from moral disorder.... I would say that this natural knowledge would fill out the picture of the commandment of love as known by virtue of itself to all. Given that one has knowledge of God as the author of being, one has knowledge of him as lovable by us, indeed as more lovable than ourselves.<sup>685</sup>

This same logic would apply to the dictate to worship, as Dewan indicates by including the text on sacrifice in his discussion. Dewan's argument appears true to Thomas' account. Aquinas points to elements in the human constitution, namely weakness and need, which one sees not

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<sup>681</sup> ST I-II. 100.7, *ad* 1.

<sup>682</sup> ST II-II. 81.2, *ad* 3.

<sup>683</sup> "Piety." 38.

<sup>684</sup> ST II-II. 85.1, *sed contra*, *corpus*.

<sup>685</sup> Lawrence Dewan, OP. "On Kevin Flannery's Acts Amid Precepts: The Aristotelian Logical Structure of Thomas Aquinas's Moral Theory." *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2007): 437-38.

only in oneself, but also in the order of the universe. Creation points to its Maker in that as changeable matter, it stands in need not only of an originator, but also of a governor to hold it in being and to direct it to its end. Thus, this intuition from one's reflection on one's own weakness compliments Aquinas' arguments for the existence of God, both of which, when realized, would naturally move one toward worship. The precept to repay debts comes directly from the natural law and, therefore, so does the honor due to the One responsible for human creation, governance, and happiness.

The foundation of worship stems from this natural dictate, yet to this must be added some determination concerning the mode of worship. The necessity of worship concerns the moral life and when acted upon rightly it habituates the will, forming the virtue of religion. Thus Thomas posits that "to worship God, since it is an act of virtue, belongs to a moral precept [of the Law]," which reflects the natural law.<sup>686</sup> However, "the determination of this precept" exists as something distinct from it, "namely that He (God) is to be worshipped by such and such sacrifices, and such and such offerings."<sup>687</sup> Nature may command this worship, but the individual must enact the means. An additional must be added to provide a determination, since the law of nature provides nothing more than the natural disposition or principle. Aquinas describes this as follows: "That he (man) should do this or that determinate thing does not belong to the dictate of natural reason, but is established by Divine or human law."<sup>688</sup> The law of nature does not direct toward the particular shape of worship, but stands beholden to additional laws to fill it out.

Aquinas does offer a few disparate descriptions of worship as influenced by the law of nature. He specifically inquires as to whether the ceremonies of the Law of Moses predated its

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<sup>686</sup> ST I-II. 99.3, *ad* 2.

<sup>687</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>688</sup> ST II-II. 81.2, *ad* 3.

existence and answers in the negative. However, he notes both that “there were some ceremonies fixed, not by the authority of any law, but according to the will and devotion of those that worship God,” and also that “since even before the Law some of the leading men were gifted with the spirit of prophecy, it is to be believed that a heavenly instinct, like a private law, prompted them to worship God in a certain definite way, which would be both in keeping with the interior worship and a suitable token of Christ’s mysteries.”<sup>689</sup> There was not a coherent divine law directing worship, but rather a dependency on either the individual’s (or ruler’s) own will or the direct assistance of God. In describing how this would be expressed, Aquinas affirms that sacrifice existed as a universal practice (II-II 85, as quoted above), though this does quite fall under the category of a determination of the general law, but rather a general part of it.

The natural law not only prompts one to worship, but also that this worship should at least have a sign that expresses this worship. Aquinas pursues this thought:

Hence it is a dictate of natural that man should use certain sensibles, by offering them to God in sign of the subjection and honor due to Him, like those who make certain offerings to their lord in recognition of his authority. Now this is what we mean by sacrifice, and consequently the offering of sacrifice is of the natural law.<sup>690</sup>

This still pertains to a general principle since it does not specify exactly what should be offered and how, only that by sacrifice one should manifest the gratitude and deference that pertain to the virtue of religion. Aquinas specifically specifies how sacrifice fits in with the natural moral ordering that pertains to religion. Though in this passage he spoke of the sacrifice of the Old Law, the reasoning given for this sacrifice pertains likewise to the act in general:

Sacrifice represented the directing of the mind to God, to which the offerer of the sacrifice was stimulated. Now in order to direct his mind to God aright, man must recognize that whatever he has is from God as from its first principle, and direct it to God as its last end. This was denoted in the offerings and sacrifices, by the fact that man offered some of his own belongings in honor of God, as though in recognition of his

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<sup>689</sup> ST I-II. 103.2, *corpus*.

<sup>690</sup> ST II-II. 85.1, *corpus*.



having received them from God.... Wherefore in offering up sacrifices man made protestation that God is the first principle of the creation of all things, and their last end, to which all things must be directed.—And since, for the human mind to be directed to God aright, it must recognize no first author of things other than God, nor place its end in any other.<sup>691</sup>

Sacrifice manifests the natural moral ordering of the will toward God as its origin and end, a necessary recognition for the will's rectitude in relation to God. Thus, sacrifice was practiced by the Patriarchs<sup>692</sup> before the Law and, due to its place within the natural law, found its way even into the distorted practices of idolatry.

Idolatry occurs within the law of sin, which is called law only analogously since it is not based upon the eternal law of God. Rather, Aquinas describes it as having the nature of law "in so far as it is a penalty following from the Divine law depriving man of his proper dignity."<sup>693</sup>

The proper dignity of humankind concerns the proper exercise of the mind in accord with reason so as to govern the passions and to act so as to reach the end of happiness, which is knowing and loving God. Therefore, sin corrupts the law of the nature, which is meant to serve as the foundation of the moral life.<sup>694</sup> Aquinas describes the corruption of this law as follows:

And so the law of man, which by Divine ordinance is allotted to him, according to his proper condition, is that he should act in accordance with reason: and this law was so

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<sup>691</sup> ST I-II. 102.3, *corpus*.

<sup>692</sup> cf. I-II. 103.1.

<sup>693</sup> ST I-II. 91.6, *corpus*. The aptness of referring to sin as a law comes from sins prevalence and dominance after the Fall. Frederick Crosson points out that in examining the "natural state of man" Aquinas recognizes "not the virtue of *religio* but rather 'idolatry,' worship of something other than God." "The Analogy of Religion." 6.

<sup>694</sup> Oscar Brown describes that "from whatever angle one approaches Aquinas' legal doctrine, it cannot be adequately understood apart from some appreciation of the effects of original sin. The fundamental such effect was, indeed, the very destruction of original justice. Once the human will and intellect were not longer submitted to God, the lower appetites – by a certain natural sanction and self-chastisement – rebelled *en masse* against the rule of reason. The lasting effects of that original disobedience are experience still, and they demand an accounting in any realistic teaching on justice and law – even, and especially, in the very understanding of the role of reason itself." 99. Eugene Rogers looks especially at Aquinas' *Commentary on Romans* to see how he understood the effect of sin on the natural law. In this commentary, Rogers argues that "Aquinas portrayed natural as an injured and therefore ineffective party in a story of decline and fall." "The Narrative of Natural Law in Aquinas's Commentary on Romans 1." *Theological Studies* 59 no 2 (Jun 1998): 257. Cf. 260-61, 269. He also argues that "according to the Romans Commentary, natural law moves human beings not one step closer to right action—unless it is restored by grace. Only the New Law, the Holy Spirit indwelling in the heart, rectifies nature." 261. Cf. Denis J. Billy, C.Ss.R. "Grace and Natural Law in the *Super Epistolam ad Romanos Lectura: A Study of Thomas' Commentary on Romans* 2: 14-16." *Studia Moralia* 26 (1988): 15-37.

effective in the primitive state, that nothing either beside or against reason could take man unawares. But when man turned his back on God, he fell under the influence of sensual impulses: in fact this happens to each one individually, the more he deviates from the path of reason.... So then this very inclination of sensuality which is called the 'fomes,' in other animals has simply the nature of a law (yet only in so far as a law may be said to be in such things), by reason of direct inclination.<sup>695</sup>

This law pulls the mind down toward the sensible and away from its end in God. It distorts the order which the natural law bestows so that either one becomes deaf to its commands or its principles become distorted into contrary actions. Aquinas specifically states that the "natural law began to be obscured on account of the exuberance of sin."<sup>696</sup> The Fall corrupted the rectitude of the natural law, bringing about ignorance, which blinds to its truth, and selfish desires, which turn away from one's true happiness in God. Aquinas argues that "human nature is more corrupt by sin in regard to the desire for good, than in regard to the knowledge of the truth."<sup>697</sup> The pull of concupiscence hinders the will from advancing towards its end by pulling its desire away from the true good. The result of this disorder wreaks havoc on the moral life so that "in the state of corrupt nature, man falls short of what he could do by his nature, so that he is unable to fulfill it by his own natural powers."<sup>698</sup> Aquinas describes this failure more specifically when examining the four wounds inflicted upon human nature as a result of original sin. He states:

In so far as the reason is deprived of its order to the true, there is the wound of ignorance; in so far as the will is deprived of its order to the good, there is the wound of malice; in so far as the irascible is deprived of its order to the arduous, there is the wound of weakness; in so far as the concupiscible is deprived of its order to the delectable, moderated by reason, there is the wound of concupiscence.<sup>699</sup>

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<sup>695</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>696</sup> ST I-II. 98.6, *corpus*. cf. *On the Ten Commandments*, Preface. The greater root of the distortion of the natural law comes from the fact that in the wicked the knowledge of the eternal law and the inclinations that follow therefrom are "to a certain extent destroyed." ST I-II. 93.6, *corpus*.

<sup>697</sup> ST I-II. 109.2, *ad 2*.

<sup>698</sup> ST I-II. 109.2, *corpus*.

<sup>699</sup> ST I-II. 85.3, *corpus*.

Each power receives the disorder brought by sin so that it is greatly hindered in the accomplishment of virtue, which perfects it in the advancement toward God, the end of human happiness.

In such a state it is clear that the “inclination to virtue” is diminished in so far as the powers no longer advance toward their proper good.<sup>700</sup> The will tends toward lesser goods, shirking the divine will, which is communicated through the natural law and reason. Aquinas makes clear that “the will lacking the direction of the rule of reason and of the Divine law, and intent on some mutable good, causes the act of sin directly.”<sup>701</sup> For the possession of moral virtue the end needs to be clearly fixed in the will so that it guides every action. While the law of sin reigns this is impossible as the sinner *de facto* turns “his back on God” by denying the proper order of all things and actions to Him as end. As Aquinas makes certain, one must choose between God and the goods of the world as one’s end: “Wherefore he that cleaves wholly to the things of this world, so as to make them his end, and to look upon them as the reason and rule of all he does, falls away altogether from spiritual goods.”<sup>702</sup> If sin hinders the acquisition of virtue in general, as it denies God’s proper role as end, how much more does it hinder the virtue which intends to directly relate to God?

While the natural law orders one to relate to God justly by rendering service and worship to Him as the Creator and end of human life, the law of sin leads to the vices of superstition and irreligion directly opposed to the virtue of religion. Focusing on material things more than the spiritual leads to practices, which either worship improperly or completely disregard the necessity of worship. This may happen due to ignorance of God or His law or the willful turning away from Him. Aquinas lists four reasons for the cause of idolatry in particular. One of the

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<sup>700</sup> ST I-II. 85.1, *corpus*.

<sup>701</sup> ST I-II. 75.1, *corpus*.

<sup>702</sup> ST I-II. 108.4, *corpus*.

four concerns “ignorance of the true God, inasmuch as through failing to consider His excellence men gave divine worship to certain creatures.”<sup>703</sup> This ignorance results directly from sin, even to the point of being deemed a punishment itself.<sup>704</sup>

Sin placed humanity at enmity with God and led to intellectual blindness. In this state of enmity one loses not only moral rectitude in the removal of original justice and the sanctifying grace which accompanied it, but also the loss of friendship with God, which enabled one to know, trust, and love Him personally. Particularly, without the possibility of faith, humanity is left in a state of unbelief, which Aquinas describes in stark terms:

Every sin consists formally in aversion from God.... Hence the more a sin severs man from God, the graver it is. Now man is more than ever separated from God by unbelief, because he has not even true knowledge of God: and by false knowledge of God, man does not approach Him, but is severed from Him. Nor is it possible for one who has false knowledge of God to know Him in any way at all, because the object of His opinion is not God. Therefore it is clear that the sin of unbelief is greater than any sin that occurs in the perversion of morals.<sup>705</sup>

Aquinas had pointed out earlier in his *Commentary on Romans* that no one can truly claim ignorance of God because of the natural law, and yet using Dewan’s explanation of the way Aquinas holds that all know God, those who do not know God after the Fall, have not followed the evidence clearly before them. The false worship of superstition encapsulates this unbelief. Thus, Aquinas states that “just as religion is not faith, but a confession of faith by outward signs, so superstition is a confession of unbelief by external worship.”<sup>706</sup> The natural dictate to worship, which impels the act, falls in vain into vice due the soul’s ignorance of God.

Another reason for false worship, beyond mere intellectual shortfall, comes from the distortion of the will, which must direct the intellect to its proper act. If the will concerns itself

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<sup>703</sup> ST I-II. 94.4, *corpus*.

<sup>704</sup> ST II-II. 10.1.

<sup>705</sup> ST II-II. 10.3, *corpus*.

<sup>706</sup> ST II-II. 94.1, *ad* 1.

with lesser ends, it will not direct both itself and the intellect to order their actions to God. Therefore, Aquinas lists two additional factors for the cause of idolatry stemming from the “inordinate affections.” He describes these affections in giving “men divine honor, through either loving or revering them too much,” or “because man takes a natural pleasure in representations... wherefore as soon as the uncultured man saw human images skillfully fashioned by the diligence of the craftsman, he gave them divine worship.”<sup>707</sup> In either case the will did not properly order the passions, but allowed them to grow too attached to creatures. *Dulia* is lawfully due to those who deserve praise, but the reverence of *latria* is transferred to creatures only by a disordered attachment to creatures. This attachment leads to nothing more than “infidelity,” which Aquinas expounds as “the greatest of all” sins, since it intends “to give God’s honor to a creature, since, so far as he is concerned, he sets up another God in the world, and lessens the divine sovereignty.”<sup>708</sup> When the will turns from its just order to God, it creates another god by placing its end in a lesser good to which it directs its affections and care.

The disorder of the will can also be seen in its direct refusal to engage in worship. In this case Aquinas speaks of irreligion, under which name he considers “the vices that are opposed to religion, and which are manifestly contrary thereto.... Such are the vices which pertain to contempt or irreverence for God and holy things.”<sup>709</sup> While idolatry still manifests the will’s inclination to give honor to what is held in esteem, however gravely erroneous it may be, irreverence directly denies the moral ordering one has toward the divine. It shows contempt toward the very prospect of worship and cuts it off at the very root in the will. Once again, it is sin which lies at the heart of this contempt for God, which Aquinas describes in the following manner: “Now men are hindered in the spiritual worship by sins,” which create impediments to

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<sup>707</sup> ST II-II. 94.4, *corpus*.

<sup>708</sup> ST II-II. 94.3, *corpus*.

<sup>709</sup> ST II-II. 97, preface.

worship and which stifle the “devotion of the mind to God.”<sup>710</sup> Sin hinders the will’s adherence to God and one’s eagerness to worship and submit to Him.

In outlining how both the vice of superstition and irreligion are situated in relation to the virtue of religion, Aquinas turns to the understanding of virtue as attaining the mean. While there cannot be excess in worship *per se*, since God cannot be worshipped enough, Aquinas does demonstrate the way in which religion finds its mean between two extremes:

Religion is... a moral virtue, since it is a part of justice, and observes a mean, not in passions, but in actions directed to God, by establishing a kind of equality in them. And when I say ‘equality,’ I do not mean absolute equality, because it is not possible to pay God as much as we owe Him, but equality in consideration of man’s ability and God’s acceptance.<sup>711</sup>

Aquinas specifies the two extremes related to this moral virtue as follows:

A twofold vice is opposed to a moral virtue; one by way of excess, the other by way of deficiency. Again, the mean of virtue may be exceeded, not only with regard to the circumstance, called ‘how much,’ but also with regard to other circumstances; so that, in certain cases such as magnanimity and magnificence; vice exceeds the mean, not through tending to something greater than the virtue, but possibly to something less, and yet it goes beyond the mean of virtue, through doing something to whom it ought not, or when it ought not, and in like manner as regards other circumstances, as the Philosopher shows (Ethic. iv. 1, 2, 3). Accordingly superstition is a vice contrary to religion by excess, not that it offers more to the divine worship than true religion, but because it offers divine worship either to whom it ought not, or in a manner it ought not.<sup>712</sup>

The excess which distorts the virtue of religion concerns adding to its equality something beyond what it is right to do. The proportion of religion concerns its direction to Whom it is owed, the proper devotion of the mind, and that fitting acts be offered. There can be no lack in any of these instances or the worship, or lack there of, will become vice. Aquinas ties the excess in religion to superstition and the defect to irreligion when dealing with the way the Decalogue addresses worship:

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<sup>710</sup> ST I-II. 102.5, *ad* 4.

<sup>711</sup> ST II-II. 81.5, *ad* 3.

<sup>712</sup> ST II-II. 92.1, *corpus*.

Now a thing is opposed to true religion in two ways. First, by excess, when, to wit, that which belongs to religion is given to others than to whom it is due, and this pertains to superstition. Secondly, by lack, as it were, of reverence, when, to wit, God is contemned, and this pertains to the vice of irreligion. . . . Now superstition hinders religion by preventing man from acknowledging God so as to worship Him: and when a man's mind is engrossed in some undue worship, he cannot at the same time give due worship to God. . . . either the true God or a false god must fall out of man's heart. . . . On the other hand, irreligion hinders religion by preventing man from honoring God after he has acknowledged Him. Now one must first of all acknowledge God with a view to worship, before honoring Him we have acknowledged.<sup>713</sup>

While both the excess and the defect hinder true worship, the former does so by using the same outward expression as true worship. Thomas goes so far as to state that the acts of superstition “agree with religion in giving worship to God,”<sup>714</sup> though it is distinguished from it by “an undue mode.”<sup>715</sup> When actually directed to the true God, this undue mode consists in focusing on “mere externals” without proper “connection to the internal worship of God.”<sup>716</sup> When these acts of worship are addressed to either a false notion of God or to a creature then the undue mode consists explicitly in idolatry. This can also entail other acts of superstition, such as divination and observances, which explicitly turn to demons for aid. The place of irreligion as a defect stands clearly enough in its refusal to engage in the actions necessary to give God His due. These three, improper worship of God, worship of a creature, and refusal to worship match the three requirements for proportion mentioned above: it either does not give honor to the true God (idolatry, divination, observance)<sup>717</sup>, or lacks proper devotion of mind (irreligion), or does so in an improper manner (superstition).

The law of sin distorts the natural order of the will toward God by pushing one either into false worship or to contempt of God. Either way the true God is refused His due of the worship

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<sup>713</sup> ST II-II. 122.3, *corpus*.

<sup>714</sup> ST II-II. 92. preface. cf. II-II. 94.1, ad 2.

<sup>715</sup> ST II-II. 92.2, *corpus*.

<sup>716</sup> ST II-II. 93.2, *corpus*.

<sup>717</sup> ST II-II. 94-96.

and service of the whole person. Harkening back to Augustine's understanding of the struggle between the two cities, Aquinas recognizes in the distortion of religion a diabolical influence, which he refers to as the fourth cause of idolatry. While the distortion of the intellect and will were dispositive causes due to "a defect of nature," this last cause he deems "completive." "The demons," he argues, "offered themselves to be worshiped by men, by giving answers to the idols, and doing things which to men seemed marvelous."<sup>718</sup> Religion seeks to order one's life justly and rightly to God in servitude, while superstition and irreligion pull one into a rebellion against God begun by the demons. Thus, Thomas links the three acts of superstition with either direct worship of demons as gods (idolatry), or with seeking their assistance for knowledge of the future (divination) or for magical powers (observances).

The imitation of the demonic revolt from God does not require acts that directly relate to demons. The acts of irreligion do not manipulate acts of worship in a twisted manner, like superstition, but follow the demons in their refusal to worship and serve God. Rather than having positive acts, irreligion refuses honor to God in a way that mocks the acts of religion. First of all, the temptation of God refuses God the due adoration of the body and instead "consists in omitting to do what one can do in order to escape from danger."<sup>719</sup> Instead of using the body in God's service, this temptation mocks trust in God by presumptuously throwing oneself into danger in order to test God. The second act of irreligion, perjury, insults God by falsely assuming His name.<sup>720</sup> Taking an oath demonstrated God's truth and sovereignty. Perjury, on the other hand, demonstrates that one does not look to God as the one to uphold truth and justice, but, rather, one selfishly manipulates the facts. Likewise, the act of sacrifice sought to set something ordinary aside and to make it holy by offering it to God. To oppose this act of

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<sup>718</sup> ST II-II. 94.4, *corpus*.

<sup>719</sup> ST II-II. 97.1, *corpus*.

<sup>720</sup> ST II-II. 98.



religion, sacrilege “pertains to irreverence for sacred things” in order to do “injury to God.”<sup>721</sup> Instead of honoring God as Creator and end, sacrilege insults God by acting against the ordering of things to Him for the use of worship. Finally, simony abuses the precept of the natural law, by which one is obligated to support those who minister to God through tithes.<sup>722</sup> Instead of using money in a proper manner to support God’s worship, simony seeks to corrupt worship by controlling it for selfish purposes.

The law of sin corrupts, distorts, and mocks the worship of God. The very essence of sin moves the intellect and will away from God so that one either worships incorrectly or refuses to do so altogether. As evidenced in chapter four, the worship of God stands at a crucial juncture of the moral life insofar as it takes up all of one’s faculties and acts and directs them to their proper end in God. Therefore, it was supremely important that in the restoration of God’s law both the error of sin would be corrected and that humanity would be established in the true worship of God. The revelation of God accomplished both and in doing so initiated a restoration and perfection of the law of nature. Aquinas describes this movement in the *Explanation of the Ten Commandments*: “Because the law of nature was destroyed by the law of concupiscence, man needed to be brought back to the works of virtue and drawn away from vice, and for that the law of Scripture was necessary.”<sup>723</sup> He continues to note that the law of Scripture is twofold: the Law of Moses, or the Old Law, and the Law of Christ, known also as the New Law or the Law of the Gospel. Both of these laws are referred to as divine law since they are bestowed directly by God.<sup>724</sup> They are distinguished from the eternal law in that the eternal law is God’s own

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<sup>721</sup> ST II-II. 99.1, *corpus*.

<sup>722</sup> ST II-II. 100.

<sup>723</sup> Preface.

<sup>724</sup> For a philosophical discussion of the nature of divine law see Rémi Brague’s *The Law of God*. While Aquinas uses the term divine law to refer to a particular law given by God, Brague argues that the term originally referred to something more akin to natural law for the Greeks. First let us look at his definition of divine law: “The idea of divine law implies that *human action, in its full breadth, receives its norm from the divine.*” 8. He then distinguishes

knowledge of the ordering of creatures, while the divine law is a particular law which specifies the eternal law for a given people at a particular time.

In the treatise on the Old Law (I-II 98-105), Aquinas specifies the relation of the Law given to Moses to the natural law.<sup>725</sup> He makes clear that it both builds upon its foundation and also heals the distortions wrought upon it by sin. In regards to the first, he states: “The Old Law is distinct from the natural law, not as being altogether different from it, but as something added thereto. For just as grace presupposes nature, so must the Divine law presuppose the natural law.”<sup>726</sup> Grace presupposes nature in the sense that it sets about healing and elevating human nature so that with supernatural assistance one can attain to God by use of the powers of the soul. Likewise, the natural law sought to direct one to do good and avoid evil, ultimately so that one could know the truth of God (cf. the fourth precept of I-II 94.2). The Old Law, through the revelation of God and by the bestowing of precepts, clarified what was truly good to do and what one should avoid and manifested God as the Law giver, deliverer, and ruler of His people. In regards to the second way in which the Old Law relates to the natural law, that of healing, Aquinas speaks thus:

It was fitting that the Divine law should come to man’s assistance not only in those things for which reason is insufficient, but also in those things in which human reason may happen to be impeded. Now human reason could not go astray in the abstract, as to the

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the different understandings of it: “Greek divine law is divine because it expresses the profound structures of a permanent natural order; Jewish Law is divine because it emanates from a [G]od who is master of history.” 18. In the Greek concept, the divine law was always unwritten. Brague contrasts this with Israel: “Concretely, the divinity of the law is represented as resulting from the fact that it was written by YHWH himself. What is new in the Bible is precisely that a divine law can be delivered in writing, and that a law can be both written and divine.” 49. He also contrasts Israel’s Law with the surrounding culture: “The Bible avoids representing the king as legislator. The one lawgiver is God. That idea was unparalleled in the ancient Middle East, where only the king made laws. The Torah has no real parallel in those ancient civilizations. The God of Israel replaces the Oriental king in the role of lawgiver.” *ibid.* Tonneau notes that the term divine law gained precision for Aquinas only later in his career. He states: “Often enough, for example, in the *Contra Gentiles*, the expression divine law simply designates the eternal law. So, it is only in the *Summa Theologiae*, at least in the tract on laws in the I-II, that Saint Thomas employs a more articulated vocabulary in which divine law designates the positive divine law and not the eternal law.” 48.

<sup>725</sup> cf. Pamela M. Hall. *Narrative and Natural Law: An Interpretation of Thomistic Ethics*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 45-64.

<sup>726</sup> ST I-II. 99.2, *ad* 1.

universal principles of the natural law; but through being habituated to sin, it became obscured in the points of things to be done in detail. But with regard to the other moral precepts, which are like conclusions drawn from the universal principles of the natural law, the reason of many men went astray, to the extent of judging to be lawful, things that are evil in themselves. Hence there was need for the authority of the Divine law to rescue man from both these defects.<sup>727</sup>

The natural law contained two deficiencies, one based on the lack of proportion between nature and the supernatural end of humanity established by God. The second entails the need for the natural law to be determined in a manner consistent with that end. The first deficiency sets up the second: since reason cannot advance toward God as supernatural end on its own, it necessarily stands in need of divine assistance as regards the means toward that end.

Furthermore, sin further aggravates the natural shortfall, putting one all the more in need of God's assistance.

The natural law's lack of proportion toward the supernatural end of humanity touches on the issue of worship. Religion, as a moral virtue, stems directly from the natural moral ordering of the will toward God. Thus, even without sin, it would fall short of that end on its own. After sin, as we have seen, both the intellect and will were drug down and confined to a sensible level in the expression of religion. The limit and distortion of worship posed a significant hurdle to the flourishing of the moral life. Consequently, the rectification of worship took a prominent place in the manifestation of God's Law to Moses. Aquinas explicates this point in this manner: "The purpose of the Law was to induce men to have reverence for the divine worship: and this in two ways;—first, by excluding from the worship of God whatever might be an object of contempt; secondly, by introducing into the divine worship all that seemed to savor of reverence."<sup>728</sup> Through the Old Law, God created a mode of worship that intended to lead

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<sup>727</sup> ST I-II. 99.2, *ad* 2.

<sup>728</sup> ST I-II. 102.5, *ad* 10.

humanity out of sin and ignorance, which served as the first step toward the fullness of worship that would be initiated through Christ.

Before directly engaging this mode of worship, it is first necessary to place it within the overall purpose and structure of the Law. Aquinas describes the purpose of the Law in overcoming the distance between God and humanity and in seeking union between them. Thus, he argues that “the chief intention of the Divine law is to establish man in friendship with God. Now... there cannot possibly be any friendship of man to God, Who is supremely good, unless man become good.”<sup>729</sup> Once again, we see the need both for the removal of moral evil and for the elevation to a new state of goodness as God leads toward the supernatural end of beatitude with Him. Thus he states that “the end of the Divine law is to bring man to that end which is everlasting happiness.”<sup>730</sup> The Law accomplished this through a variety of means. First, it healed reason “because it repressed concupiscence which is in conflict with reason;”<sup>731</sup> secondly, it was “given as a remedy for human ignorance;”<sup>732</sup> thirdly, “since by withdrawing men from idolatrous worship, it enclosed them in the worship of one God;”<sup>733</sup> and finally, “by bearing witness to Christ.” Through prophecy, the foreshadowing of its rituals, and most importantly by leading to faith, the Old Law put one in right relation to God through the expectation of salvation through the Messiah. This faith stood at the foundation of the Law, which Aquinas describes in this way: “A master does not impose laws on others than his subjects; wherefore the precepts of a law presuppose that everyone who receives is subject to the giver of the law. Now the primary subjection of man to God is by faith... Hence faith is presupposed to the precepts of the

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<sup>729</sup> ST I-II. 99.2, *corpus*.

<sup>730</sup> ST I-II. 98.1, *corpus*.

<sup>731</sup> ST I-II. 98.1, *corpus*.

<sup>732</sup> ST I-II. 98.6, *corpus*.

<sup>733</sup> ST I-II. 98.2, *corpus*.

Law.”<sup>734</sup> Faith stands out as the crucial way in which the Law made one good and prepared one to receive true happiness, which would ultimately come through Christ.

The Law sought to take one out of the state of sin and to order one to the beatific vision which would be won by the Messiah. This implicit order to salvation came through a right way of living. Aquinas describes the way the Law ordered one to God through the precepts of the Law. The commands reflect the uniqueness of the Old Law in that it constituted not only a spiritual direction toward God, but also provided a detailed determination of the religious and social existence of Israel. He groups all the precepts, or commands, given to Israel under the headings of moral, ceremonial, and judicial.

This organization of the precepts into these categories had become a theological tradition by Aquinas’ day. The treatment of the Law through these three groups of precepts had divided the massive treatise of the *Summa Fratris Alexandri*.<sup>735</sup> It also bore the influence of some Jewish thinkers, particularly Maimonides.<sup>736</sup> Though the SFA and Maimonides exerted great influence on Aquinas’ treatment, he also looks back to the division of precepts as listed within Scripture itself. He quotes Deut 6: 1: “These are the precepts, and ceremonies, and judgments which the Lord your God commanded... you;”<sup>737</sup> and Deut 4: 13, 14: “Ten words... He wrote in

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<sup>734</sup> ST II-II. 16.1, *corpus*.

