

## QUESTION 109

### The Necessity for Grace

Next we have to consider the exterior principle of human acts that comes from God insofar as we are helped by Him to act rightly by His grace. We have to consider, first, God's grace (questions 109-111); second, the cause of grace (question 112); and, third, the effects of grace (questions 113-114).

There are three parts of the first topic. We will consider, first, the necessity for grace (question 109); second, grace itself with respect to its essence (question 110); and, third, the divisions of grace (question 111).

On the first topic there are ten questions: (1) Can a man have cognition of any truth without grace? (2) Can a man do anything good without God's grace? (3) Can a man love God above all things without grace? (4) Can a man keep the commandments of the Law without grace? (5) Can a man merit eternal life without grace? (6) Can a man prepare himself for grace without grace? (7) Can a man recover from sin without grace? (8) Can a man avoid sin without grace? (9) Can a man who has received grace do good and avoid sin without any further divine assistance? (10) Can man persevere in the good on his own (*per seipsum*)?

### Article 1

#### Can a man have cognition of any truth without grace?

It seems that a man cannot have cognition of any truth without grace:

**Objection 1:** Ambrose's Gloss on 1 Corinthians 12:3 ("No one can say 'Lord Jesus' except in the Holy Spirit") says, "Anything true that is said by anyone is from the Holy Spirit." But the Holy Spirit dwells in us through grace. Therefore, we cannot know the truth without grace.

**Objection 2:** In *Soliloquium* 1 Augustine says, "The most certain of the disciplines are those that are illuminated by the sun in order that they might be seen. Now it is God Himself who does the illuminating, whereas reason exists in minds in the way that sight (*aspectus*) exists in the eyes, and the mind's eyes are the soul's senses." But no matter how pure a bodily sense is, it cannot see any visible thing without the sun's illumination. Therefore, no matter how perfect a human mind is, it cannot come to know truth through its reasoning without God's illumination. But this involves the assistance of grace.

**Objection 3:** As is clear from Augustine in *De Trinitate* 14, the human mind cannot understand truth except by thinking. But in 2 Corinthians 3:5 the Apostle says, "Not that we are sufficient to think anything by ourselves, as if it were from us." Therefore, a man cannot have a cognition truth on his own without the assistance of grace.

**But contrary to this:** In *Retractationes* 1 Augustine says, "I do not approve of my having said in a prayer, 'O God, who willed that only the clean should know what is true.' For one can reply that even many unclean individuals know many truths." But it is through grace that a man is made clean—this according to Psalm 50:12 ("A clean heart create in me, O God, and renew in my innards a steadfast spirit"). Therefore, a man can know the truth by himself without grace.

**I respond:** Having cognition of the truth is a certain employment of, or act of, the intellectual light (*usus quidam vel actus intellectualis luminis*). For according to the Apostle in Ephesians 5:13, "Everything that is made manifest is light." Now 'employment' or 'use' (*usus*) implies a sort of movement, taking 'movement' in the broad sense according to which acts of intellective understanding and of willing are said to be movements—as is clear from the Philosopher in *De Anima* 3.

Now we see in the case of corporeal things that what is required for movement is not only (a) the very form that is the principle of the movement or action, but also (b) the motion of the first mover (*motio primi moventis*). And the first mover in the order of corporeal things is a celestial body. Hence, no matter how perfect a heat a given instance of fire might have, it does not effect change except through

the motion of a celestial body.

Now it is clear that just as all corporeal movements are traced back to the movement of a celestial body as to a first corporeal mover, so too all movements, both corporeal movements and spiritual movements, are traced back to the first mover absolutely speaking, viz., God. And so no matter how perfect a given corporeal or spiritual nature is claimed to be, it cannot proceed into its own act if it is not moved by God. This movement occurs in accord with the plan of God's providence and not in accord with a necessity of nature, as in the case of the motion of a celestial body. Moreover, it is not just every *movement* that comes from God as from a first cause; rather, every *formal perfection* comes from Him as from a first act. So, then, an action of the intellect, or of any created entity, depends on God in two ways: (a) insofar as it has from God the form by which it acts, and (b) insofar as it is moved by Him to act.

Now each form that has been put into created things by God has causal efficacy with respect to a determinate act that it is capable of in accord with its properties (*habet efficaciam respectu alicuius actus determinati in quem potest secundum suam proprietatem*), but it is incapable of anything beyond that except by the addition of another form; for instance, water cannot make anything hot unless it is itself made hot by fire. So, then, the human intellect has a form, viz., the intelligible light itself, which is by itself sufficient for the cognition of certain intelligible things, viz., those that we are able to come to knowledge of through sensible things. However, the human intellect is unable to have cognition of higher intelligible things unless it is perfected by a stronger light (*nisi fortiori lumine perficiatur*), e.g., the light of faith or the light of prophecy.

So, then, one should reply that in order to have cognition of anything at all, a man needs God's help in order that his intellect might be moved by God to its act. However, in order to have cognition of the truth, he does not in all cases need a new illumination in addition to his natural illumination; instead, he needs a new illumination only in certain cases that exceed his natural cognition.

Yet sometimes through His grace God miraculously instructs some individuals with respect to things that can be known through natural reason, in just the way that He sometimes does miraculously certain things that nature can do.

