

QUESTION 166

Studiosness

Next we have to consider studiosness (*studiositas*) (question 166) and curiosity (*curiositas*), which is opposed to it (question 167).

As regards studiosness, there are two questions: (1) What is the subject matter of studiosness? (2) Is studiosness a part of temperance?

Article 1

Is cognition the subject matter of studiosness?

It seems that the subject matter of studiosness (*studiositas*) is not, properly speaking, cognition:

Objection 1: An individual is called studios (*studiosus*) from the fact that he shows eagerness (*studium*) for certain things. But in *any* subject matter a man ought to show eagerness in doing whatever needs to be done in the right way. Therefore, it seems that cognition is not the specific subject matter of studiosness.

Objection 2: Studiosness is opposed to curiosity. But curiosity, which comes from the word *cura* [care], can also have to do with splendid clothes and with other such things that involve the body; hence, in Romans 13:14 the Apostle says, “Do not give care to (*curam ne feceritis*) the flesh in its desires.” Therefore, studiosness does not have to do just with cognition.

Objection 3: Jeremiah 6:13 says, “From the least of them even to the greatest, all apply themselves eagerly to avarice (*omnes avaritiae student*).” But avarice does not properly speaking have to do with cognition, but instead, as was established above (q. 118, a. 2), it has to do with the possession of riches. Therefore, studiosness, which is taken from *studium* [eagerness], does not have to do only with cognition.

But contrary to this: Proverbs 27:11 says, “Be eager for wisdom (*stude sapientiae*), my son, and make my heart joyful, that you might be able to respond in disputations.” But it is the same studiosness which is praised as a virtue and which the law invites us to. Therefore, studiosness has to do properly with cognition.

I respond: Study (*studium*) mainly implies a strong application of the mind to something. But the mind is applied to something only by having cognition of it. Hence, the mind is first applied to cognition and secondarily applied to those matters in which a man is directed by the cognition. And so study has to do with cognition in the first place, and after that it has to do with anything else that we need the direction of the cognition in order to accomplish.

Now the virtues properly attribute to themselves the subject matter that they primarily and principally have to do with, in the way that fortitude has to do with the danger of death and temperance has to do with the pleasures of the sense of touch. And so studiosness is properly said to have to do with cognition.

Reply to objection 1: An individual cannot do a thing correctly with respect to other subject matters unless that thing is ordered beforehand by reason with its cognition. And so studiosness has to do with cognition before the study is applied to any other subject matter.

Reply to objection 2: A man’s mind is drawn by human affection to tend toward those things by which he is affected—this according to Matthew 6:21 (“Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be”). And since a man is especially affected by those things which the flesh cherishes, it follows that a man’s thinking is turned mainly to what the flesh cherishes, so that the man inquires into how he can best assist his flesh. And on this score, curiosity is posited as having to do with what involves the flesh by way of things that pertain to cognition.

Reply to objection 3: Avarice is fascinated by the acquisition of riches, which especially demands a sort of expertise in earthly affairs. And it is on this score that study is devoted to what has to do with avarice.

Article 2

Is studiousness a part of temperance?

It seems that studiousness is not a part of temperance:

Objection 1: An individual is called studious in accord with studiousness. But every virtuous individual in general is called studious—as is clear from the Philosopher, who frequently uses the name ‘studious’. Therefore, studiousness is a general virtue and not a part of temperance.

Objection 2: As has been explained (a. 1), studiousness involves cognition. But cognition belongs not to the moral virtues, which exist in the appetitive part of the soul, but instead to the intellectual virtues, which exist in the cognitive part of the soul. Hence, as was established above (q. 47, a. 9), solicitude is also an act of prudence. Therefore, studiousness is not a part of temperance.

Objection 3: A virtue that is posited as part of some principal virtue is like that principal virtue with respect to its *mode*. But studiousness is not like temperance as regards its mode. For the name ‘temperance’ is taken from a sort of curbing (*ex quadam refrenatione*) and so is more opposed to the vice that is an *excess*. But the name ‘studiousness’ is, on the contrary, taken from an application of the soul to something and so seems to be more opposed to the vice that is a *deficiency*, viz., *negligence with respect to studying*, than to the vice that is an *excess*, viz., *curiosity*. Hence, it is because of the similarity of studiousness and curiosity that Isidore says in *Etymologia* that someone is called studious “in the sense of being curious in his studies.” Therefore, studiousness is not a part of temperance.

But contrary to this: In *De Moribus Ecclesiae* Augustine says, “We are forbidden to be curious, and this is the gift of great temperance.” But curiosity is stopped by moderated studiousness. Therefore, studiousness is a part of temperance.

I respond: As was explained above (q. 141, aa. 3-5), temperance involves moderating the movement of the appetite, so that it does not tend excessively toward what is naturally desired. Now just as a man naturally desires the pleasures of food and sex with respect to his corporeal nature, so, too, with respect to his soul he naturally desires to have cognition of something. Hence, in *Metaphysics* 1 the Philosopher says. “All men naturally desire to know.” Now the moderation of this desire belongs to the virtue of *studiousness*. Hence, it follows that studiousness is a potential part of temperance as a secondary virtue that is adjoined to temperance as the principal virtue. And it is included under *modesty* for the reason explained above (q. 160, a. 2).

Reply to objection 1: As is explained in *Ethics* 6, prudence brings all the moral virtues to completion. Therefore, to the extent that the cognition that belongs to prudence pertains to all the virtues, the name ‘studiousness’, which has to do properly with cognition, flows down into all the virtues.

Reply to objection 2: The act of a cognitive virtue is commanded by the appetitive power, which, as was established above (*ST* 1, q. 82, a. 4 and 1-2, q. 9, a. 1), is the mover of all the powers. And so there are two goods that one can focus on with respect to cognition:

One of them, to be sure, has to do with the *very act of cognition*, and this sort of good pertains to the intellectual virtues, so that, namely, a man has a true reckoning of singular things.

By contrast, the other is a good that belongs to the *act of an appetitive power*, so that, namely, a man has an upright desire to apply the cognitive power in this way or that way, and with respect to this thing or that thing. This belongs to the virtue of *studiousness*. And that is why studiousness is counted among the *moral* virtues.

Reply to objection 3: As the Philosopher explains in *Ethics 2*, in order for a man to become virtuous, he must preserve himself from those things that nature inclines him toward most of all. And so it is that because nature mainly inclines a man to fear the danger of death and to pursue the pleasures of the flesh, the praiseworthiness of the virtue of fortitude mainly consists in a certain firmness to persist against dangers of the sort in question, and the praiseworthiness of temperance consists mainly in a certain curbing of the pleasures of the flesh.

By contrast, there are two contrary inclinations in a man regarding cognition:

(a) On the part of the *soul*, a man is inclined toward desiring the knowledge of things, and so it is necessary for a man to curb this desire in a praiseworthy manner, lest he should tend toward the cognition of things in an unmoderated way.

(b) However, on the part of his *corporeal nature*, a man is inclined toward avoiding the hard work involved in searching for knowledge.

Therefore, as regards the first inclination, studiousness consists in curbing it, and on this score studiousness is posited as a part of temperance. But as regards the second inclination, the praiseworthiness of this virtue consists in a sort of strength of tending toward perceiving the knowledge of things, and it is from this that studiousness receives its name.

The first feature is more essential to this virtue than is the second. For the desire for cognition has to do in its own right with cognition, toward which studiousness is ordered. On the other hand, the hard work of learning is an impediment to cognition and so the virtue in question has to do with it incidentally, in the sense that the virtue removes the obstacle.