

# **The Apology or Defence of James Arminius**

against Certain Theological Articles  
extensively distributed, and currently circulated  
at least through the hands of some persons in  
the Low Countries and beyond their confines;  
in which both Arminius, and Adrian Borrius,  
a minister of Leyden, are rendered suspect of  
novelty and heterodoxy, or error and heresy,  
on the subject of Religion

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Translated by James Nichols  
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# Preface

CERTAIN articles relating to the Christian Religion are now in a course of circulation. In a paper which was not long since delivered into my hands, the number of them is distinguished into two series, one consisting of twenty and the other of eleven articles. Some of them are attributed to me, others to Adrian Borrius, and several both to him and me. Those persons by whom they were first disseminated, attempt in them to render us suspected of having introduced into the church and the University of Leyden, novelties and heretical instructions, and to accuse us of error and heresy, that both the students of Divinity and the common people may stand on their guard against us, who have this black mark imprinted on us, lest they become infected with the same envenomed disorder, and that those persons who enjoy the supremacy both in Church and State, may seasonably interpose their authority, to prevent the evil from extending any further, or rather to extinguish it in its very commencement; which, if 'they neglect to do, they will be instrumental in producing the greatest detriment to Divine Truth, and to the Political and Ecclesiastical concord of these Provinces.'

The dispersion of some of these articles is not a very recent circumstance; for, above two years ago, seventeen out of these thirty-one came into my hands, expressed exactly in the same words as those that occur in the writing which is the subject of my present remarks. But I was silent, and concealed my regret; for I thought that those articles would, in their very infancy, die a natural death, since part of them were destitute of the truth of historical narration, by not being attributed to those who had been the authors of them; and part of them were void of all real theological sense, by the strange intermixture of truth and falsehood. But the issue did not answer my expectation. For they not only remained without diminution, but gained an increase, by the addition of other *fourteen* to the former *seventeen Articles*, and by a far wider dispersion of the whole than had at first been made. This unexpected result had the effect of inducing me to think that I ought to oppose their progress by a moderate answer, lest my continued silence should be interpreted as tantamount to a confession. If this be the interpretation which, on many occasions is given to silence, it is an easy matter thus to construe it respecting any doctrine that is aspersed as. a heresy, 'under which imputation,' it is said in a vaunting tone, 'St Jerome would have no man to remain patient.'

In this reply I will use candour and conscience. Whatever I know to be true, I will confess and defend. On whatever subjects I may feel hesitation, I will not conceal my ignorance; and whatever my mind dictates to be false, I will deny and refute. May the God of truth and peace direct my mind and my hand by his Holy Spirit! Amen.



# 1 Articles I and II

I. Faith, that is, justifying faith, is not peculiar to the elect.

II. It is possible for believers finally to decline and fall away from faith and salvation.

## Answer

The connection between these two articles is so intimate, that when the first of them is granted, the second is necessarily inferred; and, in return, when the latter is granted, the former is to be inferred, according to the intention of those persons who framed these articles. For if 'faith be not peculiar to the elect,' and if perseverance in faith and salvation belong to the elect alone, it follows that believers not only can, but that some of them actually do, 'fall away from faith and salvation.' And, on the contrary, if it be 'possible for believers finally to fall away from faith and salvation,' it follows that 'faith is not peculiar to the elect,' they being the individuals concerning whom the framers of these articles assert, that *it is impossible for them not to be saved*. The reason of the consequence is, because the words FAITH and BELIEVERS, according to this hypothesis, have a wider signification than the words ELECTION and THE ELECT. The former comprehend some persons that are not elect, that is, 'some who finally fall away from faith and salvation.' No necessity, therefore, existed for composing both these articles; it was quite sufficient to have proposed one. And if the authors of them had sought for such amplification, as had no real existence, but consisted of mere words, it was possible to deduce the Second from the First in the form of a consecutory. Thus it is evident that the *multitude* of the articles, was the great object to be attempted for the purpose of making it appear as if those persons ERRED IN VERY MANY POINTS, whom the too sedulous curiosity of the brethren is desirous without cause, of rendering suspected of heresy.

I. But, to treat of each article singly, I declare, respecting THE FIRST, that I never said, either in public or in private, 'Faith is not peculiar to the elect.' This article, therefore, is not attributed to its proper author; and thus is committed a historical error.

I add, even if I had made such a declaration as this, a defense of it would have been ready. For I omit the scriptures, from which a more prolix discussion of this subject might be formed; and since the Christian Fathers have with great semblance of truth defended their sentiments from that divine source, I might employ *the consent of those Fathers* as a shield to ward off from myself the charge of NOVELTY; and *the Harmony of Confessions*, which are severally the composition of those Churches that have seceded from Popery, and that come under the denomination of 'Protestants' and 'the Reformed,' I might adopt for a polished breast-plate, to intercept or turn aside the dart of HERESY which is hurled

against me. Neither should I be much afraid of this subject being placed for adjudication in *the balances of the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism*.

1. Let St Augustine, Prosper, and the author of the book entitled *The Vocation of the Gentiles*, be brought forward to bear testimony respecting ‘the consent of the Fathers.’

a) AUGUSTINE says, ‘It is wonderful, and indeed most wonderful, that God does not bestow perseverance on certain of his sons, whom he hath regenerated in Christ, and to whom he has given faith, hope and love; while he pardons such great acts of wickedness in sons that are alienated from him, and, by imparting his grace, makes them his children’ (*De Corrept. et Gratiâ*, cap. 8).

b) PROSPER says, ‘It is a lamentable circumstance which is proved by many examples, that some of those persons who were regenerated in Christ Jesus, have relinquished the faith, and, ceasing to preserve their former sanctity of manners, have apostatized from God, and their ungodly course has been terminated under his displeasure and aversion’ (*Ad Capita Gal.* resp. 7).

c) The author of *The Vocation of the Gentiles* says, ‘God bestows *the power of willing* to obey him, in such a manner as not to take away, even from those who will persevere, that mutability by which it is possible for them to be unwilling [to obey God]. If this were not the case, none of the believers would have departed from the faith’ (Lib. ii, c. 9).

2. The HARMONY OF CONFESSIONS might in the following manner, contribute to my defense: This dogma states that ‘faith is the peculiar property of the elect,’ and that ‘it is impossible for believers *finally* to decline from faith and salvation.’ Now, if this be a dogma *necessary to salvation*, then that Confession which does not contain it, or which asserts some thing contradictory to it, cannot be considered as harmonizing with the rest on the subject of religion. For wherever there is harmony, it is proper that there should be neither defect nor contradiction *in things pertaining to salvation*. But the Augustan or Lutheran Confession says that ‘it condemns the Anabaptists, who deny that those persons who have once been justified, can lose the Holy Spirit.’ Besides, Philip Melancthon with his followers, and the greater portion of the Lutheran Churches, are of opinion, that faith is bestowed even on the non-elect.’ Yet we are not afraid of acknowledging these Lutherans for brethren.

3. THE BELGIC CONFESSION does not contain this dogma, that ‘faith is peculiar to the elect;’ and without controversy it cannot be deduced from OUR CATECHISM. For when it is said, in the article on the Church, ‘I believe that I shall perpetually remain a member of the Church;’ and, in the first question, ‘God keeps and preserves me in such a manner, as to make all things necessarily subservient to my salvation;’ those expressions are to be understood of a believer, in reference to his actual believing. For he who is *truly such a one*, answers to the character of a *Christian*. But no man is such except through faith. Faith is therefore presupposed in both the expressions.

II. With regard to the SECOND Article, I say, that a distinction ought to be made between power and action. For it is one thing to declare, that ‘*it is possible* for the

faithful to fall away from faith and salvation,' and it is another to say, that '*they do actually* fall away.' This distinction is of such extensive observance, that even antiquity itself was not afraid of affirming, concerning the elect and those who were to be saved, 'that it was possible for them *not to be saved*;' and that 'the mutability by which it was possible for them *not to be willing to obey God*, was not taken away from them,' although it was the opinion of the ancients, 'that such persons never would in reality be damned.' On this very subject, too, the greater part of our own doctors lay down a difference. For they say, 'that it is possible for such persons to fall away, if their nature, which is inclined to lapses and defection, and if the temptations of the world and Satan, be the only circumstances taken into consideration: but that they will not *finally* fall away, because God will bring back to himself his own elect before the end of life.' If any one asserts, 'that it is not possible for believers, in consideration of their being *elect persons*, finally to fall away from salvation, because God has decreed to save them,' I answer, the decree concerning saving does not take away *the POSSIBILITY of damning*, but it removes *damnation itself*. For 'to be actually saved,' and 'a possibility of not being saved,' are two things not contrary to each other, but in perfect agreement.

I therefore add, that in this way I have hitherto discriminated these two cases. And at one time I certainly did say, with an explanation subjoined to it, 'that it was possible for believers *finally* to decline or fall away from faith and salvation.' But at no period have I asserted, 'that believers do finally decline or fall away from faith or salvation.' This article, therefore, is ascribed to one who is not its author; and it is another offense against historical veracity.