<sup>735</sup> Matthew Levering notes that the completion of the SFA greatly contributed to Aquinas’ understanding of the Old Law. He states: “The *Summa Fratris Alexandri* was finished around 1260 through a collaborative effort on the part of Franciscan theologians.... As Beryl Smalley and more recently John F. Boyle have noted, this Franciscan compendium is an important source for the shift that took place in Aquinas’ theology of salvation.... Whereas the Commentary on the Sentences contains almost no discussion of the Mosaic Law and lacks a carefully organized exposition of the mysteries of Christ’s life, Aquinas adds both to his mature theology of salvation in the *Summa Theologiae*.” *Christ’s Fulfillment*. 6.

<sup>736</sup> George Wilkes traces Maimonides division of the “law into the ‘rational’ and the ‘ceremonial’” to “Saadiah Gaon (882-942).” “The Virtues of ‘Rabbi Moyses.’” in *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*. ed. István P. Bejczy and Richard G. Newhauser. (Boston: Brill, 2005), 272. He notes particularly Maimonides influence on the SFA on this point. 285-86. While this element proved influential in Christian theology, Wilkes also notes a point of divergence in the “absence of reference in his works to the common concept of ‘cardinal’ virtues.... The scholastic interpretation of his views was, for this reason alone, not a straightforward operation.” 280.

<sup>737</sup> ST I-II. 99.5, *sed contra*. “*Haec sunt praecepta et caeremoniae atque iudicia quae mandavit Dominus Deus vobis.*” Partial quotation of this verse also given as the *sed contra* of article four.

two tablets of stone; and He commanded me at that time that I should teach you the ceremonies and judgments which you shall do.”<sup>738</sup> The ten words in Aquinas’ account stand for the moral precepts bestowed in the Ten Commandments. The heart of the Law consists in these moral precepts, which manifest the essential principles of the natural law. The ceremonial and judicial precepts serve to supplement the moral law by determining the moral precepts in detail, both in relation to God and the community of Israel respectively.<sup>739</sup>

Aquinas’ attention to the text of the Old Testament opened him up to the influence of a respected philosopher and rabbi, Maimonides, who shared the common concern of understanding the role of reason in worship. Though referenced only sparingly in the treatise on the Old Law, about three times, one can see his influence within Aquinas’ interpretation of the precepts of the Law.<sup>740</sup> The first of these three references concerns the purpose of the precepts that relate to worship. Here Maimonides arises within an objection, pertaining to seeming arbitrariness of certain ceremonies. Aquinas references him thus: “Further, Rabbi Moses says (*Doct Perplex. iii*) that the ceremonial precepts are those for which there is no evident reason.”<sup>741</sup> The text to which he refers seems to be the following: “There is a cause for every commandment; every positive or negative precept serves a useful object; in some cases the usefulness is evident, e.g., the prohibition of murder and theft; in others the usefulness is not so evident, e.g., the prohibition

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<sup>738</sup> ST I-II. 99.3, *sed contra*. “*Decem verba scripsit in duabus tabulis lapideis: mihiq̄ mandavit in illo tempore ut docerem vos caeremonias et iudicia quae facere deberetis.*”

<sup>739</sup> ST I-II. 104.1.

<sup>740</sup> It must be remembered that even in one of Aquinas’ most pivotal uses of Cicero in enumerating the principles of the natural law, he does not cite Cicero by name. Furthermore, while the *Summa Fratris Alexandris* clearly influenced Thomas, he does not reference it once in this treatise. When referring to Maimonides, he does not use direct quotations. Servais Pinckaers explicates this point on citation: “Moreover, thirteenth-century Scholastics cite by name only ancient authors, those who enjoy accepted authority in their field. They do not name contemporary theologians, with whom they are at times engaged in very direct discussion, except by way of anonymous references.” “The Sources of the Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas.” in *The Pinckaers Reader*. 5. Maimonides is not an ancient source, though surprisingly influential, but certainly far enough removed from Aquinas’ setting to risk offense through criticism.

<sup>741</sup> ST 101.1, obj. 4.

of enjoying the fruit of a tree in the first three years.”<sup>742</sup> It is not that there are any commands without a reason, for as Maimonides states, “there is a reason for every precept.”<sup>743</sup> Though he affirms this in general, in the particular he may confess that “I do not know the object of the table with the bread upon it continually, and up to this day I have not been able to assign any reason to this commandment.”<sup>744</sup> In general he assigns a reason to the ceremonial precepts, which he deems “obvious” and is quite in accord with Aquinas, namely that they serve “to remind us continually of God, and of our duty to fear and to love Him.”<sup>745</sup> This reason pertains mostly to “its general character,” but “as regards its details,” Maimonides holds that the exact formulations of worship are “nothing but tests for man’s obedience.”<sup>746</sup> That is, God has a reason, which may have been necessary only for the time, even though this reason may not be evident to all. Of course, Thomas is able to recognize a deeper signification underlying even more obscure rituals, in that they foreshadow the coming of Christ. In the end, the reason for the specific details of the ceremonial precepts coincides for them both. Thomas describes them as “figurative”<sup>747</sup> and “determinations of the moral precepts.”<sup>748</sup> In a similar fashion, Maimonides claims that the ceremonies stand in a situation “similar to the nature of a thing which can receive different forms, but actually receives one of them.”<sup>749</sup> That is, the ceremonial precepts are the determinations of worship provided by God, which must be received in obedience.

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<sup>742</sup> Moses Maimonides. *The Guide for the Perplexed*. trans. M. Friedlander. (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), III. xxvi.

<sup>743</sup> *ibid.* III. xxvi.

<sup>744</sup> *ibid.* III. xlv.

<sup>745</sup> *ibid.* III. xlv.

<sup>746</sup> *ibid.* III. xxvi. He continues farther down by stating: “Those who believe that these detailed rules originate in a certain cause, are as far from the truth as those who assume that the whole law is useless. You must know that Divine Wisdom demanded it—or, if you prefer, say that circumstances made it necessary.”

<sup>747</sup> ST I-II. 101.1, *ad* 3. This is given in the response to the objection which referred to Maimonides.

<sup>748</sup> ST I-II. 101.1, *corpus*.

<sup>749</sup> *Guide*. III. xxvi.

The second reference to Maimonides refers to the role of the Old Law in “the lessening of bodily worship; as Rabbi Moses the Egyptian testifies (*Doct. Perplex. iii*).”<sup>750</sup> Aquinas only specifies that this passage occurs in Book III. It may refer to a section of chapter thirty-two in which Maimonides specifies “two kinds of service,” in a manner consistent with the distinction between external and internal worship found within Aquinas and his predecessors. The first he deems “as the sacrificial service,” and which he states “is not the primary object” of the Law.<sup>751</sup> The second kind, which is “near to the primary object,” consists of “supplications, prayers, and similar kinds of worship.” Maimonides situates this more closely to an internal mode of worship, especially since he argues that they “can be offered everywhere and by every person.”<sup>752</sup> Aquinas may have looked favorably on Maimonides’ emphasis on the internal relation to God over the simple practice of exterior rituals. Maimonides did pick up on the greater importance of the internal, as evidenced by this quotation:

How great is the usefulness of every precept that delivers us from this great error (idolatry), and leads us back to the true faith: that God, the Creator of all things, rules the Universe; that He must be served, loved, and feared, and not those imaginary deities. According to this faith we approach the true God, and obtain His favor without having recourse to burdensome means, for nothing else is required but to love and fear Him; this is the aim in serving God.<sup>753</sup>

Maimonides places striking emphasis on faith and love and even speaks of service as an essential aspect of worship in direct relation to them. This may be the sense in which Aquinas saw Maimonides emphasizing the role of Law in leading away from the burdensome, bodily rituals of paganism and into a more interior relation with God.

Immediately after the above reference to Maimonides, Aquinas continued on with the following point: “Nevertheless it behooved not to attenuate the bodily worship of God so much

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<sup>750</sup> ST I-II. 101.3, ad 3.

<sup>751</sup> *Guide*. III. xxxii.

<sup>752</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>753</sup> *ibid*. III. xxix.



as to allow men to fall away into the worship of idols.”<sup>754</sup> This contains at least a nod to an important point of Maimonides that the emphasis on the interior must include a bodily element suited to the idolatrous customs of the time. Maimonides states:

The Israelites were commanded to devote themselves to His service.... But the custom which was in those days general among all men, and the general mode of worship in which the Israelites were brought up, consisted in sacrificing animals in... temples.... God allowed these kinds of service to continue; He transferred to His service that which had formerly served as a worship of created beings, and of things imaginary and unreal, and commanded us to serve Him in the same manner.... this result was thus obtained without deterring or confusing the minds of the people by the abolition of the service to which they were accustomed.<sup>755</sup>

The ritual of the Old Law prescribed “commandments as a means of securing His (God’s) chief object, viz., to speak a knowledge of Him, and to cause them to reject idolatry.”<sup>756</sup> Aquinas picks up explicitly on this point in question 102, article three, addressing the cause of ceremonies related to sacrifice, where he states:

Another reasonable cause may be assigned to the ceremonies of the sacrifices, from the fact that thereby men were withdrawn from offering sacrifices to idols. Hence too it is that the precepts about the sacrifices were not given to the Jewish people until after they had fallen into idolatry, by worshipping the molten calf: as though those sacrifices were instituted, that the people, being ready to offer sacrifices, might offer those sacrifices to God rather than to idols.<sup>757</sup>

This seems to point to a deeper reliance on the thought of Maimonides than the brief reference indicated. Beyond any particular point, the deeper connection flows from Maimonides’ assertion that bodily rituals, while secondary, should serve the true internal objectives, such as strengthening “true faith, which is the chief object” of the Law.<sup>758</sup>

The third reference returns the first point, the meaning of the ceremonies, and this time engages in explicit interpretation. In thinking through the rationale of particular sacrifices,

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<sup>754</sup> ST I-II. 101.3, *ad* 3.

<sup>755</sup> *Guide*. III. xxxii. For the reception of this passage in scholastic theology, cf. Wilkes, 283-84.

<sup>756</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>757</sup> ST I-II. 102.3, *corpus*.

<sup>758</sup> *Guide*. III. xxxii.

Aquinas turns to Maimonides. The reference reads: “Among turtledoves the older ones are better than the young; while with the doves the cause is the reverse. Wherefore, as Rabbi Moses observes (*Doct. Perplex.*, iii) turtledoves and young doves are commanded to be offered, because nothing should be offered to God but what is best.”<sup>759</sup> This reference seems to find its place within chapter forty-six of the *Guide*, in which Maimonides attempts “to give the reason of each precept separately.” In particular it matches up with the sentence: “In order to bring the offering in the best condition, we choose the old of the turtle doves and the young of the pigeons, the old pigeons being less agreeable.”<sup>760</sup> Though Aquinas does not quote Maimonides concerning other explanations of precepts, there are some striking parallels. Here are a few examples. With regards to prayer, Maimonides posits that “we are told to offer up prayers to God, in order to establish firmly the true principle that God takes notice of our ways.”<sup>761</sup> Aquinas: “that He [God] wishes to bestow certain things on us at our asking, is for the sake of our good, namely, that we may acquire confidence in having recourse to God, and that we may recognize in Him the Author of our goods.”<sup>762</sup> While the wording is not identical it should be noted that in the article Aquinas addressed the concern that God does not have providential concern over human actions. The second example concerns Maimonides explanation of swearing in the name of God as one part of a group of precepts, which “aim at the glorification of God; they prescribe acts which lead to the belief in God’s greatness.” Likewise, Aquinas argues in his explanation of oaths that “the very fact that a man swears by God, he acknowledges God to be more powerful.”<sup>763</sup> Finally, regarding the practice of the Sabbath, one finds a more direct relation

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<sup>759</sup> ST I-II. 102.3, *ad* 4.

<sup>760</sup> *Guide*. III. xlv. Earlier he had also stated: “It is further ordained that the offerings must all be perfect and in the best condition, in order that no one should slight the offering or treat with contempt that which is offered to God’s name.”

<sup>761</sup> *ibid.* III. xxxvi.

<sup>762</sup> ST II-II. 83.2, *ad* 3.

<sup>763</sup> ST II-II. 89.4, *corpus*.

between the two. Maimonides states that the Sabbath is directed toward honoring God as “the principle of Creation,” as part of “a double blessing: it gives us correct notions, and also promotes the well-being of our bodies.”<sup>764</sup> Aquinas picks up on both of these points, seeing the Sabbath as both for “the refreshment of the body” and “as a sign representing the Creation of the world.”<sup>765</sup> No matter the extent of Maimonides influence on Aquinas, one can say with confidence that the two share in a common way of thought about the precepts of the Law and the way in which the acts of worship express one’s relation to God.

Before engaging more directly in Aquinas’s own account of the precepts, I would like to point out a few more general areas of agreement with Maimonides. Maimonides’ attention to Aristotle brings him in line with the general movement of medieval theology, which sought to understand God’s revelation in relation to nature.<sup>766</sup> Thus, Maimonides states that “the law

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<sup>764</sup> *Guide*. II. xxxi.

<sup>765</sup> ST II-II. 122.4, *ad* 1. cf. Josef Pieper. *In Tune with the World*. In chapter five Pieper treats the Sabbath in relation to his exposition of festivity. He states that Aquinas “portrays Sunday as the model of all festive celebration. On that day we particularly celebrate what underlies all other times of festivity: assent to Creation.... Thus the holiday and the day of worship for the Christendom, recurring every week, is meant to serve both to recall the beginning of Creation and the herald future bliss. And in thus summoning before the soul’s vision both the beginning and the end of time, it throws open that wide, that infinite horizon which the great horizon which the festivals must have for their full celebration.” 48.

<sup>766</sup> Raymond Weiss engages in a very interesting discussion concerning the way in which Maimonides relates Jewish piety to Aristotle’s understanding of virtue within his *Commentary on the Mishnah*. “In the preface to the EC (*Eight Chapters*), Maimonides says that ‘according to us’—that is the Jews—‘there is no rank above piety (□*asidut*) except for prophecy.’ □*asidut* is thus emblematic of the specifically Jewish virtue. This sound anomalous because there is no word in the biblical-rabannic tradition for that seminal Greek concept, ‘virtue.’ Maimonides bridges the gap between the Jewish and the Greek views of exemplary conduct in a single stroke: he identifies the Hasidim as ‘virtuous men’ (*fu□alā*). The word □*asidut* is derived from □*esed*, whose root meaning is excess; the root of the Arabic term for virtue (*fa□īla*) also refers to excess.” *Maimonides’ Ethics: The Encounter of Philosophic and Religious Morality*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 33-34. Weiss explains Maimonides’ position that to cure a sick soul one must go to the extreme of piety so as to arrive at the Aristotelian mean of virtue. David Novak also attempts to relate piety and virtue ethics through the natural law. Though it is generally held that Maimonides does not ascribe to the natural law, Novak recognizes some elements of a natural law theory in his exposition of the Noahide law in his *Mishneh Torah*. He states that “the highest level [of gentile] is the one who accepts what Judaism regards as universally mandated because he or she believes this is a divine law. This makes one pious. Only this last person is worthy of the world-to-come along with Jews who accept (nor, minimally do not deny) the Mosaic Torah to be divine law.... After this analysis of the text [MT, Kings 8:11], it would seem that Maimonides does affirm natural law and the natural law is known by practical wisdom. The only difference between one who keeps the natural law and one who keeps divine law is that the keeper of the natural law only has a respected status in this world, but the keeper of divine law also has a respected status in the world-to-come.” “Maimonides and Aquinas on Natural Law.” in *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural Law Tradition*. 52. In the same

always follows Nature, and in some respects brings it to perfection.”<sup>767</sup> Like in Aquinas, the Law is ordered toward this perfection by bringing the worshipper into a right relation with God. Maimonides particularly emphasizes the role of knowledge. He describes the height of worship in those who can...

concentrate all their thoughts in God. This is the worship peculiar to those who have acquired a knowledge of the highest truths; and the more they reflect on Him, and think of Him, the more are they engaged in worship. These, however, who think of God, and frequently mention His name, without any correct notion of Him, but merely following some imagination, or some theory from another.... do not mention the name of God in truth, nor do they reflect on it. That which they imagine does not correspond to any being in existence.... The true worship of God is only possible when correct notions of Him have previously been conceived. When you have arrived by the way of intellectual research at a knowledge of God and His works, then commence to devote yourselves to Him, try to approach Him and strengthen the intellect, which is the link that joins you to Him.<sup>768</sup>

This profound passage shares some key links to Aquinas’ thought and yet also reveals a deep disparity with it. Both thinkers maintain that one must conform to the truth of God to worship Him, that this knowledge must be attained by purity of mind and reflection, and that the end toward which worship is directed concerns the union of the mind with God. However, Maimonides’ account tends to overemphasize rational contemplation in a manner which leaves

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volume, see also Martin D. Yaffe’s response to Novak, “Natural Law in Maimonides?” which challenges Novak’s ascription of the natural law to Maimonides as well as John Goyette’s response, “Natural Law and the Metaphysics of Creation.”

<sup>767</sup> *Guide*. III. xlili.

<sup>768</sup> *ibid.* III. li. Though Maimonides clearly emphasizes the role of metaphysical contemplation, William Dunphy emphasizes that he still seeks to position the role of philosophy within Judaism. Dunphy answers the charge of those who hold that “Maimonides would assign philosophy a role higher than religion in the perfection of man.” He does so by examining the question of “what for Maimonides was the role of philosophy in the attainment of human perfection? In his *Guide*, at least, Maimonides does not place that philosopher whose life is totally without reference to the Law in as high a rank of perfection as the man of religion who understands the Law by the way of truth through mystery of the philosophical sciences.... Apparently, then, Maimonides, like Aquinas, does not hold out much hope for achieving human perfection by imitating the great philosophers who were not aware of divine revelation.... The man who strives for the fullness of human perfection, then, should not ignore the philosophical sciences, but rather build upon them and use them within the pathway of Torah towards achieving that apprehension of God which is the necessary foundation of God which is the necessary foundation for that superior form of divine worship sketched out for us in the concluding chapters of *The Guide*.” “Maimonides and Aquinas on Faith, Reason, and Beatitude.” in *Studies in Thomistic Theology*. ed. Paul Lockey. (Houston, Texas: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1995), 314; 315-16.

behind both sensible revelations and religious practices. Maimonides portrays the mystic enraptured in metaphysical speculation as the height of worship, while Aquinas takes the body into account more fully. This is necessary due to one's conformity to the bodily sacrifice of Christ and the sacraments, which reveal that the height of spiritual union comes about in a manner that conforms to the whole nature and not just its highest part. The reasons for this will be explored in the next chapter.

This digression not only pointed to a few underlying concerns of the treatment of worship in the Old Law, but also sought to demonstrate the significant influence of Maimonides, somewhat masked by the brief and passing references to his thought. The two share a common belief that the ceremonies stand as determinations of the underlying goal of the Law, which is to interiorly unite one to God through faith and love. They both concur on the fact that while the ceremonies may be symbolic, they aim at increasing devotion and directing the mind to God's glory. In the end, they both uphold the reasonableness of the Law, which manifests God's wisdom, even while some ceremonies may be difficult to understand literally. Ultimately, they divulge on a point of greatest importance for Aquinas that the ceremonies both point toward and help lead into the true worship of Christ.

The ceremonies of the Law aim at helping the soul to arrive at a worship of God free from the distortions of sin. They do so by relying on God to formulate the specification of the moral law rather than on erring reason. In this process of determination, God first made clear the moral law itself, renewing the dictate of reason, which specified the necessity of worship. Only after it was clear that the true God must be worshipped could the means to this end be specified. Therefore, like Maimonides, Aquinas emphasizes the priority of the moral ordering of the soul to God to which the ceremonial acts are subordinated. The moral precepts "derive their binding

force from the dictate of reason itself, because natural reason dictates that something ought to be done or to be avoided.”<sup>769</sup> However, the other precepts of the Law...

derive their binding force, not from the very dictate of reason (because, considered in themselves, they do not imply an obligation of something due or undue); but from some institution, Divine or human: and such are certain determinations of the moral precepts. When therefore the moral precepts are fixed by Divine institution in matters relating to man’s subordination to God, they are called ‘ceremonial’ precepts: but when they refer to man’s relations to other men, they are called ‘judicial’ precepts.<sup>770</sup>

The moral precepts make clear the essential aspects of the moral law concerning the worship of God, while the ceremonial determine this general law by specifying the means of accomplishing the general precept. The former exists as an absolutely essential component of the order towards God, while the latter could be changed in its details, so long as it still remained a fitting expression of the former.

The moral law expresses the law of nature insofar as it concerns “those matters whereby men are well ordered in their relation to God.”<sup>771</sup> Aquinas continues by describing the way in which the moral precepts relate one to God: “Now man is united to God by his reason or mind, in which is God’s image. Wherefore the Divine law proposes precepts about all those matters whereby human reason is well ordered. But this is effected by the acts of all the virtues.”<sup>772</sup> The moral precepts rectify the moral life by pointing toward the actions needed in order to gain virtue and thus to stand in right relation to God and through Him to one’s neighbor. Though these precepts derive from the law of nature, which encapsulates the whole rational order to God, he nevertheless, describes its varying modes of doing so. First it can contain precepts that “the natural reason of every man, of its own accord and at once, judges to be done or not to be done;” then “there are certain things which, after more careful consideration, wise men deem

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<sup>769</sup> ST I-II. 104.1, *corpus*.

<sup>770</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>771</sup> ST I-II. 100.2, *corpus*.

<sup>772</sup> *ibid*.

obligatory;” and finally “there are some things, to judge of which, human reason needs Divine instruction, whereby we are taught about the things of God.”<sup>773</sup> The first group includes prohibitions against murder, the second includes things such as honor to elders, and the third contains the precepts concerning the manner of worship.<sup>774</sup>

The chief expression of the moral precepts in relation to worship comes from the first three commandments of the Decalogue. The precepts of the Decalogue as a whole function as the “first principles of the Law,”<sup>775</sup> and therefore contain all the rest in an undetermined manner.<sup>776</sup> Aquinas treats the Decalogue both within his exposition of the moral precepts and as the capstone of his treatise on justice.<sup>777</sup> Its precepts, which serve as the exposition of the moral law, specify the requirements of justice. In the *Prima Secundae* Aquinas describes this points as follows:

Now the precepts of the decalogue contain the very intention of the lawgiver, who is God. For the precepts of the first table, which direct us to God, contain the very order to the common and final good, which is God; while the precepts of the second table contain the order of justice to be observed among men, that nothing undue be done to anyone, and that each one be given his due; for it is in this sense that we are to take the precepts of the decalogue.<sup>778</sup>

In the *Secunda Secundae* Aquinas specifies further the relation of the two tablets to the various parts of justice. He writes:

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<sup>773</sup> ST I-I. 100.1, *corpus*.

<sup>774</sup> All three modes could be seen to apply to worship in the following manner: first, the recognition of the need to worship, secondly, that this worship is due to the one God, and thirdly, the proper way to conduct the worship of the one God.

<sup>775</sup> ST II-II. 122.1, *corpus*.

<sup>776</sup> “The gloss on Matth. v. 11: ‘Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, etc.’ says that ‘Moses, after propounding the ten precepts, set them out in detail.’ Therefore all the precepts of the Law are so many parts of the precepts of the decalogue.” ST I-II. 100.3, *sed contra*.

<sup>777</sup> While the Decalogue bears a special relation to justice, Pinckaers emphasized its relation to virtue in general. He states: “For St. Thomas, for example, the Decalogue is at the service of the virtue, beginning with the theological virtues that form the heart of the New Law. In the study of each virtue, he examines each corresponding commandment, as determining that without which no virtue is possible.” “Scripture and the Renewal of Moral Theology.” in *The Pinckaers Reader*. 50.

<sup>778</sup> ST I-II. 100.8, *corpus*.

Now it is altogether evident that the notion of duty, which is essential to a precept, appears in justice, which is of one towards another. Because in those matters that relate to himself it would seem at a glance that man is master of himself, and that he may do as he likes: whereas in matters that refer to another it appears manifestly that a man is under obligation to render to another that which is his due. Hence the precepts of the decalogue must needs pertain to justice. Wherefore the first three precepts are about acts of religion, which is the chief part of justice; the fourth precept is about piety, which is the second part of justice; and the six remaining are about justice commonly so called, which is observed among equals.<sup>779</sup>

The Decalogue forms the chief expression of the Law, of which the moral virtues form the core element insofar as they provide the central precepts of which the others provide determinations.

It appears in Aquinas' account that the heart of the Law stems from the moral law ordering toward God and through Him to others. Thus, it makes perfect sense that the core of the Law would stem from the precepts of justice. This perfectly conforms to the notion of general justice in which all one's actions exist in proper harmony and order toward the end of human happiness in God.

The chief part of the whole moral ordering of human life concerns relation to God. This is the reason why the "religious" commands form the foundation of the Law in the first tablet of the Decalogue. The movement from sin to happiness through God's law must first remove the most serious error of false worship and establish a right relation to God through knowledge, love, and service. Aquinas follows the previous theological tradition<sup>780</sup> in drawing on one particular instruction given to Moses to encapsulate this right relation to God. It has particular prominence in that Christ quoted it in response to Satan's temptation (Matt 4: 10): "The Lord thy God shalt thou adore and Him only shalt thou serve." In Deuteronomy this passage comes shortly after the giving of the Decalogue and reinforces it. It makes clear that it is the LORD, the true God who

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<sup>779</sup> ST II-II. 122.1, *corpus*.

<sup>780</sup> The *Glossa Ordinaria* and Hugh of St. Victor both use this passage to expound on *latría*.



revealed Himself to Moses, that one must respond. This response entails both worship and service, which, as we have seen, form the essence of the just relation to God.

The first three precepts of the Decalogue seek to cement this general command by specifying its practice. Aquinas describes the general order of these commands as follows: “Now among those things whereby we are ordained to God, the first is that man should be subjected to Him faithfully, by having nothing in common with His enemies. The second is that he should show Him reverence: the third is that he should offer Him service.”<sup>781</sup> Thus, the first command specifies the One to Whom worship is due since one cannot be faithfully subjected to God while worshipping false gods. This commandment truly serves as both the foundation of the worship of the true God, but also of the entire moral life. Aquinas states:

Now the goodness of the will depends on its object, which is its end. Wherefore since man was to be directed to virtue by means of the Law, the first thing necessary was, as it were, to lay the foundation of religion, whereby man is duly directed to God, Who is the last end of man’s will. The second thing to be observed... is that in the first place contraries and obstacles have to be removed.... Hence it behooved man, first of all to be instructed in religion, so as to remove the obstacles to true religion. Now the chief obstacle to religion is for man to adhere to a false god.... Therefore in the first precept of the Law the worship of false gods is excluded.<sup>782</sup>

In the Law’s task of righting the distortion of the moral law by sin, its foremost goal concerned the removal of a false end. If the will adhered to a creature as its god, then its fundamental order toward happiness would be jeopardized; its just relation to its maker and end would turn into the greatest injustice of idolatry. Therefore, the Law must educate the will by introducing the true God as the real object of worship.

While the first commandment removes the obstacle of idolatry, Aquinas argues that the second commandment removes the second obstacle to true religion, which is irreligion. He makes clear that something may be opposed to religion “by lack, as it were, of reverence, when

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<sup>781</sup> ST I-II. 100.6, *corpus*.

<sup>782</sup> ST II-II. 122.2, *corpus*.

to wit, God is contemned.”<sup>783</sup> The second commandment opposes the irreverence of falsely swearing in God’s name, which keeps one from giving God the honor and reverence due to Him. It is only the third commandment that actually prescribes the true worship of God: “The obstacles to true religion being removed by the first and second precepts of the decalogue... it remained for the third precept to be given whereby man is established in true religion.”<sup>784</sup> It does so both in a general way by making clear that time must be set aside to honor God and making clear that exterior signs need to accompany His worship. In this regard it pertains to the moral precepts and specifies something that all must perform. Aquinas states:

Now the precepts of the decalogue are, so to speak, first and common principles of the Law, and consequently the third precept of the decalogue prescribes the worship as the sign of a universal boon that concerns all. This universal boon was the work of the Creation of the world, from which work God is stated to have rested on the seventh day.<sup>785</sup>

Thus, Aquinas does think that the command as whole belongs as a part of the moral precepts,<sup>786</sup> even though it is “partly ceremonial,” insofar as it determines the general precept by specifying the time and manner in which it should be carried out.

Through these three commandments the Decalogue lays the foundation for true worship by laying out the way in which one should relate to God. One must relate to Him alone as the Creator and end of human life, must act reverently toward Him, and must worship Him by means of physical signs. The ceremonial precepts build from this foundation by specifying means of doing so. It must be remembered that these signs were given to the people by God through Moses in order to counteract the superstitious and irreligious practices that had arisen under the law of sin. The foundation of these precepts stems from the Sabbath, since the third

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<sup>783</sup> ST II-II. 122.3, *corpus*.

<sup>784</sup> ST II-II. 122.4, *corpus*.

<sup>785</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>786</sup> Aquinas even says that it pertains to “a dictate of reason” that one “sets aside a certain time for spiritual refreshment.” *ibid*.

commandment serves as the moral underpinning of these precepts. Aquinas describes them as “determinations of the precepts of the decalogue.”<sup>787</sup> In particular he maintains that “to the third commandment are added all the ceremonial precepts.”<sup>788</sup> The ceremonies derive from “Divine institution”<sup>789</sup> and seek to further the moral ordering toward the end of happiness in that through them “man is directed to God by the worship due to Him.”<sup>790</sup> Thus, the ceremonial precepts foster the just relation to God by habituating their practitioners in the exercise of the virtue of religion.