**Reply to objection 1:** Any truth that is uttered by anyone is from the Holy Spirit in the sense that it is from the one who pours the natural light [into the intellective soul] and moves a man to have intellective understanding and to speak the truth. However, not every truth is from the Holy Spirit in the sense that it is from the one who dwells [in the soul] through habitual or sanctifying grace (*per gratiam gratum facientem*); this is the case with the cognition and utterance only of certain truths—especially those which belong to the Faith and which the Apostle was talking about [in the cited passage].

**Reply to objection 2:** The corporeal sun illuminates from without, whereas the intelligible sun, viz., God, illuminates from within. Hence, the natural light that is poured into the soul is itself the illumination on God's part by which we are illuminated by Him in order to have cognition of those things that pertain to natural cognition. And a further illumination is not required for this, but is instead required only with respect to things that exceed our natural cognition.

**Reply to objection 3:** We always need God's help in thinking about anything whatsoever, insofar as He moves our intellect to act. For as is clear from Augustine in *De Trinitate* 14, to think is to have an actual intellective understanding of something.

## Article 2

### Is a man able to will and do good without grace?

It seems that a man is able to will and do good without grace:

**Objection 1:** What is within a man's power is such that he is the master over it. But as was explained above (q. 1, a. 1), a man is the master of his own acts, and especially of the act of willing.

Therefore, a man is able to will and do good on his own (*per seipsum*) without the assistance of grace.

**Objection 2:** Each thing is more capable of what is in accord with its nature than of what is beyond its nature. But as Damascene explains in *De Fide Orthodoxa* 2, sin is contrary to nature, while, as was explained above (q. 71, a. 1), virtue is in accord with man's nature. Therefore, since a man is able to sin on his own (*per seipsum*), it seems that, *a fortiori*, he is able to will and to do good on his own.

**Objection 3:** As the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 6, the intellect's good is the true. But the intellect is able on its own (*per seipsum*) to have cognition of what is true, just as every other entity is able to perform its natural operation on its own (*per se*). Therefore, *a fortiori*, a man is able to do and will good on his own.

**But contrary to this:** In Romans 9:16 the Apostle says, "It"—viz., the willing—"does not belong to him who wills; nor does it"—viz., the running—"belong to him who runs, but instead it belongs to God, who has mercy." And in *De Correptione et Gratia* Augustine says, "Without grace men accomplish no good at all, either by thinking or by willing and loving or by doing."

**I respond:** There are two ways in which to consider a man's nature: (a) *in its uncorrupted or integral state (in sui integritate)*, in the way it existed in the first parent before the sin; and (b) *as corrupted in us* after the sin of the first parent.

Now in both these states human nature needs God's assistance as the first mover in order to do or will any good at all; this was explained above (a. 1).

However, in the state of *uncorrupted or integral nature (in statu naturae integrae)* the man was able by his natural powers (*poterat homo per sua naturalia*), as far as the sufficiency of his operative power was concerned, to will and do the good proportioned to his nature, i.e., the good of acquired virtue, but not the good that exceeds his nature, i.e., the good of infused virtue.

On the other hand, in the state of *corrupted nature* a man falls short even of what he is able to do in accord with his nature, so that he is unable to fulfill the whole of this sort of good (*totum huiusmodi bonum*) through his natural power. Yet since human nature has not been totally corrupted by sin in such a way as to be totally deprived of the good of nature, a man is able even in the state of corrupted nature to accomplish some particular goods through the power of his nature, e.g., to build houses and plant vines and other things of this sort, even though he is not able to accomplish the whole of the good that is connatural to him in such a way as to be lacking in nothing—in the same way that a sick man is able to have some movement on his own, but cannot, unless he is assisted by medicine, move perfectly with the movement of a healthy man.

So, then, in the state of integral nature a man needs the power of grace (*virtute gratuita*) in addition to his natural power for just one thing, viz., to do and will the supernatural good. By contrast, in the state of corrupted nature he needs the power of grace for two things, viz., (a) to be healed and, further, (b) to accomplish the good of supernatural virtue, i.e., the meritorious good. What's more, in both states a man needs God's help in order to be moved by Him toward acting well.

**Reply to objection 1:** A man is the master of his own acts, of both his willing and his not willing, because of reason's deliberation, which can be turned toward one part [of a contradiction] or the other. But if he is likewise the master of whether or not he deliberates, this must be because of a previous deliberation. And since there is no infinite regress here, one must in the end arrive at the point at which the man's free choice is moved by some exterior principle that lies beyond the human mind, viz., God. The Philosopher likewise proves this in *De Bona Fortuna*. Hence, even a healthy man's mind does not have dominion over its own act in the sense that it does not need to be moved by God. And the same holds *a fortiori* after the sin for the sick man's free choice, which is kept from the good by the corruption of nature.

**Reply to objection 2:** To sin is nothing other than to fall away from a good that is appropriate to a given thing in accord with its nature. But just as each created entity is such that (a) it does not have *esse* except from another and such that (b) it is nothing considered in itself, so too it needs to be conserved by another in the good of its own nature. By contrast, it can fall away from that good on its own, just as it

can likewise fall into non-*esse* on its own unless it is conserved by God.

**Reply to objection 3:** In the sense explained above (a. 1), a man cannot without God's assistance even have cognition of what is true. And yet human nature is corrupted by sin more with respect to its desire for the good than with respect to its cognition of the true.