I subjoin, that there is a vast difference between the enunciation of these two sentences.

1. 'It is possible for believers to decline from the FAITH;' and
2. 'It is possible for believers to decline from SALVATION.'

For the latter, when rigidly and accurately examined, can scarcely be admitted; it being impossible for believers, as long as they remain *believers*, to decline from salvation. Because, were this possible, that power of God would be conquered which he has determined to employ in saving believers. On the other hand, if believers fall away from the faith and become unbelievers, it is impossible for them to do otherwise than decline from salvation, that is, provided they still continue unbelievers. Therefore, whether this hypothesis be granted or not, the enunciation cannot be accurately expressed:

1. For if this hypothesis (their perseverance in faith) be granted, they cannot decline; but if it be not granted, they cannot do otherwise than decline.
2. But that first enunciation includes no hypothesis; and therefore an answer may be given to it simply, either that it is possible, or that it is impossible.

For this cause, the second article ought to be corrected in the following manner: 'It is possible for believers finally to fall away or decline from the faith;' or rather, 'Some believers finally fall away and decline from the faith.' This being granted, the other can be necessarily inferred, 'therefore they also actually decline from salvation.' Respecting the truth of this [Second] article, I repeat the same observations which I made about the First. For the following expressions are reciprocal to each other, and regular consequences: 'Faith is peculiar to the elect,' and 'believers do not finally fall away from the faith.' In

*1 Articles I and II*

like manner, 'Faith is not peculiar to the elect,' and 'Some believers finally decline from the faith.'



## 2 Article III

**It is a matter of doubt, whether the faith by which Abraham is said to be justified, was a faith in Jesus Christ who was still to come. No proof can be adduced of his having understood the promises of God in any other manner, than that he should be the heir of the world.**

### Answer

There are two members in this article, or rather, those members are two distinct articles, each of which presents itself to be separately considered by us, after I have observed, that in this passage no *affirmation* or *negation*, each of which properly constitutes a heretic, is attributed to us, but *a mere doubt alone*, that betokens a consciousness of ignorance and infirmity, which those who arrogate to themselves *the knowledge of all these things*, ought to endeavour to remove by a mild course of instruction, and not to make it a subject of reviling or provocation.

1. To the FIRST MEMBER I reply:

*First.* I never uttered this expression; but have, on more occasions than one, taught both in public and private a contrary doctrine. Yet I remember, when a certain minister at Leyden had boasted of *the clearness* of this article, and was astonished how any persons could be found who entertained a different opinion about it, I told him, that the proof of it would not be a very easy occupation to him if he had to encounter a powerful adversary, and I challenged him to make a trial, which challenge I now repeat. I wish him to prove this assertion by such plain arguments, as will not leave a man just reasons for doubting any longer about the matter. This is a point on which the labours of a divine will be more profitably expended, than on publishing and magnifying *the doubts of the infirm*, whose confidence in themselves is not equal to that which he manifests.

*Secondly.* 'Faith in Christ' may be received in two acceptations. Either *according to promise*, which was involved in the types, figures and shadows of words and things, and proposed in that manner: Or, *it is according to the gospel*, that is clearly manifested. The difference between these two is so great, that with regard to it the Jews are said 'to have been detained or kept under the law before faith came, concluded or shut up unto that faith which should afterwards be revealed' (Gal. iii. 23). And the Apostle says, 'the children of Israel were prevented, by the veil placed over the countenance of Moses, from steadfastly looking to the end of that which is abolished' (2 Cor. iii. 13), that is, to the end of the law, as is evident from the whole chapter, and from Romans x. 4, where Christ is said to be 'the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' Let the whole description

of the faith of Abraham, which the Apostle gives at great length in Romans 4, be attentively considered, and it will appear, that *no express mention of Jesus Christ is made in it*, but it is implied in such a way as it is not easy for any one to explain.

Let it be added that *faith in Jesus Christ* seems to some persons to be used by *metonymy*, for ‘that faith which is concerning the types and figures which adumbrate and prefigure Jesus Christ,’ although it has not united with it an understanding of those types, unless it be a very obscure one, and such as appears suitable to the infant Church, according to the economy of the times and ages which God in his wisdom employs. Let a comparison be instituted between *that servitude* under which the heir, so long as he is a child, is said by the Apostle to be held (Gal. iv. 1–3), and *that bondage* from which the Spirit of the Lord is declared to liberate the man whose heart is converted to Him (2 Cor. iii. 16–18); and this doubting will then be considered ascribable to the proper fear of a trembling [scrupulous] conscience, rather than to a disposition that has a powerful propensity towards heresy.

2. To the SECOND MEMBER of this Article, I answer:

*First.* I never made such an assertion.

*Secondly.* If even I had, it would not have called for any deserved reprehension, except from a man that was desirous by that very act to betray at once the weakness of his judgment and his want of experience.

- a) It is a sign of a judgment *not the most accurate*, to blame any man for saying that which, it is possible to prove, has been written by the Apostle himself in so many words. For if *the heir-ship of the world* was promised to Abraham in these words, ‘*Thou shalt be the father of many nations,*’ what wonder is there if Abraham understood the promises in no other manner than as they had been divinely pronounced?
- b) It is a mark of *great inexperience* in the men who framed these articles, to suppose that *the heir-ship of the world* which was promised to Abraham, appertained to *this animal life* and to *carnal benefits*; because *the world* of which mention is made in that passage, is *that future world* to which belongs the calling of the Gentiles, by which vocation Abraham was made *the father of many nations*. This is apparent from the consideration, that he is said to have been made the heir of the world by *the righteousness of faith*, of which St Paul (Rom. iv. 13) proves the Gentiles likewise to be partakers; and in Ephes. iii. 1–11, the Apostle treats on the vocation of the Gentiles, and says, it belongs to ‘the grace of the gospel, and to the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hidden in God and is now brought to light by Christ, by whom God created all things.’ I repeat it, that vocation does not belong to the wisdom by which God formed the world, but to that by which he constituted Christ *his Wisdom and Power* to salvation to them that believe; and by which he founded the Church, which will endure forever. See 1 Corinthians i. 21–23; ii. 6–8; Ephes. iii. 1–11. If the forgers of this article say, ‘that they have likewise perceived this, but had supposed that my opinion was different;’ I reply, it is not the part of a prudent man to frame a foolish adversary for himself.

## 3 Article IV

**Faith is not an effect of election, but is a necessary requisite foreseen by God in those who are to be elected. And the decree concerning the bestowing of faith precedes the decree of election.**

### Answer

Of this article also there are two entire members:

#### 3.0.0.1 I.

In the FIRST of them, three assertions are included.

1. 'Faith is not an effect of election.'
2. 'Faith is a necessary requisite in those who are to be elected or saved.'
3. 'This requisite is foreseen by God in the persons to be elected.'

I confess, all these, when rightly understood and correctly explained, agree entirely with my opinion, on the subject. But the last of the members is proposed in terms too odious, since it makes no mention of God, whose benefit and gift I acknowledge faith to be.

I will now proceed to explain myself on each of these assertions:

1. With regard to the FIRST, the word 'Election' is ambiguous. For it either signifies 'the election by which God determines to justify believers, while those who are *unbelievers* or *workers* are rejected from righteousness and salvation: 'Or it signifies 'the election by which he determines to save *certain particular persons*, as such, and to bestow faith on them in order to their salvation, other particular persons being also rejected, merely in reference to their being such particular individuals.' Election is received according to this latter signification, by those who charge me with these articles. I take it in the former acceptation, according to Romans ix. 11: 'For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her, *The elder shall serve the younger.*' I will not now enter into a prolix disputation, whether or not the sense in which I receive it, be the correct one. It is evident, at least, that there is some decree of God by which he determines to justify believers; and which, since it excludes unbelievers from righteousness and salvation, is appropriately called 'the decree according to election' or 'with election,' as being that which does not include all men within its embrace. This decree I consider as *the foundation of Christianity, of man's salvation, and of his assurance of salvation;*

and it is this of which the Apostle treats in the ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, and in the first chapter to the Ephesians.

But I have not yet declared what my sentiments in general are about that decree by which God is said ‘to have determined absolutely to save certain particular persons, and to bestow faith upon them in order to their salvation, while others are reprobated from salvation and faith;’ although I have confessed, that there is a certain decree of God, according to which he determines to administer the means to faith and salvation, as he knows them to be suitable and proper to his righteousness, mercy and severity. From these premises it is deduced as a most manifest consequence, that faith is not an effect of that election by which God determines to justify those who believe.

