

The Will of God

Question 19

Article One: Whether There is Will in God?

Objection 2: Since will is a kind of appetite seeking something that is not possessed by the one seeking, God could not have something in Him that makes Him incomplete seeking something He does not have. For God has everything.

I answer that: "There is will in God, as there is intellect since will follows upon intellect. Because God has intellect in Him He must have a will." In every intellectual being there is will, just as in every sensible being there is animal appetite." "His intellect is His own existence, so is His will."

Reply to Objection 2: Appetite seeks what it does not have and also delights in what it does possess. "In this respect will is said to be In with God."

Article two: Whether God Wills things apart from Himself?

I answer that: "God wills not only Himself, but other things apart from Himself." "If natural things, in so far as they are perfect, communicate their good to others, much more does it appertain to the divine will to communicate by likeness His own good to others as much as is possible." (God wills His own existence and the existence of others.) PM

Article Three: Whether Whatever God Wills He Wills Necessarily?

I answer that: God wills what is absolutely required. But He wills more than what He wills absolutely. God wills His own goodness.

Article Four: Whether the Will of God Is the Cause of things?

Objection 2: The divine will is not the cause of things. "God acts by nature and not by will.

Reply Objection 2: Since the essence of God is His intellect it naturally follows that He acts after the mode of intellectual will.

Article Five: Whether Any Cause Can Be Assigned to the Divine Will?

Obj. 1: It appears that some causes can be assigned to divine will. “Who would venture to say that God made all things irrationally?”

Obj. 2: If God was the cause of all things the scientific method would be in vain for all occurrences would be attributed to God alone. It is true that causes effect results which come about naturally without direct and immediate intervention.

I answer that: God’s will is not operated by cause. God does not wait to respond on the basis of any agent’s thought or action. God’s will is both within and apart from His own will.

Reply Obj. 1: God sets up natural laws which are rational and reasonable. Not that God wills everything, but He wills one thing to be on account of another.

Reply Obj. 2: God preserves the order of the universe by effecting causes and effects.

Article Six: Whether the Will of God Is Always Fulfilled?

I answer that: “An effect cannot possibly escape the order of the universal cause.” God’s laws are His divine will and apply naturally to the sinner who falls away, God’s justice will be the natural effect unless God intervenes supernaturally.

Reply Obj. 1: God wills good to all, but not all receive good from that which is God’s will.

Article Seven: Whether the Will of God Is Changeable?

Obj. 1: It appears that God’s will is changeable. Gen. 6:7 states: “God repented of making man.”

Obj. 3: God does not always do the same thing. Whatever He does He does voluntarily. Sometimes God breaks His own laws. So God has a changeable will.

I answer that: “The will of God is entirely unchangeable. It has already been shown that both the substance of God and His knowledge are entirely unchangeable. (QQ. 9. A. I; 14, A.15) The changing of one’s will is one thing and to will that certain things should be changed is another.

Article Eight: Whether the Will of God Imposes Necessity on the things willed?

On the contrary: Good does not happen by necessity. Good is free to happen or not. All good things that exist are a result of God will. If it follows that all good happens of necessity, then free will does not exist.

I answer that: “The divine will imposes necessity on some things willed, but not on all.” Some things happen necessarily. “God’s will is perfectly efficacious. It follows not only that things are done, which God wills to be done, but also that they are done in the way that He wills... Therefore, to some effects He has attached necessary causes, (which) cannot fail, but to others (are attached) defectible and contingent causes from which (arises) contingent effects.” PM

Article Nine: Whether God Wills Evil?

Obj. 3: God does not will that evil should not exist, but various evils do exist. God’s will is not always fulfilled.

On the contrary: It is not God’s will that man should become worse. Since God does not will evil things because every evil makes one worse.

I answer that: “God in no way wills sin, which is the privation of right order towards the divine good.” Evil may be attached to the good He wills.

Article Eleven: Whether the Will of Expression Is to Be Distinguished in God?

I answer that: “Some things are said of God in their strict sense: others by metaphor, as appears from what has been said before (Q. 13, A. 3) Emotion can be attributed to God metaphorically, but not properly. Will is attributed to God properly.

The Will of God

1. Does God have a will? "There is will in God, as there is intellect since will follows intellect. Because God has intellect in Him He must have a will.
2. Does God will things apart from Himself? God wills not only Himself, but other things apart from Himself."
3. Is the will of God the cause of things? Since the essence of God is His intellect it naturally follows that God acts after the mode of intellectual will.
4. Can any cause be assigned to the Divine will? God's will is not operated by cause. God does not wait to respond on the basis of any agent's thought or action. God's will is both within and apart from His own will.
5. How is God's will fulfilled? "An effect cannot possibly escape the order of the universal cause." God's will is fulfilled completely and perfectly in any and every situation and circumstance.
6. Is God's will changeable? God's will is entirely unchangeable. The changing of one's will is one thing and to will that certain things should be change is another.
7. Does God's will make the things willed necessary? The Divine will imposes necessity on some things, but not on all.
8. Does God will evil? Evil may be attached to the good God wills. God does in no way will sin.
9. How is God's will attributed? Emotion can be attributed to God metaphorically, but not properly. Will is attributed to God properly.
10. What if the outcome of any circumstance or situation looks like evil triumphs over good? How then can we reconcile that the will of God always prevails? In James reminds us in chapter four and verse fifteen that we shall base our life's decisions on the surety that if the Lord wills it, it shall be done only if He wills it.

