

## QUESTION 36

### The Causes of Sadness or Pain

Next we have to consider the causes of sadness or pain (*tristitia*). And on this topic there are four questions: (1) Is the cause of pain (*dolor*) a lost good or instead a conjoined evil? (2) Is concupiscence a cause of pain? (3) Is a desire for oneness (*appetitus unitatis*) a cause of pain? (4) Is a power that cannot be resisted a cause of pain?

#### Article 1

##### Is it a lost good that is a cause of pain rather than a conjoined evil?

It seems that it is a lost good (*bonum amissum*) that is a cause of pain (*dolor*) rather than a conjoined evil (*malum coniunctum*):

**Objection 1:** In *De Octo Quaestionibus Dulciti* Augustine says that there is pain over the loss of temporal goods. Therefore, by the same line of reasoning, every pain occurs because of the loss of some good.

**Objection 2:** It was explained above (q. 35, a. 4) that an instance of pain that is contrary to an instance of pleasure is directed toward the the same thing that the pleasure is directed toward. But as was explained above (q. 23, a. 4 and q. 35, a.3), pleasure has to do with a good. Therefore, pain has to do mainly with the loss of a good.

**Objection 3:** According to Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* 14, love is a cause of sadness, just as it is a cause of the other affections of the soul. But the object of love is a good. Therefore, pain or sadness has more to do with a lost good than with a conjoined evil.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Fide Orthodoxa* 2 Damascene says, “An anticipated evil is a cause of fear (*timorem constituit*), whereas a present evil is a cause of sadness.”

**I respond:** If privations had the same status (*hoc modo se haberent*) in the soul’s apprehensions that they have among the things themselves, then this question, it seems, would be of no importance. For as was established in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 14, a. 10 and q. 48, a. 3), evil or badness (*malum*) is the privation of a good, and in the world of reality (*in rerum natura*) a privation is nothing other than a lack of the opposed disposition. And so, accordingly, being saddened over a lost good would be the same as being saddened over a possessed evil.

However, sadness is a movement of the appetite that follows upon an apprehension. And within apprehension a privation itself has the nature of a sort of entity and is thus called a ‘being of reason’ (*ens rationis*). And so since evil is a privation, it behaves in the manner of a contrary. Therefore, as regards the appetitive movement, it makes a difference whether this movement has to do mainly with a conjoined evil or a lost good.

Since the movement of an animal appetite has the same status among the works of the soul that a natural movement has among natural things, the truth can be ascertained by considering natural movements. For if we think about the notions *moving toward* (*accessus*) and *receding from* (*recessus*) in the case of natural movements, *moving toward* has to do *per se* with what is agreeable to the nature in question, whereas *receding from* has to do *per se* with what is contrary to the nature; for instance, a heavy body *per se* recedes from a higher place, whereas it naturally moves toward a lower place. But if we take the cause of these two movements, viz., heaviness (*gravitas*), the heaviness itself first inclines a thing toward a place below prior to withdrawing it from the place above from which it recedes as it tends downward.

So, then, since among the appetitive movements sadness is a sort of aversion or receding (*se habeat per modum fugae vel recessus*), whereas pleasure is a sort of pursuit or moving toward (*per modum prosecutionis vel accessus*), it follows that just as pleasure has to do in the first place with an acquired good as its object, so sadness has to do with a conjoined evil. But the cause of pleasure and of sadness,

viz., love, has to do with the good prior to having to do with the bad. So, then, in the sense in which a passion's object is its cause, the cause of sadness or pain is more properly a conjoined evil than a lost good.

**Reply to objection 1:** The loss of a good is itself apprehended as something bad (*sub ratione mali*), just as the loss of something bad is apprehended as a good (*sub ratione boni*). And this is why Augustine says that pain stems from the loss of temporal goods.

**Reply to objection 2:** An instance of pleasure and an instance of pain contrary to it have to do with the same thing but under contrary notions. For instance, if the pleasure is directed toward some good, then the sadness is directed toward the absence of that same good. Now as is clear from *Metaphysics* 10, one of two contraries includes the privation of the other. And so it is that the sadness that is directed toward a contrary is in some sense directed toward the same thing under a contrary notion.

**Reply to objection 3:** When many movements stem from a single cause, only the first of the movements, and not all of them, must have to do principally with what the cause has to do with principally. Each of the other movements has to do principally with what is appropriate for it, given its own nature.

## Article 2

### Is concupiscence a cause of pain or sadness?

It seems that concupiscence or sentient desire (*concupiscentia*) is not a cause of pain or sadness:

**Objection 1:** As has been explained (a. 1), sadness *per se* has to do with what is bad. But concupiscence is a certain movement of the appetite toward what is good, and a movement that is directed toward one of two contraries is not a cause of a movement that has to do with the other contrary. Therefore, concupiscence is not a cause of pain.