2. With regard to the SECOND assertion, from the particulars thus explained it is concluded, that ‘*faith is a necessary requisite* in those who shall be partakers of salvation according to the election of God ;’ or, that ‘*it is a condition prescribed and required by God,* to be performed by those who shall obtain his salvation.’ ‘This is the will of God, that whosoever believeth in the Son hath eternal life; he that believeth not, shall be condemned.’ The propositions contained in this passage cannot be resolved into any other than this brief one, which is likewise used in the Scripture, ‘Believe, and thou shalt be saved.’ In which the word ‘believe’ has the force of a demand or requirement; and the phrase ‘thou shalt be saved’ has that of a suasion, by means of a good that is promised. This truth is so clear and perspicuous, that the denial of it would be a proof of great perversity or of extreme unskilfulness. If any one say, ‘It is a *condition*, but yet an *evangelical one*, which God may himself perform in us, or, (as it is better expressed), which he may by his grace cause us to perform; ‘the man who speaks thus, does not contradict this truth, but confirms it when he adds this explanation, ‘of what description soever that condition may be.’
3. With regard to the THIRD, I say that we must distinguish between the condition by which it is *required*, that by which it is *performed*, and that by which it is *seen* or *foreseen as performed*. This third member, therefore, is proposed in a manner much too confused. Yet, when this confusion is corrected by the distinction which we have stated, nothing of absurdity will be apparent even in that member. Because *foreseeing* or *seeing*, in the very nature and order of things follows the performance itself; the performance has its own causes into which it is to be resolved; and the efficiency of those causes is not necessary, unless faith be prescribed and required by the law of faith and the gospel. Since therefore faith is said ‘to be foreseen by God in those who are to be saved,’ those causes, without the intervention of which there could be no faith, are not removed, but are rather appointed. Among those causes, I consider the preventing, accompanying and succeeding [subsequent] grace of God, as the principal. And I say, with Fulgentius, ‘Those persons will be saved, or they have been predestinated and elected, who, God foreknew, would believe by the assistance of his preventing grace, (I add *and of his accompanying grace*), and would persevere by the aid of his subsequent grace.’ In this first member, then, there is nothing except truth of the greatest purity.

### 3.0.0.2 II.

The SECOND member is, ‘The decree concerning the gift of faith, precedes the decree of election;’ in the explanation of which I employ the same distinction as in the former, and say, ‘The decree of election, by which God determines to justify and save believers, precedes the decree concerning the bestowment of faith.’ For faith is unnecessary, nay it is useless, without this previous decree. And the decree of election, by which God resolves to justify and save this or that particular person, is subsequent to that decree according to which he determines to administer the means necessary and efficacious to faith, that is, the decree concerning the gift of faith.

If any one says, ‘God wills first absolutely to save some particular person; and, since he wills that, he also wills to bestow faith on him, because without faith, it is not possible for him to be saved.’ I tell him, that he lays down contradictory propositions — that ‘God wills absolutely to save some one *without regard to faith,*’ and yet that, ‘according to the will of God, he cannot be saved *without faith.*’ Through the will of God it has been revealed to us, *Without faith it is impossible for any man to please God,* or to be saved. There is, therefore, in God no other will, by which he wills any one *to be absolutely saved without consideration of faith.* For contradictory wills cannot be attributed to God.

If any person replies, ‘God wills the end before he wills the means leading to the end; but salvation is the end, and faith the means leading to the end,’ I answer, *First,* Salvation is not the end of God; but salvation and faith are the gifts of God, bound and connected together in this order between themselves through the will of God, that faith should precede salvation, both with regard to God, the donor of it; and in reality. *Secondly.* Faith is a CONDITION required by God to be performed by him who shall be saved, before it is A MEANS of obtaining that salvation. Since God will not bestow salvation on any one, except on him who believes, man is on this account incited to be willing to believe, because he knows that his chief good is placed in salvation. Man, therefore, tried by faith, as the means, to attain to salvation as the end; because he knows that he cannot possibly obtain salvation except through that means. And this knowledge he does not acquire except through the declaration of the divine Will, by which God requires faith from those who wish to be saved, that is, by which he places faith as a CONDITION in the object, that is, in the person to be saved.



## 4 Article V

**Naught among things contingent can be said to be necessarily done in respect to the Divine decree.**

### Answer

My opinion concerning Necessity and Contingency is ‘that they can never be applicable at once to one and the same event.’ But I speak of the necessity and contingency that are both of the same kind, not those which are different in their genus. The schoolmen state, that there is one *necessitas consequentis* [an absolute necessity], and another, *necessitas consequentiae* [a hypothetical necessity]. The former is, when the necessity arises from *a cause antecedent to the thing itself*. But *necessitas consequentiae* — a hypothetical necessity — arises from *certain premises, [or principles], antecedent to the conclusion*. A *consequent* [or absolute], *contingency* cannot consist with a *consequent* [or absolute], *necessity*; nor can they meet together in one event. In the same manner, one *conclusion* cannot be both necessary and contingent in regard to its consequence; [that is, it cannot have, at the same time, a necessity and a contingency that are *hypothetical*]. But the cause why one thing cannot be necessary and contingent at the same time, is this ‘that what is necessary, and what is contingent, divide the whole amplitude of being. For every being is either necessary or contingent. But those things which divide the whole of being, cannot coincide or meet together in any single being. Otherwise they would not divide the whole range of being. What is contingent, and what is necessary, likewise, differ in their entire essences and in the whole of their definition. For that is *necessary* which *cannot* possibly not be or not be done. And that is *contingent* which *is possible* not to be or to be done. Thus contradictorily are they opposed to each other; and this opposition is infinite, and, therefore, always dividing truth from falsehood: as, ‘this thing is either *a man* or it is *not a man*,’ it is not possible for any thing to be both of these at once — that is, it is impossible for any thing *of one essence*. Otherwise, [in another sense], ‘Christ is *a man*,’ as proceeding from his mother, Mary; ‘he is *not a man*,’ in reference to his having been begotten of the Father from all eternity; but these are two things and two natures.

But they say: ‘It is possible for one and the same event to be necessary and contingent in different respects

- *necessary* with regard to the First Cause, which is God
- and *contingent* in respect to second causes.’

I answer,

- FIRST. Those things which differ in their entire essences, do not coincide in respects.

- SECONDLY. The necessity or contingency of an event is to be estimated, not from one cause, but from all the causes united together.

For after ten causes have been fixed, from which a thing is produced, not *necessarily* but *contingently*, if one be added from which the thing may be *necessarily* completed, the whole of that thing is said to have been done *not contingently* but *necessarily*. Because, when all these causes were together appointed, it was impossible for that thing to hinder itself from being produced, and from being brought into existence. That thing, I confess indeed, when distinctly compared by our mind with each of its causes, has a different relation to them respectively. But since none of those causes is *the total cause* of that event, and since all of them united together form *the total cause*, the thing ought itself to be accounted and declared to have been done from that total cause, either *necessarily* or *contingently*.

It is not only a rash saying, but a false and an ignorant one, ‘that a thing which, in regard to second causes, is done *contingently* is said to be done *necessarily* in regard to the divine decree.’ For the divine decree itself, being an internal action of God, is not immediately the cause of the thing; but, whatever effects it may produce, it performs them by power, according to the mode of which a thing will be said to be either *necessarily* or *contingently*. For if God resolve to use an irresistible power in the execution of his decree, or if he determine to employ such a quantum of power as nothing can resist or can hinder it from completing his purpose, it will follow that the thing will *necessarily* be brought into existence. Thus, ‘wicked men who persevere in their sins, will *necessarily* perish,’ for God will by an irresistible force, cast them down into the depths of hell. But if he resolve to use a force that is not irresistible, but that can be resisted by the creature, then that thing is said to be done, *not necessarily* but *contingently*, although its actual occurrence was certainly foreknown by God, according to the infinity of his understanding, by which he knows all results whatever, that will arise from certain causes which are laid down, and whether those causes produce a thing necessarily or contingently. From whence the school-men say that ‘all things are done by *a necessity of infallibility*,’ which phrase is used in a determinate sense, although the words in which its enunciation is expressed are ill-chosen. For infallibility is not an affection of a being, which exists from causes; but it is an affection of a Mind that sees or that foresees what will be the effect of certain causes. But I readily endure a catachrestic metalepsis, when it is evident concerning a thing, although it is my wish that our enunciations were always the best accommodated to the natures of the things themselves.

