

QUESTION 139

The Gift of Fortitude

Next we have to consider the gift [of the Holy Spirit] that corresponds to [the virtue of] fortitude, viz., the gift of fortitude. And on this topic there are two questions: (1) Is fortitude a gift [of the Holy Spirit]? (2) What does the gift of fortitude correspond to among the beatitudes and among the fruits [of the Holy Spirit]?

Article 1

Is fortitude a gift [of the Holy Spirit]?

It seems that fortitude is not a gift [of the Holy Spirit]:

Objection 1: The virtues differ from the gifts. But fortitude is a virtue. Therefore, it should not be posited as a gift.

Objection 2: As was established above (*ST* 1-2, q. 68, a. 6), the acts of the gifts remain in heaven. But the act of fortitude does not remain in heaven, since, as Gregory says in *Moralia* 1, “Fortitude gives confidence to one who fears adversities”—but no adversities will exist in heaven. Therefore, fortitude is not a gift.

Objection 3: In *De Doctrina Christiana* 2 Augustine says, “It belongs to fortitude to cut oneself off from every deadly pleasure of the passing world.” But *temperance* has more to do with pleasures and delights than *fortitude* does. Therefore, it seems that fortitude is not a gift that corresponds to the virtue of fortitude.

But contrary to this: In Isaiah 11:2 fortitude is counted among the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

I respond: As was explained above (q. 123, a. 2 and *ST* 1-2, q. 61, a. 3), fortitude implies a certain firmness of mind, and this firmness of mind is required both in doing what is good and in enduring what is evil—especially in the case of arduous goods or evils.

Now in accord with the mode that is *proper and connatural to him*, a man can have this firmness in two ways, with the result that he does not fall away from the good because of the difficulty either of carrying out some arduous task or of enduring some grave evil—and, accordingly, fortitude can be posited either as a specific virtue or as a general virtue. This was explained above (q. 123, a. 2).

However, a man’s mind is further *moved by the Holy Spirit* to attain to the end of every work that is begun and to evade every threatening danger. This is something that exceeds human nature, since sometimes a man does not have it within his power to attain the end of his work or to evade evils or dangers, given that sometimes he is oppressed by evils or dangers to the point of death. But this is what the Holy Spirit accomplishes within a man when He leads him to eternal life, which constitutes the end of all good works and the avoidance of all dangers. And a confidence in this result is infused into the mind by the Holy Spirit, who excludes the contrary fear. And it is on this score that fortitude is posited as a gift of the Holy Spirit; for it was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 68, aa. 1-2) that the gifts have to do with the soul’s being moved by the Holy Spirit.

Reply to objection 1: The fortitude which is a virtue perfects the soul for *enduring* every danger, but it is not sufficient to give one confidence about *evading* all dangers. Rather, this pertains to the fortitude which is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Reply to objection 2: The gifts do not have the same acts in heaven (*in patria*) that they have in the present life (*in via*). Rather, in heaven they have acts that have to do with the thorough enjoyment of the end. Hence, in heaven the act of fortitude is to thoroughly enjoy full security from toils and evils.

Reply to objection 3: The gift of fortitude is related to the virtue of fortitude not only insofar as the latter consists in enduring dangers, but also insofar as it consists in doing any sort of arduous task.

And so the gift of fortitude is directed by the gift of counsel, which seems to have to do mainly with the better goods.

Article 2

Does the fourth beatitude correspond to the gift of fortitude?

It seems that the fourth beatitude, viz., “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice ...,” does not correspond to the gift of fortitude:

Objection 1: It is not the gift of *fortitude*, but instead the gift of *piety* that corresponds to the virtue of justice. But hungering and thirsting for justice pertains to an act of justice. Therefore, the fourth beatitude pertains to the gift of piety rather to the gift of fortitude.

Objection 2: Hungering and thirsting for justice involves desiring what is good. But this belongs properly to charity, and, as was established above (q. 45, intro. and aa. 2 and 4), it is not the gift of *fortitude*, but instead the gift of *wisdom* that corresponds to charity. Therefore, the fourth beatitude corresponds to the gift of wisdom and not to the gift of fortitude.

Objection 3: The fruits [of the Holy Spirit] follow upon the beatitudes, since, as is explained in *Ethics* 1, delight is a part of the nature of beatitude. But it does not seem that anything posited among the fruits [of the Holy Spirit] pertains to fortitude. Therefore, neither is there any beatitude that corresponds to fortitude.

But contrary to this: In *De Sermone Domini in Monte* Augustine says, “Fortitude befits those who hunger; for they labor while desiring the joy of genuine goods and wishing to turn their love away from earthly things.”

I respond: As was explained above (q. 121, a. 2), Augustine attributes the beatitudes to the gifts in the order of their enumeration, though pointing out a certain agreement among them. And so he attributes the *fourth beatitude*, viz., the one about hungering and thirsting for justice, to the *fourth gift*, viz., the gift of fortitude. Yet there is a certain agreement there. For as has been explained (a. 1), fortitude has to do with things that are arduous. Now it is very arduous for someone not only to do virtuous works, which are commonly called ‘works of justice’, but also to do them with a sort of insatiable desire, which can be signified by a ‘hunger’ and ‘thirst’ for justice.

Reply to objection 1: As Chrysostom explains in *Super Matthaëum*, ‘justice’ is being taken here not only for particular justice, but also for general justice—which, as is explained in *Ethics* 5, involves the works of *all* the virtues. Among these works of the virtues, the fortitude which is a gift focuses on what is arduous.

Reply to objection 2: As was explained above (q. 23, a. 8 and *ST* 1-2, q. 68, a. 4), charity is the root of all the gifts and virtues. And so whatever belongs to fortitude can belong to charity as well.

Reply to objection 3: Among the fruits there are two that correspond well enough to fortitude, viz., *patience*, which has to do with enduring what is bad, and *longanimity*, which can have to do with waiting for what is good, and doing what is good, over a long period of time.