The exercise of religion requires two things: first there must be the formulation of proper means, and also the right interior disposition. Regarding the first, Aquinas makes clear that “whoever worships God must needs worship Him by means of certain fixed things pertaining to external worship.”<sup>791</sup> With regards to the second:

Now God is concerned not only with the sacrifices that are offered to Him, but also with whatever relates to the fitness of those who offer sacrifices to Him and worship Him. Because men are ordained to God as to their end; wherefore it concerns God and, consequently, is a matter of ceremonial precept, that man should show some fitness for the divine worship.<sup>792</sup>

The two really come together in the sense that the precepts are meant to lead toward God by habituating the will toward Him. The acts of worship make it clear that God is the origin and end of human life and foster the growth of virtue by creating a right relation to Him. Aquinas describes the establishment of fitting worship “for that particular time” in that the precepts “refer to the shunning of idolatry; or recall certain Divine benefits; or remind men of the Divine excellence; or point out the disposition of mind which was then required in those who

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<sup>787</sup> ST I-II. 100.11, *ad 2*.

<sup>788</sup> ST I-II. 100.11, *corpus*.

<sup>789</sup> Aquinas states that the ceremonial precepts “have no binding force except in virtue of their Divine institution.” ST 104.1, *ad 3*.

<sup>790</sup> ST I-II. 101.1, *corpus*.

<sup>791</sup> ST I-II. 103.1, *corpus*.

<sup>792</sup> ST I-II. 104.1, *ad 3*.

worshipped God.”<sup>793</sup> The exterior formulation of worship as prescribed in the ceremonial precepts do not simply serve to represent the interior devotion of those who worshipped, but could actually teach them to worship and demonstrate the disposition needed through the symbols contained in the acts of worship.

The ceremonial precepts serve as a physical representation of God’s revelation, making known His lordship and one’s necessary response of obedience. Aquinas makes clear the necessary role of these symbols as follows:

As Dionysius says (*Coel. Hier.* i), the things of God cannot be manifested to men except by means of sensible similitudes. Now these similitudes move the soul more when they are not only expressed in words, but also offered to the sense. Wherefore things of God are set forth in the Scriptures not only by similitudes expressed in words, as in the case of metaphorical expressions; but also by similitudes of things set before the eyes, which pertains to the ceremonial precepts.<sup>794</sup>

The Law of God expressed itself not only in a moral code, but also in a ritual of worship, which made clear that all things are to be referred to God as their origin and end. The solemnity of the ceremonies made clear God’s majesty. By setting things apart for worship, the Israelites were meant to understand that God must be approached with a special reverence. Aquinas explains:

Now man’s tendency is to reverence less those things which are common, and indistinct from other things; whereas he admires and reveres those things which are distinct from others in some point of excellence.... And for this reason it behooved special times, a special abode, special vessels, and special ministers to be appointed for the divine worship, so that thereby the soul of man might be brought to greater reverence for God.<sup>795</sup>

The ceremonial worship of Israel sought to manifest God’s greatness and to instill reverence into its people. It did so by extravagance, offering what was most prized to God and sometimes in great number, and also by setting things aside for worship so as to distinguish this worship in excellence in comparison with other actions.

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<sup>793</sup> ST I-II. 102.2, *corpus*.

<sup>794</sup> ST I-II. 99.3, *ad* 3.

<sup>795</sup> ST I-II. 102.4, *corpus*.

The need for a physical sign of God's greatness can be seen in the distortion wrought by sin, which Aquinas described particularly through the influence of concupiscence. This influence brought about a predominant focus on the self and on temporal goods and so the ceremonies countered this by shifting focus to God. Aquinas describes this when speaking of the Law in general: "Those who are yet imperfect desire temporal goods, albeit in subordination to God: whereas the perverse place their end in temporalities. It was therefore fitting that the Old Law should conduct men to God by means of temporal goods for which the imperfect have an affection."<sup>796</sup> This passage reveals the Law's median position between the perverse and the perfect. It uses temporal means so as to withdraw from complete domination by them, and yet still has not reached the perfect love, which clings to God in Himself.

Aquinas draws out the median position of the Law even further by speaking of its figurative significance. Though the precepts truly brought about fitting worship for the time, which Aquinas describes as the literal meaning of the precepts, there still existed a mystical purpose for these precepts, their figurative meaning, in that they pointed toward Christ.<sup>797</sup> Though the actions of worship truly directed the worshipers to God in a just manner, these rituals also were shadows of the true worship to come. Thus, the precepts served a dual purpose, one which fits in with the general need to have external determinations of worship for any time, but the other of passing significance in that it pointed to something toward which it was directed. Aquinas describes this with these words: "Now the end of the ceremonial precepts was twofold:

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<sup>796</sup> ST I-II. 99.6, *corpus*.

<sup>797</sup> On the dual significance of the ceremonial rites of Law, Richard Schenk points to Robert Kilwardby. Cf. *Quaestiones in librum IV Sententiarum*, q. 33 (143, 1.9–17). Schenk notes that in the fourth volume of this work (which consisted of disputed questions on Lombard's *Sentences*) Kilwardby engaged in one of the longest and most focused medieval treatises on non-Christian religions." "Views of the Two Covenants in Medieval Theology." *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition 4 no 4 (2006): 896; 893.

for they were ordained to the Divine worship, for that particular time, and to the foreshadowing of Christ.”<sup>798</sup> And again:

In the present state of life, we are unable to gaze upon the Divine Truth in Itself, and we need the ray of Divine light to shine upon us under the form of certain sensible figures, as Dionysius states (*Coel. Hier.* i); in various ways, however, according to the various states of human knowledge. For under the Old Law, neither was the Divine Truth manifest in Itself, nor was the way leading to that manifestation as yet opened out, as the Apostle declares (Heb. ix. 8). Hence the external worship of the Old Law needed to be figurative not only of the future truth to be manifested in our heavenly country, but also of Christ, Who is the way leading to that heavenly manifestation. But under the New Law this way is already revealed: and therefore it needs no longer to be foreshadowed as something future, but to be brought to our minds as something future or present: and truth of the glory to come, which is not yet revealed, alone needs to be foreshadowed.<sup>799</sup>

All worship must be figurative in that it seeks to represent our relation to God, which will end in a union with God beyond current comprehension. The realization of the order of the soul toward God, in direct vision, can only be foreshadowed in the recognition of God as end of human life. The worship of the Old Law stands more deeply in the shadows in that it does not contain the means of actualization of the end of human happiness in Christ, but also represents Him in an indirect fashion. This order toward Christ does not stand as something extrinsic to the formulation of the ceremonial precepts, but rather the literal meaning and purpose of the acts arose out of God’s work of redemption, leading toward Christ. If the precepts truly meant to direct the worshipers to God, they must also have included in their very rationale an intrinsic relation to the Savior. Thus, Aquinas argues that “the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law were reasonable on account of their relation to something else,” that is, in that they “signified something.”<sup>800</sup> God did not determine the moral precept to worship randomly, but rather the details of the ceremonies point toward Christ in a veiled manner.

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<sup>798</sup> ST I-II. 102.2, *corpus*.

<sup>799</sup> ST I-II. 101.2, *corpus*.

<sup>800</sup> ST I-II. 102.1, *ad 2*.

This twofold order both toward the proper worship of the time and toward Christ can be seen in the individual acts of worship prescribed by the ceremonial precepts. Aquinas groups these precepts into four main categories:

The ceremonial precepts are ordained to the Divine worship. Now in this worship we may consider the worship itself, the worshippers, and the instruments of worship. The worship consists specially in ‘sacrifices,’ which are offered up in honor of God.—The instruments of worship refer to the ‘sacred things,’ such as the tabernacle, the vessels and so forth.—With regard to the worshippers two points may be considered. The first point is their preparation for Divine worship, which is effected by a sort of consecration either of the people or of the ministers; and to this the ‘sacraments’<sup>801</sup> refer. The second point is their particular mode of life, whereby they are distinguished from those who do not worship God: and to this pertain the ‘observances,’ for instance, in matters of food, clothing, and so forth.<sup>802</sup>

Aquinas relates all of these to Christ: “just as their sacrifices signified Christ the victim, so too their sacraments and sacred things foreshadowed the sacraments and sacred things of the New Law; while their observances foreshadowed the mode of life of the people under the New Law: all of which things pertain to Christ.”<sup>803</sup> What stands out in this exposition is that worship does only entail acts such a sacrifice, but pertains to the entire way of life of the Israelites and Christians. Even mundane aspects of life, such as food and clothing, can relate to worship when they are referred to God. However, this does not minimize the importance of special acts of worship, which more directly relate one to God. Aquinas specifically describes the importance of two such acts, solemnities and sacrifices, as follows: “All the solemnities of the Old Law were instituted in celebration of some Divine favor, either in memory of past favors, or in sign of some favor to come: in like manner all the sacrifices were offered up with the same purpose.”<sup>804</sup> The revealing of the ceremonial precepts came directly after the liberation of Israel from Egypt

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<sup>801</sup> Aquinas makes clear that these sacraments do not confer grace, but only function as signs of faith.

<sup>802</sup> ST I-II. 101.4, *corpus*.

<sup>803</sup> *ibid.* ad 1.

<sup>804</sup> ST I-II. 100.5, ad 2.

and can be seen both as a thanksgiving to God for this rescue, but also a sign of its continual dependence on God.

Sacrifice possesses a particularly noteworthy role in the life of Israelite worship due to its prominence within its ritual and because of its link to the natural law and to Christian worship.<sup>805</sup> Building on Augustine's description of sacrifice in *De civitate Dei* X, Aquinas makes clear that of all the acts of reverence that one could give "there is one thing which is offered to God alone, and that is sacrifice."<sup>806</sup> While certain acts of worship, such as praise or even prostration, have been given to monarchs or others who deserve reverence, this act stands out as something which should be uniquely given to God. The act of sacrifice does not necessitate the offering of animals or grains, as these particular determinations belong specifically to the ceremonial precepts. These goods were chosen as a general representation of the order of one's life and goods to God. Aquinas explains that:

Sacrifice represented the directing of the mind to God, to which the offerer of the sacrifice was stimulated. Now in order to direct his mind to God aright, man must recognize that whatever he has is from God as from its principle, and direct it to God as its last end. This was denoted in the offerings and sacrifices, by the fact that man offered some of his own belongings in honor of God, as though in recognition of his having received them from God.<sup>807</sup>

The actual sacrifice of the animals served as a means of stimulating the mind to recognize God as origin and end and as the giver of all good things. It manifested thanks by returning a portion of that gift and also served as a protestation of God's glory insofar as sacrifice constituted a unique act of worship due to the true God alone. The significance of the matter offered does not stop at this generic benefit, but remains consistent with Aquinas' overall view of the order of the

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<sup>805</sup> For a thorough exposition of Jewish sacrifice and related rites see Robert Daly, *Christian Sacrifice*. 11-207. For a more speculative account, see Philippe, 15-51.

<sup>806</sup> ST II-II. 84.1, ad 1.

<sup>807</sup> ST I-II. 102.3, *corpus*.



ceremonies toward Christ. He turns to the *Glossa Ordinaria* in its commentary on Leviticus 1 to expound on how these specific offerings represent the coming perfect sacrifice:

As the gloss observes, ‘Christ is offered in the calf to denote the strength of the cross; in the lamb to signify His innocence; in the ram, to foreshadow His headship; and in the goat, to signify the likeness of “sinful flesh.” The turtledove and the dove denoted the union of the two natures’ . . . . ‘The wheat-flour foreshadowed the sprinkling of believers with the waters of baptism.’<sup>808</sup>

Aquinas delves more deeply into the foreshadowing with his own interpretation: “Moreover the slaying of animals signified the destruction of sins: and also that man deserved death on account of his sins; as though those animals were slain in man’s stead, in order to betoken the expiation of sins.—Again the slaying of these animals signified the slaying of Christ.”<sup>809</sup> Aquinas engages in a long and detailed discussion not only of all of the types of sacrifice, but also many other of the ceremonial precepts. Throughout all of these, the theme remains consistent: they all point toward the interior moral ordering of the soul toward God and also to the coming of the Savior who would bring about the realization of this order through His own perfect sacrifice.

In discussing the Old Law, we examined the reformulation of the general principles of the natural law and their specification in certain external ceremonies. In regards to the general principles, God is seen as the Lawgiver and Lord of all creation, though the natural law leaves it up to either the individual or ruler to specify the manner in which they should be practiced. In the case of Israel, God became ruler and lord in a special manner by acting as the head of the people of Israel, establishing them as a nation and giving them the specific laws and customs that led to their very way of life.<sup>810</sup> Due to this unique relationship, Aquinas understands the first

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<sup>808</sup> ST I-II. 102.3, *ad* 2.

<sup>809</sup> *ibid.* *ad* 5.

<sup>810</sup> Aquinas provides an interpretation of this unique arrangement: “The Jewish people were chosen by God that Christ might be born of them. Consequently the entire state of that people had to be prophetic and figurative, as Augustine states (*Contra Faust.* xxii. 24).” ST I-II. 104.2, *ad* 2. Pamela Hall states that “all of the precepts—ceremonial, judicial, and moral—were directed to the formation of a community, and of individuals within that community, properly ordered to God and to created goods.” 58.

three precepts of the Decalogue not only in their relation to the worship of God, but also to God as ruler:

Now man owes three things to the head of the community: first, fidelity; secondly, reverence; thirdly, service. Fidelity to his master consists in not giving sovereign honor to another.... Reverence to his master requires that he should do nothing injurious.... Service is due to the master in return for the benefits which his subjects receive from him.<sup>811</sup>

Even though this relationship of God as earthly sovereign exists uniquely in Israel, it does reveal something essential to the nature of worship. Aquinas makes clear that God has a general sovereignty over all: “Man ought to be faithful to God above all, both on account of God’s sovereignty, and on account of the favors he has received from God.”<sup>812</sup> God is a ruler and lawgiver even in nature. It is God who bestowed upon creation its proper laws and it is He governs it with His care and providence. Therefore, Israel’s relation to God serves as a physical instantiation of the honor due to God as the Lord of all creation.

What we see in the worship of the Old Law is a pronouncement of God’s governance. God’s lordship over humanity was rejected in the Fall and, consequently, worship fell into a deformed state. The Law rightened worship by providing knowledge of its true recipient and by establishing fitting means of practicing it. However, this worship fell short of the perfection of worship as intended by God. While it did bring about a just relation to God in the following of the commandments, it did not unite to soul to God in proportion to the beatific vision. The Old Law “was directly ordained” to “a sensible and earthly good,” an “earthly kingdom,” rather than “an intelligible and heavenly good.”<sup>813</sup> It fell short by focusing on the outward acts of worship, which it prescribed to remove Israel from the error of idolatry. In doing so, it served as a crucial step in advancing toward perfection, and yet it remained in a state of expectation.

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<sup>811</sup> ST I-II. 100.5, *corpus*.

<sup>812</sup> ST II-II. 88.3, *corpus*.

<sup>813</sup> ST I-II. 91.5, *corpus*.

This is not to say that the worship of Old Law could not be offered in an interior state of right relation to God, but rather that the outward acts themselves could not bring about this right state. The ceremonies depended on the individual's own relation to God for their spiritual efficacy. Aquinas states that...

the ceremonial precepts taken as a whole contained something just in itself, in so far as they aimed at offering worship to God; whereas taken individually they contained that which is just, not in itself, but by being a determination of the Divine law. Hence it is said of these precepts that they did not justify man save through the devotion and obedience of those who complied with them.<sup>814</sup>

There are two concerns to be addressed from this point: first, the extent to which these precepts made one just; and the second, whether the justice, which one could attain from practicing them, would bring right relation with God. The will can be justified in its natural relation to God, in that it directs all one's actions and offers worship to Him. Even still, this justice would not exist in proportion to the true justification of the soul in relation to its supernatural end in the beatific vision.<sup>815</sup> This supernatural end exceeds the relation of the will to God that exists in justice, and requires the infusion of grace and an additional virtue in the will, namely charity.

Examining the Law from the viewpoint of grace, enables one to perceive an intrinsic limitation within it. The ceremonies of the Old Law pointed toward Christ, but did not contain His presence within them. Aquinas speaks of the Old Law as "some assistance in attaining the end, but... not sufficient for the realization thereof."<sup>816</sup> And further:

That which suffices for the perfection of human law, viz., the prohibition and punishment of sin, does not suffice for the perfection of the Divine law: but it is requisite that it should make man altogether fit to partake of everlasting happiness. Now this cannot be done save by the grace of the Holy Ghost.... But the Old Law could not confer this grace, for this was reserved to Christ.<sup>817</sup>

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<sup>814</sup> ST I-II. 100.12, *corpus*.

<sup>815</sup> Even the justice that comes from the natural order requires grace. Aquinas states that "he [man] is directed to his connatural end by means of his natural principles, albeit not without the Divine assistance." ST I-II. 62.1, *corpus*.

<sup>816</sup> ST I-II. 98.1, *corpus*.

<sup>817</sup> *ibid*.

Worship of God aims to give honor to God as both origin and end. Insofar as it recognizes Him as end, it seeks to give all one's self and one's actions to Him for His glory. On one's own, one cannot offer worship that is truly condign to this end and that actually unites one's soul to this end. The Law sought to combat the law of sin and to restore the law of nature by making God known, forbidding sin, and by providing ceremonies to be signs of the moral ordering to God. True worship in accord with the supernatural end of humanity must contain something further: the grace to truly heal sin and to lead to a state above nature. Thus, Aquinas makes clear that these ceremonies...

had no power of cleansing from uncleanness of the soul, i.e., from the uncleanness of sin. The reason of this was that at no time could there be expiation from sin, except through Christ.... And since the mystery of Christ's Incarnation and Passion had not yet really taken place, those ceremonies of the Old Law could not really contain in themselves a power flowing from Christ already incarnate and crucified, such as the sacraments of the New Law contain.<sup>818</sup>

The Old Law stands in need of completion through the perfection of God's law as made known and enacted by Christ. As mentioned above, the ceremonies did foreshadow the self-offering of Christ on the Cross, the perfect sacrifice, and in this way they could serve as signs of implicit faith in Christ: "Those carnal sacrifices... signified that expiation of sins which was to be effected by Christ, and of which those of old became partakers by protesting their faith in the Redeemer, while taking part in figurative sacrifices."<sup>819</sup> The ceremonies could be drawn into a deeper union with God that stemmed from the grace bestowed upon those with implicit faith. The ceremonies in themselves served as signs of the order of justice commanded by the moral law and of the future coming of perfect worship. They stood in between the unspecified and corrupted moral law and the worship of Christ in grace.

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<sup>818</sup> ST I-II. 103.2, *corpus*.

<sup>819</sup> ST I-II. 102.5, *ad* 4.

Before moving on to speak of the worship of Christ in the New Law within the final chapter, I will note briefly one additional type of law described by Aquinas and its relation to worship. Aquinas notes that the general precepts of the moral law, such as the one to worship, need determination by a further law. We have examined the determination given by divine law, but Aquinas also notes that human law can determine the natural law in relation to worship. He states that the dictate to worship stipulates that one “should do something through reverence for God. But that he should do this or that determinate thing does not belong to the dictate of natural reason, but is established by Divine or human law.”<sup>820</sup> There is one passage that focuses on the role of human law in worship, which reads:

Divine law is instituted chiefly in order to direct men to God; while human law is instituted chiefly in order to direct men in relation to one another. Hence human laws have not concerned themselves with the institution of anything relating to Divine worship except as affecting the common good of mankind: and for this reason they have devised many institutions relating to Divine matters, according as it seemed expedient for the formulation of human morals; as may be seen in the rites of the Gentiles.<sup>821</sup>

One can easily recognize from an examination of history that many rulers thought that religion was confined completely to their authority. This fits in with the corruption of worship by the law of sin, which focused on the particular and material good versus the spiritual. Under this law worship was used by rulers to further their own civil goals. To counter this distortion, Aquinas does not actually focus much on worship guided by human law, which seems to indicate its lack of importance in the overall order of the soul toward God.<sup>822</sup> Aquinas mentions that human law

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<sup>820</sup> ST II-II. 81.2, *ad* 3.

<sup>821</sup> ST I-II. 99.3, *corpus*.

<sup>822</sup> Oscar Brown makes clear that the civil order must play a role in worship. He states: “But divine worship, collective or individual, and even personal contemplation – indeed, all aspects of religious obeisance – presuppose a certain measure of earthly and civic peace. And peace, in turn, requires a modicum of public order. So, the greater *ordo* of the universe must be participated and paralleled by the political order of the city of man – not because of any absolute immanent value of the latter but, rather, in order to facilitate man’s submission to the higher sovereignty of the *civitas Dei*. . . . In sum, if the secular common good is ordered to man, man is directed to the universal *bonum commune*, God’s order.” 71. Thus, the secular order plays an important role in worship, but it does so by securing the physical means necessary for its practice, not in directing its actual execution.

does not suffice due to the need for a supernatural relationship with God: “If man were ordained to no other end than that which is proportionate to his natural faculty, there would be no need for man to have any further direction on the part of his reason, besides the natural law and human law which is derived from it.”<sup>823</sup> While human law does determine many aspects of the natural law, it does not stand in a sufficient position to determine worship due to the need for it to be proportionate to the supernatural happiness to which humanity is called.<sup>824</sup> However, Aquinas does state that the divine law has a relationship to human law in guiding it and keeping it conformity with this end. While political life cannot achieve supernatural happiness, it cannot contradict and should even support God’s work leading humanity towards it. He quotes Isidore in laying a condition for law in that it must “‘foster religion,’ inasmuch as it is proportionate to the Divine law.... for it is called virtuous because it fosters religion.”<sup>825</sup> Human law can foster religion, if by no other means, it does not assume the role of directing worship. More positively it can cooperate with the fulfillment of God’s law by encouraging its citizens to worship and enabling and even helping the Church to fulfill its mission.

In general, the role of law in worship concerns making clear the obligation of the will to honor God and in specifying the means to do so. Through the Divine law, God has supernaturally revealed this obligation and the means to make up for humanity’s inability to do

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<sup>823</sup> ST I-II. 91.4, *corpus*.

<sup>824</sup> Even on the natural level there is a limit imposed on human law since, as Clifford Kossel describes it, it “cannot directly command or prohibit interior acts or states. It deals solely with exterior acts of justice by which people communicate with each other.” It does so only indirectly: “By accustoming people to do the right thing, it is the *hope* of law to lead them to virtue; but again, the *est hope* for this may be in fostering the religious life of the people who listen to divine revelation.” “Natural Law and Human Law (Ia IIae, qq. 90-97).” in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, 179; 180. Human law does not have the capacity to foster the interior justice needed to relate properly to God, except insofar as it cultivates a just disposition in general and points toward the need for religion. Kossel makes clear that “since people generally get their surest moral guidance from religious faith, it might be well for government and law; even pragmatically, to foster sound religious life among its people, as a help for the development and observance of the law.” 180. While this may be true, it is necessary to point out that in actual practice, the reinforcement of religion by “government and law” should always remain on the level of aiding and encouraging the practice of religion, rather than coercing and establishing, which necessarily draw religion into the political realm.

<sup>825</sup> ST I-II. 95.3, *corpus*.

so. Unlike the concerns of human law, worship seeks to relate to a being infinitely beyond the grasp of the intellect and will, especially given the supernatural vocation of humankind.

Therefore, worship intrinsically stands in need of God's assistance to fulfill the law given to humanity in nature. The Old Law provided a crucial step in pointing out the gross errors of sin and in bringing about right knowledge of God. However, due to its inability to bring about justification of the soul and lasting union with God, it stood in need of another law to perfect it.

To this law we now turn.

## CHAPTER SIX: TRUE WORSHIP IN CHRIST

The New Law, or the law of Christ or the Gospel, brings worship to its highest level on earth.<sup>826</sup> It fulfills Christ's prophecy that "the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (Jn 4:23). In his prologue, the Evangelist himself had pointed to the contrast between the old and new: "For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Jn 1:18). The New Law worships in spirit since it gives grace to the soul to form an interior union with God, which leads to perfect, interior worship. It worships in truth since the figures of the Old Law have now become clear in the manifestation of the Son of God. Christ Himself bestows this new and perfect worship, which He initiated through His own perfect worship and in which others worship by participation. This interior union with Christ shares in His relation to the Father and leads to a higher ordering toward God. This union with Christ comes about through the work of the Holy Spirit, who Himself forms the New Law. Aquinas describes this very explicitly in his *Commentary on Romans* 8:2, which speaks of the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus": "In one way this law can be the Holy Spirit, so that the *law of the spirit* means the law which is the Spirit. For a law is given in order that through it men may be led to the good... but the Holy Spirit dwelling in the mind not only teaches what is to be done by instructing the intellect but also inclines the affection to act aright."<sup>827</sup> Through the indwelling of the Spirit, justice takes on

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<sup>826</sup> Rémi Brague traces the origin of the term the New Law. He states: "In the New Testament, St. Paul... was already talking about the law of Christ. What was in Paul an isolated turn of phrase grew to become a consistent theme. The expression is already a commonplace in St. Ignatius of Antioch [*Epistle to the Magnesians*, 2]. Cyprian speaks of the law of the Lord and of the law of the Gospel or evangelical law [*Epistulae* 27.4]. Christianity came to think of itself as a law brought by Christ in the same way that Judaism is a law brought by Moses. The Fathers even speak of a 'new law' (something that the New Testament never does). Origen speaks of the Christ as a lawgiver to the Christians who brought a divine (*entheos*) legislation. For him, the Gospel is the true Deuteronomy, the veritable 'second law' [*Contra Celsum* 3.8]. Tertullian distinguishes between the earlier law and the law of the Christians which is the Gospel [*De monogamia* 8]." 210.

<sup>827</sup> Ca. 8. Lec. 1. I am indebted to Torrell for highlighting the significance of this passage. cf. *The Person and His Work*, 257. The passage continues on to note that the law is viewed not only as the Spirit Himself, but also an effect



a deeper significance as one gives God not only acts of worship out of debt, but also one's whole self in love. In addition, the New Law has a unique exterior expression as instantiates itself in the Church through the sacraments.

Though in relation to the Old Law, the New Law deepens the believer's relation with God, Aquinas still stresses their common origin in the eternal law. Both laws contain God's ultimate plan for humanity, though they reflect its gradual unfolding. The two are not "altogether diverse" since "the New Law is not distinct from the Old Law: because they both have the same end, namely, man's subjection to God."<sup>828</sup> Nevertheless, in a "second way, the New Law is distinct from the Old Law: because the Old Law is like a pedagogue of children... whereas the New Law is the law of perfection, since it is the law of charity."<sup>829</sup> There are many distinctions that Aquinas poses between the two: fear versus love, material and spiritual, etc. The greatest distinction between them seems to be Christ Himself. The Old Law looks toward Him in expectation, while the New Law contains His very presence through the Spirit. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the foundation of the New Law in Christ, particularly in relation to worship.

Christ established the New Law in many ways: by His very Incarnation and life, through His teaching, and in the work of Redemption. In the SCG, Aquinas makes clear that the

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produced in the soul: "In another way the law of the spirit can be the proper effect of the Holy Spirit, namely, faith working through love. This faith teaches what is to be done... and inclines the affections to act.... And this law of the spirit is called the new law, which is the Holy Spirit himself or something which the Holy Spirit produces in our hearts." It is the latter sense, which is emphasized in the *Summa*: "The New Law is chiefly the grace itself of the Holy Ghost, which is given to those who believe in Christ." ST I-II. 106.1, *corpus*. Though Torrell notes the difficulty of dating the Pauline commentaries, if he is correct in situating the Romans commentary in Naples (he notes its distribution began in Italy and personal accounts that testify to its occurrence there), then it would be Aquinas' final word on the relation of Holy Spirit to the New Law. Being a part of chapter eight, it would even have received Thomas' corrections after Reginald's initial *reportatio*. cf. 252-54.

<sup>828</sup> ST I-II. 107.1, *ad* 1.

<sup>829</sup> *ibid.* Being a law of charity, the New Law does not stem for legal compulsion, but rather the internal promptings of God within the soul. Pinckaers points out that "Thomas held that the New Law is a law internal to the human person, although it has its origins externally, in God." "The Return of the New Law to Moral Theology." in *The Pinckaers Reader*. 378. cf. Pinckaers' "Morality and the Movement of the Holy Spirit: Aquinas's Doctrine of *Instinctus*," found in the same volume (385-395).

Incarnation brings the divine pedagogy of the divine law to a new level: “Man, to achieve perfect certitude about the truth of faith, had to be instructed by God Himself made man, that man might in human fashion grasp the divine instruction.”<sup>830</sup> It is one thing to receive a law from God, mediated through the hands of others in written expressions of God’s wisdom, and quite another to receive the law from the hand of God’s incarnate wisdom Himself. From the same chapter of the SCG, Aquinas states that “the fact that God was willing to unite human nature to Himself personally points out to men with greatest clarity that man can be united to God by intellect, and see Him immediately.”<sup>831</sup> Rather than pointing toward the moral ordering toward God, Christ manifests the law in His very being; He embodies it and lives it out for all to see.<sup>832</sup> In the Incarnation, God’s law has descended into the midst of humanity so as to direct it in solidarity. Aquinas explains:

Matters concerning the Godhead are, in themselves, the strongest incentive to love and consequently to devotion, because God is supremely loveable. Yet such is the weakness of the human mind that it needs a guiding hand, not only to the knowledge, but also the love of Divine things by means of certain sensible objects known to us. Chief among these is the humanity of Christ.<sup>833</sup>

Sin brought about great attachment to earthly goods and blinded the mind toward the truth. As Christ sought to overcome this spiritual blindness, He manifested God to sinners in bodily form, showing solidarity with the weak and leading to the Father by sharing human nature.