But the inventors of these articles try to prove by the examples which they produce, that ‘one and the same thing, which, with respect to SECOND CAUSES, is done *contingently*, is, in respect to the DIVINE DECREE, done *necessarily*.’ They say ‘It was possible for the bones of Christ *to be broken*, or *not to be broken*. It was possible for them *to be broken*, if any person considers the nature of bones; for they were undoubtedly fragile. But they could *not be broken*, if the decree of God be taken into the account.’ In answer to this, I deny that *in respect of the DIVINE DECREE, they could not be broken*. For God did not decree that it was IMPOSSIBLE *for them to be broken*, but that they *should not be broken*. This is apparent from the manner in which the transaction was actually conducted. For God did not employ *an irresistible power* by which he might prevent the bones of Christ from being broken by those who approached to break them; but by a mild kind of suasion, he caused that they should not will to break the bones of Christ, by an argument drawn



from its inutility. For, since Christ had already given up the ghost, before those who broke the legs had arrived at the cross, they were not at all inclined to undertake a vain and fruitless labour in breaking the legs of our saviour. Because the breaking of legs, with the design to hasten death, was only done lest the bodies should remain suspended on the cross on a festival or sacred day, contrary to the divine law. Indeed, if the divine Wisdom knows how to effect that which it has decreed, by employing causes according to their nature and motion — whether their nature and motion be contingent or free, the praise due to such Wisdom is far greater than if it employ a power which no creature can possibly resist. Although God can employ such a power whensoever it may seem expedient to his Wisdom. I am therefore, of opinion that I committed no offense when I said, ‘No contingent thing — that is, nothing which is done or has been done CONTINGENTLY — can be said to be or have been done NECESSARILY, *with regard to the divine decree.*’



## 5 Article VI

**All things are done contingently.**

### **Answer**

This Article is expressed in such a stupid and senseless manner, that they who attribute it to me, declare by this very circumstance, that they do not perceive under how many falsities this expression labours; nay, they do not understand what is the meaning of the words which they employ. For if that is said to be done *contingently* which it is possible *not to do*, [or which *may not be done*], after all the causes required for its being done have been fixed; and, on the other hand, if that is said to be done *necessarily* [which *cannot but be done*] which cannot but be done-after all the causes required for its performance have been fixed; and if I grant, that, after some causes have been fixed, it is impossible for any other event to ensue than *that the thing should be done and exist*, how then can I be of opinion that 'all things are done, or happen, contingently?' But they have deceived themselves by their own ignorance; from which it would be possible for them to be liberated, if they would bestow a becoming and proper attention on sentiments that are more correct, and would in a friendly manner obtain from the author a knowledge of his views and opinions.

I have both declared and taught that 'necessity, in reference to its being said *to be* or *to happen necessarily*, is either absolute or relative.' It is an *absolute* necessity, in relation to a thing being said simply 'to be or to happen *necessarily*,' without any regard being had to the supposition, [or laying down], of any cause whatever. It is a relative *necessity*, when a thing is said 'to be or to happen necessarily,' after some cause had been laid down or fixed. Thus, God exists by an *absolute* necessity; and by the same absolute necessity, he both understands and loves himself. But the world, and all things produced from it, are, according to an *absolute* consideration, *contingent*, and are produced contingently by God, freely operating. But it being granted that God wills to form the world by his infinite power, to which NOTHING ITSELF must be equal to *matter in the most perfect state of preparation* — and it being likewise granted that God actually employs this power — it will then be said, 'It was impossible for the world to do otherwise than exist from this cause;' [or, 'From this cause, *the world could not but exist*']. And this is a *relative* necessity, which is so called from the hypothesis of an antecedent cause being laid down or fixed.

I will explain my meaning in a different manner. Two things in this place come under our consideration, the CAUSE and the EFFECT. If both of them be necessarily fixed, that is, if not only the effect be fixed necessarily when the cause fixed, but if the cause also necessarily exist and be necessarily supposed to operate, the necessity of the effect is in

that case *simple* and *absolute*. In this manner arises the *absolute* necessity of the Divine effect, by which God is said to know and love himself; for the Divine understanding and the Divine will cannot be inoperative, [cannot but operate]. This operation of God is not only an internal one, but it is also *ad intra*, [inwards], tending towards an object, which is himself. But whatever God may do *ad extra*, [externally], that is, when acting on an object which is something beside himself, [or something different from himself], whether this object be united to him in understanding and he tend towards it by *an internal act*, or whether it be in reality separated from him and towards which he tends by *an external act*, the whole of this he does freely, and the whole of it is, therefore, said to be *absolutely contingent*. Thus God *freely* decreed to form the world, and did *freely* form it. And, in this sense, *all things are done contingently in respect to the Divine decree*; because no necessity exists why the decree of God should be appointed, since it proceeds from his own pure and free [or unconstrained] will.

Or, to express it in another form: That is called the *simple* and *absolute* necessity of any effect, ‘when the cause necessarily exists, necessarily operates, and employs that power through which *it is impossible for the thing not to exist*,’ [or through which it *cannot but exist*]. In the nature of things, such an effect as this cannot be contemplated. For the intellect of the Deity, by which he understands himself, proceeds from a cause that necessarily exists and that necessarily understands itself; but it does not proceed from a cause which employs a power of action for such an understanding.

Under this consideration, the *relative* necessity of any event is two-fold.

- FIRST. When a cause that necessarily exists, but does not necessarily operate, uses a power of action that cannot be resisted. Thus it being fixed, that ‘God, who is a *Necessary Being*, wills to create a world by his omnipotence,’ a world must in that case necessarily come into existence.
- SECONDLY. When a cause that does not necessarily exist and yet necessarily operates, acts with such efficacy as is impossible to be resisted by the matter or subject on which it operates. Thus, straw is said to be *necessarily* burnt [or consumed] by the fire, if it be cast into the flame. Because it is impossible either for the fire to restrain its power of burning so as not actually to burn, or for the straw to resist the fire. But because God can prevent the fire from burning any combustible matter that is brought near it or put into it, this kind of necessity is called *partial* in respect to the cause, and only according to the nature of the things themselves and the mutual affection [or relation] between them.

When these matters have been thus explained, I could wish to see what can possibly be said in opposition. I am desirous, that we should in preference contend FOR THE NECESSITY OF GOD ALONE, that is, for his necessary existence and for the necessary production of his *ad intra* [internal] acts, and that we should contend for the CONTINGENCY OF ALL OTHER THINGS AND EFFECTS. Such a procedure on our part would conduce far more to the glory of God; to whom by this method would be attributed both the GLORY *of his necessary existence*, that is, *of his eternity*, according to which it is a pure act without [the exercise of] power, and the GLORY *of his free creation of all other things*, by which also his goodness becomes a supreme object of our commendation.

## 6 Article VII

**God has not by his eternal decree determined future and contingent things to the one part or the other.**

### Answer

A calumny which lies concealed under ambiguous terms, is capable of inflicting a deep injury with the greatest security; but after such equivocal expressions are explained, the slander is exposed, and loses all its force among men of skill and experience.

The word 'DETERMINED' is of this ambiguous description. For it signifies

1. either 'the determination of God by which he resolves that something shall be done; and when such a determination is fixed, (by an action, motion and impulse of God, of whatever kind it may be), the second cause, both with regard to its power and the use of that power, remains *free* either *to act* or *not to act*, so that, if it be the pleasure of this second cause, it *can suspend* [or defer] *its own action*.' Or it signifies
2. 'such a determination, as, when once it is fixed, the second cause (at least in regard to *the use of its power*), remains no longer free so as to be able to suspend its own action, when God's action, motion and impulse have been fixed; but by this determination, it [the second cause] is necessarily bent or inclined to the one course or the other, all *indifference to either part* being completely removed before this determined act be produced by a free and unconstrained creature.'

1. If the word 'DETERMINED,' in the article here proposed, be interpreted according to this first method, far be it from me to deny such a sort of Divine determination. For I am aware that it is said, in the fourth chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*, 'Both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together against Jesus, to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel *determined before* (or previously appointed) to be done.' But I also know, that Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the Jews, *freely* performed those very actions; and (notwithstanding this 'fore-determination of God,' and though by his power every Divine action, motion and impulse which was necessary for the execution of this 'fore-determination,' were all fixed), yet it was possible for this act (the crucifixion of Christ), which had been 'previously appointed' by God, not to be produced by those persons, and they might have remained free and indifferent to the performance of this action, up to the moment of time in which they perpetrated the deed. Let the narrative of the passion of our Lord be perused, and let it be observed how the whole matter was conducted, by what arguments Herod, Pontius Pilate and the Jews were moved and

induced, and the kind of administration [or management] that was employed in the use of those arguments, and it will then be evident, that it is the truth which I here assert.

2. But if the word ‘DETERMINED’ be received according to the second acceptance, I confess, that I abominate and detest that axiom (as one that is FALSE, ABSURD, and preparing the way for MANY BLASPHEMIES), which, declares that ‘God by his eternal decree has determined to the one part or to the other *future contingent things*.’ By this last phrase understand ‘those things which are performed by the free will of the creature.’

- a) I execrate it as a FALSEHOOD: Because God in the administration of his Providence conducts all things in such a manner that when he is pleased to employ his creatures in the execution of his decrees, he does not take away from them their nature, natural properties or the use of them, but allows them to perform and complete their own proper motions. Were it otherwise, Divine Providence, which ought to be accommodated to the creation, would be in direct opposition.
- b) I detest it as AN ABSURDITY: Because it is contradictory in the adjunct, that ‘something is done *contingently*,’ that is, it is done in such a manner as makes *it* POSSIBLE *not to be done*; and yet this same thing is determined to the one part or the other in such a manner, as makes *it* IMPOSSIBLE *to leave undone* that which has been determined to be done. What the patrons of such a doctrine advance about ‘that liberty not being taken away which belongs to the nature of the creature,’ is not sufficient to destroy this contradiction:

Because it is not sufficient for the establishment of contingency and liberty to have the presence of a power which can freely act according to nature; but it is requisite that the use and employment of that power and liberty should on no account be impeded. What insanity therefore is it, [according to the scheme of these men], to confer at the creation a power on the creature *of acting freely or of suspending its action*, and yet to take away the use of such a power when the liberty comes at length to be employed. That is, to grant it when there is no use for it, but when it becomes both useful and necessary, then in the very act to prevent the exercise of its liberty. Let Tertullian against Marcion be examined, (lib. ii. c. 5, 6, 7) where he discusses this matter in a most erudite and nervous manner. I yield my full assent to all that he advances.