### Article 3

#### Can a man love God above all things by just his natural power and without grace?

It seems that a man cannot love God above all things by just his natural power and without grace (*non possit diligere Deum super omnia ex solis naturalibus sine gratia*):

**Objection 1:** To love God above all things is the proper and principal act of charity. But man cannot have charity on his own, since, as Romans 5:5 puts it, "God's charity is diffused in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who is given to us." Therefore, a man is unable to love God above all things by just his natural power.

**Objection 2:** No nature is capable of what lies beyond itself (*nulla natura potest supra seipsam*). But to love something more than oneself is to tend toward something beyond oneself. Therefore, no created nature can love God in a way that lies beyond itself without the assistance of grace (*nulla natura creata potest Deum diligere supra seipsam sine auxilio gratiae*).

**Objection 3:** Since God is the highest good, He is owed the highest love, viz., that He be loved above all things. But a man is unable without grace to devote to God the highest love that is owed to Him by us; otherwise, it would make no sense for grace to be added. Therefore, without grace a man cannot love God above all things by just his natural power.

**But contrary to this:** According to some, the first man was constituted with just his natural power. And it is clear that in that state he loved God in some way or other. But he did not love God exactly as much as he loved himself or less than he loved himself (*non dilexit Deum aequaliter sibi vel minus se*), since he would have thereby sinned. Therefore, he loved God more than he loved himself (*dilexit Deum supra se*). Therefore, a man is able to love God more than himself—and so above all things—by just his natural power.

**I respond:** As was explained above in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 95, a. 1), where diverse opinions were likewise posited about the angels' natural love, man in the state of integral nature (*in statu naturae integrae*) was able by the power of his nature to accomplish that good that is connatural to him without the addition of the gift of grace (*absque superadditione gratuiti doni*)—though not without the assistance of God as mover (*tamen non absque auxilio Dei moventis*).

Now to love God above all things is something connatural to man as well as to every creature—not just rational creatures, but also non-rational and even non-living creatures, each in accord with the mode of love that can belong to it. The reason for this is that it is natural to every creature that it should desire and love something to the extent that this desire and love are naturally fitting (*secundum quod aptum natum est esse*); for as *Physics* 2 says, "Each thing acts in the way that is fitting for it." But it is clear that the good of the part exists for the sake of the good of the whole. Hence, by a natural desire or love each particular entity likewise loves its own proper good for the sake of the *common good of the whole universe*, i.e., for the sake of God. Hence, in *De Divinis Nominibus* Dionysius says, "God turns all things toward love for Himself." Thus, in the state of uncorrupted nature man referred his love for himself—and, similarly, his love for all other things—to the love of God as his end. And in this sense He loved God more than himself and loved Him above all things.

By contrast, in the state of corrupted nature a man falls short of this as far as the rational will's desire is concerned, since, because of the corruption of the nature, the rational will pursues *its own private good*—unless it is healed by God's grace.

And so one should reply that a man in the state of integral nature does not need the addition of the gift of grace to his natural goods in order to love God naturally above all things, even though he does need God's assistance in moving him to this act. However, in the state of corrupted nature a man needs the addition of the gift of grace healing his nature in order for him to do even this much.

**Reply to objection 1:** Charity loves God above all things in a more eminent way than [human] nature does. For the nature loves God above all things insofar as He is the source and end of natural goodness, whereas charity loves God above all things insofar as the man has a certain spiritual fellowship with God (*quandam societatem spiritualem cum Deo*).

Moreover, charity adds to the natural love for God a sort of promptitude and pleasure, in the same way that any virtuous habit adds something to a good act that comes just from the natural reason of a man who did not [previously] have the virtuous habit.

**Reply to objection 2:** The claim that no nature is capable of what lies beyond itself (*potest supra seipsam*) should not be understood to imply that a nature cannot be directed toward an object which lies beyond it (*in aliquod obiectum quod est supra se*). For it is clear that our intellect is able by its natural cognition to have cognition of things that lie beyond it, as is clear from its natural cognition of God. Rather, the claim should be understood to imply that a nature is incapable of an act that exceeds the measure of the nature's power. But loving God above all things is not an act of this latter sort, since, as has been explained, this act is natural to every created nature.

**Reply to objection 3:** Love (*amor*) is said to be 'highest' not only with respect to the *degree* of the loving (*quantum ad gradum dilectionis*) but also with respect to the *nature* of the loving and the *mode* of loving (*quantum ad rationem diligendi et dilectionis modum*). Accordingly, as has been explained, the highest degree of love is that by which charity loves God as the beatifier.

#### Article 4

##### Can a man without grace fulfill the precepts of the Law by his own natural power?

It seems that a man without grace can fulfill the precepts of the Law by his own natural power (*per sua naturalia possit praecepta legis implere*):

**Objection 1:** In Romans 2:14 the Apostle says, "The Gentiles, who do not have the Law, do naturally those things that belong to the Law." But what a man does naturally he is able to do on his own (*per seipsum*) without grace. Therefore, a man is able to carry out the precepts of the Law without grace.

**Objection 2:** In *Expositio Catholicae Fidei* Jerome says, "They are to be cursed who claim that God has commanded something impossible of man." But what a man is unable to fulfill on his own is impossible for him. Therefore, a man can fulfill all the precepts of the Law on his own.

**Objection 3:** As is clear from Matthew 25:37, the greatest of all the precepts of the Law is, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart." But as was explained above (a. 3), a man can fulfill this commandment through his natural powers by loving God above all things. Therefore, a man can fulfill all the precepts of the law without grace.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Haeresibus* Augustine says that it belongs to the Pelagian heresy "to believe that a man can carry out all of God's commandments without grace."