In regards to the moral ordering toward God, Aquinas uses the Sermon on the Mount to typify the promulgation of the New Law through Christ’s teaching. He describes the general

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<sup>830</sup> SCG. IV. liv. trans. Charles J. O’Neil.

<sup>831</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>832</sup> Michael Dodds points out that “Thomas believes that every word and action of Jesus can teach us something of the truth.... every event of Jesus’ life ‘is a mystery’ in the sense that it signifies and actualizes the whole ‘mystery of divine love which is revealed and which acts in human history.’” “The Teaching of Thomas Aquinas on the Mysteries of the Life of Christ.” in *Aquinas on Doctrine*, 92. Thomas Ryan points to the ways in which Aquinas treats Christ as both exemplar and exemplum in the *Tertia Pars*. 86-105. See in particular his treatment of Christ’s prayer, 95-96.

<sup>833</sup> ST II-II. 82.3, *ad 2.*

order of this teaching as follows: “After declaring that his (man’s) end is Beatitude; and after commending the authority of the apostles, through whom the teaching of the Gospel was to be promulgated, He orders man’s interior movements.... viz., volition of what has to be done, and intention of the end.”<sup>834</sup> Aquinas discusses those who distorted the Law by taking its “promise” of “exalted honors and abundant riches” as a pretext “to think that we ought to serve God, with these things as the end in view.”<sup>835</sup> Christ’s teaching points to the true end of human life as a good that surpasses any earthly desire. He taught actions of mortification, such as fasting, alms, and prayer, so that it would be clear “that works of virtue should not be done for human glory,” but rather for the glory of God.<sup>836</sup> The Incarnate Son indicated that the pure interpretation of the Law requires the will to adhere to Him without putting its end in earthly goods.

Finally, Christ promulgated His New Law by His actions, which abolished the Old by fulfilling their deepest meaning. The chief of these deeds was the Paschal Mystery, which fulfilled all of the precepts of the Old Law.<sup>837</sup> Aquinas makes clear that “the mystery of the redemption of the human race was fulfilled in Christ’s Passion: hence Our Lord said then: ‘It is consummated’ (Jo. xix. 30). Consequently the prescriptions of the Law must have ceased altogether through their reality being fulfilled.”<sup>838</sup> This is not to say the moral precepts of the Law were abrogated, because these were expressions of the natural law, based on the dictate of reason itself. However, the chief function of the other precepts, ceremonial and judicial, was to direct toward Christ, both as a figurative foreshadowing and as a direct preparation of the people

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<sup>834</sup> ST I-II. 108.3, *corpus*.

<sup>835</sup> *ibid.* ad 4.

<sup>836</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>837</sup> Matthew Levering notes the advancement Aquinas made on this point: “Unlike the authors of the *Summa Fratris Alexandri*, however, Aquinas argues that Christ fulfills the Old Law precisely in his passion or suffering on the cross. Aquinas suggests that Christ’s perfect obedience to the threefold law in his passion fulfills both the literal and spiritual meaning of the Mosaic Law: Christ’s passion manifests his perfect charity (moral precepts), through which he freely wills to suffer the penalty of sin for all sinners (judicial precepts) and to give himself as the perfect offering to God (ceremonial precepts).” *Christ’s Fulfillment*. 7.

<sup>838</sup> ST I-II. 109.4, ad 2.

for His coming.<sup>839</sup> The moment of redemption stands as a direct embodiment of the New Law: Christ offers Himself in love, as both priest and victim, so as to achieve a new and lasting covenant by which God's people would dwell with Him forever. Thus, all the precepts of the Law find their perfection expression in Christ.<sup>840</sup>

Worship plays a special role in this act of redemption, as Christ offers Himself on behalf of the people as priest. This role places Him at the front of the people in leading them in their relation to God, but also in bestowing God's New Law upon them. Aquinas draws on Hebrews to express the pivotal role that the priesthood plays in law: "The Apostle says (Heb vii. 12) that 'the priesthood being translated it is necessary that a translation also be made of the Law.' But the priesthood was transferred from Aaron to Christ. Therefore the entire Law was also transferred."<sup>841</sup> The worship which expresses both laws typifies them: the one corporeal and pointing toward something else; the other incorporated within an efficacious and saving relation to the Father. The worship of Christ expresses the right relation He has with the Father and seeks to include others within that relation.

Insofar as one can claim that Christ worshipped, it is also clear that He shared in the just moral ordering to God. His soul possessed the virtue of justice and its associated virtues, such as religion.<sup>842</sup> Aquinas states that "since the grace of Christ was most perfect, there flowed from it,

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<sup>839</sup> cf. ST I-II. 100.8; 103.3; 104.3. Levering offers an important clarification on the figurative nature of these precepts: "I should emphasize again that Aquinas does not think that 'figurative' causes of the ceremonial and judicial precepts mean that one can ignore the history of Israel and simply focus on figures. On the contrary, the figurative sense upholds the integral unity of the divine law. In recognizing that Israel prefigures Christ, one does not therefore dismiss Israel as a reality in itself. Rather, as Aquinas explains, each aspect of Israel's history takes on importance in a way that no other ancient people's history does." *Christ's Fulfillment*. 27.

<sup>840</sup> Aquinas demonstrates the perfection of the Law in Christ and its order toward Him thusly: "Christ wished to conform His conduct to the Law... that by obeying the Law He might perfect it and bring it to an end in His own self, so as to show that it was ordained to Him." ST III. 40.4, *corpus*.

<sup>841</sup> ST I-II. 104.3, *sed contra*.

<sup>842</sup> Christ is spoken of as having obedience, also a part of the virtue of justice. cf. ST III. 20. Thomas Ryan points out that Aquinas "asserts that one of the virtues that Christ embodied in his passion was the cardinal virtue of justice ([III] 46.3). As we have seen, one of the subsidiary virtues arranged under justice in the *secunda-secundae* is that of religion, which is the rendering unto God that which is due God (cf. II-II.81.2). One of the acts of religion, i.e., one

in consequence, the virtues which perfect the several powers of the soul for all the soul's acts; and thus Christ had all the virtues."<sup>843</sup> While he does not speak specifically of Christ having the virtue of religion, he does imply this in numerous discussions. First, in the discussion of His possession of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Aquinas does offer some help in conceiving how Christ could have reverence for God. In speaking of the gift of fear, he indicates that...

It is plain that no one is feared except for some preeminence. And in this way it is said that in Christ there was fear of God, not indeed as it regards the evil of separation from God by fault; but inasmuch as it regards the Divine pre-eminence, on account of which the soul of Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, was borne towards God in an act of reverence. Hence it is said (Heb. v. 7) that in all things 'he was heard for his reverence.' For Christ as a man had this act of reverence toward God in a fuller sense and beyond all others. And hence Scripture attributes to Him the fullness of the fear of the Lord.<sup>844</sup>

The similarity between reverence and worship is close enough to draw conclusions about the latter from the former. This line of thought would indicate that the human and creaturely soul of Christ worships God, respecting His pre-eminence both as Creator and end. While Aquinas holds that even this created soul shared the beatific vision of God on earth, it would still have an order toward God and be borne towards Him. This bearing towards would not indicate movement toward a future union, but rather a present one. This indicates that His worship, while fulfilling the order of justice, would be propelled by the union of charity present within the will.

There are a few other indirect discussions which indicate that Christ possessed the virtue of religion. One pertains to Christ's servitude to the Father. Drawing on Augustine's

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of the expression of the virtue of religion is prayer (II-II.83). And Thomas, as we have seen, speaks explicitly of Christ's prayer in III.21." 98.

<sup>843</sup> ST III. 7.2, *corpus*. It must be noted that "all the virtues" refers to the intellectual and moral virtues, but not the theological virtues, since He did not possess faith or hope. cf. *ibid.* articles 3 and 4.

<sup>844</sup> ST III. 7.6, *corpus*. cf. Sullivan, Francis B., C.P.P.S. "The Notion of Reverence." *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 23 (1953): 5-35. Sullivan traces the history of the theology of gift of fear from Augustine to Aquinas. He focuses some attention to its relation to religion, which emerges primarily through "the explanation of reverence in terms of subjection to God." 27. He notes particularly that Alan of Lille, in his attempt to equate the gifts with virtues, tied the gift of fear to "the virtue of reverence, the virtue which inclines one to show the proper cult of honor to dignitaries." 11.

interpretation,<sup>845</sup> Aquinas states that “in the form of a servant Christ is subject to the Father.”<sup>846</sup>

Service composes one of the chief elements of the virtue of religion, and likewise, this service led to Christ’s worshipful offering of self through “obedience unto death.”<sup>847</sup> Both the gift of fear and the subjection of Christ to God represent the right ordering of His soul.

Christ’s possession of the virtue of religion can be recognized also through His actions. Prayer constitutes the first of such actions through which Aquinas points toward the conformity of His human will with the Divine will. Once again, worship can be recognized insofar as it pertains to the human soul, which maintains the right order toward God. Aquinas defends Christ’s ability to pray from the objection that it is not proper for a Divine Person to receive anything. He states: “Receiving belongs to the Divine Persons in respect of their nature, whereas prayer belongs to the one who receives through grace. The Son is said to ask or pray in respect of His assumed, i.e., His human nature and not in respect of His Godhead.”<sup>848</sup> In particular, Thomas posits that Christ “gave thanks to the Father for gifts already received in His human nature, by acknowledging Him as the author therefore,” and “also, in recognition of His Father, He besought Him in prayer for those gifts still due to Him in His human nature, such as the glory of His body.”<sup>849</sup> Aquinas holds Christ’s prayer up as “an example,” which indicates that it does stand in conformity the virtue of religion: it seeks to order one’s will to God, to give thanks, and to manifest God’s greatness in turning to Him for help.

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<sup>845</sup> Augustine interpreted Christ’s statement in Jn 14: 28 about the Father’s greatness through Philip’s language of Christ in the form of a servant.

<sup>846</sup> ST III. 20.1, *sed contra*.

<sup>847</sup> *ibid. corpus*.

<sup>848</sup> ST II-II. 83.10, *ad 1*. It is interesting to compare Thomas’ assertion that the Divine Persons do not pray since they do not need to receive anything to Bonaventure’s claim that the Divine Persons show each other piety. Rendering honor and praying are different aspects of religion and to my knowledge Thomas does not specifically address the rendering of honor within the Trinity. cf. Yves Congar’s “The Prayer of Christ,” in *Jesus Christ*, trans. Luke O’Neill. (New York: Herder & Herder, 1966), 86-106. Congar affirms that “it as man, and with a fully human prayer, that Christ prays,” since, “the Incarnate Word assumed a Jewish humanity, a religious humanity.” 87; 100. Though Aquinas points out the distinction that Christ prays as a human, it is also important to remember that this would be the action of the Word and proceed from “the human nature deified.” ST III. 16.5, *ad 2*.

<sup>849</sup> ST III. 21.3, *corpus*.

The second act concerns Christ's circumcision, by which it is clear that He practiced the ceremonial precepts, which ordered one to God through worship. While Aquinas lists many reasons why Christ should have undergone such a practice, His obedience pertains most to this discussion. He adhered to this ceremony, obediently recognizing the validity of its institution, so that "by taking on Himself the burden of the Law, He might set others free therefrom."<sup>850</sup> Christ fulfills the original purpose of circumcision as a foreshadowing of His death. Circumcision was given as a figurative "sign of faith in Christ's future Passion,"<sup>851</sup> and further "was to be a remedy against original sin... [and] for carnal concupiscence."<sup>852</sup> Christ's death consummates circumcision by actuating the reality it prefigured. This consummation freed from the material burden of this precept and made the spiritual effects it sought more explicit and accessible in Baptism. Likewise, Aquinas affirms that at Christ's presentation the sacrifice of animals should have been offered so that "the figure might be united to and confirmed by the reality."<sup>853</sup> Christ accepted the worship of the Law and in doing so took it onto the Cross so as to transform it into the new and perfect<sup>854</sup> worship of the New Law.

The final and greatest act through which Christ demonstrated worship entails the offering of Himself to the Father on the Cross. Aquinas treats this as an act of worship under Christ's

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<sup>850</sup> ST III. 37.1, *corpus*.

<sup>851</sup> ST III. 70.4, *corpus*.

<sup>852</sup> ST III. 70.3, *ad 1*.

<sup>853</sup> ST III. 37.3, *ad 3*.

<sup>854</sup> Though the fullness of perfection will only come in the state of beatitude, Aquinas still speaks of the New Law as relatively perfect in relation to the Old: "The New Law succeeded the state of the Old Law, as a more perfect law a les perfect one. Now no state of the present life can be more perfect than the state of the New Law since nothing can approach nearer to the last end than that which is the immediate cause of our being brought to the last end." ST I-II. 106.4, *corpus*. Levering describes "the perfection of the New Law" in that "believers, as the people of God (not merely as individuals), offer the perfect sacrifice to God. Israel offered animal sacrifices that prefigured Christ's sacrifice; the people of God that God gathers around Christ offers Christ's sacrifice.... Were not Christ bodily present, believers could not offer up Christ's sacrificial body, and the New Law would not attain 'perfection,' but would instead remain at the figural level.... To attain perfection means to share in Christ's bodily sacrifice in and through which justice – true interpersonal communion – is attained. Such a 'Law' constitutes a 'perfect' community. Our 'perfection' comes in sharing in this Law of love by sharing in its accomplishment." *Sacrifice and Community*. 137.

priesthood. Christ offered to the Father the act of worship due to God alone, which is sacrifice. Likewise, He bestows upon the people merits and gifts obtained by this worship. It is precisely this dual function, of offering worship to God on behalf of others, and then in return acting on God's behalf to the people, which constitutes His priesthood.<sup>855</sup> Therefore, Aquinas states that...

the office proper to a priest is to be a mediator between God and the people: to wit, inasmuch as He bestows Divine things on the people, wherefore *sacerdos* means a giver of sacred things (*sacra dans*)... and again, forasmuch as he offers up the people's prayers to God, and, in a manner, makes satisfaction to God for their sins.... For through Him are gifts bestowed on men.... Moreover, He reconciled the human race to God.<sup>856</sup>

The worship of the priest enlarges the scope of the personal order of the will to God since the priest stands in the place of others and presents them to God. The priest aids those he represents by offering acts of worship on their behalf so as to aid their shortfalls. Christ does so through His relationship with the Father. The true worship He offered was received by the Father because due to the unity between the Father and Son, with which His humanity shared, as expressed in Jesus' loving obedience.

Aquinas describes Christ's ability to mediate in a separate question dedicated to that concern. His role as mediator arises from the hypostatic union, which places the humanity of Christ in a unique position in its proximity to God. Aquinas' describes this mediation as follows:

We may consider two things in a mediator: first, that he is a mean; secondly, that he unites others. Now it is of the nature of a mean to be distant from each extreme: while it unites by communicating to one that which belongs to the other. Now neither of these

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<sup>855</sup> cf. Matthew Levering. "Christ as Priest: An Exploration of *Summa Theologiae* III, Question 22." *The Thomist* 71 (2007): 379-417. See also, Roger Nutt. "From Within the Mediation of Christ: The Place of Christ in the Christian Moral and Sacramental Life According to St. Thomas Aquinas." *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition 5 no 4 (2007): 817-842.

<sup>856</sup> ST III. 22.1, *corpus*. In his essay on Aquinas' Commentary on Hebrews, Thomas Weinandy describes Christ's ability to be priest through his threefold perfection. He states: "First, it (Christ's priesthood) pertains to his relationship to the Father as the all holy Son. Secondly, it pertains to his relationship to the Father as the all holy Son. Secondly, it pertains to his relationship with his fellow human beings in that being 'innocent' he has never been found guilty of sin, that is, he has never sinned against anyone, but instead, in his innocence, has consistently loved everyone. Thirdly it is in relationship to himself, in that he is himself holy and without blemish in his own being.... therefore his priesthood has merited for him an everlasting superiority that exceeds all others." "The Supremacy of Christ: Aquinas' *Commentary on Hebrews*." in *Aquinas on Scripture*. 237.



can be applied to Christ as God, but only as man. . . . Because, as man, He is distant both from God, by nature, and from man by dignity both of grace and glory. Again, it belongs to Him, as man, to unite men to God by communicating to men both precepts and gifts, and by offering satisfaction and prayers to God from men.<sup>857</sup>

Christ's unique ontological position grants Him proximity to both "extremes" so that he can render human worship in an acceptable manner to God and also bestow the fruit of that worship to humanity.<sup>858</sup> The need for this mediation arises both from sin and the limits of nature in relating to God. All of humanity stands in need of Christ's mediating priesthood: "He needs someone between himself and God, who of himself cannot approach to God; and such a one is subject to the priesthood by sharing the effect thereof."<sup>859</sup> Christ's worship seeks to lift up the worship of humanity, which cannot approach God in a fitting manner on its own.

Christ elevates worship by perfectly fulfilling the natural dictate of the moral order and also by exceeding it in a supernatural fashion.<sup>860</sup> He communicates this perfection to others by enabling them to share in His own worship. While all of Christ's life can be seen within this

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<sup>857</sup> ST III. 26.2, *corpus*. Aquinas speaks also of the fitness of Incarnation for Christ's mediation in the following manner: "Now a mere man could not have satisfied for the whole human race, and God was not bound to satisfy; hence it behooved Jesus Christ to be both God and man." ST III. 1.2, *corpus*.

<sup>858</sup> William Martin describes how in Christian worship the worship of man and the saving action of God meet. He states: "The worship that is offered to God is an upward movement from earth to heaven, while sanctification is a downward movement one from heaven to earth. The liturgy of the Church is capable of both these movements which are not opposed to each other but are truly complementary. Between them exists the bond of unity that is founded on the unique position held by Christ in all liturgical activity. The worship rendered by the Church to God is always in Christ, that is to say, in union with the Head. More properly, the cult of the Church is her participation in the worship which Christ the Head renders to God. It is the worship rendered to God by Christ the Head, and by His priesthood continued in and through and with the Church." *The Relations Between Faith and the Sacraments Interpreted According to the Doctrine of Saint Thomas*. PhD diss., Pontifical University of the Lateran, 1964, 128. It is the priesthood of Christ, which unites the divine and human into one unified worship in the Church.

<sup>859</sup> ST III. 22.4, *corpus*.

<sup>860</sup> Serge-Thomas Bonino argues that Christ's priesthood fulfills not only the priesthood of the Old Law, but also that of the law of nature, as expressed by Melchizedek. He states: "Il faut donc tenir simultanément *et la nouveauté et la continuité* du sacerdoce chrétien par rapport au sacerdoce de la Loi ancienne. Bien plus, la référence au mystérieux sacerdoce du roi païen Melchisédech suggère qu'au-delà de la relation binaire entre l'Ancienne et la Nouvelle Alliance, le sacerdoce de Jésus-Christ assume et accomplit aussi le sacerdoce tel qu'il a pu se réaliser dans l'économie de la loi de nature, c'est-à-dire dans l'état théologique de l'humanité qui fait suite à la chute originelle et précède, pour le peuple hébreu, le don de la Loi." "La sacerdoce comme institution naturelle selon saint Thomas d'Aquin." *Revue Thomiste* 99 no 1 (1999): 33-34. Though Bonino acknowledges that Thomas does specify a natural priesthood in his treatment of religion or priesthood, he argues that is implied in the social character of religion, the necessary role of intermediaries, and in the practice of sacrifice. Cf. 56.

light, through His practice, example, and teaching of continual prayer and the bestowal of honor to the Father, there is one act, which stands out as the climax of His worshipful mediation. Aquinas makes clear that “the priest’s office consists principally in offering sacrifice.”<sup>861</sup> This pertains also to Christ’s priesthood. As explained above, the general nature of sacrifice consists of contemning some good in order to show honor to God as the origin and end of all one’s goods. Of all the good things, which the world has ever possessed, Aquinas emphasizes that Christ’s own life stands out chiefly among them. He states: “Now of all the gifts which God vouchsafed to mankind after they had fallen away by sin, the chief is that He gave His Son.... Consequently the chief sacrifice is that whereby Christ ‘delivered Himself... to God for an odor of sweetness (Eph. v. 2).’”<sup>862</sup> The only gift truly worthy of the Father that Christ could offer was His own life. Christ did not only worship, but His life consisted of the matter (and therefore the object)<sup>863</sup> of the worship: “Therefore, Christ Himself, as man, was not only priest, but also perfect victim, being at the same time victim for sin, victim for a peace offering and holocaust.”<sup>864</sup> This sacrifice constitutes the perfect act of worship as regards both the one worshipping and what is offered.

Christ’s perfect act of worship served not only to honor God, but also to act as a means of salvation for humanity. This act fulfilled the order of justice ruptured by sin and also elevated humanity to a new level of supernatural union with the Father. Aquinas speaks of Christ’s offering of Himself as “condign satisfaction” with “infinite efficiency.”<sup>865</sup> It is truly significant that the salvation of humanity comes through a human act of worship. The desired end of happiness in God, which had previously eluded the worshipper, finally finds its goal in the

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<sup>861</sup> ST III. 22.4, *sed contra*.

<sup>862</sup> ST I-II. 102.3, *corpus*.

<sup>863</sup> cf. ST II-II. 81.5.

<sup>864</sup> ST III. 22.2, *corpus*.

<sup>865</sup> ST III. 1.2, *ad 2*.

worship of Christ. While worship, and especially sacrifice, had always sought right relation with God, only the one and true sacrifice could enact that relation. Christ's worship fits with Aquinas' definition that "a sacrifice properly so called is something done for that honor which is properly due to God to appease Him."<sup>866</sup> This act could atone since "he properly atones who offers something which the offended one loves equally, or even more than he detested the offense. But by suffering out of love and obedience, Christ gave more to God than was required to compensate for the offense of the whole human race."<sup>867</sup> The "dignity of His life" itself made the sacrifice wholly acceptable, but the true greatness of the act came from Christ's interior relation to the Father.

First of all, Aquinas makes clear that Christ's sacrifice fulfills the natural order of justice, which stands as the foundation for worship. Christ fulfills the order of justice through its part of obedience, which we saw above to be the essential human act. Obedience recognizes the greatness of God and justly follows His commands. The interior rectitude resulting from it acts to truly honor God, which is why Aquinas echoes the Scriptures by stating that "Obedience is preferred to all sacrifices.... Therefore it was fitting that the sacrifice of Christ's Passion and death should proceed from obedience."<sup>868</sup> The rectitude of Christ's will reestablished

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<sup>866</sup> ST III. 48.3, *corpus*. Cf. *De civitate Dei* X, to which Aquinas refers directly after the above quotation.

<sup>867</sup> ST III. 48.2, *corpus*. Cf. Matthew Levering. "Juridical Language in Soteriology." *Angelicum* 80 no 2 (2003): 309-326.

<sup>868</sup> ST III. 47.2, *corpus*. Romanus Cessario describes "Christ's submission to the will of the Father," which "establishes the exemplar of all human loving." He continues: "Several features of Aquinas's theology of satisfaction merit careful attention at this point. First, Aquinas locates the essence of Christ's sacrifice in the perfect meshing of his human will with that which the Father from all eternity wills for the salvation of the world.... Second, the inauguration of the new dispensation occurs because of the love and obedience of the Incarnate Son. Indeed, we recognize in Christ the perfection of the beatitude he himself taught as expressive of the new law." He ties this obedience into worship as follows: "Christ the priest of the new alliance offers to God the perfect worship of praise. Even so, it is not the sacrifice of his body on the altar of the cross in which this perfect worship mainly consists, but his personal offering of obedience and love. Since the divine will to which Christ is obedient remains identical with the salvific will of God for man's salvation, Christ's satisfactory offering opens the way up to salvation." *The Godly Image: Christ and Salvation in Catholic Thought from St. Anselm to Aquinas*. (Petersham, Massachusetts: St. Bede's Publications, 1990), 157.

humanity's just relationship with God that had been lost through Adam's sin.<sup>869</sup> This disobedience had destroyed the will's order toward God and consequently led to false sacrifice. Nevertheless, Christ's rectitude did not simply place the will in a just relation to God, but rather reached out to the Father in a supernatural manner, creating an even higher moral relation of the will.<sup>870</sup> Above obedience, love served as the means by which Christ offered Himself to the Father. Aquinas states that His sacrifice "was acceptable to God on account of His charity in offering up His own flesh."<sup>871</sup> Aquinas links this charity specifically with the virtue of religion through devotion. The Cross served as a means of exercising devotion, as Aquinas relates:

Two things may be considered in the offering of a sacrifice by any priest—namely, the sacrifice itself which is offered, and the devotion of the offerer. Now the proper effect of priesthood is that which results from the sacrifice itself. But Christ obtained a result from His passion, not as by virtue of the sacrifice, which is offered by way of satisfaction, but by the very devotion with which out of charity He humbly endured the Passion.<sup>872</sup>

Christ fulfilled the just demand to offer worship and service to God not by relating to God as an "other," but by offering Himself to reflect unity in charity. His worship does not only fulfill a debt, but also responds in a manner that exceeds the nature and demands of justice.<sup>873</sup>

The exceeding manner of Christ's action reflects that He both takes on the mode of worship as presented by nature, and even custom, and yet perfects it in a way surpassing any other. In speaking specifically of the Old Law, Aquinas stresses that "Christ was the culminating

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<sup>869</sup> Levering affirms that "Aquinas insists that justice belongs at the heart of the Christian account of salvation, precisely because of the significance of justice as a framework descriptive of the creature-Creator relationship in creation." *Sacrifice and Community*. 69.

<sup>870</sup> Philippe affirms this point by making clear that "Jesus, the supreme servant of the Lord, alone lived, in a special way, in accordance with the first commandment of the Law. He lived with such intensity of love that he transformed it, giving it a far deeper and more divine meaning—from worship of the servant for his master was changed into the worship of the well-beloved Son for his Father. It is on the cross that is accomplished and shown in full that filial worship which, throughout his life, Jesus never ceased to carry out and to be." 56.

<sup>871</sup> ST III. 48.3, *ad* 1.

<sup>872</sup> ST III. 22.4, *ad* 2.

<sup>873</sup> Aquinas holds together theories of salvation emphasizing both just satisfaction (Anselm) and charity (Abelard). Aquinas "argues that both are right," though in response to the prophetic criticism of sacrifice "as mere external forms," he "is careful to emphasize the role of charity in Christ's sacrifice." Levering. *Christ's Fulfillment*. 58.

sacrifice of all.”<sup>874</sup> The “all” seems to signify “all people” since the objection to which it responds specified that certain animals were offered for certain individuals. Christ’s sacrifice fulfills not only the foreshadowing of the ceremonies of the Old Law, but even the empty and evil rituals of worship in sin. Though human sacrifice bears no direct relation to Christ’s offering, Aquinas still makes a connection: “the slayers of Christ are not accounted as offering a sacrifice to God, but as guilty of a great crime: a similitude of which was born by the wicked sacrifices of the Gentiles in which they offered up men to idols.”<sup>875</sup> Christ allowed Himself to become a victim of sinful men in a manner akin to the vain, human sacrifice of paganism. He did not fulfill this empty ritual, but instead used its form to surpass it. The pagans incorrectly thought that human flesh would be most pleasing to the gods and yet Christ’s offered His own “since being flesh of human nature, it was fittingly offered for men.”<sup>876</sup> The main difference between human sacrifice and Christ’s self-sacrifice is that while the former commits sin through murder, Christ offered Himself out of love. In handing Himself over to sinners, He conquered their sin. This is why Aquinas can posit that “it was through the triumph of the cross that Christ merited power and lordship over the Gentiles”<sup>877</sup> through which “idolatry was banished by the

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<sup>874</sup> ST III. 22.3, *ad 3*. “...idest Christi esset sacrificium consummativum omnium aliorum.” Charles Journet affirms that “in this priesthood, in this cultus, in this unique sacrifice, all that was legitimate in the priesthood, the cultus and the sacrifice of the Old Law—and before that of the law of nature—finds its meaning, its justification and its fulfillment.” *The Church of the Word Incarnate*. Vol. 1. *The Apostolic Hierarchy*. trans. A.H.C. Downes. (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1955), 52. The Cross fulfills both the sacrifice of the law and of nature and, as will be shown below, even that of idolatry, to some degree. Bonino sees the reference in the Roman Canon to the sacrifice of Abel, Abraham, and Melchizedek as an indication that Christ’s sacrifice recapitulates all others. 57.

<sup>875</sup> ST III. 22.2, *ad 2*. Chapter one of Levering’s *Sacrifice and Community* explores the relation of Christ’s sacrifice to the *aqedah*, the near sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham. The sacrifice of Abraham’s beloved son represents his complete obedience to God. Levering explains that “what God tests in Abraham goes beyond merely a test of Abraham’s attitude of trust. The issue is rather whether Abraham will sacrifice every created thing, *even the beloved son of the promise*, to God at God’s command.” He links this to Aquinas thought as follows: “For Aquinas, Isaac is a paradigmatic instance of such sacrificial communion, even though Isaac himself does not, unlike Abraham and Jacob, offer sacrifice in the Genesis narratives: ‘Isaac was a type of Christ, being himself offered in sacrifice; and so there was no need that he should be represented as offering sacrifice.’ [ST II-II. 85.1, *ad 2*]” 35; 49.

<sup>876</sup> ST III. 48.4, *ad 1*.

<sup>877</sup> ST III. 42.1, *corpus*.

doctrine and power of Christ, who triumphed over the devil.”<sup>878</sup> By submitting to the evil deeds of those who sinfully offered (not as worship, as Aquinas made clear above) an innocent man to God, Christ abrogated sinful worship.