- c) I abhor it as CONDUCTING TO MULTIPLIED BLASPHEMIES. For I consider it impossible for any art or sophistry to prevent this dogma concerning ‘such a previous determination’ from producing the following consequences:
- FIRST. It makes God to be the author of sin, and man to be exempt from blame.
  - SECONDLY. It constitutes God as the real, proper and only sinner: Because when there is a fixed law which forbids this act, and when there is such ‘a fore-determination’ as makes it ‘impossible for this act not to be committed,’ it follows as a natural consequence, that it is God himself who transgresses the law, since he is the person who performs this

deed against the law. For though this be immediately perpetrated by the creature, yet, with regard to it, the creature cannot have any consideration of sin; because this act was unavoidable on the part of man, after such 'fore-determination' had been fixed.

- THIRDLY. Because, according to this dogma, God needed sinful man and his sin, for the illustration of his justice and mercy.
- FOURTHLY. And, from its terms, sin is no longer sin.

I never yet saw a refutation of those consequences which have been deduced from this dogma by some other persons. I wish such a refutation was prepared, at least that it would be seriously attempted. When it is completed, if I am not able to demonstrate, even then, that these objections of mine are not removed, I will own myself to be vanquished, and will ask pardon for my offense. Although I am not accustomed to charge and oppress this sentiment [of theirs] with such consequences before other people, yet I usually confess this single circumstance, (and this, only when urged by necessity), that 'I cannot possibly free their opinion from those objections.'





## 7 Article VIII

**Sufficient grace of the Holy Spirit is bestowed on those to whom the gospel is preached, whosoever they may be; so that, if they will, they may believe: otherwise, God would only be mocking mankind.**

### Answer

At no time, either in public or in private, have I delivered this proposition in these words, or in any expressions that were of equivalent force, or that conveyed a similar meaning. This assertion I confidently make, even though a great number of persons might bear a contrary testimony. Because, unless this Article received a modified explanation, I neither approve of it at present, nor has it at any time obtained any portion of my approval. Of this fact it is in my power to afford evidence, from written conferences which I have had with other people on the same subject.

In this Article there are three topics concerning which I am desirous of giving a suitable explanation.

#### **7.0.0.3 First. Concerning the difference which subsists among the persons to whom the gospel is preached.**

Frequent mention of this difference is made in the scriptures, and particularly in the following passages. ‘I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things *from the wise and prudent*, and hast revealed them *unto babes*’ (Matt. xi. 25). ‘The explanation of these words may be discovered in 1 Corinthians 1 and 2. ‘Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into a house, salute it. And *if the house be worthy*, let your peace come upon it; but, *if it be not worthy*, let your peace return to you’ (Matt. x. 11–13).

The Jews of Berea ‘were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind,’ etc. (Acts xvii. 11). ‘Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you; and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men. For all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, etc.’ (2 Thess. iii. 1, 2).

#### **7.0.0.4 Secondly. Concerning the bestowing of sufficient grace,**

— what is to be understood by such a gift? It is well known, that there is *habitual grace*, and [the grace of] *assistance*. Now the phraseology of the article might be understood

according to this acceptance, as though some kind of *habitual grace* were infused into all those to whom the gospel is preached, which would render them *apt* [or *inclined*] to give it credence, or believe the gospel. But this interpretation of the phrase is one of which I do not approve. But this SUFFICIENCY, after all that is said about it, must, in my opinion, be ascribed to *the assistance of the Holy Spirit*, by which he assists the preaching of the gospel, as the organ, or instrument, by which He, the Holy Spirit, is accustomed to be efficacious in the hearts of the hearers. But it is possible to explain this operation of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, in a manner so modified and appropriate, and such *sufficiency* may be ascribed to it, as to keep at the greatest possible distance from Pelagianism.

**7.0.0.5 Thirdly. Concerning the expression, 'By this grace they may believe, if they will.'**

These words, when delivered in such a crude and undigested form, are capable of being brought to bear a very bad interpretation, and a meaning not at all agreeable to the scriptures, as though, after that power had been bestowed, the Holy Spirit and Divine Grace remain entirely quiescent, waiting to see whether the man will properly use the power which he has received, and will believe the gospel. When, on the contrary, he who wishes to entertain and to utter correct sentiments on this subject, will account it necessary to ascribe to Grace its own province, which, indeed, is the principal one, in persuading the human will that it may be inclined to yield assent to those truths which are preached.

This exposition completely frees me from the slightest suspicion of heresy on the point here mentioned; and proves it to be a report not entitled to the least credit, *that I have employed such expressions*, as I am unwilling to admit, except with the addition of a sound and proper explanation.

In reference to the REASON which is appended to this proposition, that, *otherwise, God would only be mocking mankind*, I confess it to be a remark which several adversaries employ against the opinion entertained by many of our divines, to convict it of absurdity. And it is not used without just cause, which might easily have been demonstrated, had it pleased the inventors of these Articles, (instead of ascribing them to me), to occupy themselves in openly declaring on this subject their own sentiments, which they keep carefully concealed within their own bosoms.

## 8 Article IX

**The temporal afflictions of believers are not correctly termed ‘chastisements,’ but are punishments for sins. For Christ has rendered satisfaction only for eternal punishments.**

### Answer

This Article is attributed to me by a double and most flagrant falsehood: the first of which will be found in *the Article itself*, and the second in *the Reason appended*.

1. Concerning the FIRST. Those who are mere novices in Divinity know that the afflictions and calamities of this animal life, are either *punishments*, *chastisements*, or *trials*. That is, in sending them, God either intends punishment for sins, in regard to their having been already committed, and without any other consideration; or, He intends *chastisement*, that those who are the subjects of it may not afterwards fall into the commission of other or similar offenses; or, in sending afflictions and calamities, God purposes *to try* the faith, hope, charity, patience, and the like conspicuous virtues and graces of his people. What man would be so silly as to say, when the Apostles were called before the Jewish Council, and were beaten with rods, that ‘it was a PUNISHMENT!’ although ‘they departed from the presence of the Council, REJOICING that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name’ (Acts v. 41). Is not the following expression of the Apostle familiar to every one? ‘For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, Παιδευομεθα, we are CHASTENED (reproved and instructed), OF THE LORD, that we should not be condemned with the world’ (1 Cor. xi. 30–32). By not reflecting on these and similar passages of scripture, the persons who attributed these articles to me betrayed their *ignorance*, as well as their *audacity*. If they had bestowed the least reflection upon such texts, by what strange infatuation of mind has it happened, that they ascribe to me a sentiment which is thus confuted by plain and obvious quotations from the word of God?

On one occasion, when the subject of discussion was — *the calamities inflicted on the house of David on account of criminal conduct towards Uriah*; — and when the passages of scripture which were adduced tended with great semblance of truth to prove, that those *calamities* bore some relation to PUNISHMENT, I stated, that ‘no necessity whatever existed for as to allow ourselves to be brought into such straits by our adversaries the Papists, from which we could with difficulty escape; since the words appear to make against the opinion which asserts that *they have by no means any reference to punishment*. And because sin merits both an eternal

punishment corresponding with its grievous enormity, and a temporal punishment, (if indeed God be pleased to inflict the latter, which is not always his practice even with respect to those who persevere in their transgressions, as may be seen in Psalm lxxiii and Job xxi), it might, not unseasonably, be said, that, after God has pardoned the guilt so far as it is meritorious of *eternal* punishment, he reserves or retains it in reference to *temporal* punishment.’ And I shewed, that, ‘from these premises, no patronage could be obtained for the Popish dogma of a *Purgatory*,’ which was the subject of that discussion.

2. With regard to the REASON appended, it is supported by the same criminal falsehood as the preceding part of the Article, and with no less absurdity of object, as I will demonstrate. For I affirm, in the first place, that this expression at no time escaped from my lips, and that such a thought never entered my imagination. My opinion on this subject is, ‘Christ is our Redeemer and saviour from sins, which merit both temporal and eternal death; and He delivers us not only from death *eternal*, but from death *temporal*, which is the separation of the soul from the body.’ But it is amazing, that this opinion [ ‘Christ has rendered satisfaction for *temporal* punishments alone’], could possibly have been attributed to me by men of discretion, when the scriptures expressly declare, ‘Christ was also a partaker of flesh and blood, that, through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil’ (Heb. ii. 14). By the term DEATH in this place must be understood either ‘the death of the body alone,’ or ‘that in conjunction with eternal death. ‘The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil’ (1 John iii. 8). And among those *works* to be destroyed, we must reckon *death temporal*. For ‘by the envy of the devil, death entered into the world.’ In another passage it is said, ‘For since by man came death, by MAN came also the resurrection of the dead;’ this man is Christ (1 Cor. xv. 21). ‘Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself’ (Phil. iii. 21). The greatest necessity exists for that man to become conversant with the scriptures, who denies, that ‘*by the death of Christ* we are redeemed from *temporal death*, and obtain a right and title to a happy resurrection.’