**I respond:** There are two senses of 'fulfill the commandments of the Law'.

One sense has to do with *the substance of the deeds*, viz., insofar as a man does just deeds and brave deeds and deeds of the other virtues. In this sense a man in the state of integral nature was able to fulfill all the commandments of the Law; otherwise, he would not have been able not to sin in that state, since to sin is nothing other than to transgress God's commandments. By contrast, in the state of corrupted nature a man is not able to fulfill all of God's commandments without healing grace.

In the second possible sense, the commandments of the law are fulfilled not only with respect to the

substance of the deed, but also with respect to *the mode of acting*, in the sense that they are done out of charity. And in this sense a man cannot fulfill the commandments of the Law without grace either in the state of integral nature or in the state of corrupted nature. This is why, in *De Correptione et Gratia*, after he had claimed that “without grace men can do no good at all,” Augustine adds, “not only in order that they might know what to do by the light of grace, but also in order that, with the help of grace, they might do with love what they know.”

In addition, as has been explained (a. 2), in both states men need the assistance of God as [first] mover in order to fulfill the commandments.

**Reply to objection 1:** As Augustine says in *De Spiritu et Littera*, “Let it not disturb you that he said that they are to do naturally what belongs to the Law. For the Spirit of grace does this in order to restore in us the image of God, in which we have been naturally made.”

**Reply to objection 2:** What we are able to do with God’s assistance is not altogether impossible for us—this according to the Philosopher in *Ethics* 3 (“What we can do through our friends, we can in some sense do through ourselves”). Hence, in the very same place Jerome likewise concedes that we have free choice in such a way that we may claim that we are always in need of God’s assistance.

**Reply to objection 3:** As is clear from what was said above (a. 3), a man cannot by his purely natural power fulfill the precept concerning the love of God insofar as it is fulfilled out of charity.

## Article 5

### Can a man merit eternal life without grace?

It seems that a man can merit eternal life without grace:

**Objection 1:** In Matthew 19:17 our Lord says, “If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” From this it is clear that it is within the power of man’s will (*sit constitutum in hominis voluntate*) to enter into eternal life. But we can do by ourselves what is within our will’s power. Therefore, it seems that a man can merit eternal life on his own (*per seipsum*).

**Objection 2:** Eternal life is a prize or reward (*praemium vel merces*) that is bestowed by God on men—this according to Matthew 5:12 (“Your reward is great in heaven”). But a reward or prize is bestowed by God on a man because of the man’s works—this according to Psalm 61:12 (“You will render to each one according to his works”). Therefore, since a man is the master of his own works, it seems that it is within his power to attain eternal life.

**Objection 3:** Eternal life is the ultimate end of human life. But each natural thing can attain its own end through its own natural powers. Therefore, *a fortiori*, man, who has a higher nature, can attain eternal life through his own natural powers and in the absence of any sort of grace (*absque aliqua gratia*).

**But contrary to this:** In Romans 6:23 the Apostle says, “The grace of God is eternal life.” As a Gloss on the same passage points out, this is said “in order that we might understand that God leads us to eternal life by His mercy.”

**I respond:** The acts that lead one to eternal life have to be proportioned to the end. But no act exceeds the proportion of its active principle. And so we see that, among natural things, no entity can by its own operation bring about an effect that exceeds its active power; instead, it is able through its operation to produce only an effect that is proportioned to its power.

But as is clear from what was explained above (q. 5, a. 5), eternal life is an end that exceeds the proportion of human nature. And so man cannot by his natural powers produce meritorious works that are proportioned to eternal life; instead, this requires a higher power, which is the power of grace. And so without grace a man cannot merit eternal life.

However, as Augustine says in his third reply to the Pelagians, a man is able to do works that attain

to some of the good that is connatural to him, e.g., “work in the field, drink, eat, have friends,” and others of this sort.

**Reply to objection 1:** It is by his own will that a man does the works that merit eternal life; however, as Augustine explains in the same book, what is required for this is that the man’s will should be prepared by God through grace.

**Reply to objection 2:** As a Gloss on Romans 6:23 (“The grace of God is eternal life”) says, “It is certain that eternal life will be given for good works, but the very works for which eternal life is rendered belong to God’s grace.” For it was likewise explained above (a. 4) that grace is required in order to fulfill the commandments of the Law in the right manner for their fulfillment to be meritorious.

**Reply to objection 3:** This objection goes through for the case of an end that is connatural to man. But by the very fact that human nature is more noble, it can, at least by the help of grace, be led to a higher end that lower natures can in no way attain—in the same way that, as the Philosopher points out in *De Caelo* 2, a man who can attain health with the help of certain medicines is better disposed toward health than is a man who cannot in any way attain health.

## Article 6

### Can a man prepare himself for grace on his own without the exterior assistance of grace?

It seems that a man can prepare himself for grace on his own without the exterior assistance of grace:

**Objection 1:** As was explained above (a. 4), nothing that is impossible for a man is imposed on him. But Zachariah 1:3 says, “Turn toward me, and I will turn toward you,” and preparing oneself for grace is nothing other than turning toward God. Therefore, it seems that man can prepare himself for grace on his own without the assistance of grace.

