

It is impossible to say that something is predicated univocally of a creature and God because in all univocal predication the nature signified by the name is common to those of whom the univocal predication is made. Hence, from the point of view of the nature signified by the predicate, the subjects of the univocal predication are equal, even though from the point of view of its real existence one may take precedence over another. For example, all numbers are equal from the point of view of the nature of number, even though, by the nature of things, one number is naturally prior to another. No matter how much a creature imitates God, however, a point cannot be reached where something would belong to it for the same reason it belongs to God. For things which have the same formal characters but are in separate subjects are common to the same subjects in regard to substance or quiddity but distinct in regard to the act of being. But whatever is in God is His own act of being; and just as His essence is the same as His act of being, so is His knowledge the same as His act of being a knower. Hence, since the act of existence proper to one thing cannot be communicated to another, it is impossible that a creature ever attain to the possession of something in the same manner in which God has it, just as it is impossible for it to attain the same act of being as that which God has. The same is true of us. If *man* and *to exist as man* did not differ in Socrates, man could not be predicated univocally of him and Plato, whose acts of existing are distinct.

Nevertheless, it cannot be said that whatever is predicated of God and creatures is an equivocal predication; for, unless there were at least some real agreement between creatures and God, His essence would not be the likeness of creatures, and so He could not know them by knowing His essence. Similarly, we would not be able to attain any knowledge of God from creatures, nor from among the names devised for creatures could we apply one to Him more than another; for in equivocal predication it makes no difference what name is used, since the word does not signify any real agreement.

Consequently, it must be said that knowledge is predicated neither entirely univocally nor yet purely equivocally of God's knowledge and ours. Instead, it is predicated analogously, or, in other words, according to a proportion. Since an agreement according to proportion can happen in two ways, two kinds of community can be noted in analogy. There is a certain agreement between things having a proportion to each other from the fact that they have a determinate distance between each other or some other relation to each other, like the proportion which the number two has to unity in as far as it is the double of unity. Again, the agreement is occasionally noted not between two things which have a proportion between them, but rather between two related proportions--for example, six has something in common with four because six is two times three, just as four is two times two. The first type of agreement is one of proportion; the second, of proportionality.

We find something predicated analogously of two realities according to the first type of agreement when one of them has a relation to the other, as when being is predicated of substance and accident because of the relation which accident has to substance, or as when healthy is predicated of urine and animal because urine has some relation to the health of an animal. Sometimes, however, a thing is predicated analogously according to the second type of agreement, as when sight is predicated of bodily sight and of the intellect because understanding is in the mind as sight is in the eye.

In those terms predicated according to the first type of analogy, there must be some definite relation between the things having something in common analogously. Consequently, nothing can be predicated analogously of God and creature according to this type of analogy; for no creature has such a relation to God that it could determine the divine perfection. But in the other type of analogy, no definite relation is involved between the things which have something in common analogously, so there is no reason why some name cannot be predicated analogously of God and creature in this manner.

But this can happen in two ways. Sometimes the name implies something belonging to the thing primarily designated which cannot be common to God and creature even in the manner described above. This would be true, for example, of anything predicated of God metaphorically, as when God is called lion, sun, and the like, because their definition includes matter which cannot be attributed to God. At other times, however, a term predicated of God and creature implies nothing in its principal meaning which would prevent our finding between a creature and God an agreement of the type described above. To this kind belong all attributes which include no defect nor depend on matter for their act of existence, for example, being, the good, and similar things.