

Summa of the Summa

Summary

Chapter One-

(1) Whether Sacred Doctrine is necessary: For Salvation? Yes

Why is revealed Scripture important to know God?

(2) Whether Sacred Doctrine is a science: Physical or Metaphysical? Both are built upon presuppositions.

(3) Whether Sacred Doctrine is one or many: Yes, one science. All revealed for one purpose by one God.

(4) Whether the Sacred is speculative or practical: It is both- Contemplative and Practical. More practical in St. Thomas' day and more contemplative now. It is more contemplative than practical because more concerned with divine things than humans alone.

(5) Sacred Doctrine compared to other sciences: It is not completely knowable- Can't be proved from philosophical view. Does not depend on philosophical science, but on God alone by transcending all other science. Sacred science makes physical science clear.

(6) Whether Sacred Doctrine is the same as wisdom: Sacred Doctrine is wisdom from God.

(7) Whether the Sacred Doctrine has God as its subject matter: It is above all human reason. It treats God as the highest cause.

(8) Sacred Doctrine is a matter of argument: Obj. 2 only From authority or Reason with authority being the weaker argument of the two. If the opponent admits at least some truth of the presuppositions of Sacred Doctrine, an argument can be made from reason. If not, then no way. * The Church is our authority on Truth. (I Tim 3:15). However, this is bolstered and made known to each Catholic personally through Sacred Doctrine. This is how it becomes personally applicable to each life. "Authority is the weakest form of truth."

(9) Whether Holy Scripture rightly employs metaphors : Material things can be used for understanding Sacred Doctrine i.e. pictures, music, art, beauty, nature, etc. (Figures or symbols) All knowledge originates from sense.

(10) Whether in Holy Scripture a Word may have several senses? (Literal and Spiritual) The presupposition of the spiritual sense is the literal sense. The spiritual senses are three and fall under the literal sense: 1, Allegorical, 2, Moral and 3, Anagogical

Chapter two

Intro: Aim of Sacred Doctrine 1. Teach us knowledge of God

- A. As He is in Himself
- B. As He is in the beginning of things and at last things
- C. And especially of rational creatures

This chapter shall treat three things:

- 1. Of God
- 2. Of the rational creature's advance to words of God
- 3. Of Christ, Who as man, is our way to God

In this treating of the above three things there will be a threefold division:

- 1. Whether God exists?
- 2. The manner of His existence, or what is not His existence.
- 3. Whatever concerns His operations-namely His
 - A. Knowledge
 - B. Will
 - C. Power

Concerning the first, there are three articles of inquiry:

1. Whether the proposition, “God exists” is self evident?
2. Whether it is demonstrable?
3. Whether God exists or not?

(1) Whether the Existence of God is Self-Evident?

Objection 1. It seems that the existence of God is self-evident. That is this knowledge is already implanted in us. This is obvious, because of knowledge which is naturally implanted in us. We know basic elementary principles. Damascene says: Knowledge of God is naturally implanted in all and therefore, God’s evidence is self-evident.

Objection 2. Those things, that is, propositions are said to be self-evident which are known (to be true) as soon as the terms are known (understood), which the Philosopher, 1 Poster says is true of the first principles of demonstration. In nature, when the whole is known along with the part it is seen that the whole is greater than the part. When the word, “God” is seen and understood, then God exists. The word includes that nothing greater could exist. Since to exist by word and actually is greater than just by word only. Therefore, since the word exists, it is self-evident that God exists.

Objection 3. The existence of truth is self-evident. If truth does not exist, then the proposition that truth does not exist declares that the opposite is true and therefore, God exists. Jesus said, “I am the Truth, the Life and the Way.” Therefore, God’s existence is self-evident.

Objection 3. On the contrary: No one can truthfully admit the opposite of what is self-evident as the Philosopher states the opposite of the proposition “God” can be mentally admitted that the fool has said in his heart there is no God. Therefore, that God exists is not self-evident.

I answer that: A thing can be self-evident in either of two ways: Self-evident in itself, though not to us, and the other is self-evident to itself, and also to us.

According to the Author’s note:

A proposition that is “self-evident in itself” is one whose predicate is logically identical with or contained in the meaning of its subject. An example is, “The water is good.” In order for the proposition, “God Exists” to be self-evident the terms for both the subject and the predicate will need to be understood. Now because we don’t fully know the Essence of God, because He is His own existence, as will be shown in (Q, 3, A.4) the proposition is not self-evident to us. But this must be demonstrated by other things more known to us, perhaps only by effects.

Reply Obj 1 We know God exists only by nature in a general and confused manner, in that God is man’s beatitude. For if man is drawn to God, as he is drawn to happiness, therefore, what is naturally desired by man must be naturally known to him. However, we do not know God exists absolutely in a similar way that we might be aware that someone is approaching us and this is not the same as knowing Peter is that man who is approaching us, even though it is Peter approaching us. For many imagine that man’s perfect good which is happiness consists in riches, and others in pleasures, and in others something else.

