

THIRD PART, QUESTION 11

Of the Knowledge Imprinted or Infused in the Soul of Christ (In Six Articles)

We must now consider the knowledge imprinted or infused in the soul of Christ, and under this head there are six points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether Christ knows all things by this knowledge?
- (2) Whether He could use this knowledge by turning to phantasms?
- (3) Whether this knowledge was collative?
- (4) Of the comparison of this knowledge with the angelic knowledge;
- (5) Whether it was a habitual knowledge?
- (6) Whether it was distinguished by various habits?

Whether by this imprinted or infused knowledge Christ knew all things?

IIIa q. 11 a. 1

Objection 1. It would seem that by this knowledge Christ did not know all things. For this knowledge is imprinted upon Christ for the perfection of the passive intellect. Now the passive intellect of the human soul does not seem to be in potentiality to all things simply, but only to those things with regard to which it can be reduced to act by the active intellect, which is its proper motor; and these are knowable by natural reason. Therefore by this knowledge Christ did not know what exceeded the natural reason.

Objection 2. Further, phantasms are to the human intellect as colors to sight, as is said *De Anima* iii, 18,31,39. But it does not pertain to the perfection of the power of seeing to know what is without color. Therefore it does not pertain to the perfection of human intellect to know things of which there are no phantasms, such as separate substances. Hence, since this knowledge was in Christ for the perfection of His intellective soul, it seems that by this knowledge He did not know separate substances.

Objection 3. Further, it does not belong to the perfection of the intellect to know singulars. Hence it would seem that by this knowledge the soul of Christ did not know singulars.

On the contrary, It is written (Is. 11:2) that “the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of knowledge and counsel shall fill Him,” under which are included all that may be known; for the knowledge of all Divine things belongs to wisdom, the knowledge of all immaterial things to understanding, the knowledge of all conclusions to knowledge [scientia], the knowledge of all practical things to counsel. Hence it would seem that by this knowledge Christ had the knowledge of all things.

I answer that, As was said above (q. 9, a. 1), it was fitting that the soul of Christ should be wholly perfected by having each of its powers reduced to act. Now it must be borne in mind that in the human soul, as in every creature, there is a double passive power: one in comparison with a natural agent; the other in comparison with the first agent, which can reduce

any creature to a higher act than a natural agent can reduce it, and this is usually called the obediencial power of a creature. Now both powers of Christ’s soul were reduced to act by this divinely imprinted knowledge. And hence, by it the soul of Christ knew: First, whatever can be known by force of a man’s active intellect, e.g. whatever pertains to human sciences; secondly, by this knowledge Christ knew all things made known to man by Divine revelation, whether they belong to the gift of wisdom or the gift of prophecy, or any other gift of the Holy Ghost; since the soul of Christ knew these things more fully and completely than others. Yet He did not know the Essence of God by this knowledge, but by the first alone, of which we spoke above (q. 10).

Reply to Objection 1. This reason refers to the natural power of an intellective soul in comparison with its natural agent, which is the active intellect.

Reply to Objection 2. The human soul in the state of this life, since it is somewhat fettered by the body, so as to be unable to understand without phantasms, cannot understand separate substances. But after the state of this life the separated soul will be able, in a measure, to know separate substances by itself, as was said in the Ia, q. 89, Aa. 1,2, and this is especially clear as regards the souls of the blessed. Now before His Passion, Christ was not merely a wayfarer but also a comprehensor; hence His soul could know separate substances in the same way that a separated soul could.

Reply to Objection 3. The knowledge of singulars pertains to the perfection of the intellective soul, not in speculative knowledge, but in practical knowledge, which is imperfect without the knowledge of singulars, in which operations exist, as is said *Ethic.* vi, 7. Hence for prudence are required the remembrance of past things, knowledge of present things, and foresight of future things, as Tully says (*De Invent.* ii). Therefore, since Christ had the fulness of prudence by the gift of counsel, He consequently knew all singular things—present, past, and future.

* Vulg.: “The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel...the Spirit of knowledge...”; cf. *Ecclus.* 15:5.