The following is an affirmation which I have made: ‘We are not actually delivered from temporal death, except by *the resurrection from the dead*, through which our last enemy, death, will be destroyed. These two truths, therefore, are, in my judgment, to be considered and taught,

1. Christ, by his death, immediately took away from death the authority or right which he had over us, that of detaining us under his power, even as *it was not possible that Christ himself should be holden by the bonds [pains] of death* (Acts ii. 24). But
2. Christ will in his own time deliver us from its actual dominion, according to the administration or appointment of God, whose pleasure it is to concede to the soul an early period of liberation, and to the body one that is later.

But, I confess, that I cannot with an unwavering conscience assert, and therefore, dare not do it as if it were an object of certain knowledge, that temporal death, which is imposed or inflicted on the saints, *is not a punishment*, or has no regard to punishment,’ when it is styled ‘an ENEMY that is to be destroyed’ by the Omnipotence of Christ.

The contrary opinion to this is not proved by the argument, that ‘our corporeal death is a passage into eternal life:’ because it is a passage of the *soul*, and not of the *body*; the latter of which, while it remains buried in the earth, is held under the dominion of death. Nor is it established by the remark that ‘*the saints long for the death of the body*’ (Phil. i. 21, 23). For when they ‘have a desire to be dissolved [to depart] and be with Christ,’ that desire is according to the soul; the body in the mean time remaining under the dominion of death its enemy, until it likewise, (after being again united to its own soul), be glorified with it. The address of Christ to Peter may also be stated in opposition: ‘*When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wilt not.* This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God’ (John xxi. 19).

The framers of these articles, therefore, have imputed this opinion to me, not only without truth, but without a sufficient sanction from their own discretion. Of this weakness of their judgment I observe, in this Article, other two tokens:

FIRST. They do not distinguish between the magnitude of each error in a proper manner. For he falls into a far greater error who DENIES, that ‘Christ has rendered satisfaction for corporeal punishments,’ that is, *for the punishment of death temporal*, than is his who ASSENTS, that ‘the death of the body has regard to punishment, since it is inflicted even on holy persons.’ But they have placed *the latter error* as the proposition; and *the former one* is brought, as a reason, for its confirmation. When they ought to have adopted an opposite mode of stating them, according to the relative estimate of each of these errors thus, ‘Christ has rendered satisfaction for eternal punishment alone. Therefore, the *temporal afflictions* of believers are not correctly called *chastisements*, but are *punishments* for sins.’

SECONDLY. Because they make me employ an argument, which I cannot discover to be possessed of any force towards proving the proposition. For I grant, that Christ has rendered satisfaction even for *temporal punishments*; and yet I say, ‘It may likewise be true that *temporal death* has a reference to PUNISHMENT, even when it is inflicted on believers.’

THIRDLY. From these considerations, a Third Mark of an inconstant and wavering judgment discovers itself. For when they employ this mode of argumentation,

- ‘Christ has liberated us from temporal punishments.
- Therefore our death cannot have any respect to punishment,’

they do not perceive that I might with equal facility draw from the same premises the following conclusion,

- ‘Therefore, it is not equitable that the saints should die a temporal death.’

My method of reasoning is [direct] *a re ad rem*, from subject to subject,

- ‘Because Christ has borne the death of the body, it is not to be borne by us.’

Their method is [relative] *a re ad respectum rei*, from the subject to its relation, thus,

- ‘Because Christ has borne the death of the body, it is indeed inflicted on us, but not so as to have any reference to punishment.’

8 *Article IX*

God will himself approve and verify this argument a re ad rem, from subject to subject, by the effect which He will give to it at some future period. But the argument will be prepared and stated in a legitimate form, thus, 'Christ has borne the death of the body; and, (secondly), has taken it away, which fact is apparent from his resurrection. Therefore, God will take away death from us in his own good time.'

## 9 Article X

**It cannot be proved from Scripture, that believers under the Old Testament, before the ascension of Christ, were in Heaven.**

### Answer

I never taught such a doctrine as this in public, and I never asserted it affirmatively in private. I recollect, however, that I said, on one occasion, to a minister of God's word, in reference to a sermon which he had then delivered, 'there are many passages of Scripture which seem to prove, that believers under the Old Testament, before the ascension of Christ, were not in Heaven.' I produced some of those passages, against which he had little to object. But I added, that I thought it could not now be propounded with much usefulness to any church [*sic habenti*] that held a contrary opinion; but that, after it has been diligently examined and found to be true, it may be taught with profit to the church and to the glory of Christ, when the minds of men have been duly prepared. I am still of the same opinion. But, about the matter itself, I affirm nothing on either side. I perceive that each of these views of the subject has arguments in its favour, not only in passages of scripture and in conclusions deduced from them, but likewise in the sentiments of divines. Having investigated all of them to the best of my ability, I confess that I hesitate, and declare that neither view seems to me to be very evident [or to have the preponderance.] In this opinion I have the assent of a vast majority of divines, especially those of our own age. Most of the Christian Fathers place the souls of the Patriarchs under the Old Testament beyond or out of Heaven, either in the lower regions, in Purgatory, or in some other place, which yet is situated out of the verge of what is properly called Heaven<sup>1</sup>. With St Augustine, therefore, 'I prefer doubting about secret things, to litigation about those which are uncertain.' Nor is there the least necessity. For why should I, in these our days, when Christ, by his ascension into Heaven, having become our Forerunner, hath opened for us a way and entrance into that holy place, why should I now contend about the place in which the souls of the Fathers rested in the times of the Old Testament?

But lest, as is usual in my case, a calumnious report should be raised on the consequences to be deduced from this opinion, as though I was favourable to the Popish dogma of a Purgatory, or as though I approach nearly to those who think that the souls of the dead sleep or have slept, or, which is the worst of all, as though I seem to identify myself with those who say, 'the Fathers were like swine that were fed and fattened without any hope of a better life,' — lest such reports as these should be fabricated, I will openly declare what my opinion is about the state of the Fathers prior to Christ's ascension into Heaven.

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<sup>1</sup>See Hilary on Psalms ii. and cii.; and Tertullian in his 4th book *Against Marcion*, also in his book *Concerning the Son*.

1. I believe that human souls are immortal, that is, they will never die.
2. From this I deduce, that souls do not sleep.
3. That, after this life, a state of felicity or of misery is opened for all men, into the one or the other of which they enter immediately on their departure out of this world.
4. That the souls of the Fathers, who passed their days of sojourning on earth in faith and in [*expectatione*] waiting for the Redeemer, departed into a place of quiet, joy, and blessedness, and began to enjoy the blissful presence of God, as soon as they escaped out of the body.
5. I dare not venture to determine where that place of quiet is situated, whether in Heaven, properly so called, into which Christ ascended, or somewhere out of it. If any other person be more adventurous on this subject, I think he ought to be required to produce reasons for his opinion, or be enjoined to keep silence.
6. I add, that, in my opinion, the felicity of those souls was much increased by the ascension of Christ into Heaven, and that it will be fully consummated after the resurrection of the body, and when all the members of the Church universal are introduced into Heaven.

I know certain passages of Scripture which are produced, as proofs that the souls of the Old Testament Saints have been in Heaven.

1. 'The spirit shall return unto God who gave it' (Eccl. xii. 7). But this expression must either be understood in reference to all the spirits of men of every description, and thus will afford no assistance to this argument; or, if it be understood as relating to the souls of good men alone, it does not even then follow, that, because 'the spirit returns unto God,' it ascends into Heaven property so called. I prefer, however, the former mode of interpretation, a return to God the Creator and the Preserver of spirits, and the Judge of the deeds done in the body.
2. Enoch is said to have been taken to God, (Gen. v. 24) and Elijah to have ascended by a whirlwind into Heaven (2 Kings ii. 11). But, beside the fact of these examples being out of the common order, it does not follow of course that because Enoch was taken to God, he was translated into the highest heaven. For the word 'Heaven' is very wide in its signification. The same observation applies to Elijah. See *Peter Martyr* and *Vatablus* on 2 Kings ii. 13.
3. 'Christ is now become the first fruits of them that slept' (1 Cor. xv. 20). This would not appear to be correct, if Enoch and Elijah ascended into the highest Heaven, clothed in bodies endued with immortality.
4. 'Lazarus was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom,' where he enjoyed consolation (Luke xvi. 22). But it is not proved, that Heaven itself is described by the term, 'Abraham's bosom.' It is intimated, that Lazarus was gathered into the bosom of his father Abraham, in which he might rest in hope of a full beatification in Heaven itself, which was to be procured by Christ. For this reason the Apostle, after the ascension of Christ into Heaven, 'had a desire to be with Christ' (Phil. i. 23).
5. 'Many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven' (Matt. viii. 11). But it does not thence



follow, that the Fathers have been in Heaven, properly so called, before they, who are to be called from among the Gentiles, sit down with them.