While it has been established that Christ offered one exceedingly perfect and acceptable act of worship, it must now be demonstrated how this worship is communicated to others. In treating Christ’s priesthood, Aquinas states: “In the priestly office, we may consider two things: first, the offering of sacrifice; secondly, the consummation of the sacrifice, consisting in this, that those for whom the sacrifice is offered, obtain the end of the sacrifice.”<sup>879</sup> It belongs to Christ’s priesthood not only to offer sacrifice on behalf of others, but also to communicate the effects of this sacrifice. He lists these effects thusly:

Now man is required to offer sacrifice for three reasons. First, for the remission of sin, by which he is turned away from God.... Secondly, that man may be preserved in a state of grace, by ever adhering to God, wherein his peace and salvation consist.... Thirdly, in order that the spirit of man be perfectly united to God: which will be most perfectly realized in glory.... Now these effects were conferred on us by the humanity of Christ. For, in the first place, our sins were blotted out.... Secondly, through Him we received the grace of salvation.... Thirdly, through Him we have acquired the perfection of glory.<sup>880</sup>

Christ bestows forgiveness, grace, and eternal happiness to those who accept His mediation.

This occurs by a sharing in Christ’s life, joining in His loving and just offering of Himself to the Father. Aquinas repeatedly makes clear that those who are joined to Christ, by faith and love, are truly one with Him as part of His Body. For example, he states that “the head and members are as one mystic person; and therefore Christ’s satisfaction belongs to all the faithful as being

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<sup>878</sup> ST II-II. 94.4, *ad* 2.

<sup>879</sup> ST III. 22.5, *corpus*.

<sup>880</sup> ST III. 22.2, *corpus*.

His members.”<sup>881</sup> Christ’s faithful share in His sacrifice by being one with Him. By uniting to Christ’s definitive sacrifice, His members may likewise make true sacrifices at one with Him.

Christ’s worshipful sacrifice unites believers by binding and conforming them to it, allowing them to share in its merits. His worship comes to the individual through the worship of the Church, His Body, through which one is given a share in His very priesthood. First of all, in treating the effects of the Passion, Aquinas specifies the general means of this conformity: “In order to secure the effects of Christ’s Passion, we must be likened unto Him. Now we are likened unto Him sacramentally in Baptism, according to Rom. vi. 4.”<sup>882</sup> Later, when treating the sacraments, he specifies the way in which baptism conforms one to Christ’s priesthood. He does so through the bestowal of a character, by which “God imprints His character on us,”<sup>883</sup> and this “character should properly be attributed to Christ.”<sup>884</sup> The sacramental character conforms one to Christ so as to depute to the worship of God by sharing in Christ’s priesthood.<sup>885</sup> Through this “seal” one is given grace “for the enjoyment of glory,” but more “properly speaking” it acts so that “each of the faithful is deputed to receive, or to bestow on others, things pertaining to the worship of God.”<sup>886</sup> Furthermore:

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<sup>881</sup> ST III. 48.2, *ad* 1.

<sup>882</sup> ST III. 49.3, *ad* 2.

<sup>883</sup> ST III. 63.1, *sed contra*.

<sup>884</sup> ST III. 63.3, *sed contra*.

<sup>885</sup> Romanus Cessario, in his essay “Aquinas on Christian Salvation,” elaborates on the relation of Christ’s priesthood and the sacramental participation of the believer as follows: “For Aquinas, Christ’s satisfaction holds a central place in the Church’s life as it is ordered around faith and sacraments. Christ preeminently exercises the priestly office in the new covenant. Configured to the person of Christ in baptism, the member of his body joins in the pleasing sacrifice which Christ himself offers to the Father. As something due to God, satisfaction constitutes an act of worship on the part of the creature. In this sense, satisfaction pleases God. By the same token, satisfaction, though by nature penal, also renders a sacrifice of praise. This happens, however, only when the unity established between Christ and his members makes of the whole body a single oblation to the Lord.” in *Aquinas on Doctrine*, 133. It is significant that Cessario points to the fulfillment of just worship through one’s union to Christ in the worship of the Church. Cf. Levering’s *Sacrifice and Community*. 91. Levering states: “The members of the Mystical Body, participating in the action of Christ the Head as represented by the priest, share by the common priesthood of baptism in the priest’s sacramental offering of Christ’s sacrifice and in the benefits that flow from Christ’s sacrificial expiation, whose power is made present in the Eucharist.”

<sup>886</sup> ST III. 63.3, *corpus*.

The whole rite of the Christian religion is derived from Christ's priesthood. Consequently, it is clear that the sacramental character is specially the character of Christ, to Whose character the faithful are likened by reason of the sacramental characters, which are nothing else than certain participations of Christ's Priesthood, flowing from Christ Himself.<sup>887</sup>

The faithful share in the priesthood of Christ by receiving His character in baptism and by virtue of this character they make acts of worship, which participate in His own. This participation forms the essence of Christian worship; it makes it not only acceptable to God, but salvific for the individual.

Sharing in Christ's worship reveals an even deeper participation in His relation to the Father. It is His love and devotion to the Father which makes His sacrifice so exceedingly worthy and redemptive. Therefore, for the Christian's worship to avoid a superficial participation in Christ's worship, there must be conformity to Christ in His very relation to the Father.<sup>888</sup> This harkens back to the fact that it was the love, not the sacrifice itself, that was most pleasing to the Father.<sup>889</sup> To share in this worship, one cannot only share in the act of worship, but also the Sonship of Christ. This occurs through adoption. In a question devoted to this subject, Aquinas makes clear that "adoptive sonship is a certain likeness of the eternal Sonship"<sup>890</sup> so that "by adoption we are made the brethren of Christ, as having with Him the same Father."<sup>891</sup> Aquinas

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<sup>887</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>888</sup> Matthew Levering affirms this point as follows: "We share in his (Christ's) sacrifice sacramentally by becoming like him, thereby accomplishing God's purpose in Israel of forming a holy people in and through holy worship." *Sacrifice and Community*. 92. Holy worship comes from sharing in Christ's self-offering to the Father in love and obedience. Therefore, Levering affirms that "to abide in Christ's love, we must imitate his obedience to the Father's commandments." *ibid.* 99.

<sup>889</sup> cf. Daly. *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*. 57.

<sup>890</sup> ST III. 23.2, *ad* 3. Cessario links the notion of adoption specifically to sacramental worship. Cf. *The Godly Image*, 176.

<sup>891</sup> *ibid.* *ad* 2. Wawrykow points out this adoption brings about a new relationship of justice with God, which he describes in terms of merit. He argues that "Thomas's teaching in the *Summa* is clearly 'juridical': He explains merit to be a quality of an act which one deserves, in justice, a reward from God. Yet Thomas's 'juridicism' is highly nuanced, and he is careful to focus our attention on the context in which justice can govern divine-human relations. Most important, he argues that his justice only holds sway when there exists a special community between God and the human person, and this community is itself created by the gift of God. The 'communal' basis of justice is disclosed by Thomas's description of grace in terms of sonship. By grace, God freely elevates people to God's



notes an important distinction that humans are “likened to the splendor of the Eternal Son by reason of the light of grace”<sup>892</sup> not “natural generation.”<sup>893</sup> As adopted sons and daughters, Christians share more fully in Christ’s worship since they too approach God as Father and offer Him a sacrifice out of love.

Though Christ’s humanity was not adopted since it shared in the “natural generation” of the Person of the Word, it did receive an overflow of grace.<sup>894</sup> The humanity of Christ, as an instrument, acts for the salvation of souls, so that by imitation and participation in this graced relation, others may share in its abundance of grace: “Now men become receivers of this grace through God’s Son made man, Whose humanity grace filled first, and thence flowed forth to us.”<sup>895</sup> In this light Aquinas argues for the necessity of the Incarnation “with regard to the full participation of Divinity, which is the true bliss of man and end of human life; and this is bestowed upon us by Christ’s humanity.”<sup>896</sup> With adoption by God and in conformity to the grace and merits of Christ, the Christian enters into the right moral relation with God necessary for true worship. While the Old Law had pointed toward the necessity of right moral conduct, the New Law, in conforming one to Christ through the Holy Spirit, enables one to actually live righteously.

The New Law does not essentially propose a new moral code.<sup>897</sup> This had been given both in human law, as a codification of the natural law, and in the moral precepts of the Old

own level, treating them as ‘sons’ to whom what belongs to the Father can also belong. As the term ‘sonship’ suggests, the community which lies behind merit is itself Christ-centered. It is through the action of the Son of God that others are enabled to be adopted as God’s children.” 203-04.

<sup>892</sup> *ibid. ad 3.*

<sup>893</sup> *ibid. ad 2.* Thomas also notes that this adoption occurs “through a voluntary operation, which is common to Him (the Father) and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost: so that Christ is not the Son of the whole Trinity, as we are.” *ibid. ad 3.*

<sup>894</sup> cf. ST III. 7.1, *corpus.*

<sup>895</sup> ST I-II. 108.1, *corpus.*

<sup>896</sup> ST III. 1.2, *corpus.*

<sup>897</sup> Aquinas states that “the teaching of Christ and the apostles added very few precepts to those of the natural law.” ST I-II. 107.4, *corpus.*

Law.<sup>898</sup> The New Law essentially consists of the internal strength to do the good in love, which comes from interior union with God. Thus, Aquinas expounds on the nature of the New Law: “Now that which is preponderant in the law of the New Testament, and whereon all its efficacy is based, is the grace of the Holy Ghost, which is given through faith in Christ. Consequently the New Law is chiefly the grace itself of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>899</sup> Further, it “is instilled into man not only by indicating to him what he should do, but also by helping him to accomplish it.”<sup>900</sup> This pertains to the natural dictate to worship, which was commanded by the moral and ceremonial precepts of the Law. While it appeared to reason in the reception of the command that this worship was necessary, it was up to the individual to either formulate the means (under the law of reason) or to execute it (under both natural and Old laws). However, in the New Law the dictate to worship springs forth from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Who leads one to lovingly honor the Father as an adopted son or daughter, and, Who, furthermore, grants His assistance for its execution. Therefore, Aquinas explains that “the worship of the New Law, in the sacrifice whereof spiritual grace is contained, is of itself acceptable to God.”<sup>901</sup> Since it flows from Christ’s own worship, the New Law contains the right relation to the Father He possessed and gives His Spirit which configures the believer to His humanity along with its relation to God.

Unlike the worship of the Old Law, which contained much that was figurative, and served as a pedagogue, the worship of the New Law focuses explicitly on right relation with God. The essential acts of Christian worship stem from interior love and knowledge of God, while exterior deeds act as signs of the interior. Aquinas contrasts this worship with the

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<sup>898</sup> Pamela Hall makes an important point on the similarity of the natural law and the New Law that both consist in “internal prompting.” 69. See also 72-73.

<sup>899</sup> ST I-II. 106.1, *corpus*.

<sup>900</sup> *ibid.* *ad* 2.

<sup>901</sup> ST I-II. 102.4, *ad* 3.

ceremonial precepts by affirming that “the decrees of the New Law, which refer chiefly to faith and the love of God are reasonable from the very nature of the act.”<sup>902</sup> The priority of the interior in the New Law follows Christ’s own sacrificial worship. Though it took the form of an external act, Aquinas recognizes its greatest worth primarily as an internal act of charity. In relating the New Law to the moral precepts, Aquinas makes clear that the exercise of charity calls for external acts, which are essential to virtue. He states that “the right use of grace is by means of works of charity. These, in so far as they are essential to virtue, pertain to the moral precepts.... Hence in this respect, the New Law had nothing to add as regards external action.”<sup>903</sup> The New Law does not issue a new dictate to worship, but rather presupposes “those moral precepts which have a necessary connection with virtue.”<sup>904</sup> Thus, the moral precept to worship does not constitute a new external act of the New Law, but rather becomes a work of charity, by which grace is rightly exercised in honoring God.

The New Law’s contribution to worship does not stem from a new imposition of a moral code nor from new external acts, but rather from the bestowal of the ability to accomplish them. The charity, which Christ manifested on the Cross, becomes the form of the moral life, which is shared through conformity to Christ in faith and the sacraments<sup>905</sup> (through which come the bestowal of characters and adoption). In the New Law the Spirit communicates this charity, which leads to a blossoming of the moral life. While the will may have its order to God from its very nature, it is charity which bestows upon it the rectitude and elevation necessary to have God as its supernatural end. Aquinas makes the distinction between perfect (infused) and imperfect

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<sup>902</sup> ST I-II. 102.1, *ad* 1.

<sup>903</sup> ST I-II. 108.2, *corpus*.

<sup>904</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>905</sup> *cf.* ST III. 48.6.

(acquired) virtue.<sup>906</sup> The former comes from the infusion of grace and is ordered toward supernatural beatitude with God, while the latter comes from the exercise of the powers in proportion to their nature.<sup>907</sup> Aquinas argues that “only the infused virtues are perfect, and deserve to be called virtues simply: since they direct man well to the ultimate end. But the other virtues, those namely, that are acquired, are virtues in a restricted sense, but not simply: for they direct man well in respect of the last end in some particular genus of action, but not in respect of the last end simply.”<sup>908</sup> Thus, the natural order of the will toward God, found within Cicero’s description of the virtue of religion, could achieve some imperfect and very limited expression, but could not achieve the right relation with God in accord with the true happiness of humanity. Aquinas does affirm the existence of this imperfect virtue, “even as they were in many of the Gentiles,” but any such expression in the realm of worship, could not be called a virtue “simply.”

The need for the infusion of virtue is the reason why true religion or worship comes only through Christ. The grace which flows from His own perfect worship enables one to have the right relation to God necessary for virtue. This includes justice, upon which worship is founded. Justice necessarily entails right relation to God and thus, it is necessary to repeat that “faith in Christ is the origin and cause of justice, according to Rom. iii. 22, ‘The justice of God by faith of Jesus Christ’: wherefore faith in Christ does not void the order of justice, but strengthens it.”<sup>909</sup>

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<sup>906</sup> cf. Gabriel Bullet. *Vertus morales infuses et vertus morales acquises selon Saint Thomas d’Aquin*. Thomas Osborne makes a further distinction between imperfect and perfect acquired virtue, the latter which consists in the full possession of the unity of the virtues achieved with the assistance of grace. “Perfect and Imperfect Virtues in Aquinas.” *The Thomist* 71 (2007): 39-64. Even this perfect acquired virtue is imperfect compared to perfect infused virtue due to the differing ends toward which they are directed, the former to imperfect happiness and the latter to perfect. Osborne also deals with two lower levels of virtue (at least so called): false virtue (directed to a bad end) and altogether imperfect virtue (a sort of natural disposition). He notes that other commentators on Aquinas, such as Garrigou-Lagrangue add even more distinct states to acquired virtue.

<sup>907</sup> For a treatment of charity as the form of the virtues, see Sherwin, 192-202. Sherwin notes that the role of charity as form of the virtues shifted in Aquinas’ thought from exercising a formal or exemplar cause (as in his *Commentary on the Sentences*) to the position that it “charity is solely the efficient cause of the virtues.” 202.

<sup>908</sup> ST I-II. 65.2, *corpus*.

<sup>909</sup> ST II-II. 104.6, *corpus*. Matthew Levering describes Christ as the “sacrificial embodiment of justice.” “Aquinas on the Liturgy of the Eucharist.” in *Aquinas on Doctrine*, 191.

In setting right humanity's relation to God, Christ opens up the order of justice to healing and strengthening. This is expressed not only in worship, but also in relations between fellow human beings. Aquinas describes that Christ "orders man's interior movements, first in regard to man himself, secondly in regard to his neighbor."<sup>910</sup> In this way Christ strengthens particular justice by directing one to act rightly in relation to one's neighbor, but He also directs one according to legal justice, "because all works of virtue must be offered by us to God through Him."<sup>911</sup> Therefore, the New Law strengthens the moral order of the will through justice, but most importantly, it elevates the will in relation to God through the order of charity. It does so by allowing the order of all one's actions to God to come to fruition by relating to Him intimately as adopted son of the Father. While justice advances toward God as the end of action, charity actually arrives at this end. Having a close relationship with God in love brings about moral rectitude by sharing in His goodness, which creates a state of interior righteousness.

The New Law creates interior righteousness by initiating the believer into a true state of justice. In his exposition of justice, Aquinas lists an additional form of justice put forward by Aristotle, metaphorical justice, which centers on interior rectitude.<sup>912</sup> Thomas states that "the justice which faith works in us, is that whereby the ungodly is justified: it consists in the due coordination of the parts of the soul.... Now this belongs to metaphorical justice."<sup>913</sup> If the law of sin inflames the concupiscible part of the soul, bringing it to dominate reason and volition, the New Law brings about right order in the soul, allowing reason and the will to control the passions and to focus on their true end of knowing and loving God. While Aquinas does recognize that justice can be acquired naturally, he, nevertheless, notes that "the infused virtue is

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<sup>910</sup> ST I-II. 108.3, *corpus*.

<sup>911</sup> ST I-II. 102.4, *ad* 6.

<sup>912</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. V. xi.

<sup>913</sup> ST II-II. 58.2, *ad* 1. cf. ST I-II. 113.

caused by God Himself through His grace. The latter (infused rather than acquired) is true justice... and in this respect of which is said to be just before God.”<sup>914</sup> Even if one could develop some imperfect habit of rendering what is due (say to one’s neighbors or business partners), to have the true justice by which one’s interior life exists in proper harmony and all of one’s actions are ordered properly to God requires God’s grace. True justice comes only from the New Law through which one may share in Christ’s own righteousness.

To have justice toward God requires a right relation with Him. One cannot rend Him what He is due when in a state of enmity with Him on account of sin. However, one cannot establish this right relation on one’s own. Aquinas describes this in these words: “Hence sin is remitted to us, when God is at peace with us, and this peace consists in the love whereby God loves us.... Now the effect of the Divine love in us, which is taken away by sin, is grace, whereby a man is made worthy of eternal life, from which sin shuts him out.”<sup>915</sup> The creation of this interior righteousness and peace with God enables one to become God’s servant and to fulfill the demands of justice. Aquinas examines the way the interior state relates to worship through holiness. In the article dealing with holiness (II-II. 81.8), he refers to the canticle of Zachariah, where the Evangelist writes that God swore an oath to Abraham “to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve [*latreuein*] him without fear, in holiness [*hosioteti*] and righteousness [or justice, *dikaiousune*] before him all the days of our life” (Luke 1: 74-75). This short passage reflects the need for grace to free from the entanglements of sin, which entails the lordship of the devil, so that one becomes free to enter into His service (i.e. worship) through holiness and justice. Aquinas looks to purity and firmness as the particular attributes of holiness, which respectively allow for “the mind to be united to the Supreme Being”

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<sup>914</sup> ST I-II. 100.12, *corpus*.

<sup>915</sup> ST I-II. 113.2, *corpus*.

and for it to be “applied to Him as its last end and first beginning.”<sup>916</sup> This purity and firmness enable the mind to cling to God without the distraction of lower things and thus enable one to justly order one’s life to Him. Therefore, Aquinas makes a strong link between holiness and religion:

Accordingly, it is by sanctity that the human mind applies itself and its acts to God: so that it differs from religion not essentially but only logically. For it takes the name of religion according as it gives God due service in matters pertaining specially to the Divine worship, such as sacrifices, oblations, and so forth; while it is called sanctity, according as man refers to God not only these but also the works of the other virtues, or according as man by means of certain works disposes himself to the worship of God.<sup>917</sup>

Holiness serves as the means by which the infused justice of interior righteousness orders all of one’s life to God, not only in acts of worship, but also in all one does. Holiness allows all of one’s life to act as a pure offering to the honor of God.

Holiness elucidates the way in which the virtue of religion directs all of one’s virtue and acts to the honor of God. It is clear that this could only be called worship analogously since it did entail a specific act of worship (such as a visible sacrifice), and yet Aquinas kept it within the discussion of religion to show that both specific acts of worship and the general order to God both stem from a common virtue of the will. While holiness stands for a general order of one’s whole life to God, Aquinas does introduce more specific means by which the intellect and will relate to God. In speaking of justification he notes that “faith and charity imply a special directing of the human mind to God by the intellect and will; whereas justice implies a general rectitude of order.”<sup>918</sup> As acts of virtue seeking to honor God, faith and charity certainly fall under the general ordering of justice to God. Nevertheless, as theological virtues they provide

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<sup>916</sup> ST II-II. 81.8, *corpus*.

<sup>917</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>918</sup> ST I-II. 113.1, *ad 2*.

the soul with a more direct means of relating to God than the moral virtue of justice. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the way in which the theological virtues impact the worship of God.

The theological virtues reveal the way in which God elevates the natural order of the intellect and will so that they may be proportionate to Him as the object of supernatural happiness. Thomas makes clear that “the reason and will are naturally directed to God, inasmuch as He is the beginning and end of nature, but in proportion to nature. But reason and will, according to their nature, are not sufficiently directed to Him in so far as He is the object of supernatural happiness.”<sup>919</sup> Intellectual and moral virtues seek knowledge and right action so as to know and love God, but are confined by the limits of nature. The limits of nature and the call to relate to God supernaturally reveal what Aquinas describes as a twofold happiness:

One is proportionate to human nature, a happiness, to wit, which man can obtain by means of his natural principles. The other is a happiness surpassing man’s nature, and which man can obtain by the power of God alone, by a kind of participation of the Godhead, about which it is written (2 Pet. i. 4) that by Christ we are made ‘partakers of the Divine nature.’ And because such happiness surpasses the capacity of human nature, man’s natural principles which enable him to act well according to his capacity, do not suffice to direct man to this same happiness. Hence it is necessary for man to receive from God some additional principles, whereby he may be directed to supernatural happiness, even as he is directed to his connatural end, by means of his natural principles, albeit not without the Divine assistance. Such like principles are called theological virtues: first, because their object is God, inasmuch as they direct us aright to God: secondly, because they are infused in us by God alone: thirdly, because these virtues are made known to us by Divine revelation, contained in Holy Writ.<sup>920</sup>

The talk of two happinesses should not be confused with two final ends.<sup>921</sup> There are two ends for humanity, one natural and one supernatural, but only the latter exists as the final end of true happiness for humanity. God is the end of happiness of both nature and grace, but the theological virtues relate to God in a much more direct fashion. He is not the remote end toward which actions are directed, but the direct object of the acts of the virtues of faith, hope, and

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<sup>919</sup> ST I-II. 62.1, *ad* 3.

<sup>920</sup> ST I-II. 62.1, *corpus*.

<sup>921</sup> Aquinas lists the reasons necessary that there be only one final end in I-II. 6.5.



charity. This direct relation is not possible for human faculties on their own and, therefore, these virtues must be infused by God Himself. God must elevate these faculties and present Himself to them as their object, granting them a greater participation in Himself than bestowed by Creation.

The theological virtues have the same end as the moral virtues, which is happiness with God, and yet they advance toward this end in a more direct manner with the supernatural assistance of God. This does not do away with the order of the moral virtues, such as justice and religion its part, but rather affirms their order and draws it into this new intimacy with God. Rather than denying the natural moral order toward God, the theological virtues strengthen that order and allow it to flourish, enabling the moral virtues to contribute toward the reception of supernatural happiness. Aquinas describes this through the fact that the moral virtues, which can be acquired, are infused along with charity. He states: “Now it is evident that charity, inasmuch as it directs man to his last end, is the principle of all good works that are referable to his last end. Wherefore all the moral virtues must needs be infused together with charity, since it is through them that man performs each different kind of good work.”<sup>922</sup> While the theological virtues grant the right disposition toward God as supernatural end, this right relation with God also requires that the rest of the moral life be well disposed as well. It would not be right to love God with infused charity and yet to lack the virtue of temperance so as to inordinately love temporal goods. Likewise, a right supernatural relation to God strengthens the necessity to justly worship Him and enables the virtue of religion to perform its proper acts with greater depth and strength. The theological virtues enable one to worship in spirit and truth, that is, with the spiritual bond of charity and a share in God’s own knowledge of Himself.

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<sup>922</sup> ST I-II. 65.3, *corpus*.

Worship in accord with the supernatural end of humanity must proceed from God's own assistance, bestowing grace to the will to strengthen its bond to Him and to the intellect, enabling it to know Him in a manner exceeding reason's own power. First of all, it is necessary to examine the role of faith in presenting God to the soul as the object of knowledge and love. Aquinas argues that the theological virtues, especially faith, must precede all other perfect virtues:

Since the end is the principle in matters of actions... the theological virtues, the object of which is the last end, must needs proceed all others. Again, the last end must of necessity be present to the intellect before it is present to the will, since the will has no inclination for anything except in so far as it is apprehended by the intellect. Hence, as the last end is present in the will by hope and charity, and in the intellect, by faith, the first of all virtues, must of necessity, be faith, because natural knowledge cannot reach God as the object of heavenly bliss, which is the aspect under which hope and charity tend towards Him.<sup>923</sup>

Faith must precede religion to enact perfect worship in spirit and truth in accord with God's truth. Nevertheless, Aquinas does not rule out that an imperfect virtue of religion could precede faith and in way prepare for it: "On the other hand, some virtues precede faith accidentally... in so far as they remove obstacles to belief."<sup>924</sup> As referenced above, Aquinas specifically mentions *latria* as one of these virtues in his *Commentary on First Timothy*. This preparation could not in any fashion entail a natural advancement toward grace, but rather the removal of obstacles which prevent its reception. This could be understood in the case of religion in the following fashion: the fact that one recognizes the very existence of the One, Creator God and the necessity to worship Him could remove obstacles such idolatry or irreligion, which stand in the way of faith. It should be noted that even this imperfect acquisition of moral virtue, which may precede faith, would not be "without the Divine assistance."<sup>925</sup>

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<sup>923</sup> ST II-II. 4.7, *corpus*.

<sup>924</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>925</sup> ST I-II. 62.1, *corpus*.

The role of faith goes beyond a simple introduction of the supernatural end to the mind, but actually entails an initiation into a right relationship with God. Aquinas speaks of faith as “the primary subjection of man to God,”<sup>926</sup> and “the first turning to God,” through which justification occurs.<sup>927</sup> The supernatural union with God destined for one in the beatific vision begins in a limited manner through faith. The mind assents to God’s revelation, acknowledging Him as the true God, the Creator, Redeemer, and happiness of humanity. Aquinas makes clear that “whoever believes, assents to someone’s words; so that, in every form of belief, the person to whose words assent is given seems to hold the chief place and to be the end as it were.”<sup>928</sup> This recognition initiates a friendship in which the believer enters into God’s own life. This participation in God’s Trinitarian life occurs through the mediation of Christ’s humanity: “Christ dwells in us ‘by faith’ (Eph. iii. 17). Consequently, by faith Christ’s power is united to us.”<sup>929</sup> Faith enables one to share in a limited way Christ’s own knowledge and love of the Father.

The knowledge which one receives through faith is meant to unite one to God. Therefore, the knowledge of the last end should lead one to an intimate relation of love, for “to have a right estimate about the last end one must not be in error about the end, and must adhere to it firmly as to the greatest good.”<sup>930</sup> The intellect presents the will with knowledge of the good toward which it longs most intently so that it may cling to it with all its strength. The justice which requires one’s life to be ordered to its final end comes to fruition through the theological virtue of charity. Aquinas strikingly describes God’s relation to the will as follows: “Now the potentiality of the will extends to the universal good; just as the object of the intellect

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<sup>926</sup> ST II-II. 16.1, *corpus*.

<sup>927</sup> ST I-II. 113.4, *corpus*.

<sup>928</sup> ST II-II. 11.1, *corpus*.

<sup>929</sup> ST III. 62.5, *ad 2*.

<sup>930</sup> ST II-II. 8.5, *corpus*.

is universal being. But every created good is some particular good; God alone is universal good. Whereas He alone fills the capacity of the will, and moves it sufficiently as its object.”<sup>931</sup> As stated above, the moral virtues, even when seeking God as end, always have something created as their object, just as religion has acts of worship as its object. Only through charity does God become an object of the will so that it can directly choose and cling to God as its happiness.

Charity elevates the will to perfection in that it enables it to desire and move toward its true last end. Aquinas describes love, of which charity is a particular form, as “the principle of movement towards the end loved.”<sup>932</sup> In the case of charity, this love comes from God as a habit of the will, which inclines it toward loving God as its ultimate end in the beatific vision and by referring all others actions to that end. What justice did in a remote way toward God as the common good of the universe, charity does through direct and personal friendship with God.<sup>933</sup> Aquinas explains that “there is a communication between man and God, inasmuch as He communicates His happiness to us.... The love which is based on this communication, is charity: wherefore it is evident that charity, is the friendship of man for God.”<sup>934</sup> God communicates the end of human action, which is happiness, to those who believe in Him, initiating a fellowship between them and which impels toward final union. In doing so it achieves the object of virtue in a supreme manner.

Virtue, as a whole, habituates one toward the perfection of his or her powers as they exercise their proper act in a manner consistent with right reason, which is law. God’s law,

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<sup>931</sup> ST I. 105.4, *corpus*.

<sup>932</sup> ST I-II. 26.1, *corpus*.

<sup>933</sup> Bobik argues that “the religious man will, with growing familiarity with God, move beyond being just toward God, to being a friend to God. For, at some point he will become aware of the intensity of God’s goodness, and be overwhelmed by it. The religious man will develop benevolent love for God, i.e., want for God the same good things he wants for himself, and among those especially an eternal and blessed life. And he will want these good things for God just because God is God, i.e., infinitely the Good One.” 56. While Bobik’s main point of developing deeper friendship is correct, I think we must be cautious of saying that one moves beyond justice. It may be more accurate to state that the just relation deepens through love.

<sup>934</sup> ST II-II. 23.1, *corpus*.

whether in nature or revealed, directs the human powers to their proper end, which is ultimately Him, either indirectly through moral and intellectual virtue, or directly through the theological virtues. Aquinas explains this as follows:

Human acts are good according as they are regulated by their due rule and measure. Wherefore human virtue which is the principle of all man's good acts consists in following the rule of human acts, which is twofold, as stated above... viz., human reason and God. Consequently just as moral virtue is defined as being 'in accord with right reason,' as stated in *Ethic.* ii. 6, so too, the nature of virtue consists in attaining God, as also stated above with regard to faith (Q. 4, A. 5) and hope (Q. 17, A. 1). Wherefore, it follows that charity is a virtue for, since charity attains God, it unites us to God, as evidenced by the authority of Augustine quoted above [*De Moribus Eccl.* xi].