Objection 1. It would seem that the soul of Christ could not understand by this knowledge except by turning to phantasms, because, as is stated *De Anima* iii, 18,31,39, phantasms are compared to man's intellective soul as colors to sight. But Christ's power of seeing could not become actual save by turning to colors. Therefore His intellective soul could understand nothing except by turning to phantasms.

Objection 2. Further, Christ's soul is of the same nature as ours. otherwise He would not be of the same species as we, contrary to what the Apostle says (*Phil. 2:7*) "...being made in the likeness of men." But our soul cannot understand except by turning to phantasms. Hence, neither can Christ's soul otherwise understand.

Objection 3. Further, senses are given to man to help his intellect. Hence, if the soul of Christ could understand without turning to phantasms, which arise in the senses, it would follow that in the soul of Christ the senses were useless, which is not fitting. Therefore it seems that the soul of Christ can only understand by turning to phantasms.

On the contrary, The soul of Christ knew certain things which could not be known by the senses, viz. separate substances. Therefore it could understand without turning to phantasms.

I answer that, In the state before His Passion Christ was at the same time a wayfarer and a comprehensor, as will be more clearly shown (q. 15, a. 10). Especially had He the conditions of a wayfarer on the part of the body, which was passible; but the conditions of a comprehensor He had chiefly on the part of the soul. Now this is the condition of the soul of a comprehensor, viz. that it is nowise subject to its body, or dependent upon it, but wholly dominates it. Hence after the resurrection

glory will flow from the soul to the body. But the soul of man on earth needs to turn to phantasms, because it is fettered by the body and in a measure subject to and dependent upon it. And hence the blessed both before and after the resurrection can understand without turning to phantasms. And this must be said of the soul of Christ, which had fully the capabilities of a comprehensor.

Reply to Objection 1. This likeness which the Philosopher asserts is not with regard to everything. For it is manifest that the end of the power of seeing is to know colors; but the end of the intellective power is not to know phantasms, but to know intelligible species, which it apprehends from and in phantasms, according to the state of the present life. Therefore there is a likeness in respect of what both powers regard, but not in respect of that in which the condition of both powers is terminated. Now nothing prevents a thing in different states from reaching its end by different ways: albeit there is never but one proper end of a thing. Hence, although the sight knows nothing without color; nevertheless in a certain state the intellect can know without phantasms, but not without intelligible species.

Reply to Objection 2. Although the soul of Christ was of the same nature as our souls, yet it had a state which our souls have not yet in fact, but only in hope, i.e. the state of comprehension.

Reply to Objection 3. Although the soul of Christ could understand without turning to phantasms, yet it could also understand by turning to phantasms. Hence the senses were not useless in it; especially as the senses are not afforded to man solely for intellectual knowledge, but for the need of animal life.

Objection 1. It would seem that the soul of Christ had not this knowledge by way of comparison. For Damascene says (*De Fide Orth.* iii, 14): "We do not uphold counsel or choice in Christ." Now these things are withheld from Christ only inasmuch as they imply comparison and discursion. Therefore it seems that there was no collative or discursive knowledge in Christ.

Objection 2. Further, man needs comparison and discursion of reason in order to find out the unknown. But the soul of Christ knew everything, as was said above (q. 10, a. 2). Hence there was no discursive or collative knowledge in Him.

Objection 3. Further, the knowledge in Christ's soul was like that of comprehensors, who are likened to the angels, according to *Mat. 22:30*. Now there is no collative or discursive knowledge in the angels, as Dionysius shows (*Div. Nom.* vii). Therefore there was no discursive or collative knowledge in the soul of Christ.

On the contrary, Christ had a rational soul, as was shown (q. 5, a. 4). Now the proper operation of a rational soul consists in comparison and discursion from one thing to another. Therefore there was collative and discursive knowledge in Christ.

I answer that, Knowledge may be discursive or collative in two ways. First, in the acquisition of the knowledge, as happens to us, who proceed from one thing to the knowledge of another, as from causes to effects, and conversely. And in this way the knowledge in Christ's soul was not discursive or collative, since this knowledge which we are now considering was divinely infused, and not acquired by a process of reasoning. Secondly, knowledge may be called discursive or collative in use; as at times those who know, reason from cause to effect, not in order to learn anew, but wishing to use the knowledge they have. And in this way the knowledge in Christ's soul could be collative or discursive; since it could conclude one thing

from another, as it pleased, as in Mat. 17:24,25, when our Lord asked Peter: "Of whom do the kings of the earth receive tribute, of their own children, or of strangers?" On Peter replying: "Of strangers," He concluded: "Then the children are free."