**Objection 2:** A man prepares himself for grace by doing something that is within him (*faciendo quod in se est*), since if a man does what is within him, then God does not deny him grace. For Matthew 7:11 says that God gives His good Spirit “to those who ask Him.” But what is ‘within us’ is what is within our power. Therefore, it seems that it is within our power to prepare ourselves for grace.

**Objection 3:** If a man needs grace in order to prepare himself for grace, then by parity of reasoning he will need grace in order to prepare himself for that first grace, and so there will be an infinite regress—which is absurd. Therefore, it seems that one should stop at the first step—so that, namely, a man without grace can prepare himself for grace.

**Objection 4:** Proverbs 16:1 says, “It belongs to a man to prepare his mind.” But what is said to belong to a man is that which he can do on his own. Therefore, it seems that a man can on his own prepare himself for grace.

**But contrary to this:** John 6:44 says, “No one can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him.” But if a man were able to prepare himself for grace, he would not have to be drawn by another. Therefore, a man cannot prepare himself for grace without the assistance of grace.

**I respond:** There are two sorts of preparation of the human will for the good:

One sort of preparation is that by which the human will is prepared for operating well and enjoying God. And this sort of preparation cannot be accomplished in the absence of the *habitual* gift of grace (*non potest fieri sine habituali gratiae dono*), which, as has been explained (a. 5), is the principle of a meritorious work.

In the second way, the preparation of the human will can be thought of as a preparation for *attaining* the habitual gift itself of grace. Now the preparation itself for the reception of *this* gift would not have to presuppose any other *habitual* gift in the soul, since otherwise there would be an infinite regress. Instead, what has to be presupposed is some assistance of grace (*aliquod auxilium gratuitum*)

whereby God either moves the soul interiorly or inspires a good intention (*interius animam moventis sive inspirantis bonum propositum*). For as was explained above (aa. 2 and 3), it is in these two ways that we need God's assistance.

Now it is clear that for this [second sort of preparation] we need God's assistance in moving us. For since every agent acts for the sake of an end, every cause must turn its effects toward its own end. And so since there is an ordering of ends corresponding to the ordering of agents or movers, a man has to be turned toward his ultimate end by the motion of the first mover, whereas he has to be turned toward a proximate end by certain of the lower movers' effecting the movement (*per motionem alicuius inferiorum moventium*)—just as a soldier's mind is turned toward seeking victory by the army leader's effecting the movement (*ex motione ducis exercitus*), whereas it is moved toward following his company's standard by the company leader's effecting the movement (*ex motione tribuni*). So, then, since God is the first mover absolutely speaking, the effect of His motion is that all things are turned toward Him in accord with the common tendency of the good (*secundum communem intentionem boni*), through which each thing tends toward being similar to God in its own manner. Hence, in *De Divinis Nominibus* Dionysius says, "God turns all things toward Himself." But He turns justified men (*homines iustos*) toward Himself as toward a special end that they intend and that they desire to adhere to as their proper good—this according to Psalm 72:28 ("It is good for me to adhere to God"). And so a man's being turned toward God can occur only when God turns him toward Himself. But someone's preparing himself for grace is, as it were, his being turned toward God—in the same way that someone whose eyes are turned away from the sun's light prepares himself to receive the sun's light by turning his eyes toward the sun. Hence, it is clear that a man cannot prepare himself to receive the light of grace except through the assistance of the grace of God, who moves him interiorly (*nisi per auxilium gratuitum Dei interius moventis*).

**Reply to objection 1:** A man's turning toward God does, to be sure, come about through free choice and, accordingly, the man is commanded to turn himself toward God. But free choice cannot be turned toward God unless God turns it toward Himself—this according to Jeremiah 31:18 ("Turn me toward you and I will be turned, since you are my God") and according to Lamentations 5:21 ("Turn us, O Lord, toward you and we will be turned").

**Reply to objection 2:** A man can do nothing unless he is moved by God—this according to John 15:5 ("Without me you can do nothing"). And so when it is said that a man does what is 'within him', what is being said is that this is within a man's power insofar as he is moved by God.

**Reply to objection 3:** This objection goes through for the case of habitual grace, which requires some preparation, since every form requires something that is disposed toward being able to receive it (*requirit susceptibile dispositum*). But a man's being moved by God does not have as a prerequisite any other movement, since God is the first mover. Hence, there need be no infinite regress.

**Reply to objection 4:** It belongs to a man to prepare his mind, since he does this through free choice, and yet, as has been explained, he does not do this without the assistance of God moving him and attracting him to Himself.

## Article 7

### Can a man rise up from sin without the assistance of grace?

It seems that a man can rise up from sin without the assistance of grace:

**Objection 1:** That which is a prerequisite for grace can be effected without grace. But to rise up from sin is a prerequisite for the illumination of grace; for Ephesians 5:14 says, "Rise up from the dead, and Christ will illuminate you." Therefore, a man can rise up from sin without grace.

**Objection 2:** As was explained above (q. 71, a. 1), sin is opposed to virtue in the way that sickness

is opposed to health. But by his natural power a man is able to rise up from sickness to health without the aid of any exterior medicine, because there remains within him a life-principle (*principium vitae*) from which natural operations proceed. Therefore, it seems that, for a similar reason, a man can recover on his own by going from a state of sin back to a state of justice (*de statu peccati ad statum iustitiae*) without the assistance of exterior grace.