Charity habituates the will in such a way that it keeps it united to God by focusing on the happiness, which God bestows, which inspires acts of love toward God and others. It directs the will both with regard to God Himself so that it rests intently upon Him as the beloved to which it is united and seeks to be ever more united. Charity also directs all acts focused on any other thing or person to refer to this ultimate end and aid in the movement toward it. Aquinas reflects on this twofold order. First of all, he states that charity alone "tends toward the last end considered as last end: and this does not apply to any other virtue.... Wherefore charity, above all, implies relation to the First Principle."<sup>935</sup> This reflects the fact that charity alone attains directly to God in that it wills Him directly. The second way the will relates to God is through other virtues, about which Aquinas states: "It is charity which directs the acts of all other virtues to the last end, and which consequently, also gives the form to all other acts of virtue."<sup>936</sup> Charity both directs the will in itself toward God and also directs all the other virtues so that they can truly refer to God as their end. The moral virtues could refer to God without charity, but only remotely as the good toward which the will refers as its end. However, in charity these same

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<sup>935</sup> ST II-II. 26.1, *ad* 1.

<sup>936</sup> ST II-II. 23.8, *corpus*.

virtues can refer to God as the supernatural happiness of man and actually enable one to reach this end through the grace which flows to and informs them through grace.

In several places Aquinas expands on the differentiation of the moral virtues and charity. The first location demonstrates the twofold end of humanity and how the moral virtues of themselves pertain only to the natural end, while charity to the supernatural. He states: “Nature loves God above all things inasmuch as He is the beginning and end of natural good; whereas charity loves Him, as He is the object of beatitude, and inasmuch as man has a spiritual fellowship with God.”<sup>937</sup> The moral virtues arise from the order of reason based on human nature and refer to God through justice, which acknowledges Him as principle and common good of all. Charity does not deny but intensifies that relation insofar as it “attains God Himself that it may rest in Him, but not that something may accrue to us from Him.”<sup>938</sup> The moral virtues focus on human powers and seeks to perfect them by regulating their operation, while charity focuses on God directly and it is this direction which flows through it and actually leads to the perfection of these other powers. Charity attains for the moral virtues what they themselves cannot attain.

How then does this discussion of charity impact the right understanding of worship? It must be noted that without charity, the virtue of religion can only be imperfect.<sup>939</sup> It would be without charity as its form and would be contained simply to the order of justice rather than to the direct ordering of eternal friendship with God. Aquinas goes so far as to claim “that simply

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<sup>937</sup> ST I-II. 109.3, *ad* 1.

<sup>938</sup> ST II-II. 23.6, *corpus*.

<sup>939</sup> With charity, the virtue of religion would be infused. This would enable one’s worship to share in Christ’s not only be a general share in His acts of worship, but also in the possession of a virtue which flows from Christ’s own virtue. Cessario describes that “the new ‘form’ which the infused virtue puts in the believer amounts to a real participation in the *imitation Christi*.” *The Moral Virtues*. 112. cf. 108. **Odon Lottin rejects the infusion of the virtue of religion**, positing rather that charity inflames the acquired virtue of religion. This is problematic on many fronts. For one, it would contradict Aquinas’ claim that all the moral virtues are infused with charity. Secondly, it would require a pre-existing acquired virtue for the possibility of Christian worship. This would be particularly problematic.

true virtue is that which is direct to man's principal good... and in this way no true virtue is possible without charity."<sup>940</sup> This is a serious claim that greatly impacts the discussion of worship through the virtue of religion. The will cannot be directed to God in justice without a relationship of love and friendship ordered toward supernatural beatitude with Him. One can catch a glimpse of the distinction in Aquinas' discussion of charity as friendship. In discussing whether friendship should apply to justice he writes: "We might say that it (friendship) is a moral virtue about works done in respect of another person, but under a different aspect from justice. For justice is about works done in respect of another person, under the aspect of legal due, whereas friendship considers the aspect of a friendly and moral duty, or rather that of a gratuitous favor."<sup>941</sup> Worship is not itself friendship with God, but nonetheless, it is crucial to account for this friendship when describing Christian worship. Worship must be understood as something justly owed to God, but how should one understand just worship and service when between Father and adopted son and between God as the beloved in Whom one's happiness rests? One must account for the fact that this worship would not necessarily proceed as a legal duty, but rather as a loving act.<sup>942</sup>

Aquinas does actually describe worship through friendship. He states that "charity both causes devotion inasmuch as love makes one ready to serve one's friend and feeds on devotion. Even so all friendship is safeguarded and increased by the practice and consideration of friendly deeds."<sup>943</sup> There is a mutual relationship in the will between adherence to God in divine friendship and the readiness to worship Him. The nature of friendship with God is not that of

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<sup>940</sup> ST II-II. 23.7, *corpus*.

<sup>941</sup> ST II-II. 23.3, *ad* 1.

<sup>942</sup> Servais Pinckaers, in his monumental work *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, argues that according to Scripture "justice lies not in the observance of an external obligatory law but in the interior need of the heart's love to expand... this love... is characterized by a superabundance in giving and forgiving, in imitation of the Father's generosity." He further states that "St. Thomas saw justice as a necessary stage in the development of charity." 37; 38.

<sup>943</sup> ST II-II. 82.2, *ad* 2.

equals and therefore must include honor, reverence, and worship as befits the relationship of Creator and creature. Though this relationship is also akin to that of master and slave in that service is given to God as Lord, Aquinas also accounts for Jesus' address to His disciples: "It is written (Jo. xv. 15): 'I will not now call you servants... but My friends.' Now this was said to them by reason of nothing else than charity."<sup>944</sup> This certainly does not mean that servitude no longer belongs to God in the Christian life, but rather that this servitude comes forth from friendship rather than simply from justice. Worship acts not only to fulfill a debt; it now proceeds as an act of love and friendship, which seeks greater union with God. Thus, Aquinas affirms that "the very fact that we wish to cling to God in a spiritual fellowship pertains to reverence for God."<sup>945</sup> Just as the virtue of religion sought to initiate justice in relation to God by referring one's thoughts, actions, and earthly goods to God as beginning and end, so does worship through charity seek to direct all one's life to God for spiritual fellowship.

This is the sense in which one can understand the "worship in spirit," which Jesus described to the Samaritan woman. The virtue of religion, when formed by charity and brought into its act of love, offers worship to God in a spirit united to Him. The two virtues of religion and charity unite in a loving worship of God according to the spirit. Aquinas draws them together as follows: "It belongs immediately to charity that man should give himself to God, adhering to Him by a union of the spirit; but it belongs immediately to religion, and through the medium of religion, to charity which is the principle of religion, that man should give himself to God for certain works of Divine worship."<sup>946</sup> Charity is put forward as the principle of religion,

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<sup>944</sup> ST II-II. 23.1, *sed contra*. Matthew Levering describes this friendship with God in charity through the "communion of the rational creature with the triune God—a communion that is perfect *worship*—[this] can be brought about only by the elevation and transformation of the human being through the grace of the Holy Spirit." *Christ's Fulfillment*. 119.

<sup>945</sup> ST II-II. 85.3, *ad 1*.

<sup>946</sup> ST II-II. 82.2, *ad 1*. Aquinas gives a specific example of this: "Prayer proceeds from charity through the medium of religion, of which prayer is an act.... For the offering of prayer itself to God belongs to religion, while



while religion acts as a medium for charity. In other words, charity inspires worship in that while loving God the believer recognizes that it is due to Him; worship serves as a medium of this love by providing concrete expression of love through its acts.<sup>947</sup>

Just as charity specifies the way in which one worships in ‘spirit,’ so does faith make clear how one worships in ‘truth.’ In order to offer God worship, one must know Him, so that it may be directed toward Him, and not something else, and may also be done in a way appropriate to Him. Aquinas describes worship in truth as follows: “Since God is truth, to invoke God is to worship Him in spirit and truth, according to J. iv. 23. Hence a worship that contains a falsehood, is inconsistent with a salutary calling upon God.”<sup>948</sup> Faith grants surety to human knowledge about God. It also exceeds reason’s capacity in that it provides knowledge beyond the fact that God is Creator, governor, and end, such as the reality of God as a Trinity of Persons and that One of these Persons has become Incarnate for the salvation of the world. Worship without this knowledge would not be proportionate to God as He has revealed Himself and also would take into account His work of salvation.

Worship must express not only thanks for the benefits of nature and honor to God as the common good of creation, but also thanks for the salvation and happiness made known only by faith. The act of worship by which faith outwardly expresses itself is known as confession.

Aquinas speaks in general of confession in this way:

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the desire for the things that we pray to be accomplished belongs to charity.” ST II-II. 83.15, *corpus*. Matthew Levering describes the relationship between charity and worship as follows: “The *telos* of Christian life is perfect charity expressed in perfect worship. The life of virtue (ultimately perfect charity) finds its consummation in perfect worship of God.” *Christ’s Fulfillment*. 109.

<sup>947</sup> Charles Journet refers to worship and love almost playfully as the container and its contents. He does so in speaking of Christ’s own sacrifice. He states: “Christ inaugurated the regime of the New Law by his death on the Cross, which is simultaneously the supreme act of worship and the supreme act of love. The cult, which is the container, so to speak, and love, which is the content, are inseparably united in it.” *The Theology of the Church*. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 173.

<sup>948</sup> ST II-II. 93.1, *ad* 1.

A threefold confession is commended by the Scriptures. One is the confession of matters of faith, and this is a proper act of faith, since it is referred to the end of faith, as stated above (*corpus*). Another is the confession of thanksgiving or praise, and this is an act of *latria*, for its purpose is to give outward honor to God, which is the end of *latria*. The third is the confession of sins, which is ordained to the blotting out of sins, which is the end of penance, to which virtue it belongs.<sup>949</sup>

While Aquinas distinguishes these three confessions through the virtue to which their acts pertain, there is a sense in which they all belong to religion. As pointed out above, he links the third confession to religion explicitly in his *Commentary on the Sentences*. The other may be linked to religion since he mentions that omitting this confession “would deprive God of due honor, or our neighbor of a service that we ought to render him.”<sup>950</sup> The manifestation of faith, even when it pertains directly to faith, still falls under the scope of the virtue religion insofar as it strives to give honor and reverence to God. Just as “prayer proceeds from charity through the medium of religion,”<sup>951</sup> so would the confession of faith proceed from faith through the medium of religion. Aquinas makes this clear as he states that “religion is... a confession of faith by outward signs.”<sup>952</sup> While manifesting faith is not the proper act of religion, such as sacrifice, the truth of faith expresses itself to God for His honor and manifests itself to others as a witness.

The relationship between faith and love with worship make clear that the theological virtues stand in an essential relationship with the virtue of religion. In expressing this relationship, Aquinas explicates Augustine’s classic phrase of “worship in faith, hope, and love.” Both the theological virtues and the virtue of religion strive to unite one to God, though they do so in different ways: “Now man is directed to God not only by the interior acts of the mind, which are faith, hope, and love, but also by certain external works, whereby man makes profession of his subjection to God: and it is these that are said to belong to the Divine

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<sup>949</sup> ST II-II. 3.1, *ad* 1.

<sup>950</sup> ST II-II. 3.2, *corpus*.

<sup>951</sup> ST II-II. 82.2, *ad* 1.

<sup>952</sup> ST II-II. 94.1, *ad* 1.

worship.”<sup>953</sup> This would not seem to explain Augustine’s phrase if the internal and external are separated, yet I would take Aquinas’ distinction to indicate something along the lines of what he pointed out under confession. The proper acts of the theological virtues are acts of the mind, whereby we believe, hope in, and love God, while the proper acts of worship are external acts which signify this relation. This does not mean that the theological virtues do not worship God. These internal acts above all are due to God as the principle and end of human life and they certainly give Him honor. The internal relation of subjection and honor of the theological virtues becomes expressed exteriorly through the acts of worship.<sup>954</sup> In this sense, one can see how the theological virtues act as the form of religion, which enables it to truly give honor to God insofar as it manifests the honor given to God by the soul.

Therefore, worship in faith, hope, and love does not only mean that one worships God by the acts of the theological virtues but also that the proper acts of religion become conformed to these interior acts.<sup>955</sup> Aquinas makes this clear in that “external worship should be in proportion

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<sup>953</sup> ST I-II. 99.3, *corpus*.

<sup>954</sup> John of St. Thomas describes the way in which one could understand religion to command the acts of the theological virtues, which are superior to it. He states: “The true answer to this problem is that the ward ‘formal’ resolves it completely: for it is to be conceded that an inferior habit is never able formally to command its superior. But it is easily able to do so materially, that is, it can command the thing that is otherwise its superior but which under some particular aspect in which it is commanded is its inferior.” John continues further down: “It can happen that some virtue is from its own part completely incapable or ordination to another or a higher end but it is so ordainable by reason of some circumstance which the inferior virtue adds to it; and then it is not formally or absolutely imperated by the inferior virtue. It is only that the material act of the superior virtue according to the circumstance added to it is imperated or ordained by the inferior virtue from which it participates that circumstance, because from this particular point of view the virtue that is otherwise wholly superior is inferior. Thus acts of faith or acts of the other theological virtues in themselves are entirely above the imperation of religion because they attain in the highest way the ultimate end, so that there is no higher end for them. Yet some circumstances can be added to such an act, for example, that it be made the matter of a vow, since I can add an obligation to such liberty, and as such, that is, as free, the act is considered materially, as it were, and thus it is directed by the virtue of religion, and its omission becomes a sin against the virtue of religion.” *Cursus Theologicus*, t. vii, -disp. 19, art. 8, n. 19; 21. This passage is quoted and translated by Curran. 563-64.

<sup>955</sup> The virtue of religion shares in the relation to God established by the theological virtues. Cessario describes this reality in the following manner: “This union, rooted in habitual grace, amounts to a real and active relationship between the persons of the Blessed Trinity and the one living the theological life. . . . When the theological virtues animate the life of the believer, the moral energies of the human person, including the fundamental resolve to live a virtuous life, originate and find their sustaining power in the triune God.” *The Moral Virtues*. 95. For more on

to the internal worship, which consists in faith, hope, and charity.”<sup>956</sup> As we saw above, justice directs things to God as end, while charity directs things to God as the last end of beatitude. In this case, the virtue of religion, when acquired, directs its acts toward God as the end of all creation, toward a natural happiness, but when infused and formed by charity, it directs its act to God as its supernatural end. Worship gets taken up into the supernatural life of the theological virtues and becomes part of the movement toward God in the beatific vision. However, Aquinas makes clear that one should not confuse the worship of God with the more direct relationship of the theological virtues.

While the theological virtues directly unite the mind with God, religion as a part of the moral virtues offers something to God so as to advance toward Him as end. The former actually unites to the end, while the latter directs things to the end. Aquinas explains this at length:

Religion pays due worship to God. Hence two things are to be considered in religion: first that which it offers to God, viz. worship, and this is by way of matter and object in religion; secondly, that to which something is offered, viz. God, to Whom it is paid. And yet the acts whereby God is worshiped do not reach out to God Himself, as when we believe God we reach out to Him by believing; for which reason we stated... that God is the object of faith, not only because we believe in a God, but because we believe in God. Now due worship is paid to God, in so far as certain acts whereby God is worshiped, such as the offering of sacrifices and so forth, are done out of reverence for God. Hence it is evident that God is related to religion not as matter or object, but as end: and consequently religion is not a theological virtue whose object is the last end, but a moral virtue which is properly about things referred to that end.<sup>957</sup>

Through the theological virtues God supernaturally presents Himself to the mind and the will as an object of knowledge and love. In the virtue of religion God acts as an object only insofar as the action done is referred to Him as its end. Though it has a less direct relation to God, religion serves as a means by which charity directs one’s life and actions to God. As charity seeks to

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Cessario’s description of the theological life, cf. *Christian Faith and the Theological Life*. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996).

<sup>956</sup> ST I-II. 103.3, *corpus*.

<sup>957</sup> ST II-II. 82.5, *corpus*.

unite all of one's life to God, it respects the integrity of each virtue's subordinate acts, invigorating them rather than subsuming them into its own proper act. Worship is inspired out of charity and is accomplished with its strength, though the act of worship still has its own proper acts as its object. Aquinas states: "faith, hope, and charity have an act in reference to God as their proper object: wherefore, by their command, they cause the act of religion, which refers certain deeds to God."<sup>958</sup> For instance, the act of sacrifice concerns making an object or act holy by referring it to God. Worship focuses directly on the thing or act as its object, which it offers to God as its end. The more direct relation of the will to God through charity does impact the relation of the will in justice, by rectifying and strengthening, but it does not do away with its own proper order.

Worship in spirit and truth means that one worships in a right relationship with God. The order of justice truly reaches God and gives Him His due only when it knows the One it seeks to worship and proceeds from an interior union with Him. Aquinas emphasizes that the worship of the New Law consists in the honor given to God by interior and graced acts of the mind, which benefit the perfection of this law. This does not do away with the natural order of the will to God, but rather allows it to participate in this new and elevated relation. Grace brings alive the natural law so that it can speak more clearly: "Even in those precepts which direct us to God, some are moral precepts, which the reason itself dictates when it is quickened by faith; such as that God is to be loved and worshipped."<sup>959</sup> The theological virtues allow worship to fulfill the natural order of justice and use it to express the supernatural union which they impart.<sup>960</sup>

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<sup>958</sup> *ibid. ad 1.*

<sup>959</sup> ST I-II. 104.1, *ad 3.*

<sup>960</sup> Servais Pinckaers relates nature and grace as follows: "Natural inclinations are the foundation, destined one day to receive the cornerstone, Christ. The structure is enhanced by the theological virtues." *The Sources of Christian Ethics*. 456. This insight bears itself out in the case of religion. Christ fulfills the order sought by religion, which the theological virtues enhance by bringing union with God.

The theological virtues are not alone in being gifts bestowed by God to the soul to aid in the exercise of worship. The gifts of the Holy Spirit also assist the soul in this endeavor. They are distinct from virtue in that the former relate to “inspiration,” which “denotes motion from without.”<sup>961</sup> Virtues entail a habit of one’s own faculties, an interior disposition, while the gifts dispose one to be acted upon by God:

Man needs yet higher perfections [than virtues], whereby to be disposed to be moved by God. These perfections are called gifts, not only because they are infused by God, but also because by them man is disposed to become amenable to the Divine inspiration.... Even the Philosopher says (*Ethic. Eudem.* loc. cit. [vii. 8]) that for those who are moved by Divine instinct, there is no need to take counsel according to human reason, but only to follow their inner promptings, since they are moved by a principle higher than human reason. This then is what some say, viz. that the gifts perfect man for acts which are higher than acts of virtue.<sup>962</sup>

Aquinas specifically refers to the need for additional assistance to bring about fitting worship of God. The New Law relates the soul to God in a direct fashion, exceeding the limits of nature, and its worship must reflect this new ordering.

For example, Aquinas uses the gift of piety to describe worship in a manner consistent with the adoption by grace. He articulates the particular way in which the Holy Ghost moves the soul through this gift: “Now the Holy Ghost moves us to this effect among others, of having a filial affection towards God.... And since it belongs to piety [as a virtue] to pay duty and worship to one’s father, it follows that piety, whereby at the Holy Spirit’s instigation, we pay worship and duty to God as our Father, is a gift of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>963</sup> Just as the Spirit brings about a close relation to God through adoption and the bestowal of grace, so does He follow through with this

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<sup>961</sup> ST I-II. 68.1, *corpus*.

<sup>962</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>963</sup> ST II-II. 121.1, *corpus*. Servais Pinckaers describes the place of the gifts in St. Thomas’ thought in relation to virtue. He states: “St. Thomas links the virtues with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which thus enter the organism of the virtues in order to perfect them. The gifts are an integral part of Thomas’s moral teaching, in accordance with the definition of the New Law as the grace of the Spirit, and are necessary for all Christians. They add a receptivity to the virtues, a docility to spiritual impulses. In this way the Holy Spirit’s actions, like the virtues, can affect all that the Christian does.” “The Place of Philosophy in Moral Theology.” in *The Pinckaers Reader*. 68.

relation by prompting one to worship. This new impetus exceeds the order of justice, which relates to God solely as the beginning and end of Creation. The Christian worships rather in a personal and intimate manner. Aquinas describes the relation of the virtue of religion and the gift of piety thusly:

To pay worship to God as Creator, as religion does, is more excellent than to pay worship to one's father in the flesh, as the piety that is a virtue does. But to pay worship to God as Father is yet more excellent than to pay worship to God as Creator and Lord. Wherefore religion is greater than the virtue of piety: while the gift of piety is greater than religion.<sup>964</sup>

The gift of piety raises worship to a new level.

Aquinas also points to religion's relation to another gift of the Spirit. The gift of fear makes one "amenable to the motion" of God as mover "since thereby we revere God and avoid separating ourselves from Him."<sup>965</sup> It is this gift's focus on reverence, which enables Aquinas to link it to religion. He states that "to pay reverence to God is an act of the gift of fear. Now it belongs to religion to do certain things through reverence for God. Hence it follows, not that religion is the same as the gift of fear, but that it is referred thereto as to something more excellent."<sup>966</sup> Aquinas emphasizes that this gift is not servile fear, but filial fear, which approaches God not out of fear of punishment, but fear of separation. Therefore, by this gift the soul seeks greater union with God. Religion refers its acts to the gifts of piety and fear so as to worship within a deeper union with its end in God.

It is thus clear that the worship of the New Law exceeds that of the natural law by a greater directedness and intensity. It does not simply relate to God as the principle of Creation through the movement of one's own will, but personally as Father through the movement of the Spirit. The theological virtues implant within the intellect and will habits by which one is

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<sup>964</sup> *ibid. ad 2.*

<sup>965</sup> ST II-II. 19.9, *corpus.*

<sup>966</sup> ST II-II. 81.2, *ad 1.*

impelled to union with God through the infusion of grace into the powers of the soul. The gifts enter the soul as an additional impetus to impel one to a deeper union. By these two interior workings of the Spirit, Christian worship arrives at a purer and more spiritual worship than seen either in nature or under the Old Law. True and perfect worship must stem from a filial union of the soul with God by knowledge and love.

The focus on the interior does not mean that Christian worship is devoid of exterior actions. While interior actions form the primary element of worship, they consequently inspire the exterior as their manifestation. Even though the New Law consists primarily in the bestowal of grace, its worship is not devoid of exterior elements.<sup>967</sup> The New Law has its own religious expression, which Aquinas refers to as its rite of worship. The grace of the New Law does not exist in a disembodied form, but in response to the social and bodily elements of human nature, it is communicated by God through the Church. The Church instantiates God's revelation and grace in the world, giving them physical expression through her rite of worship, which primarily consists in the sacraments.<sup>968</sup> The worship of the Church unites the grace and truth of God with a human expression of worship.

The worship of the New Law draws together the primacy of God's saving action with the need for determinate means of visibly and physically transmitting it. Though the two elements necessarily co-exist, Aquinas recognizes that the New Law freed from the burdensome excesses

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<sup>967</sup> Robert Daly points out that there can be a "spiritualization" of sacrifice without necessarily opposing the external. "This sense includes all those movements and tendencies within Judaism and Christianity which attempted to emphasize the true meaning of sacrifice, that is, the inner, spiritual, or ethical significance of cult over against the merely material or merely external understanding of it." *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*. 7.

<sup>968</sup> Journet presents the role of the Church in worship as continuing the true sacrifice of Christ. He states: "It follows furthermore that the efficacy of this supreme cultus, this decisive oblation, is to be passed on from age to age till the end of all ages; that all later sinful generations will need its purifying virtue." *The Church of the Word Incarnate*. 52. The efficacy of the Church's prayer stems from the fact that it preserves and hands down within herself Christ's perfect worship. In describing the means by which the Church achieves this continuity, Journet points toward the sacramental priesthood: "It is entirely due to the sacramental or sacerdotal power that Christian cultus continues down the ages. It is by its means that the redemptive sacrifice is made present to each generation, and that redemptive grace is brought to each individual man in the sacraments.... If therefore the sacramental power ceased to be handed down... the Christian cultus would there perish." 70.



of ritualistic ceremony. In speaking of the ceremonial precepts, Aquinas makes clear that “since these determinations [of the moral precepts] are not in themselves necessarily connected with inward grace wherein the Law consists, they do not come under a precept of the New Law, but are left to the decision of man.”<sup>969</sup> Though Christ laid a foundation for worship in the institution of the sacraments, the exact formulation of Christian worship does not come from revelation, but was left to the determination of the apostles and their successors. Consistent with the New Law, this determination flowed from the Spirit’s guidance, which Aquinas describes in the fact that the “Holy Spirit taught the apostles all truth in respect of matters necessary for salvation; those things, to wit, that we are bound to believe and do.”<sup>970</sup> This manifests the cooperation latent in Christian worship, as the Spirit guides the expression of the interior relation He infuses.

In accordance with this holistic approach, which takes account of the divine and human elements of worship, Aquinas describes the various components of right worship. He lists the criteria for worship, which keeps it from falling into the excesses of idolatry:

Now the end of divine worship is that man may give glory to God, and submit to Him in mind and body. Consequently, whatever a man may do conducing to God’s glory, and subjecting his mind to God, and his body, too, by a moderate curbing of the concupiscences, is not excessive in the divine worship, provided it be in accordance with the commandments of God and of the Church, and in keeping with the customs of those among whom he lives.<sup>971</sup>

Worship must include both interior and exterior elements; it must be consistent with God’s law and the law of the Church; and it must be fitting in relation to one’s culture. This picture of worship encompasses the totality of one’s life, drawing in the whole of human nature, conforming to one’s relation to God and fellow humans, and serving as a suitable witness within the public realm. Christian worship is not private or individualistic, but manifests one’s place

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<sup>969</sup> ST I-II. 108.2, *corpus*.

<sup>970</sup> ST I-II. 106.4, *ad 2*.

<sup>971</sup> ST II-II. 93.2, *corpus*.

within God's saving work acting in history for all of humanity. The Christian bears the responsibility to worship in a manner consistent with the dispensation of Christ and the life of the Christian community. Otherwise, Aquinas warns of falling into "the guilt of falsehood" by giving "worship contrary to the manner established by the Church or divine authority, and according to ecclesiastical custom."<sup>972</sup> While the Old Law's ritual may have been abolished, this does not free one from the need for bodily and public worship, which express the interior life in a manner befitting human nature.<sup>973</sup>

However, it cannot be overemphasized that what makes the bodily and public worship of the Christian community acceptable to God still stems from its interior and spiritual nature. Even though Christian worship retains exterior similarities to Jewish ritual, as in the transference of circumcision to baptism, Aquinas still refers to the latter as spiritual. Aquinas argues that Christ "makes it clear that the entire bodily worship which was fixed by the Law, was to be changed into a spiritual worship: as is evident from Jo. iv. 21, 23."<sup>974</sup> The ritual of neither the Old nor New Law would not suffice if it remained on the exterior level, for "bodily worship is not acceptable of itself."<sup>975</sup> What distinguishes the latter from the former consists in the grace and truth bestowed by Christ, which stands at the foundation of Christian ritual. Aquinas clearly establishes the precedence of grace over ritual as follows: "The New Law is called the law of faith, in so far as its pre-eminence is derived from that very grace which is given inwardly to believers.... Nevertheless it consists secondarily in certain deeds, moral and sacramental: but the

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<sup>972</sup> ST II-II. 93.1, *corpus*.

<sup>973</sup> Matthew Levering describes this fact by stating that "liturgy is an act of *justice*. The focus of the liturgy is upon repaying a debt to God. The right ordering of human beings to God—an order known by human rational participation in God's eternal law—requires the gratitude of the creature to the Creator.... The task of tendering 'submission and honor' to God requires *sensible signs*." "Aquinas on the Liturgy of the Eucharist." 186.

<sup>974</sup> ST I-II. 108.3, *ad* 3. John 4:23 is of course our recurring key text concerning worship in spirit and truth.

<sup>975</sup> ST I-II. 102.4, *ad* 3.

New Law does not consist chiefly in these latter things, as did the Old Law.<sup>976</sup> The Old Law focused on external conformity to its ceremonies. The worship of the New Law does contain external deeds, but these are not an end in themselves, but serve as means of transmitting grace, which seeks to deepen the primary element of internal union.

It is through the interplay of the interior and exterior that Aquinas explains the rationale for the sacraments. The external formulations of worship give visible shape to the grace of the New Law and act as the instrument for its bestowal. The foundation for such visible expression goes back to Christ Himself. Aquinas ties together all these points:

The New Law consists chiefly in the grace of the Holy Ghost, which is shown forth by faith that worketh through love. Now men become receivers of this grace through God's Son made man, Whose human grace filled first, and thence flowed forth to us.... Consequently it was becoming that the grace which flows from the incarnate Word should be given to us by means of certain external sensible objects; and that from this inward grace, whereby the flesh is subjected to the Spirit, certain external works should ensue. Accordingly external acts may have a twofold connection with grace. In the first place, as leading in some way to grace. Such are the sacramental acts which are instituted by the New Law.... In the second place there are those external acts which ensue from the promptings of grace.<sup>977</sup>

In order for grace to fill one's entire being, which is a body soul unity, grace must come in a way fitting to this union. Just as Christ's humanity served as an instrument for the salvation of the soul, so do the sacraments continue this physical instrumentality. Christ offered His body as an act of sacrifice, which fulfilled the essence of worship. The sacraments provide Christians with a means of uniting to that perfect sacrifice.

Worship derives in a general way from the New Law in the sense that the theological virtues prompt external acts of worship through the virtue of religion. The sacraments also,

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<sup>976</sup> ST I-II. 107.1, *ad* 3. Matthew Levering describes that "inclusion in the Mystical Body is achieved through the spiritual realities of faith and charity, but these spiritual realities cannot be cut off from corresponding physical 'signs' or sacraments." *Christ's Fulfillment*. 121.