Reply to Objection 1. From Christ is excluded that counsel which is with doubt; and consequently choice, which essentially includes such counsel; but the practice of using counsel

is not excluded from Christ.

Reply to Objection 2. This reason rests upon discursion and comparison, as used to acquire knowledge.

Reply to Objection 3. The blessed are likened to the angels in the gifts of graces; yet there still remains the difference of natures. And hence to use comparison and discursion is unnatural to the souls of the blessed, but not to angels.

Whether in Christ this knowledge was greater than the knowledge of the angels?

IIIa q. 11 a. 4

Objection 1. It would seem that this knowledge was not greater in Christ than in the angels. For perfection is proportioned to the thing perfected. But the human soul in the order of nature is below the angelic nature. Therefore since the knowledge we are now speaking of is imprinted upon Christ's soul for its perfection, it seems that this knowledge is less than the knowledge by which the angelic nature is perfected.

Objection 2. Further, the knowledge of Christ's soul was in a measure comparative and discursive, which cannot be said of the angelic knowledge. Therefore the knowledge of Christ's soul was less than the knowledge of the angels.

Objection 3. Further, the more immaterial knowledge is, the greater it is. But the knowledge of the angels is more immaterial than the knowledge of Christ's soul, since the soul of Christ is the act of a body, and turns to phantasms, which cannot be said of the angels. Therefore the knowledge of angels is greater than the knowledge of Christ's soul.

On the contrary, The Apostle says (Heb. 2:9): "For we see

Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor"; from which it is plain that Christ is said to be lower than the angels only in regard to the suffering of death. And hence, not in knowledge.

I answer that, The knowledge imprinted on Christ's soul may be looked at in two ways: First, as regards what it has from the inflowing cause; secondly, as regards what it has from the subject receiving it. Now with regard to the first, the knowledge imprinted upon the soul of Christ was more excellent than the knowledge of the angels, both in the number of things known and in the certainty of the knowledge; since the spiritual light, which is imprinted on the soul of Christ, is much more excellent than the light which pertains to the angelic nature. But as regards the second, the knowledge imprinted on the soul of Christ is less than the angelic knowledge, in the manner of knowing that is natural to the human soul, i.e. by turning to phantasms, and by comparison and discursion.

And hereby the reply to the objections is made clear.

Whether this knowledge was habitual?

IIIa q. 11 a. 5

Objection 1. It would seem that in Christ there was no habitual knowledge. For it has been said (q. 9, a. 1) that the highest perfection of knowledge befitted Christ's soul. But the perfection of an actually existing knowledge is greater than that of a potentially or habitually existing knowledge. Therefore it was fitting for Him to know all things actually. Therefore He had not habitual knowledge.

Objection 2. Further, since habits are ordained to acts, a habitual knowledge which is never reduced to act would seem useless. Now, since Christ knew all things, as was said q. 10, a. 2, He could not have considered all things actually, thinking over one after another, since the infinite cannot be passed over by enumeration. Therefore the habitual knowledge of certain things would have been useless to Him—which is unfitting. Therefore He had an actual and not a habitual knowledge of what He knew.

Objection 3. Further, habitual knowledge is a perfection of the knower. But perfection is more noble than the thing perfected. If, therefore, in the soul of Christ there was any created habit of knowledge, it would follow that this created thing was nobler than the soul of Christ. Therefore there was no habitual knowledge in Christ's soul.

On the contrary, The knowledge of Christ we are now speaking about was univocal with our knowledge, even as His soul was of the same species as ours. But our knowledge is in the genus of habit. Therefore the knowledge of Christ was habitual.