**Objection 3:** Each natural thing is able to return to the act that is appropriate for its nature, in the way that hot water returns on its own to its natural coldness, and in the way that a rock that has been thrown returns on its own to its natural movement. But as is clear from Damascene in *De Fide Orthodoxa* 2, a sin is in some sense an act that is contrary to nature. Therefore, it seems that a man is able on his own to go from sin back to a state of justice.

**But contrary to this:** In Galatians 2:21 the Apostle says, “If a Law was given that was able to confer justification (*potest iustificare*), then Christ died in vain (*gratis*),” i.e., for no reason (*sine causa*). Therefore, by parity of reasoning, if a man has a nature through which justification is able to be conferred, then Christ died in vain, i.e., for no reason. But it is absurd to say this. Therefore, a man is not able to be justified on his own, i.e., to go from a state of sin back to a state of justice.

**I respond:** A man cannot in any way rise up from sin on his own without the assistance of grace. For since, as was explained above (q. 87, a. 6), a sin that passes away in its act remains in its guilt (*peccatum transiens actu remaneat reatu*), rising up from a sin is not the same thing as ceasing to commit the sin (*cessare ab actu peccati*).

Now as was explained above (q. 85, a. 1 and q. 86, a. 1 and q. 87, a. 1), there are three sorts of damage that a man incurs by sinning, viz., (a) the stain or blemish of sin (*macula*), (b) the corruption of the natural good (*corruptio naturalis boni*), and (c) the debt of punishment (*reatus poenae*). He incurs the stain of sin insofar as he is deprived of the beauty of grace by the deformity of sin. And the good of nature is corrupted insofar as the man’s nature is disordered by a human will that is not subject to God; for when this order is removed, the result is that the sinful man’s whole nature remains disordered. On the other hand, the debt of punishment is that by which a man, in committing a mortal sin (*peccando mortaliter*), merits eternal damnation.

Now it is clear, with respect to all three of these, that they can be repaired only by God. For since the beauty of grace results from being illuminated by God’s light, such beauty cannot be restored unless God once again does the illuminating; hence, what is required is a habitual gift, i.e., the light of grace. Similarly, the order of nature cannot be repaired in such a way that a man’s will is subject to God unless, as has been explained (a. 6), God draws the man’s will toward Himself. Likewise, the debt of eternal punishment can be remitted only by God, against whom the offense was committed and who is the judge of men.

And so the assistance of grace is required in order for a man to rise up from sin, both (a) in the sense of a habitual gift and (b) in the sense of an interior movement from God.

**Reply to objection 1:** What is being indicated to a man in this passage involves the act of free choice that is required in the man’s rising up from sin. And so when it says, “Rise up ... and Christ will illuminate you,” this should not be taken to mean that the whole of the rising up from sin precedes the illumination of grace. Rather, it means that when a man, through free choice moved by God, tries to rise up from sin, he receives the light of justifying grace.

**Reply to objection 2:** Natural reason is not a sufficient principle of the health that exists in a man through justifying grace. Instead, the principle of this health is grace, which is destroyed by sin. And so a man is not able to rise up on his own; instead, he needs the light of grace to be poured into him once again, in the same way that a soul would be poured once again into a dead body that was to be resuscitated.

**Reply to objection 3:** When nature is integral, then it can be restored on its own to what is appropriate for and proportioned to itself. However, it cannot without exterior assistance be restored to what exceeds its own proportion. So, then, as was explained above, since human nature as it goes

downward through sin does not remain integral but is instead corrupted, it cannot be restored through itself either with respect to the good that is connatural to itself or, *a fortiori*, with respect to the good of supernatural justification.

## Article 8

### Is a man without grace able not to sin?

It seems that a man without grace is able not to sin:

**Objection 1:** As Augustine points out in *De Duabus Animabus* and in *De Libero Arbitrio*, no one sins in what he cannot avoid. Therefore, if a man who is in mortal sin is not able to avoid sin, then it seems that in sinning he will not sin—which is absurd.

**Objection 2:** A man is corrected in order that he might not sin. Therefore, if a man who is in mortal sin is not able not to sin, then it seems that it would be useless to give him correction—which is absurd.

**Objection 3:** Ecclesiasticus 15:18 says, “Before man is life and death, good and evil; what pleases him shall be given to him.” But someone does not cease to be a man by sinning. Therefore, it is still within his power to choose good or choose evil. And so a man can avoid sin without grace.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Perfectione Iustitiae* Augustine says, “If anyone denies that we should pray not to enter into temptation (and someone denies this if he claims that the assistance of God’s grace is not necessary for a man not to sin, but that, once a man merely receives the Law, the human will is sufficient), I have no doubt that this denial should be obliterated from the ears of everyone and condemned by the mouth of everyone.”

**I respond:** There are two ways in which we can speak about a man: (a) in accord with the state of *integral nature* and (b) in accord with the state of *corrupted nature*.

With respect to the state of *integral nature*, a man was able not to sin—either mortally or venially—even without habitual grace. For sinning is nothing other than withdrawing from what is in accord with nature, and a man in the integrity of his nature is able to avoid this. However, he was not able to do this without the assistance of God’s conserving him in the good [of his nature]; for if this were taken away, then he would fall into nothingness.