6. It appears from Matthew 25, that there are only two places, one destined for the pious, the other for the wicked. But it does not hence necessarily follow, that the place destined for the pious has always been Heaven supreme. There have never been more *places*, because there have never been more *states*. But it is not necessary, that they should always be the same places without any change. The authority of this declaration is preserved inviolate, provided a third place be never added to the former two.
7. 'The reward' which awaits the pious 'in heaven,' is said to be 'great' (Matt. v. 12). Let this be granted. Therefore, [will some reasoner say], they must instantly after death be translated into the supreme heaven.' This does not necessarily follow. For it is well known, that the Scriptures have in these promises a reference to the period which immediately succeeds the last judgment, according to the following expression: 'Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me.' The spouse replies, 'Even so come, Lord Jesus!' (Rev. xxii. 12, 20) In the same manner must be understood that passage in Luke, 'They may receive you into everlasting habitations;' (Luke xvi. 9) that is, after the last judgment, at least after [the ascension of] Christ, whose office it was to prepare those mansions for his people (John xiv. 2).
8. 'The Fathers are said to have been justified by the same faith as we are' (Acts xiii. 33). I acknowledge this. 'Therefore they have always been in Heaven even *before* [the ascension of] Christ, and we shall be *after* Him.' This is not a necessary consequence. For there are degrees in glorification. Nor is it at all wonderful, if they be said to be rendered more blessed and glorious after the ascension of Christ into Heaven.
9. 'But Jesus said to the malefactor, *To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*' (Luke xxiii. 43). I reply,
  - FIRST, It is not necessary that by 'Paradise' should here be understood the third heaven, or *the eternal abode of the blessed*. For it denotes in general *a place of felicity*.
  - SECONDLY, St Chrysostom says, the crucified thief was the first person whose spirit entered into heaven. Yet he did not ascend there before Christ, nor before the vail of the temple had been rent in twain.'

But to these passages is opposed that admirable dispensation or economy of God, which is distinguished according to the times preceding Christ, and those which followed. Of this dispensation the temple at Jerusalem was an illustrious [*exemplar*] pattern. For its external part, by means of an interposing vail, was separated and divided from that in which the priests daily appeared, and which was called 'The Holy of Holies,' in contradistinction to that which is called 'The Sanctuary,' (Heb. ix. 2, 3) Heaven itself is designated by 'The Holy of Holies' in Heb. ix. 24. It was shut as long as the former tabernacle stood, and until Christ entered into it by his own blood (Heb. ix. 8–12). It was his province as 'our Forerunner' to precede us, that we also might be able to enter into those things which are within the vail (Heb. vi. 19). For this purpose it was necessary that liberty

should be granted to us of ‘entering into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by that new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh’ (Heb. x. 19, 20). On this account the ancient worthies, who, ‘through faith have’ most evidently ‘gained this testimony *that they pleased God,*’ are said, ‘not to have received or obtained the promise; God having provided some better thing for us,’ who follow Christ, ‘that they without us should not be made perfect’ (Heb. xi. 40). These passages of scripture, and a view of the dispensation which they describe, are among the principal reasons why I cannot give my assent to the opinion which affirms, that the Fathers have been in Heaven properly so called.

But, that our brethren may not so highly blame me, I will oppose to them one or two of the approved divines of our church.

- CALVIN, in his ‘INSTITUTES’ (lib. iv, c. 1, s. 12), says: ‘For what churches would dissent from each other on this account alone — that one of them, without any of the licentiousness of contention or the obstinacy of assertion, holds the opinion *that souls, when they leave their bodies, soar up to Heaven;* while another church does not venture to define anything about the place, but only maintains with certainty *that they still live in the Lord.*’ Peruse also the following passage in his ‘Institutes’ (lib. iii, c. 25, s. 6), ‘Many persons torment themselves by disputing about the place which departed souls occupy, and whether they be now in the enjoyment of heavenly glory or not. But it is foolish and rash to inquire about things unknown, more deeply than God permits us to know them.’ Behold, Calvin here says, that it is frivolous to contend whether the souls of the dead already enjoy celestial glory or not; and, in his judgment, it ought not to be made a subject of contention. Yet I am condemned, or at least am accused, because I dare not positively affirm ‘that the souls of the Fathers before Christ, were in Heaven, properly so called.’
- PETER MARTYR proceeds still further, and is bold enough to assert, in his observations on 2 Kings ii. 13, ‘that the souls of the Fathers before Christ, were not in Heaven properly so called.’ He says, ‘Now if I be asked, to what place were Enoch and Elijah translated? I will say simply that I do not know, because that circumstance is not delivered in the divine volume. Yet if we might follow a very probable analogy, I would say, they were conducted to the place of the Fathers, or into Abraham’s bosom, that they might there pass their time with the blessed Patriarchs in expectation of the resurrection of Christ, and that they might afterwards be elevated above the Heavens with Him when he was raised up again.’ Where it is to be noted, that Martyr entertains doubts concerning Enoch and Elijah, but speaks decisively about those who are in Abraham’s bosom, that is, about the Fathers, ‘that they were raised up above the heavens with Christ at his resurrection.’ This likewise appears from what he mentions a little afterwards. With regard to that sublime ascension, we grant that no one enjoyed it before Christ. Enoch, therefore, and Elijah went to the Fathers, and there with them waited for Christ, upon whom, in company with the rest, they were attendants when he entered into heaven.’ See also BULLINGER on Luke xvi. 23; Heb. ix. 8; 1 Pet. iii. 19.

From the preceding explanation and extracts, I have, I think, rendered it evident, that not only had I just causes for *being doubtful* concerning this matter, but that I likewise ought not therefore to be *blamed*, even though I had uttered what they here charge upon

me as an error; nay, what is still more, that I ought to be *tolerated* had I simply asserted, 'that the souls of the Fathers were not in Heaven prior to the ascension of Christ to that blissful abode.'



## 10 Article XI

**It is a matter of doubt, whether believers under the Old Testament understood that the legal ceremonies were types of Christ and of his benefits.**

### **Answer**

I do not remember to have said this at any time: nay, I am conscious that I have never said it, because I never yet durst utter any such expression. But I have said, that an inquiry not altogether unprofitable might be instituted, ‘how far the ancient Jews understood the legal ceremonies to be types of Christ?’ At least I feel myself well assured, that they did not understand those ceremonies, as we do to whom the mystery of the Gospel is revealed. Nor do I suppose that any one will venture to deny this. But I wish our brethren would take upon themselves the task of proving, that believers under the Old Testament understood the legal ceremonies to be types of Christ and his benefits. For they not only know that this opinion of theirs is called in question by some persons, but that it is likewise confidently denied. Let them make the experiment, and they will perceive how difficult an enterprise they have undertaken. For the passages which seem to prove their proposition, are taken away from them in such a specious manner by their adversaries, that a man who is accustomed to yield assent to those things alone which are well supported by proofs, may be easily induced to doubt whether the believers under the Old Testament had any knowledge of this matter; especially if he consider, that, according to Gal. iv. 3, the whole of the ancient [Jewish] Church was in a state of infancy or childhood, and therefore possessed only the understanding of a child. Whether an infant be competent to perceive in these corporal things the spiritual things which are signified by them, let those decide who are acquainted with that passage, ‘When I was a child, I understood as a child’ (1 Cor. xiii. 11). Let those passages also be inspected which, we will venture to say, have a typical signification, because we have been taught so to view them by Christ and his Apostles; and it will be seen whether they be made so plain and obvious, as, without the previous interpretation of the Messiah, to have enabled us to understand them according to their spiritual meaning. It is said (John viii. 56), ‘Abraham saw the day of Christ, and was glad.’ Those who are of a contrary sentiment, interpret this passage as if it was to be understood by a metonymy, because, Abraham saw the day of Isaac, who was a type of Christ, and therefore his day was ‘the day of Christ.’ It is an undoubted fact, that no mention is made in the scriptures of any other rejoicing than of this. The faith of Abraham and its object occupy nearly the whole of the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Let what is there said be compared together; and let it be demonstrated from this comparison, that Abraham saw Christ in those promises which he apprehended by faith. Who would understand ‘the sign of Jonah,’ to have been instituted to typify the three days in which Christ remained in the bowels of the earth, unless Christ

had himself given that explanation? What injury does this opinion produce, since those who hold it do not deny, that the Fathers were saved by the infantile faith which they possessed? For an infant is as much the heir of his father's property, as an adult son.

Should any one say, it follows as a necessary consequence, that 'the Fathers were saved without faith in Christ.' I reply, the faith which has respect to [*salutare* the saving mercy] the salvation of God that has been promised by him, and 'waits for *the redemption of Israel*,' understood under a general notion, is 'faith in Christ,' according to the dispensation of that age. This is easily perceived from the following passages: 'I have waited for thy salvation, or thy saving mercy, O Lord! (Gen. xlix. 18). 'And the same man (Simeon) was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel' (Luke ii. 25). In the same chapter it is said, 'Anna, a prophetess, spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.'