I answer that, As stated above (a. 4), the mode of the knowledge impressed on the soul of Christ befitted the subject receiving it. For the received is in the recipient after the mode of the recipient. Now the connatural mode of the human soul is that it should understand sometimes actually, and sometimes potentially. But the medium between a pure power and a completed act is a habit: and extremes and medium are of the same genus. Thus it is plain that it is the connatural mode of the human soul to receive knowledge as a habit. Hence it must be said that the knowledge imprinted on the soul of Christ was habitual, for He could use it when He pleased.

Reply to Objection 1. In Christ's soul there was a twofold knowledge—each most perfect of its kind: the first exceeding the mode of human nature, as by it He saw the Essence of God, and other things in It, and this was the most perfect, simply. Nor was this knowledge habitual, but actual with respect to everything He knew in this way. But the second knowledge was

in Christ in a manner proportioned to human nature, i.e. inasmuch as He knew things by species divinely imprinted upon Him, and of this knowledge we are now speaking. Now this knowledge was not most perfect, simply, but merely in the genus of human knowledge; hence it did not behoove it to be always in act.

Reply to Objection 2. Habits are reduced to act by the command of the will, since a habit is that “with which we act when we wish.” Now the will is indeterminate in regard to infinite things. Yet it is not useless, even when it does not actually tend to all; provided it actually tends to everything in fitting place and time. And hence neither is a habit useless, even if

all that it extends to is not reduced to act; provided that that which befits the due end of the will be reduced to act according as the matter in hand and the time require.

Reply to Objection 3. Goodness and being are taken in two ways: First, simply; and thus a substance, which subsists in its being and goodness, is a good and a being; secondly, being and goodness are taken relatively, and in this way an accident is a being and a good, not that it has being and goodness, but that its subject is a being and a good. And hence habitual knowledge is not simply better or more excellent than the soul of Christ; but relatively, since the whole goodness of habitual knowledge is added to the goodness of the subject.

Whether this knowledge was distinguished by divers habits?

IIIa q. 11 a. 6

Objection 1. It would seem that in the soul of Christ there was only one habit of knowledge. For the more perfect knowledge is, the more united it is; hence the higher angels understand by the more universal forms, as was said in the Ia, q. 55, a. 3. Now Christ’s knowledge was most perfect. Therefore it was most one. Therefore it was not distinguished by several habits.

Objection 2. Further, our faith is derived from Christ’s knowledge; hence it is written (Heb. 12:2): “Looking on Jesus the author and finisher of faith.” But there is only one habit of faith about all things believed, as was said in the IIa IIae, q. 4, a. 6. Much more, therefore, was there only one habit of knowledge in Christ.

Objection 3. Further, knowledge is distinguished by the divers formalities of knowable things. But the soul of Christ knew everything under one formality, i.e. by a divinely infused light. Therefore in Christ there was only one habit of knowledge.

On the contrary, It is written (Zech. 3:9) that on “one” stone, i.e. Christ, “there are seven eyes.” Now by the eye is understood knowledge. Therefore it would seem that in Christ there were several habits of knowledge.

I answer that, As stated above (Aa. 4,5), the knowledge imprinted on Christ’s soul has a mode connatural to a human soul. Now it is connatural to a human soul to receive species

of a lesser universality than the angels receive; so that it knows different specific natures by different intelligible species. But it so happens that we have different habits of knowledge, because there are different classes of knowable things, inasmuch as what are in one genus are known by one habit; thus it is said (Poster. i, 42) that “one science is of one class of object.” And hence the knowledge imprinted on Christ’s soul was distinguished by different habits.

Reply to Objection 1. As was said (a. 4), the knowledge of Christ’s soul is most perfect, and exceeds the knowledge of angels with regard to what is in it on the part of God’s gift; but it is below the angelic knowledge as regards the mode of the recipient. And it pertains to this mode that this knowledge is distinguished by various habits, inasmuch as it regards more particular species.

Reply to Objection 2. Our faith rests upon the First Truth; and hence Christ is the author of our faith by the Divine knowledge, which is simply one.

Reply to Objection 3. The divinely infused light is the common formality for understanding what is divinely revealed, as the light of the active intellect is with regard to what is naturally known. Hence, in the soul of Christ there must be the proper species of singular things, in order to know each with proper knowledge; and in this way there must be divers habits of knowledge in Christ’s soul, as stated above.