

Natural Law, then, is a participation of Eternal Law in rational creatures. It is that guiding principle which comes from man's reasoning powers, as the Eternal Law is that same guiding principle coming from God, who is Himself eternal. Natural Law is the impression of divine reason in our mind, which makes us masters of ourselves and capable of ruling our most inward thought as well as our outward action. Natural Law, moreover, is the impression of divine light in us by which we discern what is good and what is bad.

Man is the only earthly being subject to Natural Law, for he alone possesses an intelligence and will. It is by this intelligence, through the act of reasoning, that he comes to perceive this inward manifestation which is to be a guide to his every act. The possession of a free will enables man to accept or refuse the dictates of this natural rule and this is why Natural Law is found among the laws of morality.

Animal on the other hand performs all its operations through necessity. It has not the privilege of choosing, but must act, always, in accordance to fixed and binding laws. These are called the physical laws as opposed to those of moral, guiding the free operation.

It is the instinct which leads a dog to self-preservation, and nothing can deter it from this tendency. Man is not physically bound to a moral law in this way, and though morally bound, may at any time break this rule which leads him on. And so man differs from all other earthly beings in this respect, for minerals, plants and animals are necessitated in all their operations.

In the physical world, composed as it is of bodies, the physical law is the determined manner in which a cause produces its effect. For instance, in Astronomy, we have the laws of Kepler concerning the motion of heavenly planets; in Physics, the laws of weight and of reflection; in Chemistry, the laws of multiple proportions. and likewise in all experimental sciences.

But in the world of spiritual souls, there are psychological and logical laws which equally represent a necessary and unchangeable order. From a study of these, we come to the study of moral law, which is the moral obligation of tending to good, and we find a particular character not found in the preceding: the agent being free, he does not act from necessity, but can violate this law at