Reply to Obj 2 This is Anselm’s argument, but appears to beg the question: Not everyone who perceives God when hearing the Word, “God” recognizes that it signifies something in which nothing greater can be thought, seeing that some have believed God to be a body. We cannot be assured that everyone does not follow and understand what the word, “God” signifies and that it actually exists, unless of course, if admitted so that there actually exists something that which nothing greater can be thought, and this is definitely not admitted by those who hold that God does not exist. The word can only be rightly argued that the existence of God is known mentally.

Reply to Obj 3 The existence of truth, in general is self-evident, but the existence of a Primal Truth is not self-evident to us.

1. Concerning understanding>term ->clear or unclear
2. Judging-> Declarative sentence->>true or false-> If true ->evident or not evident->If evident then true through other premises or propositions or self-evident

3. Reasoning-→argument which is either logically valid or invalid (see examples of a valid and invalid syllogism:

Valid Example

All men are animals

All animals have a backbone

Therefore, all men have a backbone

Invalid Example

All people are omnivores

Animals are omnivores too

Therefore, all animals and men are omnivores

Second Article: Whether it can be demonstrated that God Exists

Obj 1 Since it is an article of faith that God exists, it cannot be known scientifically that God exists since faith is of the unseen. (Hebrews 11:1)

Reply Obj 1 God's existence and other similar truths about God can be known by natural reason and are not articles of faith, but opening summary statements or preambles to the articles, for faith is not based in any thought vacuum, but has a context based on information, sound reasoning and natural knowledge, just as grace presupposes nature and perfection supposes something that can be perfected. However, it is acceptable to us as a matter of faith goes with something which is capable of being scientifically known and understood, even though proof is just out of reach at this time. (PM) p. 59

Continuation of Second Article: Whether it can be demonstrated that God exists?

Obj 2 A true "demonstration" is not merely any deductive argument, but a proof that a certain property necessarily follows from the essence. "The beginning, middle and final terms of the syllogism: Rational animals are mortal, Socrates is a rational animal and therefore, Socrates is mortal." Rational animal is the middle term. The essence is the middle term of demonstration. But we cannot know in what God's essence consists, but solely in what it does not consist as Damascene says, "Therefore we cannot demonstrate that God exists.

Reply to Obj 2 Accepting the middle term in the syllogism is crucial to answering the question of its essence, which follows on the question of its existence, because the existence of a cause is demonstrated from an effect. This effect takes the place of the definition of the cause in proof of the cause's existence. Names given to God are derived from His effects; consequently, in demonstrating the existence of God from His effects, we may take for the middle term the meaning of the word, "God."

Continuation Second Article: Whether it can be demonstrated that God exists.

Obj 3 Since the effect of God is not sufficient enough to include all of God's being, since God is infinite and His effects are finite, and there is no proportion here able to be related. Therefore, the existence of God cannot be demonstrated.

p. 58 On the contrary: The Apostle says: Romans 1:23 "The invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." This is so because the existence of God is demonstrated through things that are made. This is general revelation.

I answer that: There exist two ways to demonstrate: a priori and a posteriori. (Basically, by cause and effect). When the effect is better known we proceed to the knowledge of the cause. From every effect the existence of its proper cause can be demonstrated, so long as its effects are better known to us; because since every effect depends upon its cause, if the effect exists, then the cause must pre-exist. Therefore, God's existence can be demonstrated from His effects.

Continuation 3 Sacred Article: Whether it can be demonstrated that God exists

Reply to obj 1 and p. 59 No problem with someone accepting a truth as a matter of faith even if it is scientifically unable to be known and demonstrated. Grace presupposes nature and perfection presupposes something that can be perfected.

Reply to objection 2 In order to prove the existence of anything, it is necessary to accept as a middle term the meaning of the word, and not its essence. We do not need to know the essence of footprints for the demonstration to be valid, but we do need to know the meaning of the word.

Reply to Objection 3 From effects not proportionate to the cause no perfect knowledge of that cause can be obtained. Yet, from every effect the existence of the cause can clearly be demonstrated, and we can demonstrate the existence of God from His effects, though from them we cannot perfectly, know God as He is in His essence. Foot prints can reveal existence even though we can't know all.

Third Article: Whether God Exists?

Obj 1 Since evil is in the world God cannot exist.

Obj 2 No need to suppose God because all material things can be reduced to nature and all voluntary things can be reduced to human reason, or will.

On the Contrary: It is said in the person of God: I am who I am. God said it so, therefore, it is!

I answer that: There are five ways to prove the existence of God:

- 1) Motion—Motion has to be put into effect by something.
- 2) The nature of the efficient cause-- To take the cause away is to take away the effect.
- 3) The possibility and necessity-- Every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another or not. Only from the existence of its own necessity can we state its existence is not dependent upon anything for its own existence. That one is God.
- 4) This greatest good and every other perfection leads us to God.
- 5) The Governor of the world—Some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to that ends and this being we call God.

Continued Third Article: Whether God Exists?

Reply to Obj 1: Augustine says, "Since God is the Highest Good, He would not allow any evil to exist in His works, unless, His omnipotence and goodness were such as to bring good even out of evil.

Reply to obj. 2: Whatever is done by nature or some human reason or will must be traced back to an immovable and self-necessary first principle.