**Objection 2:** According to Damascene, pain has to do with the present, whereas concupiscence has to do with the future. Therefore, concupiscence is not a cause of pain.

**Objection 3:** That which is *per se* pleasurable is not a cause of pain. But as the Philosopher says in *Rhetoric* 1, concupiscence is pleasurable in its own right (*secundum seipsam*). Therefore, concupiscence is not a cause of pain or sadness.

**But contrary to this:** In *Enchiridion* Augustine says, "When ignorance of things that have to be done and a desire (*concupiscentia*) for harmful things find their way in, error and pain are added as attendants." But ignorance is a cause of error. Therefore, concupiscence is a cause of pain.

**I respond:** Sadness is a certain movement of the animal appetite. But as has been explained (a. 1), an appetitive movement bears a likeness to the movement of a natural appetite, for which two sorts of causes can be assigned: one in the manner of an *end*, and the other as *the source of the beginning* of the movement (*alia sicut unde est principium motus*). For instance, the cause, in the sense of the *end*, of the downward movement of a heavy body is a place down below (*locus deorsum*), whereas the beginning of the movement (*principium motus*) is the natural inclination that comes from heaviness (*ex gravitate*).

Now the cause, in the manner of an *end*, of an appetitive movement is the movement's object. And in this sense, as was explained above (a. 1), the cause of pain or sadness is a conjoined evil.

On the other hand, the cause, in the sense of *the source of the beginning* of such a movement, is the interior inclination of the appetite, which is first of all inclined toward a good and, as a result, is inclined toward rejecting the contrary evil (*ad repudiandum malum contrarium*). And so the first principle of this sort of appetitive movement is love, which is the appetite's first inclination toward attaining the good, whereas the second principle is hatred, which is the appetite's first inclination toward avoiding what is

bad. But since concupiscence or desire (*concupiscentia vel cupiditas*) is the first effect of love, which, as was explained above (q. 32, a. 6), we especially delight in, Augustine often substitutes ‘concupiscence’ (*concupiscentia*) or ‘avid desire’ (*cupiditas*) for ‘love’ (*amor*)—as was likewise explained above (q. 30, a. 2). And this is the sense in which he claims that concupiscence is a universal cause of pain.

However, even when thought of according to its proper notion, concupiscence itself is sometimes a cause of pain. For everything that keeps a movement from reaching its terminus is contrary to that movement. But what is contrary to the appetite’s movement is a cause of sadness (*contristans*). And so, as a result, concupiscence becomes a cause of sadness insofar as we are saddened by the postponement of a desired good or by its being completely cancelled (*de retardatione boni concupiti vel totali ablatione*). However, concupiscence cannot be a *universal* cause of pain, since we sorrow more over the removal of present goods (*de subtractione bonorum praesentium*), in which we are already taking pleasure, than over the future goods that we have concupiscence for (*quae concupiscimus*).

**Reply to objection 1:** As has been explained, the appetite’s inclination toward attaining what is good is a cause of the appetite’s inclination toward avoiding what is bad. And this is why appetitive movements that have to do with the good are posited as a cause of appetitive movements that have to do with what is bad.

**Reply to objection 2:** Even if what is desired is future in reality, it is nonetheless present in a certain sense insofar as it is hoped for.

An alternative reply is that even if the desired good is itself future, nonetheless, what causes pain is an obstacle that is posed in the present.

**Reply to objection 3:** Concupiscence is pleasurable as long as hope remains for acquiring what one has concupiscence for. But if the hope is removed by an obstacle that is posed, then the concupiscence is a cause of pain.

### Article 3

#### Is a desire for oneness a cause of pain?

It seems that a desire for oneness (*appetitus unitatis*) is not a cause of pain:

**Objection 1:** In *Ethics* 10 the Philosopher says, “This opinion,” which posited that being filled up (*repletio*) is a cause of pleasure and being cut off (*incisio*) is a cause of sadness, “seems to have been formed on the basis of the pleasures and pains associated with food.” But not every instance of pleasure or of sadness is of this sort. Therefore, a desire for oneness is not a universal cause of pain—given that being filled up has to do with oneness, whereas being cut off induces a multitude.

**Objection 2:** Any sort of separation is opposed to oneness. Therefore, if pain were caused by a desire for oneness, then no sort of separation would be pleasurable. But this is clearly false in the case of the separation of what is superfluous.