By contrast, in the state of *corrupted nature* a man needs habitual grace healing his nature in order to abstain entirely from sin. In the present life this healing occurs first in the mind, even while the carnal appetite is not yet repaired; hence, in Romans 7:25 the Apostle says in the person of a man who has been restored: “I myself, with the mind, serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin.” As was established above (q. 74, a. 5), in this state a man is able to abstain from mortal sins that exist in reason. However, a man is not able to abstain from every venial sin, and this because of the corruption of the lower appetite of sensuality. To be sure, *each* movement of sensuality is such that the man is able to repress it (and for this reason these movements have the character of sins and of voluntary acts), but he is nonetheless not able to repress *all* of them, since (a) while he is trying to resist the one, another is likely to rise up, and also, as was explained above (q. 74, a. 3), since (b) reason is unable to be ever watchful, so as to avoid movements of this sort.

Similarly, even before man’s reason, in which mortal sin exists, is repaired through justifying grace, each mortal sin is such that reason is able to avoid it (*postest singula peccata mortalia vitare*) and for some time, since it is not necessary for reason to be continually sinning in actuality; but it is impossible for reason to remain without mortal sin for a long time. Hence, in *Super Ezechiel* Gregory says, “A sin that is not erased right away through repentance leads by its momentum (*suo pondere*) to other sins.” The reason for this is that, just as the lower appetite should be subject to reason, so too reason should be subject to God and to posit the end or goal of its will in God (*in ipso constituere finem suae voluntatis*).

But all human acts have to be regulated by the end, in the same way that the movements of the lower appetite ought to be regulated by reason's judgment. Therefore, just as, when the lower appetite is not totally subject to reason, it is impossible that disordered movements should not arise in the sentient appetite, so too, when man's reason is not subject to God, the result is that many disorders occur in the very acts of reason. For since the man does not have his heart fixed on God in such a way that he wills not to be separated from Him for the sake of any good to be pursued or evil to be avoided, many things occur which are such that for the sake of pursuing them or avoiding them, the man withdraws from God by disregarding His precepts (*contemnendo praecepta ipsius*). And in this way he commits mortal sin, mainly because, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 3, in matters that come up suddenly (*in repentinis*) a man acts according to his preconceived ends and preexistent habits—even though the man is able, by reason's antecedent consideration (*ex praemeditatione rationis*), to do something outside the order of his preconceived ends and outside the inclination of his habits. But since a man cannot always have this sort of antecedent consideration, it is impossible that he should remain for a long time without acting in accord with the natural result of a will not ordered toward God (*secundum consequentiam voluntatis deordinatae a Deo*), unless he is quickly restored through grace to the correct ordering.

**Reply to objection 1:** As has been explained, each individual act of sinning is such that a man is able to avoid it; but he is not able to avoid all of them together (*non tamen omnes*) except through grace. And yet since a man's not preparing himself to have grace results from his own defect, his sin is not excused by the fact that he is unable to avoid sin without grace.

**Reply to objection 2:** Correction is useful, as Augustine puts it in *De Correptione et Gratia*, "when a desire for regeneration arises from the pain of the correction. Yet if a son of the promise is corrected, then while the noise of the correction resounds outwardly and lashes out, God is working and willing in him internally by His hidden inspirations."

Therefore, the reason why correction is necessary is that a man's act of will is required in order for him to abstain from sin; and yet the correction is not sufficient without God's assistance. This is why Ecclesiastes 7:14 says, "Consider the works of God, that no man is able to correct someone whom He has despised."

**Reply to objection 3:** As Augustine says in *Hypognosticon*, this passage is to be understood of man in the state of integral nature, when he was as yet not a slave of sin and so was able to sin and able not to sin.

In his present state, too, man is given whatever he wills, but the fact that he wills the good comes from the assistance of grace.

## Article 9

### **Is someone who has already received grace able on his own to do good and avoid evil without any further assistance of grace?**

It seems that someone who has already received grace is able on his own to do good and avoid evil without any further assistance of grace (*absque alio auxilio gratiae*):

**Objection 1:** A thing is either useless or imperfect (*frustra aut imperfectum*) if it does not accomplish what it is given for. But grace is given to us in order that we might be able to do good and avoid sin. Therefore, if a man is not able to do this through grace, then it seems that grace is either useless or else imperfect.

**Objection 2:** Through grace the Holy Spirit Himself dwells within us—this according to 1 Corinthians 3:16 ("Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells within you?"). But since the Holy Spirit is omnipotent, He is sufficient to induce us to act well and to guard us from sin. Therefore, a man who has received grace is able to do both of the aforementioned

things without any further assistance of grace.

**Objection 3:** If a man who has received grace still needed a further assistance of grace in order to live well and to abstain from sin, then, by parity of reasoning, if he received that further assistance of grace, he would still need a further assistance [of grace]. Therefore, there would be an infinite regress—which is absurd. Therefore, someone who is in the state of grace does not need any further assistance of grace in order to act well and to abstain from sin.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Natura et Gratia* Augustine says, “Just as a fully healthy bodily eye cannot see unless it is aided by the clarity of light, so, too, even a most perfectly justified man cannot live correctly unless he is aided divinely by the eternal light of justice.” But justification comes from grace—this according to Romans 3:24 (“... justified gratuitously by His grace”). Therefore, even a man who already has grace needs the further assistance of grace in order to live correctly.

**I respond:** As was explained above (a. 5), in order to live correctly, a man needs God’s assistance in two ways: In one way, with respect to a *habitual gift*, through which corrupted human nature is healed and, once healed, is elevated to do works that merit eternal life and that exceed the proportion of nature. In the second way, a man needs the assistance of grace in order *to be moved by God to act*.

Therefore, as regards the first type of assistance, a man in the state of grace (*in gratia existens*) does not need any further assistance in the sense of another infused habit.

