

## QUESTION 34

### Hatred

We next have to consider the vices opposed to charity: first, hatred, which is opposed to charity itself (question 34); second, acedia and envy, which are opposed to the joy of charity (questions 35-36); third, discord and schism, which are opposed to peace (questions 37-42); fourth, scandal and giving offense, which are opposed to beneficence and fraternal correction (question 43).

On the first topic there are six questions: (1) Can God be hated? (2) Is hating God the greatest of sins? (3) Is hating one's neighbor always a sin? (4) Is hating one's neighbor the greatest of the sins against one's neighbor? (5) Is hatred a capital vice? (6) From which of the capital sins does hatred arise?

### Article 1

#### Can God be hated?

It seems that no one can hate God (*Deum nullus odio habere possit*):

**Objection 1:** In *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 4, Dionysius says, "What is itself good and beautiful is lovable and delectable to everyone." But God is goodness itself and beauty itself. Therefore, He cannot be hated by anyone.

**Objection 2:** In the apocryphal books of Esdra it says, "All things call forth truth and do well in its works." But as John 14:6 says, God is truth itself. Therefore, everyone loves God and no one can hate Him.

**Objection 3:** Hatred is a certain sort of aversion. But as Dionysius says in *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 4, God "turns all things toward Himself." Therefore, no one can hate Him.

**But contrary to this:** Psalm 73:23 says, "The pride of those who hate You ascends continually," and John 15:24 says, "But now they have both seen and hated me and my Father."

**I respond:** As is clear from what was said above (*ST* 1-2, q. 29, a. 1), hatred is a certain movement of the appetitive power, which is moved only by something that is apprehended. Now there are two ways in which God can be apprehended by a man: (a) *in Himself*, viz., when He is seen through His essence; and (b) *through His effects*, viz., when "the invisible things of God are seen clearly, having been understood through the things that have been made" (Romans 1:20).

Now through His essence God is goodness itself, which no man can hate, since it is of the nature of the good that it be loved. And so it is impossible that anyone who sees God through His essence should hate him.

On the other hand, some of His effects are such that they cannot in any way be contrary to the human will, since *existing (esse)*, *being alive (vivere)*, and *understanding (intelligere)* are desirable and lovable by everyone and are certain effects of God's. Hence, insofar as God is apprehended as the author of those effects, He cannot be hated.

However, there are certain effects of God's that are repugnant to a disordered will—e.g., the inflicting of punishment and, again, the inhibiting of sins through divine law, which are repugnant to a will that has been depraved by sin. And given the consideration of such effects, God can be hated by some individuals, i.e., insofar as He is apprehended as one who prohibits sins and inflicts punishments.

**Reply to objection 1:** This argument goes through for the case of those who see God's essence, which is the very essence of goodness.

**Reply to objection 2:** This argument goes through with respect to God's being apprehended as the cause of those effects that are naturally loved by men, among which are "the works of truth" that give men the knowledge of God.

**Reply to objection 3:** God turns all things to Himself insofar as He is the source of being, since all

things, insofar as they exist, tend toward a likeness of God, who is *Esse* itself.

## Article 2

### Is hating God the greatest of sins?

It seems that hating God is not the greatest of sins (*odium Dei non sit maximum peccatorum*):

**Objection 1:** The most serious sin is a sin against the Holy Spirit, which, as Matthew 12:31-32 says, is unforgivable. But as is clear from what was said above (q. 14, a. 2), hating God is not counted among the species of sins against the Holy Spirit. Therefore, hating God is not the most serious sin (*non sit gravissimum peccatorum*).

**Objection 2:** Sin consists in putting oneself at a distance from God. But a non-believer, who does not have knowledge of God, seems to be at a greater distance from God than a believer who, even if he hates God, at least has knowledge of Him. Therefore, it seems that the sin of unbelief is a more serious sin than hating God.

**Objection 3:** God is hated only because of those effects of His that are repugnant to the will, the chief among which is punishment. But hating punishment is not the greatest of sins. Therefore, hating God is not the greatest of sins.

**But contrary to this:** As is clear from the Philosopher in *Ethics* 8, what is worst is opposed to what is best. But hating God is opposed to loving God, which is the best thing for a man. Therefore, hating God is the worst sin for a man.