<sup>977</sup> ST I-II. 108.1, *corpus*. Journet links the "ritual drama in which Jesus offered His life to God and communicated grace to men" with the reality that "a cultus, a liturgy, a ministry, is at the heart of Christianity." He states further that "a liturgy, ascending and descending, is the root of the Christian religion. It constitutes as it were its framework." *The Church of the Word Incarnate*. 57.

though in a distinct way, relate to the virtue of religion. Aquinas divided the external acts of religion into things that are either offered to God or assumed from Him. In the treatise on religion, Aquinas described oaths, adjuration, and praise as the acts of religion which assume God's name. However, he also indicated that there was another group of acts, which fall into this category: "We must now consider those external acts of religion, whereby something Divine is taken by man: and this is either a sacrament or the Name of God. The place for treating of the taking of a sacrament will be in the Third Part of this work."<sup>978</sup> Though he delayed the treatment of the sacraments to the third part as the application of Christ's salvation, Aquinas nevertheless made clear that they pertain to the virtue of religion.

The sacraments are given by God so that the believer may use them to exercise the will in a proper manner toward Him, by offering Him fitting acts of worship. If the sacraments offer worship, one would ask why Aquinas included them in the category of assuming something divine. I believe the answer can be seen in the fact the sacraments are something received from God, by which the believer assumes grace through the act of worship. While the Christian may offer thanks to God or praise through the sacraments, nevertheless, they more fundamentally exist to bestow grace through the act of worship. Aquinas demonstrates the passivity of the sacraments in this sense: "Since we cannot of ourselves obtain grace, but through Christ alone, hence Christ of Himself instituted the sacraments whereby we obtain grace."<sup>979</sup> The sacraments flow from the priesthood of Christ, whereby He obtained the grace and merits which are bestowed in the sacraments. Yocum describes this crucial role: "The sacraments, according to

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<sup>978</sup> ST II-II. 89, preface.

<sup>979</sup> ST I-II. 108.2, *corpus*. Journet insightfully reflects on how the basic passivity of the sacraments enables the activity of the believer to be fruitful. He states that "Christ, coming to... make all things new among men, gave them not only the power of entering into union with Him, but also the power of acting in Him, of becoming (in total dependence on Himself) true causes themselves, offering the world to God with Him, and likewise with Him giving God to the world." *The Church of the Word Incarnate*. 58. Being drawn into Christ's worship enables the formation of a priesthood to make this worship present to the faithful, but it also enables believers to bring this participation into their prayer life in actions to cooperate with Christ in the work of salvation.

Thomas, are the means by which human beings are brought to birth in Christ, on the basis of his passion, the act of his perfect self-offering to the Father, itself the perfect worship. The sacraments bring human beings to participate in that very self-offering, and in the new life which the risen Christ lives.”<sup>980</sup> The sacraments are given so that in using them as the basis of Christian worship, one may be drawn into Christ’s worship, to receive the benefits obtained by this worship, and then through this participation in Christ to reach a deeper union with God.<sup>981</sup>

The worship of the sacraments reveals a double purpose. Since they are acts of the virtue of religion, they do perfect the will justly in relation to God, by giving the Christian fitting acts to express a graced union with God. Further, as acts of worship through which grace is assumed by the soul, they also work to sanctify the soul and unite it to God. Aquinas generally describes this as follows: “In the use of the sacraments two things may be considered, namely, the worship of God, and the sanctification of man: the former of which pertains to man as referred to God, and the latter pertains to God in reference to man.”<sup>982</sup> He provides additional details of this twofold nature: “Now sacramental grace seems to be ordained principally to two things: namely, to take away the defects consequent on past sins, in so far as they are transitory in act, but endure in guilt; and, further, to perfect the soul in things pertain to Divine Worship in regard to the Christian religion,”<sup>983</sup> or what he calls “the rite of the Christian life.”<sup>984</sup> The sacraments serve

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<sup>980</sup> “Sacraments in Aquinas.” 176.

<sup>981</sup> William Martin draws together these points: “The entire liturgy of the Church is but the continuation of the activity of Christ. If any word could amply characterize Christ’s activity on earth, it would be ‘filial.’ He had a filial veneration for the Father in fulfilling His will, in the redemption of men. In all things He showed Himself the Perfect Religious by rendering to the Father the most perfect and the most constant worship possible. The ultimate scope of the life of Christ was the glory of God, the perfect worship of the Father, which found its culmination in the death on the Cross which destroyed the Old Alliance and inaugurated a new and perfect cult of the Father, the rite of the Christian religion. As the continuation on earth of the activity of Christ, in a sacramental frame of reference, the Church is wholly given over to rendering God the Father, in, with, and through Christ, the perfect worship instituted by Christ on the Cross. This function is essential to the Church and is ever to the forefront in all her liturgical activity.” *The Relations Between Faith and the Sacrament*. 143-44.

<sup>982</sup> ST III. 60.5, *corpus*.

<sup>983</sup> ST III. 62.5, *corpus*.

<sup>984</sup> ST III. 63.1, *corpus*.

both as remedy to sin by the strengthening and elevating of the soul through grace and also a means by which the soul orders itself to God. The sacraments contain an aspect in which man is referred to God, which makes it clear that it helps the soul to arrive at the just and loving order of ceremony and service offered to God.

The sacraments perfect the worshipper in three ways. First of all, Aquinas makes clear that they enact the right interior relation with God sought by the virtue of religion. He does so by using the language associated with *latria*, or servitude: “By the sacraments men are deputed to a spiritual service pertaining to the worship of God.”<sup>985</sup> The sacraments present the believer with a clear way in which to offer oneself in God’s service. The worship of the sacraments brings one into divine friendship, which initiates a new way of life centered on the service of God. Secondly, this service does not stop at one’s own relation to God, but necessarily entails relation to others. Therefore, the mode in which one is deputed to this service comes through the bestowal of a character, as described above. Aquinas makes clear that this character not only enables one to offer fitting service to God through one’s own worship, but also to lead others to do the same. He states that “the worship of God consists either in receiving Divine gifts, or in bestowing them on others. And for both these purposes some power is needed,” namely a character.<sup>986</sup> This further strengthens justice and charity in that it perfects not only one’s relation to God, but also to one’s neighbor. Finally, the sacraments direct to a right relation with the community, in the sense that worship directs Christ’s Mystical Body as one toward its common good. Aquinas speaks in strong terms of the way in which the sacraments promote unity: “It is necessary for salvation that men be united together in the name of the one true religion.

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<sup>985</sup> ST III. 63.1, *corpus*.

<sup>986</sup> ST III. 63.2, *corpus*.

Therefore sacraments are necessary for man's salvation."<sup>987</sup> Just as justice orders one's action to the common good of creation, so does grace and charity direct believers through their worship to God, Who is the common, supernatural good of the Church.

This final point may shed light on the phrase used by Aquinas and referenced above, "the Christian religion" (III 62.5). Insofar as one enters the reality of Christ's saving work through the visible ministry of the Church in the sacraments, one can understand the community of Christians as a religious body. This term has a vague significance today, yet for Aquinas, since the sacraments pertain to religion, it is religion's worship which unites the believing community and binds them to Christ. Aquinas makes this link explicit: "by His (Christ's) Passion He inaugurated the Rites of the Christian religion by offering 'Himself—an oblation and a sacrifice to God' (Eph. v. 2)."<sup>988</sup> And furthermore: "The whole rite of the Christian religion is derived from Christ's priesthood."<sup>989</sup> The worship of the New Law stems from the worship of Christ. He initiated true worship in love and established His own worship as the basis for all those who worship in the New Law. The sacraments contain the efficacy of His worship and communicate it to others, which Aquinas describes in this way: "The sacraments of the New Law" "contain in themselves a power flowing from Christ... incarnate and crucified."<sup>990</sup> The sacraments continue Jesus' life and saving work within the Church in a visible manner.

In receiving the sacraments one does not simply execute an exteriorly focused ritual, but through faith, one enters into the very sacrifice of Christ. The sacraments both bestow and consequently require a right interior disposition for them to serve as acts of true worship.<sup>991</sup>

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<sup>987</sup> ST III. 61.1, *sed contra*.

<sup>988</sup> ST III. 62.5, *corpus*.

<sup>989</sup> ST III. 63.3, *corpus*.

<sup>990</sup> ST I-II. 103.2, *corpus*.

<sup>991</sup> Levering emphasizes how sharing in Christ's sacrifice enables one to share in His justice and love: "Because Aquinas's understanding of liturgy is firmly rooted in Christ's Cross, he is able both to describe a deifying justice (communion) achieved in the sacramental-sacrificial sharing in Christ's sacrifice, and to suggest that this

Aquinas emphasizes that is “by faith” that “Christ’s power is united to us.... Therefore the power of the sacraments which is ordained to the remission of sins is derived principally from faith in Christ’s Passion.”<sup>992</sup> One should not view the sacraments in the light of shamanistic rituals, which seek to manipulate the gods by using rituals to magically force a spiritual result. The efficacy of the sacraments flows from the saving work of Christ and only reaches the believer insofar as this one is united to Him in faith. The sacraments are physical not in order to bypass interior relation, but to serve as fitting expression and instrument of the interior for composite beings.

The sacraments are meant to conform one to Christ through the communication of grace. As they draw one into Christ, they enable one to worship in conformity with His worship. This reveals the role of cooperation in that Christian worship comes from God’s grace, which enables the recipient to worship well. The sacraments demonstrate that the initiative truly comes from God in that they flow from Christ’s own institution and His perfect worship, but they also require a proper spiritual reception. Through the sacraments God brings about a right relationship with Himself, which enables one to respond to Him properly. They also continue to deepen this relationship through their continual reception. This may be seen respectively in baptism, which begins the Christian life, and the Eucharist, which is a continual source of strength.

These two sacraments particularly mediate Christ’s sanctification and lead the believer into Christ’s own worship. First, baptism begins the Christian life by forgiving original and actual sin, conforming one to Christ in His death and resurrection, and bestowing the initial

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achievement requires, on the part of communicants, the cruciform practices of charity which the liturgy, as part of divine pedagogy, teaches us.” And further: “In God, human beings find holiness and renewal. As directed to divine communion in justice, liturgical sacrifice is ultimately God’s action, God’s gift. Justice, toward which God directs his providential plan, is ultimately accomplished by God in Christ’s Cross.” *Sacrifice and Community*. 172; 173.

<sup>992</sup> ST III. 62.5, *ad 2*.



character of the Christian life. Aquinas describes the way in which baptism conforms to Christ as follows: “The Passion is communicated to every baptized person, so that he is healed just as if he himself had suffered and died.”<sup>993</sup> This transference of Christ’s merits to the recipient of the sacrament occurs in the context of ritual. In this ceremony there exist certain elements needed for the spiritual effect and certain which are intended for additional benefits. The latter reveals the reason for having the bestowal of grace take place through exterior worship. The Church’s ritual provides the recipient with a worshipful response to God for the grace received. Its external form is meant to communicate the spiritual reality and solemnity of the sacraments.

In Baptism, like in any sacrament, there are formal and material elements, which are needed for the existence of the sacrament. These are used instrumentally for the transference of grace, which Aquinas describes through “a certain sanctifying instrumental virtue, not permanent but transient, [which] passes from the water, in which it is, into man who is the subject of true sanctification.”<sup>994</sup> The essential elements of the sacrament, the formal words and the material element of water, combine to initiate a spiritual transformation in the recipient. To receive the grace communicated in this act, there must be a response, which Aquinas describes in the fact that “right faith is necessary for Baptism.”<sup>995</sup> Nevertheless, it must be remembered that “the sacrament is not perfected by the righteousness of the minister or the recipient of Baptism, but by the power of God.”<sup>996</sup> Baptism mirrors the Passion in that it enacts salvation upon the recipient, though both require the response of faith for the effects of the power bestowed to be received.

The transference of this grace and the response of the recipient are meant to occur in an exchange, which Aquinas described as the movement of God toward the individual and also the

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<sup>993</sup> ST III. 69.2, *corpus*.

<sup>994</sup> ST III. 66.1, *corpus*.

<sup>995</sup> ST III. 68.8, *corpus*.

<sup>996</sup> *ibid*.

individual toward God. God and the believer meet in the act of worship, which expresses the union of knowledge and love between them. Alongside of these essential elements, which are needed for the bestowal of grace, “the Church observes” elements of worship which form that “baptismal rite” and belong to the “solemnity of the sacrament.”<sup>997</sup> The solemnity draws in the human response to God’s initiative. The sacraments are exterior acts of worship, because they seek to draw one into a right relation with God. Aquinas describes the necessity of ritual solemnity in three reasons: “First in order to arouse the devotion of the faithful and their reverence for the sacrament.... Secondly, for the instruction of the faithful.... Thirdly, because the power of the devil is restrained, by prayers, blessings, and the like, from hindering the sacramental effect.”<sup>998</sup> The sacraments draw one out of the bondage of sin and the restraints on worship, which follow from that distorted law. Therefore, the external ritual is meant to lead one to God by arousing the will to worship, by instructing the intellect through “sensible signs,” and by removing the exterior influence of evil, which draws away from God’s law. The worship of the sacraments stands at the heart of the New Law in that it provides a suitable means to receive and to respond to God’s grace. This worship draws one into a right relation to God, one of knowledge and love, which leads to deeper union with God.

The worship of the New Law climaxes in one particular act of worship. Just as the sacraments as a whole bind one to Christ’s own worship so that one shares in His priesthood and receives its benefits, the Eucharist, in particular, contains and communicates that worship in a special manner.<sup>999</sup> To stress the uniqueness of the Eucharist, Aquinas contrasts it with the ceremonies of the Old Law: “The sacrifices of the Old Law contained only in figure that true

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<sup>997</sup> ST III. 66.10, *corpus*.

<sup>998</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>999</sup> Nicholas Gihl points to the intrinsic link between the Eucharist and the virtue of religion by beginning his treatment of the Mass with an exposition of this virtue. *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: Dogmatically, Liturgically and Ascetically Explained*. (St. Louis, Missouri: B. Herder Book Co., 1946), 17-26.

sacrifice of Christ's Passion.... therefore it was necessary that the sacrifice of the New Law instituted by Christ should have something more, namely, that it should contain Christ Himself crucified, not merely in signification or figure, but also in very truth."<sup>1000</sup> The Eucharist does not just point toward the order to God, but contains within it Christ's worship, which actually unites with God. The Eucharist is the most direct way that one can share in Christ's worshipful and sanctifying love of the Father.

The sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood stands as the highest act of Christian worship. This one act contains all the essential elements of worship: it is a sacrifice, the particular act of worship; it proceeds from right internal relation to God through grace and charity; it advances one toward the end of human life in divine, transforming union with God; and the contents of this sacrifice are most pleasing to God in that it contains His Son. The act of the priest in offering this sacrifice (and also of the baptized who share in Christ's priesthood through their baptismal character) joins with Christ's one, true sacrifice to form the perfect worship of the Church. Aquinas expresses this point in these words: "The Eucharist belongs to the Divine worship, for the Divine worship consists principally therein, so far as it is the sacrifice of the Church."<sup>1001</sup> Here Aquinas puts forward a profound reality: worship "consists principally" in the sacrifice of the Eucharist. It fulfills the order of justice in that it enables one to present to the

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<sup>1000</sup> ST III. 75.1, *corpus*. Levering points to the link between Christ's offering and the sacrificial rituals which preceded it. He states that "the language of the Cross and the Eucharist cannot be separated from cultic sacrifice: Christ's body given for us, his blood spilled for the forgiveness of sin." *Sacrifice and Community*. 58. Levering opposes Eucharist idealism by insisting on the need to view the communion, which the Eucharist seeks to enact, through its necessary relation to sacrifice. The Eucharist brings about communion with God by drawing the believer into Christ's own sacrifice. Therefore, Levering states that "in and through Christ's sacrifice and our Eucharistic participation in its offering through the Holy Spirit, the Father is accomplishing his will to establish a holy people dwelling eternally in the Trinity." 94. Further counteracting sacramental idealism, he argues that "bodily contact with Jesus is necessary because 'the perfection of the New Law' [III. 75.1] requires a sharing of his sacrifice that goes beyond offering up in faith – as was possible in Israel's sacrifices – and achieves actual bodily sharing in his sacrifice, true offering up of Jesus in and with him. Such a sacrificial offering, the 'sacrifice of the New Law,' could not take place without the bodily presence of 'Christ Himself crucified.'" 136.

<sup>1001</sup> ST III. 63.6, *corpus*. On the importance of recognizing the Eucharist as a sacrifice, see Romanus Cessario. "'Circa res . . . aliquid fit' (*Summa theologiae* II–II, q. 85, a. 3, ad 3): Aquinas on New Law Sacrifice." *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition 4 no 2 (2006): 295–312.

Father the one true sacrifice, which serves as justification through Christ's merits. Matthew Levering demonstrates the link to Christ's worship in the Eucharist as follows: "We can love as Christ loved because the Eucharist inflames our charity and enables us radically to offer our lives to God in Christ, thereby sharing in Christ's (cultic) justice."<sup>1002</sup> The Eucharist further draws one into the order of charity in that it expresses "the special feature of friendship to live together with friends" as "the sign of supreme charity."<sup>1003</sup> The Eucharist enables true worship and draws one into a deeper union with God.

In regards to the first point of true worship, Aquinas emphasizes how the Eucharist provides one with the opportunity to share in Christ's sacrifice. In treating Christ's priesthood, he describes how one offers sacrifice in general: "As Augustine says (*De Civ. Dei* x. 5): 'Every visible sacrifice is a sacrament, that is a sacred sign, of the invisible sacrifice.' Now the invisible sacrifice is that by which a man offers his spirit to God.... Wherefore, whatever is offered to God in order to raise man's spirit to Him, may be called a sacrifice."<sup>1004</sup> This applies directly to the Eucharist, which uses sensible signs to mediate the reality of Christ's invisible sacrifice, made present in the separated Body and Blood. Aquinas describes the twofold nature of the Eucharist in that "it has the nature of a sacrifice inasmuch as it is offered up; and it has the nature of a sacrament inasmuch as it is received."<sup>1005</sup> The Eucharist represents Christ's sacrificial offering of Himself on the Cross and also mediates the merits gained by this sacrifice so that the recipient may share in it. Aquinas draws these points together as follows:

The celebration of the sacrament is an image representing Christ's Passion, which is His true sacrifice. Accordingly, the celebration of this sacrament is called Christ's sacrament.... Secondly, it is called a sacrifice, in respect of the effect of His Passion:

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<sup>1002</sup> *Sacrifice and Community*. 102. He states further that "the Eucharist teaches us, by transforming us, how to worship God in a cruciform communion." 111.

<sup>1003</sup> ST III. 75.1, *corpus*.

<sup>1004</sup> ST III. 22.2, *corpus*.

<sup>1005</sup> ST III. 79.5, *corpus*.

because to wit, by this sacrament we are made partakers of the fruit of our Lord's Passion."<sup>1006</sup>

As the Christian is drawn into Christ's Passion, he or she may fully participate in the sacrifice of the Church, the height of Christian worship, by uniting with the sacrifice offered to the Father. The believer has been adopted by God, united to Christ's priesthood, and now becomes one in a mystical union with the Son's sacrifice of His Body and Blood through the reception of communion. In the Eucharist one can truly worship the Father in spirit and truth by being at one with the Son.

Christ enables true worship by giving Himself to be one's own sacrifice. In His own worship, He provides the ceremony recognized as necessary by Cicero's definition of religion. In the midst of the Church's worship, the Eucharist makes present the one, true sacrifice. Abbot Anscar Vonier summarizes this point: "The full Christian religion is this, that the very sacrifice is put into our hands, so that we, too, have a sacrifice."<sup>1007</sup> Christ provides Himself as the ceremonial offering of the believer. Through union with Christ one is able to worship with a right interior relation with the Father, honoring Him as an adopted child. This right interior relation constitutes the second element of worship from the classical definition, service of God, by placing oneself at God's disposal with an interior sacrifice of one's very self. The two elements of ceremony and service combine in the Eucharist, which serves as the culmination of both the natural and supernatural order of the worship of God. The law of nature made clear the necessity to thank and honor God and this was upheld and strengthened in God's law. Only in Christian worship do these two laws find their true fulfillment with the perfect expression of thanks and honor in the love of the Son.

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<sup>1006</sup> ST III. 83.1, *corpus*.

<sup>1007</sup> *A Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist*. (Bethesda, Maryland: Zaccheus Press, 2004 [1925]), 147.

The worship of the Christian does not end in the Eucharist, but this highest act on earth spurns the believer toward a yet further union to be consummated in Heaven. Aquinas' description of the necessity of the priest's reception of the Eucharist rings true for all Christians: "Now whoever offers sacrifice must be a sharer in the sacrifice, because the outward sacrifice he offers is a sign of the inward sacrifice whereby he offers himself to God."<sup>1008</sup> Partaking in the Eucharist ultimately represents one's interior union with God, which seeks to see Him face to face and to love Him without hindrance. The ordering of worship toward perfection requires truly partaking in Christ's sacrifice not only sacramentally but in one's entire way of life. Aquinas describes the entrance into religion, i.e. the religious life, as an act of religion since it points directly toward this full communion to come. He states:

Now religion... is a virtue whereby a man offers something to the service and worship of God. Wherefore those are called religious antonomastically, who give themselves up entire to the divine service, as offering a holocaust to God.... Now the perfection of man consists in adhering wholly to God... and in this sense religion denotes a state of perfection.<sup>1009</sup>

And further: "If a man devotes his whole life to the divine service, his whole life belongs to religion."<sup>1010</sup> The virtue of religion tends toward this perfection in seeking to order one's life to God. The sacraments mystically make this end present to the believer, but the religious state emulates the perfection to come in giving oneself wholly over to the worship and service of God. While this perfection will be complete only in the beatific vision, the religious life aims at the perfection of religion in this life. In doing so it directs one's life most fully in preparation of the perfection to come.

Charles Journet points out the eschatological order of Christian worship. Christian *cultus*, he argues...

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<sup>1008</sup> ST III. 82.4, *corpus*.

<sup>1009</sup> ST II-II. 186.1, *corpus*.

<sup>1010</sup> *ibid*.

announces and prepares the life of glory in which all truth will be openly and perfectly unveiled, where neither the offering of sacrifice or the reception of sacraments, nor the exercise of what Thomas calls the exterior cultus, will have any further reason to exist. The Christian cultus is no longer pure figure, nor, as yet, is it pure reality: it is reality, but under a veil of figures.<sup>1011</sup>

While Christian worship does reach relative perfection in this life, it must give way before the true and ultimate perfection in Heaven. There worship will truly reach God without any taint of the frustration of sin and ignorance. The intellect and will will exist in a perfectly right relation with God; they will have achieved their end of union with God.

I will end with Aquinas' one reference in the *Summa* to the perfect worship of the Blessed:

External worship should be in proportion to the internal worship, which consists in faith, hope, and charity. Consequently exterior worship had to be subject to variations according to the variations of internal worship, in which a threefold state may be distinguished. One state was in respect of faith and hope, both in heavenly goods, and in the means of obtaining them,—in both of these considered as things to come. Such as the state of faith and hope in the Old Law.—Another state of the interior worship is that in which we have faith and hope in heavenly goods as things to come; but in the means of obtaining heavenly goods, as in things present or past. Such is the state of the New Law.—The third state is that in which both are possessed as present; wherein nothing is believed in as lacking, nothing hoped for as being yet to come. Such is the state of the Blessed. In this state of the Blessed, then, nothing in regard to the worship of God will be figurative; ‘there will be naught but thanksgiving and voice of praise’ (Isa. li. 3). Hence it is written concerning the city of the Blessed (Apoc. xxi. 22): ‘I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty is the temple therefore, and the Lamb.’<sup>1012</sup>

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<sup>1011</sup> Charles Journet. *The Church of the Word Incarnate*. 50. Levering points to the eschatological dimension of the Church's worship as follows: “Only when sharing in this cruciform charity in and through Christ's reconciling sacrifice, can we share, as the Body of Christ, in the eschatological ‘end’ or goal of Christ's sacrifice, namely eternal life in and with the Risen Christ.” And further: “History is fulfilled in the Eucharistic liturgy, and its *telos* is revealed to be nothing less than sharing in the heavenly liturgy through participation in the life of the Trinity.” *Sacrifice and Community*. 94; 176. In the final chapter of his *Key to the Doctrine of the Eucharist*, Vonier points to the fact that “sacraments are true prophecies of the eternal glories,” and, yet, “in the Catholic sacramental system a certain transitoriness which it is very important to remember.... Sacraments belong to the work which Christ does here on earth; they are not permanent glories of the everlasting triumph.” 171-72.

<sup>1012</sup> ST I-II. 103.3, *corpus*.

## CONCLUSION

What does Thomas Aquinas' account of worship bring to the modern discussion of religion? It seems that primarily there are two points which stand out for notice. The first is his treatment of religion within the virtue of justice. Religion does not simply entail an allegiance to a religious organization, but rather a moral relationship with a Person.<sup>1013</sup> Secondly, Aquinas focuses on the importance of truth through worship's order to the true God. The first point has come under criticism in the Enlightenment.<sup>1014</sup> Though enlightened thinkers agreed that religion pertains to ethics, they did not see it as justice in relation to a Person with Whom one can interact. Rather, they saw religion as pertaining to one's own experience completely cut off from revelation.<sup>1015</sup> The second point has arisen in contemporary discussions as a result of the first,

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<sup>1013</sup> To highlight a more contemporary perspective on religion and its relation to God, see Scott Dunbar. "God and Virtue." *Religious Studies* 18 (Dec. 1982): 489-502. Dunbar begins by stating that "God is the subject of religion, but the word 'God' does not name a person or an object in the ordinary way. The word 'God' is a *symbol* for the ultimately mysterious, unknowable and transcendent ground of all being." 489. By emphasizing personal relation, I am not endorsing a subjective interpretation of religion, which Max Charlesworth describes in Kierkegaard's emphasis on the "'personal' character of religious truths," which opposes itself to God "an object we assent to, or contemplate." "St. Thomas Aquinas and the Decline of the Kantian-Kierkegaardian Philosophy of Religion." in *Tommaso d'Aquino nel suo VII centenario: Congresso Internazionale Roma-Napoli, 17-24, aprile, 1974*, 328. Charlesworth goes on to lay out an entire philosophy of religion drawn primarily from Kant and Kierkegaard's thought. He contrasts this philosophy with Aquinas' "'intellectualistic' view of religion, to use Eduoard Le Roy's term," which he describes further in that "for Aquinas religious belief consists essential in an intellectual assent to the truth of certain propositions." 332. Charlesworth is right to point out the error of Kant in reducing religion to morality and of Kierkegaard of reducing it to an irrational and subjective assent, but one should not overlook the essential role of morality and relation to God as another person in Aquinas' view of religion.

<sup>1014</sup> Pedro Salgado describes the rise of the modern study of religion in an environment fundamentally hostile to it. He states: "Our study investigates the nature and properties of that phenomenon which goes by the name of religion. Such a study became a distinct and separate subject in the philosophical disciplines, and gained prominence, under the auspices of heterodox thinkers. They did this, not precisely because they appreciated religion, but, quite on the contrary, they desired to topple it down." "The Phenomenon of Religion in Light of Saint Thomas." *Philippiniana Sacra* 2 no 5 (1967): 305. In particular he describes two strands of inquiry on religion based respectively on rationalism and irrationalism (excessive focus on sentiments), which he contrasts with Aquinas' approach. Salgado's own definition proves somewhat problematic in light of Aquinas. He defines religion as "the awareness of one's dependence to God, and the ordination of one's life in conformity with that dependence." 311. While it is true that one is dependent on God and must order one's life to Him, Salgado overlooks the notion of debt, except for a very brief treatment on 319. The issue concerns the focus on dependence over debt (which can arise through the realization of dependence) seems to push Salgado's account to close to the sentimentality he criticizes as irrational. Walter Farrell, in contrast, clearly emphasizes that religion's "chief" and even "sole concern" "is with the payment of an unpayable debt, or, at the very least, a recognition of this debt." 342, 343.

<sup>1015</sup> cf. Grant Kaplan. *Responding to the Enlightenment: The Catholic Recovery of Historical Revelation*. (New York: Herder and Herder, 2006). Joseph Bobik proposes a theory of religious experience understood as one's response to revelation. See chapter one, "Revelation, Religious Experience, and Faith," in *Veritas Divina*. 33-52.



particularly from the perspective of religious pluralism. Without a traditional understanding of religion, it is no longer possible to speak of religion in relation to truth.

Kant's *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* serves as a prominent example of a treatment of religion within Enlightenment philosophy. The title itself manifests the shift, which has taken place. Kant confines religion into the realm of reason and not even the speculative realm, but solely to the practical. In his thought, religion conforms neither to the truth manifested to the intellect by revelation nor to a personal relation to another, but only to an ideal. Kant does not affirm God's existence except as the postulate of practical reason. This postulate of God is clearly subordinate to morality, flowing from Kant's absolute standard of duty. He states "this idea arises out of morality and is not its basis."<sup>1016</sup> The idea of God arises out of morality as a necessary component of it, but does constitute its foundation, which reflects the absence of teleology. Kant makes clear that the moral life does not stand in need of anything outside of itself:

So far as morality is based upon the conception of man as a free agent who, just because he is free, binds himself though his reason to unconditional laws, it stands in need neither of the idea of another Being over him, for him to apprehend his duty, nor of an incentive other than the law itself, for him to do his duty.... for whatever does not originate in himself and his own freedom in no way compensates for the deficiency for his morality. Hence for its own sake morality does not need religion at all.<sup>1017</sup>

This is to say that for humanity to reach the goal of the moral life there does not need to be the assistance of an external law, making known what is to be done, nor the assistance of grace, granting the power to accomplish what must be done. Rather, the individual stands as the

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<sup>1016</sup> Immanuel Kant. *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*. trans. Theodore Greene and Hoyt Hudson. (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1960), 5. For a sympathetic treatment of Kant's moral philosophy in relation to religion see Allen Wood. *Kant's Moral Religion*. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1970). Wood describes Kant's position in the face of the impossibility of achieving moral ends as follows: "Moral faith is the outlook of the rational man who has chosen to succumb to moral despair, who has chosen hope rather than despair. Concretely, then, moral faith consists in a view of the situation of moral action which gives a rational and conceptual expression to confidence and hope that the processes of the world are ordered purposively and cooperate with our moral volition." 161.