However, he does need the other type of assistance of grace, in order, namely, to be moved by God to act correctly—and this for two reasons. First, a general reason, viz., that, as was explained above (a. 1), no created entity is able to proceed into any act except by virtue of God’s moving it (*nisi virtute motionis divinae*). Second, a specific reason, viz., because of the condition of the state of human nature, which, even if it has been healed with respect to the mind, is still such that corruption and infection remain in it with respect to the flesh, through which “it serves the law of sin,” as Romans 7:25 puts it. In addition, a certain darkness of ignorance remains in the intellect and, accordingly, as Romans 8:26 likewise says, “We do not know what to pray for as we ought.” For because of the various turns of events, and because we do not know even our very own selves perfectly, we are not able to know in full what is good for us (*quid expediat nobis*)—this according to Wisdom 9:14 (“The thoughts of mortals are timid, and our counsels uncertain”). And so it is necessary for us to be directed and protected by God, who knows all things and can do all things.

This is why it is proper even for those who have been re-born through grace as children of God to say, “And lead us not into temptation,” and “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” and the rest of what is contained in the Lord’s prayer that is relevant in this regard.

**Reply to objection 1:** The gift of habitual grace is not given to us in order that we might not need any further divine assistance, since every creature needs to be conserved by God in the good that it has received from Him. And so if, after having received grace, a man still needs God’s assistance, one cannot infer that it is useless for the grace to have been given, or that the grace is imperfect. For even in the state of glory, when the grace will be altogether perfect, a man will still need God’s assistance.

Still, as has been explained, in our present state (*hic*) the grace is indeed imperfect in the sense that it does not heal a man totally.

**Reply to objection 2:** The action of the Holy Spirit by which He moves and protects us is not limited to the effect of the habitual gift that He causes within us. To the contrary, along with the Father and the Son, He moves and protects us beyond this effect.

**Reply to objection 3:** This argument shows that a man does not need any further *habitual* grace.

## Article 10

### Does a man in the state of grace need the assistance of grace in order to persevere?

It seems that a man in the state of grace (*in gratia constitutus*) does not need the assistance of grace in order to persevere:

**Objection 1:** Perseverance is something less than virtue, in the same way that, as is clear from the Philosopher in *Ethics* 7, continence is something less than virtue. But in order to have the virtues, a man does not need the assistance of grace other than that assistance by which he is justified. Therefore, *a fortiori*, he does not need the [further] assistance of grace in order to have perseverance.

**Objection 2:** All the virtues are infused together. But perseverance is counted as a virtue. Therefore, it seems that perseverance is given along with the other virtues infused by grace.

**Objection 3:** As the Apostle says in Romans 5:20, more was restored through Christ's gift than was lost through Adam's sin. But Adam received that by which he was able to persevere. Therefore, *a fortiori*, our ability to persevere is restored to us through Christ's grace. And so a man does not need [any further] grace in order to persevere.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Dono Perseverantiae* Augustine says, "Why is perseverance begged for from God, if it is not given by God? Wouldn't that prayer be laughable, since one is asking from Him something that He is known not to give, but that is within the man's power even though God doesn't give it?" But perseverance is begged for even by those who are sanctified through grace; this is understood when we say, "Hallowed be Thy name"—something that Augustine confirms in the same place by citing Cyprian's words. Therefore, a man—even a man in the state of grace—needs to be given perseverance by God.

**I respond:** There are three senses of 'perseverance'.

Sometimes 'perseverance' signifies a habit of the mind through which a man stands firm, lest he be drawn away by pressing sorrows (*per tristitias irruentes*) from what accords with virtue. Taken in this sense, perseverance is related to sorrows in the way that, as the Philosopher explains in *Ethics* 7, continence is related to sensual desires and pleasures.

In a second sense, 'perseverance' implies a certain habit in accord with which a man adopts the plan to persevere in the good right up to the end.

Now in both of these senses, perseverance is infused together with grace, just as continence is and just as the rest of the virtues are.

In yet another sense, 'perseverance' implies a continuation in the good right up until the end of one's life. And as is clear from the preceding article (a. 9), in order to have this sort of perseverance, a man does not, to be sure, need any further *habitual* grace, but he does need God's assistance directing him and protecting him against the pressure of temptations (*contra impulsus tentationum*). And so after a man is justified through grace, he has to ask God for this gift of perseverance, in order that he might be guarded from evil right up until the end of his life. For there are many men to whom grace is given, but to whom perseverance in grace is not given.

**Reply to objection 1:** This objection goes through on the first sense of 'perseverance', just as the second objection goes through on the second sense.

**Reply to objection 2:** For the same reason, the reply to this objection is clear.

**Reply to objection 3:** As Augustine puts it in *De Natura et Gratia*, "Man in his first state received the gift through which he could persevere, but he did not receive it in order to persevere. Now, however, through the grace of Christ many receive the gift of grace by which they are able to persevere, and it is further granted them that they do in fact persevere." And it is in this sense that Christ's gift is greater than Adam's crime.

Yet a man was more easily able to persevere through the gift of grace in the state of innocence, in which there was no rebellion of the flesh against the spirit, than he is now, when the restoration by

Christ's grace, even if it has begun with respect to the mind, is nonetheless not yet finished with respect to the flesh. This will occur in heaven (*in patria*), where a man will not only be able to persevere, but will also be unable to sin.