**I respond:** As was explained above (q. 10, a. 3), the defect of sin consists in turning away from God. But this sort of turning away would not have the character of a sin if it were not voluntary. Hence, the nature of sin consists in a voluntary turning away from God.

Now this voluntary turning away from God is involved in its own right (*per se*) in the hatred of God, whereas in other sins it is involved, as it were, by participation and with respect to something else (*participative et secundum alium*). For just as the will adheres in its own right to what it loves, so it flees in its own right from what it hates. Hence, when someone hates God, his will is turned away from God by that very fact (*secundum se*).

By contrast, in the case of other sins—e.g., when someone commits fornication—the will is turned away from God not in its own right, but with respect to something else, viz., insofar the will desires a disordered pleasure, which has the turning away from God annexed to it.

But it is always the case that what is such-and-such in its own right is more central than what is such-and-such with respect to another. Hence, hating God is more serious than other sins.

**Reply to objection 1:** In *Moralia* 25 Gregory says, “It is one thing not to do good, it is another to hate the giver of what is good, just as it is one thing to sin precipitately and another to sin deliberately.” From this one can see that to hate God, the giver of all that is good, is to sin deliberately, which is a sin against the Holy Spirit. Hence, it is clear that hating God is especially a sin against the Holy Spirit, insofar as ‘sin against the Holy Spirit’ names a special genus of sin. Yet the reason why it is not numbered among the species of sins against the Holy Spirit is that it is found generally in every species of sin against the Holy Spirit.

**Reply to objection 2:** Unbelief does not itself have the character of a sin unless it is voluntary. And the more voluntary it is, the more serious it is. But unbelief’s voluntariness arises from someone’s hating the truth that is being proposed to him. Hence, it is clear that the character of sin in unbelief arises from hating God, whose truth faith has to do with. Therefore, in the way that a cause is more powerful than its effect, so hating God is a greater sin than unbelief.

**Reply to objection 3:** Not everyone who hates punishments hates God, the author of punishments,

since many hate the punishments that they nonetheless bear patiently out of reverence for God's justice. Hence, in *Confessiones* 10 Augustine says that God "commands that we tolerate the evils associated with punishment, not that they be loved."

However, to break out into hatred of God because He punishes is to harbor hatred for God's justice itself, and this is a very serious sin. Hence, in *Moralia* 25 Gregory says, "Just as it is sometimes more grievous to love sin than to perpetrate it, so it is more wicked to have hated justice than not to have done it."

### Article 3

#### Is every instance of hating one's neighbor a sin?

It seems that not every instance of hating one's neighbor is a sin (*non omne odium proximi sit peccatum*):

**Objection 1:** No sin is found in the precepts or counsels of divine law—this according to Proverbs 8:8 ("All my words are just, there is nothing wicked or perverse in them"). But Luke 14:26 says, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, he cannot be my disciple". Therefore, not every instance of hating one's neighbor is a sin.

**Objection 2:** To the extent that we are imitating God, nothing we do can be a sin. But if we imitate God, then we hate certain individuals. For instance, Romans 1:30 says, "Detractors, hateful to God." Therefore we can hate some individuals without sinning.

**Objection 3:** Nothing that is natural is a sin, since, as Damascene says in *De Fide Orthodoxa* 2, sin is "a withdrawal from what is in accord with nature." But it is natural for each thing to hate what is contrary to itself and to aim at its destruction. Therefore, one's hating his enemy does not seem to be a sin.

**But contrary to this:** 1 John 2:9 says, "Whoever hates his brother is in darkness." But sins are spiritual darkness. Therefore, hatred of one's neighbor cannot exist without sin.

**I respond:** As was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 29, a. 1), hatred is opposed to love. So hatred has the character of something bad only to the extent that the corresponding love has the character of something good.

Now love is owed to one's neighbor with respect to what he has from God, i.e., his nature and grace, but love is not owed to him with respect to what he has from himself and the devil, i.e., his sin and lack of justice. And so it is permissible to hate in one's brother his sin and everything that belongs to his lack of divine justice, but no one can hate without sin his brother's nature and grace.

Now the fact that we hate the sin and lack of goodness in our brother is part of our love of our brother, since loving someone's good is of the same nature as hating what is bad in him. Hence, if hatred of one's brother is taken in an absolute sense, then it is always a sin.

**Reply to objection 1:** As is clear from Exodus 20:12, our parents are to be honored by us according to God's command, because of our nature and because of the closeness by which they are joined to us. But they are to be hated to the extent that they put up obstacles to our reaching the perfection of divine justice.