<sup>1017</sup> *ibid.* 1.

sufficient origin and executor of the moral life and in Kant's view of the religious life as well. God comes into picture in this account only as an assurance of the goodness and happiness consequent on forming and living out a good maxim of the will. Kant argues that...

if, now, the strictest obedience to moral laws is to be considered the cause of the ushering in of the highest good (as end), then, since human capacity does not suffice for bringing about happiness in the world proportionate to worthiness to be happy, an omnipotent moral Being must be postulated as ruler of the world, under whose care this [balance] occurs.<sup>1018</sup>

Kant does not affirm the existence of God or that He actually does provide happiness, but rather that the mind necessarily posits His existence to fill a gap in the distance between what is and what ought to be in terms of the consequent happiness from following one's maxim.

The ultimate significance of Kant's subordination of religion to his own ethical system entails a complete reversal of Aquinas' understanding. For Aquinas the virtuous life serves as a means of acting for God's glory and to share in that glory. God is the ultimate end of the moral life as it is based on His creation and is ordered to God as the end of happiness. Kant reverses this by making morality an end in itself with God and religion serving this morality: "The doctrine of virtue, however, subsists of itself (even without the concept of God), whereas the doctrine of godliness involves the concept of an object which we represent to ourselves, in relation to our morality, as the cause supplementing our incapacity with respect to the final moral end."<sup>1019</sup> If God cannot be known and one cannot act so as to be happy with Him, one is left solely with duty, which turns morality into an end in itself. Reason becomes revelation, and one's own actions automatically become religious. To have any other end, especially God, constitutes a distortion of religion for Kant. He makes this clear as follows:

When reverence for God is put first, with virtue therefore subordinated to it, this object [of reverence] becomes an *idol*, that is, He is thought of as Being whom we may please

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<sup>1018</sup> *ibid.* 7.

<sup>1019</sup> *ibid.* 171.

not through morally upright conduct on earth but through adoration and ingratiating; and religion is then idolatry.<sup>1020</sup>

If there is no one to serve than religion as classically understood becomes what Kant deems “pseudo-service,” which he holds to be a distraction from the true religion of a right moral maxim. Since he focuses exclusively on this maxim, Kant also cuts religion off from any relation to the exterior, whether it be an expression of worship or an outside inspiration. If worship stems solely from the interior order of the will with no necessary relation to anything outside then it becomes completely personal and even subjective.

One cannot underestimate the significance of Kant’s argumentation. While he maintains Aquinas’ link of religion to morality, he completely isolates it from the understanding of justice as relation to another. Kant’s rectitude focuses on the self, cutting reason and the will off from their origin and fixed end. What this entails is the study of religion as something confined to one’s own self. God comes from within and not from without. Religion becomes subordinate to the independent exercise of the mind, rather than part of an order guiding the soul to its true purpose. This has allowed religion to become an anthropological study, something that belongs to human nature with no intrinsic reference to what is beyond. While Aquinas does at least affirm the basis for religion within nature, he nevertheless recognizes that when religion is isolated to the level of nature alone, it exists as a distortion of its true purpose.

Recognizing the limits of Kant’s exposition of religion led Friedrich Schleiermacher to formulate yet another enormously influential understanding of religion. Schleiermacher understood the problematic nature of Kant’s confinement of religion to reason and his separation of religion from God. However, instead of returning to a classical understanding, he further

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<sup>1020</sup> *ibid.* 173. Emphasis original.

cemented the anthropocentric focus on religion as a human experience.<sup>1021</sup> He did so by placing the encounter with God within the soul through the Feeling of Absolute Dependence. Rather than laying stress on the need for revelation and grace, Schleiermacher proposed meeting God within oneself through this feeling within, which would then directly lead to the formulation of knowledge about God and action in conformity with that knowledge. The problem arises in making religious truth and expression depend on one's own experience, which necessarily relativizes them. He argues...

that if one faith wishes to establish the validity of its own application of the idea as against the others, it cannot at all accomplish this by the assertion that its own divine communication is pure and entire truth, while the others contain falsehood. For complete truth would mean that God made Himself known as He is in and for Himself. But such a truth could not proceed outwardly from any fact, and even if it did in some incomprehensible way come to a human soul, it could not be apprehended by that soul, and retained as a thought.<sup>1022</sup>

Even though it is true that no human cognition could fully comprehend God, Schleiermacher ventures further to deny that any religious body could maintain to have received a pure and complete revelation from God. This is due to his confinement of revelation and knowledge of God to human experience.<sup>1023</sup>

While Kant had maintained the role of the moral life in religion, he had done so at the expense of an actual relation to God. Schleiermacher responded by emphasizing the relation above anything else. Therefore, one's relation with God does not depend on either right moral relation or knowledge, but rather these two are subordinate to human experience.

Schleiermacher initiates a move of great significance in the study of religion, but making religion essentially concern human experience of the divine. This leads to a subjectivization of religion,

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<sup>1021</sup> For instance, he states: "A religious man must be reflective, his sense must be occupied in the contemplation of himself." *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*. trans. John Oman. (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 132.

<sup>1022</sup> *The Christian Faith*. ed. H.R. MacKintosh and J.S. Stewart. (New York: T & T Clark, 1999), 52.

<sup>1023</sup> *ibid.* 50.

which ultimately maintains the anthropocentric focus of Kant. Even though Schleiermacher posited the Divine as a reality to be experienced, the emphasis still remained on the experience of this other within the person, rather than a movement toward the other. The next logical step would be to do away with the divine altogether as a reality in religious experience, and simply regard it as something entirely human, contrived for practical advantages.<sup>1024</sup>

Karl Barth famously pointed out the fallacious move to equate religion with human experience. He responded with an emphasis on the truth of God's revelation, which stands as the foundation for any true encounter with God. He even exempts Aquinas from his criticism of religion. He describes religion in scholastic theology as follows:

Thomas Aquinas (*S. Theol.* II 2 *qu.* 81 f.) spoke of the general (moral) virtue of *religio* and (ib. *qu.* 186 f.) of the specifically monkish *religio*. Occasionally he described the object of theology as *Christiana religio* (e.g., in the Prologue to the *S. Theol.*) or as *religio fidei*. But when he did this he had obviously no thought of a non-Christian 'religion.' What we call that seems then not to have been known by that name. And the concept of religion as a general concept, to which the Christian religion must be subordinated as on with others was obviously quite foreign to him. In substance, the problem had been raised early in the Middle Ages by Claudius of Turin, John Scot Erigena and Abelard. But it did not and could not have any great importance until after the Renaissance.<sup>1025</sup>

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<sup>1024</sup> Both Hume and Nietzsche posit religion as a source for the advancement and manipulation of humanity. However, both of them place religion into the primitive stage of human development, and argue that humanity should move beyond it. Hume posits morality as true religion (in a move mirrored by Kant), while Nietzsche essentially points toward an absolute focus on the self through the strength of the will and its eternal positing of oneself. cf. David Hume. *The Natural History of Religion.* in *Writings on Religion.* ed. Antony Flew. (Chicago: Open Court, 1992) and Friedrich Nietzsche. *Beyond Good and Evil.* in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche.* trans. and ed. Walter Kaufmann. (New York: The Modern Library, 2000).

<sup>1025</sup> *Church Dogmatics.* Vol. 1. Second Half-Volume. *The Doctrine of the Word of God.* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985), 284. Nicholas Lash describes the move to place particular religions within a general concept of religion as follows: "The view... according to which there are a number of different religions, related to each other as species of a common genus, was first invented in seventeenth-century England. It appears, at the beginning of the century, in Richard Hooker, and the distinction drawn by Edward Brerewood, in 1614, between 'four sorts of Sects of Religion' – Christianity, Mahometanism, Judaism and paganism – soon became standard. Drawn in these terms, this distinction would have puzzled Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa who spoke, in the fifteenth century, of that one religion, *una religio*, the 'unattainable truth about God... of which all existing belief systems are but shadowy reflections'.... The construction of the 'genus and species' model of relationships between 'the religions' was but one component in the project of 'enlightenment.'" *The Beginning and End of 'Religion.'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 10-11. The quote from Cusa was taken from his *De pace fidei* and quoted by Lash from Peter Harrison's *'Religion' and the Religions in the English Enlightenment.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 12.

While it would be possible to recognize many similarities in Barth's and Aquinas' approach to religion, it would nevertheless remain necessary to point out one significant difference between them. While they both insist on the necessity of grace and revelation for true religion, Aquinas strongly maintains the role of human nature in religion. Since he treats religion as a moral virtue of the will, his account positively incorporates elements of human nature and its way of expressing itself. However, Barth refuses to concede that Christian worship can bear any similarity to the history of religion, tainted by sin.<sup>1026</sup> This places true religion in a realm that transcends human nature, since it is equated with grace and revelation, and the human, religious expression of the Church will remain imperfect and even impure.<sup>1027</sup> He states that "religion is never true in itself as such,"<sup>1028</sup> since even Christian worship "stands under the judgment that religion is unbelief."<sup>1029</sup>

Hans Urs von Balthasar forcefully responds to this by placing the worship of Christ within the context of the history of religion, in a manner consistent with Aquinas. He makes clear that Christ "achieved the perfect human response to God," which includes the moral ordering of the will through religion.<sup>1030</sup> He draws this out in the following manner:

it certainly follows [from Christ's taking on man's nature to redeem it] that the acts of Christ—being acts of his human nature, and therefore insofar as the man Christ manifests his *religio* toward the Father in adoration and obedience...—are truly acts of natural religion. They are not merely natural religion, but this is not reason for denying that they are *also* natural religion; it does mean that we have both the right and duty to affirm natural religion as necessarily implied in Christology.<sup>1031</sup>

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<sup>1026</sup> *ibid.* 345. Cottier points out that for Barth ("the great reformed theologian") the problem rests in the fact that "religion, because it proceeds from nature, is idolatry." He does agree that in regards to faith it "does not have its equivalent in other religions." On the precise point of similarity to other religions, he responds that "the same symbols, in effect, are capable of receiving specifically different significations." "*La vertu de religion.*" 340-342.

<sup>1027</sup> *ibid.* 344-45.

<sup>1028</sup> *ibid.* 325.

<sup>1029</sup> *ibid.* 327.

<sup>1030</sup> "Catholicism and the Religions." *Communio* 5 (1978): 9.

<sup>1031</sup> *Explorations in Theology*. Vol. 1. *The Word Made Flesh*. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 58.

Christ affirms religion as a positive element within human nature, which even in its imperfect expression pointed toward the supernatural fulfillment of humanity. Aquinas made this clear in the fact that Christ used the sacrifice of human flesh to save humanity. Balthasar points out that other elements have also survived in the history of religion to become a part of true worship. While affirming the thrust of Barth's criticism, he nevertheless concedes more to religion: "The word of God, in replacing the false gods, condemns and indeed scorns the material content of man's ideas of the Godhead, but nonetheless takes over for its own use the bare framework, and thus, on occasion even preserves (in the economy of grace) something of the content."<sup>1032</sup> Here Balthasar points out a fine line in maintaining the transcendence of true religion while affirming some sort of positive contribution achieved by human effort in the history of religious traditions.

Many are not able to maintain this delicate balance and tend toward the equation of the Christian religion with other religions. This constitutes the second major move in the study of history after Aquinas contrary to his thought. It is based upon the first step within the Enlightenment which removed the element of a personal and dynamic relationship with God. If religion exists solely as a human experience or phenomenon then it would be improper to speak in terms of truth or superiority. This does not necessarily mean that God is absent from religion, but rather that He is not the object of moral advancement nor known through positive revelation.

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<sup>1032</sup> *ibid.* 67. For an interesting exposition of the way in which Christian worship builds upon common religious elements of humanity see Louis Bouyer, *Rite and Man: Natural Sacredness and Christian Liturgy*. trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963). He describes his intent as follows: "We shall come to see what Christianity has in common with other religions, and which, perhaps, we had not suspected. Actually, as long as these common elements have not been identified and examined we cannot even imagine them." 2. He states further: "It is indeed true that the Incarnation should tend to consecrate all flesh, but by this, as we shall see, it merely tends to restore the primitive, original form of natural sacredness, while transfiguring it; for everything without exception was originally conceived as pertaining to the divine domain. But it tends to this end effectively only because it starts from the unique sacredness of the flesh of the Son of God made man, which, as we also shall see, far from abolishing the heart of Jewish sacredness, brings it to its completion, just as the latter, far from abrogating the segregations of natural sacredness, had already perfected them." 12. Bouyer uses themes such as sacrifice, myth, and mysteries/sacraments for his comparison. As was noted above, Aquinas does recognize sacrifice as a natural institution, which was taken up and purified by Israel and perfected by Christ. Cf. ch. 6 in Bouyer, entitled "Sacrificial Rites and Their Ambivalence," 78-94.

God becomes an idea shared in some form by all religions and which constitutes a basic, interior experience common to all.

Jacques Dupuis attempts to situate this new climate of pluralism explicitly within Catholic theology. In doing so he attempts to refute both religion's constitution as a natural phenomenon and also the Christian religion's supernatural and unique role as the embodiment of perfect worship. Both of these assertions of Aquinas are denied as Christianity becomes one religion among many, all of which serve as diverse representations of God's relation to humanity. While Aquinas would have seen religion within the context of one's relation to God through law, Dupuis shifts the emphasis away from one's personal state in relation to God, pointing rather to the grace and truth placed by God within all religions. Dupuis argues that...

when the phrase 'paths to salvation' is applied here to the religious traditions, it refers not merely to a search for God, universally present in human beings even though never fulfilled through their own power, but, in the first place, to God's search for them and to God's gracious initiative in inviting them to share in the divine life. Paths to salvation are laid by God, not by human beings for themselves.<sup>1033</sup>

Since Dupuis links religious traditions to paths of salvation laid down by God Himself, He moves beyond the understanding of religion as a natural phenomenon (marred by sin). He posits that "as there is no purely natural concrete religious life, so neither is there any such thing as a purely natural historical religion."<sup>1034</sup> The reason for this is that God has willed the diversity of religion and given all of them His truth and grace.

Aquinas recognizes a basic structure of religion insofar as nature and reason recognize God's existence and the need for worship; this dictate would stand under the corruption of sin, unless God intervenes. Aquinas' description of this intervention draws explicitly from Scripture in its understanding of the economy of salvation beginning with Israel and culminating in Christ.

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<sup>1033</sup> *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2001), 305.

<sup>1034</sup> *ibid.* 318.



Through the Old and New Law, God has provided sinners with the proper means of worship. Others, outside of this economy, can share in right worship insofar as they as individuals have a right interior relation with God. Aquinas describes this through implicit faith, which opens life to grace and the instincts of the Holy Spirit, who will teach the individual the proper way to worship.

Though Dupuis recognizes the positive contribution of Aquinas' teaching on implicit faith,<sup>1035</sup> he nevertheless insists on moving beyond it. He argues that...

if many members of the other religious traditions have an authentic experience of God, the inescapable conclusion is that these traditions contain, in their institutions and social practices, traces of the encounter of human beings with grace.... No dichotomy can be erected between human beings' subjective religious life and the religion they profess, between their personal religious experience and the historico-social religious phenomenon... to which they adhere.<sup>1036</sup>

While the first part of this quotation does not particularly pose a problem, the second part stretches too far, claiming that if one has a true encounter with God, this validates one's religion. It is true that any religion based on a sinful distortion of nature does have a relation to grace,

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<sup>1035</sup> cf. 114-19.

<sup>1036</sup> *ibid.* 318. Anselm Min presents a similar way of thought in *Paths to the Triune God: An Encounter between Aquinas and Recent Theologies*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005). He uses principles taken from Aquinas to argue that implicit faith must find its outward expression in already existing religious practices. He compares this to the fact that Jewish ritual serves as a means of faith in Christ's saving work. He argues that "Aquinas can safely be regarded as an inclusivist in his theology of the non-Christian. But is it possible to *develop* the implications of his position and draw a pluralistic inclusivist or even a straightforwardly inclusivist position?" 101. Min answers in the affirmative, wanting to push Aquinas "one step further and say that they (non-Christians) can be saved not only as individuals but precisely as members of their religions, i.e., *through* their religions." 102. He describes his conclusion as follows: "The principle of nature and the sacramental principle now require that believers concretize their implicit faith and hope in the possibility of salvation through appropriate rituals of their own. The principle of difference requires that these rituals of different peoples will obviously differ among themselves as well as from Christian and Hebrew sacraments. The principle of reasonable accessibility will require that these rituals will be precisely those available in the already existing religious of the particular regions. These rituals, however, are meaningful only as part of a concrete, organized totality of symbols such as rituals, beliefs, and practices that constitute a living religion." 103-04. This argument completely prescind from the crucial question as to whether the practices of these diverse religions truly foster the minimal belief, for which Min argues, namely, belief in God and His saving providence. Many religions explicitly deny these elements and participation in their rituals would therefore contradict one's implicit faith in God. This is not to say that there may not be certain elements in that religion in which one with implicit faith could participate, but this notion is certainly distinct from that claim that one is saved through a religion which denies God's existence and His saving work. It should also be noted that turning to Judaism as a model does not advance his argument, because in this case the beliefs and rituals were given directly by God, the latter to act as signs of Christ's future coming.

even if it is one of rejecting God's grace, so that none will be purely natural in that sense.

However, it is absurd to say that if a pagan has implicit faith in God and worships Him correctly that this justifies pagan idolatry. Dupuis seeks to create a new economy of salvation that includes all religions, though it is clear that religion apart from scriptural revelation contains sinful distortions, which affect knowledge of God and interior relation to Him.

The way that Dupuis arrives at this dangerous assertion stems from His reletavization of Christ's saving action. While he claims to make this the center of his account of religion, he, nevertheless, imposes great limits upon its definitiveness. He states:

The historical particularity of Jesus imposes upon the Christ-event irremediable limitations.... God remains beyond the man Jesus as the ultimate source of both revelation and salvation. Jesus' revelation of God is a human transposition of God's mystery; his salvific action is the channel, the efficacious sign or sacrament, of God's salvific will.... If this is true, it will also be seen that, while the Christ-event is the universal sacrament of God's will to save humankind, it need not therefore be the only possible expression of that will. God's saving power is not exclusively bound by the universal sign God has designed for his saving action.<sup>1037</sup>

For Aquinas the particularity does not impose limits on Christ's actions, but actually serves as the means by which His saving work becomes enacted and communicated. Dupuis points to God's saving will as if it were abstract.<sup>1038</sup> He completely abstracts from the role of the humanity of Christ, through which the Second Person of the Trinity becomes priest, prophet, and king of humanity. It is by the Incarnation that Christ becomes one with humanity so that it may be drawn into His saving action on the Cross. This action is not a symbol, but rather the very accomplishment and mediation of salvation. True religion springs directly from this action and is mediated by Christian worship, which actually contains the power of that action.

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<sup>1037</sup> *ibid.* 298.

<sup>1038</sup> He speaks of the "Logos *asarkos*... through whom all people may be saved and in whom all ways may converge." *ibid.* 288.

Dupuis' reliance on pluralism strips the Christian religion from its unique embodiment of Christ's truth and saving action. Christian worship expresses them both in a unique way, even if others may share in it implicitly. Aquinas anticipates the tendency toward pluralism when dealing with superstition. He puts forward two objections not unlike those of today:

Objection 1. It would seem that there cannot be anything pernicious in the worship of the true God. It is written (Joel ii. 32): 'Everyone that shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' Now whoever worships God calls upon His name. Therefore all worship of God is conducive to salvation, and consequently none is pernicious.

Obj. 2. Further, it is God that is worshipped by the just in any age of the world. Now before the giving of the Law the just worshiped God in whatever manner they pleased, without committing moral sin: wherefore Jacob bound himself by his own vow to a special kind of worship, as related in Genesis xxviii. Therefore now also no worship of God is pernicious.<sup>1039</sup>

Aquinas responds in the following manner:

Reply Obj. 1. Since God is truth, to invoke God is to worship Him in spirit and truth, according to Jo. iv. 23. Hence a worship that contains falsehood is inconsistent with a salutary calling upon God.

Reply Obj. 2. Before the time of the Law the just were instructed by an inward instinct as to the way of worshiping God, and others followed them. But afterwards men were instructed by outward precepts about this matter, and it is wicked to disobey them.

It is significant that even the objector specifies that the worship mentioned is directed to the true God. Even when that is the case, the worship must still reflect the truth which God has revealed. God must be known for who He is (though of course only He knows Himself fully) without any admixture of error. The second objection deals only with the response of the just, which after the advent of revelation must conform to God's law. The parameters for true religion in Aquinas entail true knowledge of God and right response, both of which require knowledge and grace.

One may respond that this is precisely what Dupuis sought to include within other religions. Though it may be clear that ancient pagan religions, which worshiped idols and practiced human sacrifice, did not appropriately reflect true religion, what of other noble

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<sup>1039</sup> ST II-II. 93.1.

religions, which many adhere to today? The response must question whether these religions aim at the same thing as Christianity. Though they may have a vague order toward the absolute, do they know the true God and have a right relationship with Him? J. A. DiNoia convincingly points out that the pluralist and inclusivist movements wrongfully equate the actually distinct aims of religions. He states:

Pluralists substitute religiously indeterminate concepts like ‘Reality’ or ‘Mystery’ for otherwise distinctively conceived religious objects... the pluralist account construes religious differences about the nature of the objects of worship and quest as ultimately resolvable into a higher synthesis that transcends the reach of the doctrines of all existing religious communities.<sup>1040</sup>

For instance, does eternal and personal union with the Blessed Trinity truly aim at the same end as the state of Nirvana? While there may be many commonalities between religions and while other religions do contain true and useful doctrines, this does not mean that they aim at the same goal as Christianity. Aquinas points toward the distinctiveness of the Christian religion in its order toward a personal and enduring relationship with God through justice and charity. He insists that this relationship, even in its implicit form, must contain knowledge of the true God and the right practice of virtue and worship.

This brief description of the development of thought concerning religion was meant to highlight the loss of key elements of Aquinas’ account of religion as a virtue. Religion today generally refers to membership within a religious tradition, which may lack the internal relation of justice and love directed toward a personal God so central to Aquinas. Given the limits of Aquinas’ description, that is, his exclusive focus on classical and Christian sources, one could ask what value his thought has for a contemporary account of religion. While it is clear that Aquinas cannot provide a basis for a full account for the diversity of religion, his thought does

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<sup>1040</sup> *The Diversity of Religions: A Christian Perspective*. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992), 140-141.

provide helpful parameters for a Christian understanding of religion. I propose three general points: the context of the moral life, the framework of salvation history, and conformity to Christ. These points may help one to evaluate other religions in light of how they encourage their adherents toward a right relation to God (even if they are unaware of this ordering).

1. “There cannot possibly be any friendship of man to God, Who is supremely good, unless man become good.” First, though religion may be commonly thought of through its external elements of ritual and practice, one must ask whether a religion fosters a right interior disposition. Does this tradition see worship and religious practices through the lens of justice?<sup>1041</sup> In Aquinas’ thought this understanding is based on the recognition of God as Creator. It involves gratitude and the order of one’s actions to God as end. While other traditions may not see the world in such terms, worship may still be grounded in a sense of gratitude, which leads one to act in a

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<sup>1041</sup> cf. The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue’s “Message to Buddhists for the Feast of Vesakh 2006: Buddhists and Christians at the Service of Humanity.” The document seeks to appreciate the Buddhist concept of metta in light of Christian charity, recognizing how both seek the good of others. It states: “Through our dialogue we have come to appreciate the importance that you Buddhists give to love for one’s fellow human beings which is expressed in the concept of metta, a love without any desire to possess but only to help others. It is understood as a love which is willing to sacrifice self-interest for the benefit of humanity. So metta, according to Buddhist teaching, is not confined to benevolent thought, but extends to the performance of charitable deeds, to the service of one and all. It is indeed a universal benevolence. Nor should one forget that other virtue, karuna, through which is shown loving compassion for all living beings.” § 5. [www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/interelg/documents/rc\\_pc\\_interelg\\_20060504\\_vesakh2006\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_20060504_vesakh2006_en.html). For an interesting discussion on how to dialogue with Buddhism from a Thomistic perspective, particularly on the existence of God, see Paul Williams. “Aquinas Meets the Buddhists: Prolegomenon to an Authentically Thomas-ist Basis for Dialogue.” in *Aquinas in Dialogue*. 87-117. Williams notes that the author of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, Śāntideva, may actually be a useful source for refuting erroneous notions of God, though he has not recognized the existence of the true God. Williams argues that “Thomas, I suggest, would be enormously grateful to Śāntideva for showing (as far as he is concerned) the incoherence of many people’s ideas of what God is. Inasmuch as the attack on the existence of God proceeds through attacking that which simply could not ever have been God—that is, therefore, through undermining idolatry—Thomas would be quite happy.... What Śāntideva simply has not shown, however, is that *God* does not exist, the (for Thomas) true God, the actual Creator of everything.” 101. In conclusion, Williams argues that the pivotal point of disagreement actually concerns creatures, “not God as such.... What the Buddhist does not know is that everything is *created*. Knowing this changes everything. For it has supreme soteriological import,” insofar as one cannot turn to the Creator if He is not thought to exist. 108. Keith Ward may have exaggerated Thomas’ affinity to Eastern thought as he compares his thought on God to the Hindu notion of Brahman. *Religion and Revelation: A Theology of Revelation in the World’s Religions*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 147, 150-51. Ward does make an excellent point in relation to Aquinas in arguing that his use of Aristotle demonstrates the usefulness of turning to outside traditions to illuminate one’s own. He, therefore, argues the following: “I am inclined to say that one cannot properly understand the mode of Divine revelation within Christianity unless one can set it in the context of human religious activity in general, for only in its widest context can one discern the true meaning of such revelation.” 37.

compassionate and upright manner. If Aquinas' emphasis on nature and reason are correct, then one would expect that most religious traditions would have at least some emphasis on these elements due to the natural ordering of the will and the role of the natural law. While it may be difficult to speak in such terms while dialoguing within another tradition, natural law may help to recognize common motivations, thoughts, and even practices, which arise across religious boundaries.

2. "Now in order that anyone go straight along a road, he must have some knowledge of the end."<sup>1042</sup> Secondly, a Christian must approach the study of religion from a biblical perspective. In Scripture, God has provided the context of salvation history from which to evaluate human action and worship. There is no neutral study of history for a Christian, since God has described the underlying thrust of history in terms of sin and grace. True and false worship are put side by side immediately after the Fall in the story of Cain and Abel. Religion cannot be solely a sociological or anthropological study, but must reflect the theological reality of the destructive force of sin and the redeeming work of grace. Religion will bear the mark of both. Those who refuse to accept the privileged role of Israel and the Church must only look to the Scripture to recognize their unique election and vocation to be a point of unity and salvation for all nations. Other traditions may contain elements of grace due to the work of God in its members, but only Judaism and Christianity have the privilege of being constituted directly by God.

3. "It is necessary for salvation that men be united together in the name of the one true religion."<sup>1043</sup> Finally, Aquinas insists on the need for conformity to Christ. The Church exists as a continuation of Christ's mission by making His revelation known through her teaching and His saving work present in the sacraments. The worship of the Church stems from Christ's priesthood,

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<sup>1042</sup> ST III. 45.1, corpus.

<sup>1043</sup> ST III. 61.1, *sed contra*.

which Scripture points to as the only mediator between God and humanity. To attribute another source of mediation, such as in another religious tradition, truly contradicts the Christian faith. This does not need to stand as a blanket condemnation of all non-Christian religions, but merely points out that they cannot substitute for Christianity in terms of salvation. These human traditions can contain many good elements and even advance their adherents in some limited way toward salvation. However, if any of these adherents are saved it is only through Christ, which Aquinas would speak of in terms of implicit faith. This emphasizes the state of the individual as opposed to the tradition itself.<sup>1044</sup>

In conclusion, there are many elements of religion which stem primarily from the experience of individual human beings. These experiences have many common elements, which seems to point to some unity, which exists through all religions as an experience of Ultimate reality. This common experience can be studied scientifically and serve as a point of common reference for all religions. Nevertheless, when religion is studied in terms of a supernatural relationship with God that ends in eternal fellowship, one must have recourse to God's own initiative in history as seen in His work of revelation and redemption. Most religions lay no claim to such a relation to God; some do not even adhere to a belief in God. Aquinas reminds us that religion, truly speaking, must involve a just and loving relationship with the true God, who creates and redeems us. A Christian account of religion must uphold this as the standard through which other expressions are seen and evaluated.

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<sup>1044</sup> cf. DiNoia. 11. "A rough but useful distinction can be drawn between doctrines about other religions *qua* religions (as systems of belief or patterns of life) and doctrines about the adherents of other religions (as fellow human beings or nonmembers)."

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ABBREVIATIONS

I	<i>Prima Pars</i> —the first part of the <i>Summa Theologiae</i>
I-II	<i>Prima Secundae</i> —the first part of the second part of the <i>Summa Theologiae</i> .
II-II	<i>Secunda Secundae</i> —the second part of the second part of the <i>Summa Theologiae</i> .
III	<i>Tertia Pars</i> —the third part of the <i>Summa Theologiae</i> .
SCG	<i>Summa Contra Gentiles</i> .
SFA	<i>Summa Fratris Alexandris</i> .
ST	<i>Summa Theologiae</i> .