God's Love

Question 20

Article One: Whether Love exists in God?

Obj 1: Since love is a passion and God does not have passions, God does not have love.

On the contrary: I John 4:16 says, "God is love."

I answer that: Since will is in God (Q. 19, A.1) we must attribute love to Him. "We must needs assert that in God there is love, because love is the first movement of the will and of every appetitive faculty."

Reply to Obj. 1: Love is passion on the appetite level, but acts of the will are not so called passions. Therefore, love is in God.

Article Two: Whether God loves all things?

Obj. 4: It is written in Ps. 5:7 "God hates all workers of iniquity." Therefore, God hates and does not love some.

On the contrary: (Wis. 11:25) says, "Thou lovest all things that are and hatest none of the things which Thou hast made."

I answer that: "God loves all existing things."

Reply to Obj. 4: God loves sinners in so far as they are existing natures, for they have existence and have it from Him.

Article Three: Whether God loves All things equally?

On the contrary: God's love is hierarchical: He has more love for His only begotten Son than He has for creation, His believers, next rational creatures and next all things at last.

Article Four: Whether God Always loves More the Better Things?

I answer that: God loves more the better things because, "God's will is the cause of goodness in things and the reason why some things are better than others, is that God wills for them a greater good.

Reply to Obj. 2: It seems God operates in love greater where there is a greater need. God doesn't love men more than angels because He sent His Son to die for their sin, It is more because man had a greater need.

Q & A Chapter 20

God's Love

- 1 Does love exist in God? I John 4:16 tells us "God is Love." According to TA we must needs that in God there is love, because love is the first movement of the will and of every appetitive faculty.
2. Does God love all things? Ps. 5:7 indicates that God hates all workers of iniquity. Therefore how could he have love for some who sin? On the contrary Wis. 11:25 tells us that God loves all things that are and hates none of the things which He has made. According to TA God loves all existing things. God loves sinners in so far as they are existing natures, for they have existence, and have it from God.
3. Does God love all things equally? In any given situation or person God's love may be more intense, but God does not love some things more than other. "God loves all things by an act of the will that is one, simple, and always the same."
4. Does God love the better things more? God loves more the better things because "God's will is the cause of goodness in things, and the reason why some things are better than others, is that God wills them a greater good." God appears to love some more than others because of the greater need. Jesus died for our sin showing God's love for us, but it doesn't mean that God loves the faithful angels more than fallen mankind because they did not sin and only help God's kingdom to be fulfilled without sin.

The Justice and Mercy of God

Question 21

Article One: Whether there Is Justice in God?

On the Contrary: (Ps. 10:8 says, “The Lord is just, and hath loved justice.”

I answer that: “There are two kinds of justice. The one consists in mutual giving and receiving, as in buying and selling other kinds of intercourse and exchanges.” The two kinds are commutative and distributive justice. Commutative justice directs exchange and the intercourse of business. Distributive justice is when a ruler or a steward gives to each what his rank deserves. PM

Article Two: Whether the Justice of God Is Truth?

On the contrary: Ps. 84:11 says “Mercy and Truth have met each other: where truth stands for justice.”

I answer that: We speak of the truth of justice. “God’s justice which establishes things in the order comfortable to the rule of His wisdom, which is the law of His justice, is suitably called truth.”

Article Three: Whether Mercy can be attributed to God?

Obj. 2: Mercy is not becoming to God because it is a failure to apply justice. God is just and He cannot deny Himself per 2 Tim 2:13 says “If we believe not, He continues faithful: He cannot deny Himself.” If God does not carry out His perfect justice He would deny Himself and His words.

Reply to Obj. 2: “God acts mercifully, not indeed by going against His justice, but doing something more than justice. So in this sense, mercy does triumph over judgment or justice is the carrying out of righteous judgment. (See James 2:13) Mercy surpasses justice and does not simply overlook it.

Article four: Whether in every work of God there are mercy and justice?

On the Contrary: Ps 24:10 says “All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth.”

I answer that: “mercy and truth are necessarily found in all God’s works” Justice must exist in all God’s works. Now the work of divine justice always presupposes the work of mercy and is founded there upon.

Q & A Chapter 21

1. Is there justice in God? Ps. 10:8 says, “The Lord is just, and hath loved justice.” According to TA there are two kinds of justice. They are called commutative and distributive. The first is a form of business justice in the exchange of goods and services in an agreed and equitable fashion in honesty. The distributive justice is when a ruler gives to each what his/her rank deserves.

2. Is the justice of God truth? Ps. 84:11 says, “Mercy and Truth have met each other; where truth stands for justice.” TA tells us that when we speak of the truth of justice, God’s justice which establishes things in the order comfortable to the rule of His wisdom, which is the law of His justice, is suitable called truth.

3. Can mercy be attributed to God? “God acts mercifully, not indeed by going against His justice, but doing something more than justice. So in this sense mercy does triumphs over justice. Ps. 24:10 tells us that all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. According to TA mercy and truth are necessarily found in all God’s works. Justice must exist in all God’s works. Now the work of divine justice always presupposes the work of mercy; and is founded there upon.