**Objection 3:** The reason why we desire to be conjoined to something good is the same reason why we desire to be separated from something bad. But just as being conjoined pertains to oneness, since oneness is a certain sort of union, so separation is contrary to oneness. Therefore, a desire for oneness should not be posited as a cause of pain more than a desire for separation is.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Libero Arbitrio* 3 Augustine says, “From the pain that beasts feel, it is quite evident how much their souls, in ruling and animating their bodies, desire oneness. For what is pain other than a sort of reluctant sensing of division or corruption?”

**I respond:** In the same way that having concupiscence or desire for the good is a cause of pain, so also love, or a desire for oneness, should be posited as a cause of pain. For the good of each thing consists in a certain sort of oneness, viz., insofar as each thing has united within itself the things that its

completeness (*perfectio*) consists in; this is why the Platonists claimed that the One is a principle in the same way that the Good is. Hence, each thing naturally desires oneness in the same way that it desires goodness. And because of this, just as love in the sense of a desire for the good is a cause of pain, so love in the sense of a desire for oneness is a cause of pain.

**Reply to objection 1:** It is not just any sort of union that brings the nature of the good to perfection, but only that sort of union that the entity's complete *esse* depends on (*sed solum illa unio a qua dependet esse perfectum rei*).

And, for this same reason, it is not, as some have thought, just any sort of desire for oneness that is a cause of pain or sadness. In the cited passage the Philosopher rules out their opinion by appealing to the fact that some instances of being filled up are not pleasurable, in the way that those who are filled up with food do not take pleasure in consuming food. For this sort of being filled up—or oneness—would be repugnant to complete *esse* rather than constitutive of it (*magis repugnaret ad perfectum esse quam ipsum constitueret*). Hence, pain is caused not by the desire for just any sort of oneness, but rather by the desire for the sort of oneness that the nature's perfection (*perfectio naturae*) consists in.

**Reply to objection 2:** Separation can be pleasurable either insofar as what is removed is contrary to the thing's perfection, or insofar as the separation has some sort of union adjoined to it—as, for instance, the union of a sensible object with the sensory power.

**Reply to objection 3:** The separation from things that are harmful or corrupting is desired insofar as such things destroy the right sort of oneness. Hence, the desire for a separation of this sort is not a first cause of pain, but is instead a desire for oneness.

#### Article 4

##### Should a greater power be posited as a cause of pain?

It seems that a greater power (*potestas maior*) should not be posited as a cause of pain:

**Objection 1:** What is within an agent's power is no longer present but future. But pain has to do with a present evil. Therefore, a greater power is not a cause of pain.

**Objection 2:** Inflicted harm is a cause of pain. But harm can be inflicted even by a lesser power. Therefore, a greater power should not be posited as a cause of pain.

**Objection 3:** The causes of appetitive movements are the soul's interior inclinations. But a greater power is something exterior. Therefore, it should not be posited as a cause of pain.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Natura Boni* Augustine says, "The will resisting a greater power causes pain in the mind; the sensory power resisting a more powerful body causes pain in the body."

**I respond:** As was explained above (a. 1), a conjoined evil is a cause of pain or sadness in the manner of an object. Therefore, whatever causes the evil to be conjoined should be posited as a cause of pain or sadness. Now it is clearly contrary to the appetite's inclination for it to adhere in the present to what is bad. But what is contrary to a thing's inclination never reaches it except through the action of something more powerful. And this is why Augustine claims that a greater power is a cause of pain.

However, note that if a greater power is strong enough to change a contrary inclination into a proper inclination, then there will no longer be any repugnance or violence—as when a stronger agent, by corrupting a heavy body, removes from it the inclination by which it tends downward, at which point being borne upwards is natural to it and not violent. So, then, if some greater power is strong enough to remove the will's inclination or the sentient appetite's inclination, then pain or sadness does not follow from this. Instead, pain or sadness follows only when the appetite's inclination to the contrary remains. And this is why Augustine says that it is "the will *resisting* a greater power" that causes pain. For if it were not resisting, but if it instead ceded by consenting, then pleasure, and not pain, would follow.

**Reply to objection 1:** A greater power is a cause of pain not insofar as it is an agent in potentiality, but insofar as it is actually acting, viz., while it is effecting the conjoining of the corruptive evil.

**Reply to objection 2:** Nothing prevents a power that is not greater absolutely speaking from being greater with respect to something. And in this sense it is able to inflict harm. But if it were not greater in any way at all, then it would not in any way be able to inflict harm and hence could not be a cause of pain.

**Reply to objection 3:** Exterior agents can be a cause of appetitive movements insofar as they cause the presence of the object. And it is in this sense that a greater power is posited as a cause of pain.