**Reply to objection 2:** God hates the sin in the detractors and not their nature. And it is in this way that we ourselves can hate the detractors without sinning.

**Reply to objection 3:** Men are not opposed to us with respect to the goods that they have from God, and hence in this regard they are to be loved.

On the other hand, they are opposed to us insofar as they treat us with hostility, which belongs to their sin, and in this regard they are to be hated. For we ought to hate in them the fact that they are

enemies to us.

#### Article 4

##### Is hating one's neighbor the most serious sin that is committed against one's neighbor?

It seems that hating one's neighbor is the most serious sin that is committed against one's neighbor:

**Objection 1:** 1 John 3:15 says, "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer." But homicide is the most serious of the sins that are committed against one's neighbor. Therefore, hatred is, too.

**Objection 2:** What is worst is opposed to what is best. But the best of the things we show to our neighbor is love (*amor*), since everything else is traced back to love (*ad dilectionem*). Therefore, the worst thing is hatred.

**But contrary to this:**

1. According to Augustine in *Enchiridion*, what is bad is what does harm. But someone harms his neighbor more through other sins than through hatred, e.g., through theft and murder and adultery. Therefore, hatred is not the most serious sin.

2. In expounding Matthew 5:19 ("He who breaks one of these least commandments ...") Chrysostom says, "The commandments of Moses—'You shall not kill', 'You shall not commit adultery'—are rewarded modestly but the sins against them are great (*in remuneratione modica sunt, in peccato autem magna*), whereas the commandments of Christ—'You shall not be angry', 'You shall not covet'—are rewarded greatly but the sins against them are small." But hatred belongs to an interior movement, as do anger and covetousness. Therefore, hatred of one's neighbor is a lesser sin than homicide.

**I respond:** A sin that is committed against one's neighbor has the character of badness in two ways: (a) from the disorder that belongs to the one who sins, and (b) from the harm that is inflicted on the one against whom the sin is directed.

In the first way, hatred is a greater sin than the exterior acts that are harmful to one's neighbor, since through hatred a man's will, which is the most important thing in a man and from which comes the root of sin, is disordered. Hence, if the disordered exterior acts existed without the will's disorder, there would be no sins, as when someone kills a man unknowingly or out of an ardent desire for justice. And if there is anything sinful in the exterior sins that are committed against one's neighbor, then all of it comes from the interior hatred.

On the other hand, as regards the harm that is inflicted on one's neighbor, the exterior sins are worse than the interior hatred.

**Reply to objection 1 and objection 2 and the arguments for the contrary:** From this the replies to the objections are clear.

#### Article 5

##### Is hatred a capital vice?

It seems that hatred is a capital vice (*vitium capitale*):

**Objection 1:** Hatred is directly opposed to charity. But charity is the most important of the virtues and the mother of the other virtues. Therefore, hatred especially is a capital vice and a principle of all the other capital vices.

**Objection 2:** Sins arise in us because of the inclination of the passions—this according to Romans

7:5 (“The passions of sins work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death”). But as is clear from what was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 27, a. 4), among the passions of the soul, all the others seem to follow from love and hatred. Therefore, hatred should be posited among the capital vices.

**Objection 3:** A vice is a moral evil. But hatred has more to do with evil than does any other passion. Therefore, it seems that hatred should be posited as a capital vice.

**But contrary to this:** In *Moralia* 31 Gregory does not enumerate hatred among the seven capital sins.

**I respond:** As was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 84, aa. 3-4), a capital vice is one from which other vices very often arise. Now a vice is contrary to a man’s nature insofar as he is a rational animal. And in the case of those things that are done contrary to nature, what belongs to the nature is little by little corrupted. Hence, one must first recede from what is less in accord with nature and ultimately from what is most in accord with nature, since what is first in construction is last in decomposition.

Now what is first and foremost natural to a man is that he loves what is good, and principally the divine good and the good of his neighbor. And so the hatred that is opposed to this love is the last thing—and not the first thing—in the destruction of virtue that comes about through vice. And so hatred is not a capital vice.

**Reply to objection 1:** As *Physics* 7 explains, “the virtue of each thing consists in its being well-disposed in accord with its nature.” And so in the case of the virtues, what is first and foremost has to be what is first and foremost in the natural order. And it is because of this that charity is posited as the most important of the virtues. And, as has been explained, by this same line of reasoning hatred cannot be first among the vices.

**Reply to objection 2:** Hatred of the sort of evil that is contrary to the natural good is first among the passions of the soul, just as the love of the natural good is. But hatred of the connatural good cannot be first; instead, it has the character of what is last, since this sort of hatred attests to a corruption of nature that has already taken place, just as love of a strange good (*amor extranei boni*) does, too.

**Reply to objection 3:** There are two sorts of evil.

Some evils are genuine evils, since they are incompatible with the natural good; and hatred of this sort of evil has the character of priority among the passions.

On the other hand, some evils are apparent evils and not genuine evils, viz., those that are genuine and natural goods but are thought of as evils because of the corruption of one’s nature. Hatred of this sort of evil must happen at the end. This hatred is vicious, but it is not first.

## Article 6

### Does hatred arise from envy?

It seems that hatred does not arise from envy:

**Objection 1:** Envy is sadness about the goods of others. But hatred does not arise from sadness; just the opposite, we are sad about the presence of evils that we hate. Therefore, hatred does not arise from envy.

**Objection 2:** Hatred is opposed to love. But as has been established (q. 25, a. 1), loving one’s neighbor is referred back to loving God. Therefore, hating one’s neighbor is referred back to hating God. But hatred of God is not caused by envy; for as is clear from the Philosopher in *Rhetoric* 2, we envy those who seem close to us and not those who are greatly distant from us. Therefore, hatred is not caused by envy.

**Objection 3:** There is a single effect of a single cause. But hatred arises from anger; for in *Regula* Augustine says, “Anger grows into hatred.” Therefore, it is not the case that hatred is caused by envy.

**But contrary to this:** In *Moralia* 31 Gregory says that hatred arises from envy.

**I respond:** As has been explained (a. 5), hating one's neighbor is the last step in the progression of sin, since this hatred is opposed to the love by which one's neighbor is naturally loved. But the fact that one recedes from what is natural occurs because he intends to avoid what is naturally to be fled from.

Now as is clear from the Philosopher in *Ethics* 7 and 10, every animal flees from sadness, in the same way that it seeks pleasure. And so just as love is caused by pleasure, so hatred is caused by sadness; for just as we are moved to love the things we take delight in, since by that very fact they are taken to be good (*accipiuntur sub ratione boni*), so we are moved to hate the things that sadden us, since by that very fact they are taken to be bad. Hence, since envy is sadness about our neighbor's good, it follows that our neighbor's good is rendered odious to us. And so it is that hatred arises from envy.

**Reply to objection 1:** Since, like the apprehensive power, the appetitive power reflects on its own acts, it follows that there is a circular movement in the acts of the appetitive power. Therefore, in the initial progression of an appetitive movement, desire follows upon love, and delight follows from desire when one has attained what he was desiring. And since the very fact that he is delighting in the good that he loves has the nature of goodness, it follows that delight causes love. And by the same line of reasoning it follows that sadness causes hatred.

**Reply to objection 2:** The character of love is different from the character of hatred. For the object of love is the good, which flows from God into creatures, and so love is first of all love of God and then love of one's neighbor. But hatred is hatred of evil, which has a place in God's effects but has no place within God Himself. Hence, it was likewise explained above (a.1) that God is hated only insofar as He is apprehended in His effects. And so hatred of one's neighbor is prior to hatred of God. Hence, since envy with respect to one's neighbor is the mother of the hatred that is directed toward one's neighbor, it follows that it is a cause of the hatred that is directed toward God.

**Reply to objection 3:** Nothing prevents a thing from arising from diverse causes with respect to diverse notions. And, accordingly, hatred can arise from both anger and envy.

Yet hatred arises more directly from envy, through which the very good of one's neighbor is rendered something to be saddened by and thus hated.

By contrast, hatred arises from anger because of a certain sort of increase. For through anger we at first desire evil for our neighbor in a given measure, insofar as this measure has the character of vindication. But afterwards, through the continuation of the anger, it gets to the point that a man desires evil for his neighbor absolutely speaking, and this has the character of hatred.

Hence, it is clear that hatred is caused by envy formally according to the very character of the object of envy, whereas anger causes a disposition toward hatred (*odium causatur ex ira autem dispositive*).