But if we consider the 'faith in Christ,' which is that of the New Testament, and which has regard to Him as a Spiritual and Heavenly King, who bestows upon his followers those celestial benefits which he has procured for them by his passion and death; then a greater difficulty will hence arise. What man ever received more promises concerning the Messiah than David, or who has prophesied more largely about Him? Yet any one may with some show of reason, entertain doubts, whether David really understood that the Messiah would be a Spiritual and Heavenly Monarch; for when he seemed to be pouring out his whole soul before the Lord (2 Sam. 7), he did not suffer a single word to escape that might indicate the bent of his understanding to this point, which, nevertheless, would have been of great potency in magnifying Jehovah and in confirming his own confidence.

The knowledge which all Israel had of the Messiah and of his kingdom, in the days when Christ was himself on earth, appears not only from the Pharisees and the whole of the populace, but also from his own disciples after they had for three years and more enjoyed constant opportunities of communication with him, and had heard from his own lips frequent and open mention of the kingdom of Heaven. Nay, what is still more wonderful, immediately after the resurrection of Christ from the dead, they did not even then comprehend his meaning (Luke xxiv. 21–25). From this, it seems, we must say, either 'that the knowledge which they formerly possessed had gradually died away,' or 'that the Pharisees, through their hatred against Jesus, had corrupted that knowledge.' But neither of these assertions appears to be at all probable.

1. The former is not; because the nearer those times were to the Messiah, the clearer were the prophecies concerning him, and the more manifest the apprehension of them. And this for a good reason, because it then began to be still more necessary for men to believe that person to be the Messiah, or at least the time was fast approaching in which such a faith would become necessary.
2. The latter is not probable; because the Pharisees conceived that hatred against him on account of his preaching and miracles. But it was at the very commencement of his office that he called into his service those twelve disciples. There are persons, I am aware, who produce many things from the Rabbinical writers of that age, concerning the spiritual kingdom of Christ; but I leave those passages to the authors of them, because it is out of my power to pronounce a decision on the subject.

While I have been engaged in the contemplation of this topic, and desirous to prove from the preceding prophecies, that the kingdom of Christ the Messiah, was to be spiritual, no

small difficulty has arisen, especially after consulting most of those who have written upon it. Let those who on this point do not allow any one to indulge in a single doubt, try an experiment. Let them exhibit a specimen of the arguments by which they suppose their doctrine can be proved, even in this age, which is illuminated with the light of the New Testament. I will engage, that, after this experiment, they will not pass such a sinister judgment on those who confess to feel some hesitation about this point.

These observations have been adduced by me, not with the design of denying that the opinion of the brethren on this matter is true, much less for the purpose of confuting it. But I adduce them, to teach others to bear with the weakness of that man who dares not act the part of a dogmatist on this subject.





# 11 Article XII

**Christ has died for all men and for every individual.**

## **Answer**

This assertion was never made by me, either in public or private, except when it was accompanied by such an explanation as the controversies which are excited on this subject have rendered necessary. For the phrase here used possesses much ambiguity. Thus it may mean either that ‘the price of the death of Christ was given for all and for every one,’ or that ‘the redemption, which was obtained by means of that price, is applied and communicated to all men and to every one.’

1. Of this latter sentiment I entirely disapprove, because God has by a peremptory decree resolved, that believers alone should be made partakers of this redemption.
2. Let those who reject the former of these opinions consider how they can answer the following scriptures, which declare, that Christ died for all men; that He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John ii. 2); that He took away the sin of the world (John i. 29); that He gave his flesh for the life of the world (John vi. 51); that Christ died even for that man who might be destroyed with the meat of another person (Rom. xiv. 15); and that false teachers make merchandise even of those who deny the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction (2 Pet. ii. 1, 3); He therefore who speaks thus, speaks with the Scriptures; while he who rejects such phraseology, is a daring man, one who sits in judgment on the Scriptures and is not an interpreter of them. But he who explains those passages agreeably to the analogy of faith, performs the duty of a good interpreter and prophet [or preacher] in the Church of God.

All the controversy, therefore, lies in the interpretation. The words themselves ought to be simply approved, because they are the words of Scripture. I will now produce a passage or two from Prosper of Aquitain, to prove that this distinction was even in his time employed: ‘He who says that the saviour was not crucified for the redemption of the whole world, has regard, not to the virtue of the sacrament, but to the case of unbelievers, since the blood of Jesus Christ is the price paid for the whole world. To that precious ransom they are strangers, who, either being delighted with their captivity, have no wish to be redeemed, or, after they have been redeemed, return to the same servitude.’ (*Sent. 4, super cap. Gallorum*) In another passage he says, ‘With respect both to the magnitude and potency of the price, and with respect to the one [general] cause of mankind, the blood of Christ is the redemption of the whole world. But those who pass through this life without the faith of Christ, and without the sacrament of regeneration, are utter strangers to redemption.’ Such is likewise the concurrent opinion of all antiquity. This is a consideration to which

*11 Article XII*

I wish to obtain a little more careful attention from many persons, that they may not so easily fasten the crime of novelty on him who says anything which they had never before heard, or which was previously unknown to them.

## 12 Articles XIII and XIV

**Original Sin will condemn no man.**

**In every nation, all infants who die without [having committed] actual sins, are saved.**

### Answer

These articles are ascribed to Borrius. To augment their number, they have made them two, when one would have been sufficient, from which the other necessarily follows, even according to their own opinion. For if 'original sin condemns no one,' it is a necessary consequence that 'all those will be saved who have not themselves committed actual transgressions.' Of this class are all infants without distinction; unless some one will invent a state between salvation and damnation, by a folly similar to that by which, according to St Augustine, Pelagius made a distinction between salvation and the kingdom of heaven.

But Borrius denies having ever publicly taught either the one or the other. He conferred indeed in private on this subject, with some candidates for Holy Orders: and he considers that it was not unlawful for him so to do, or to hold such an opinion, under the influence of reasons which he willingly submits to the examination of his brethren; who, when they have confuted them, may teach him more correct doctrine, and induce him to change his opinion. His reasons are the following:

1. Because God has taken the whole human race into the grace of reconciliation, and has entered into a covenant of grace with Adam, and with the whole of his posterity in him. In which he promises the remission of all sins to as many as stand steadfastly, and deal not treacherously, in that covenant. But God not only entered into it with Adam, but also afterwards renewed it with Noah, and at length confirmed and perfected it through Christ Jesus. And since infants have not transgressed this covenant, they do not seem to be obnoxious to condemnation; unless we maintain, that God is unwilling to treat with infants, who depart out of this life before they arrive at adult age, on that gracious condition under which, notwithstanding, they are also comprehended [*ut foederati*] as parties to the covenant; and therefore that their condition is much worse than that of adults, to whom is tendered the remission of all sins, not only of that which they perpetrated in Adam, but likewise, of those which they have themselves personally committed. The condition of infants, however is, in this case, much worse, by no fault or demerit of their own, but because it was God's pleasure thus to act towards them. From these premises it would follow, that it was the will of God to condemn them for the commission of sin, before He either promised or entered into a covenant of grace; as though they had been excluded and

rejected from that covenant by a previous decree of God, and as though the promise concerning the saviour did not at all belong to them.

2. When Adam sinned in his own person and with his free will, God pardoned that transgression. There is no reason then why it was the will of God to impute this sin to infants, who are said to have sinned in Adam, before they had any personal existence, and therefore, before they could possibly sin at their own will and pleasure.
3. Because, in this instance, God would appear to act towards infants with far more severity than towards the very devils. For the rigor of God against the apostate angels was extreme, because he would not pardon the crime which they had perpetrated. There is the same extreme rigor displayed against infants, who are condemned for the sin of Adam. But it is much greater; for all the [evil] angels sinned in their own persons, while infants sinned in the person of their first father Adam. On this account, the angels themselves were in fault, because they committed an offense which it was possible for them to avoid; while infants were not in fault, only so far as they existed in Adam, and were by his will involved in sin and guilt.

These reasons are undoubtedly of such great importance, that I am of opinion those who maintain the contrary are bound to confute them, before they can affix to any other person a mark of heresy. I am aware, that they place antiquity in opposition, because [they say] its judgment was in their favour. Antiquity, however, cannot be set up in opposition by those who, on this subject, when the salvation of infants is discussed, are themselves unwilling to abide by the judgment of the ancients. But our brethren depart from antiquity, on this very topic, in two ways:

1. Antiquity maintains, that all infants who depart out of this life without having been baptized, would be damned; but that such as were baptized and died before they attained to adult age, would be saved. St Augustine asserts this to be the Catholic doctrine in these words: ‘If you wish to be a Catholic, be unwilling to believe, declare, or teach, that infants who are prevented by death from being baptized, can attain to the remission of original sins’ (*De animâ et ejus Orig.*, lib. 3, cap. 9). To this doctrine our brethren will by no means accede; but they contradict both parts of it.
2. Antiquity maintains that the grace of baptism takes away original sin, even from those who have not been predestinated; according to this passage from Prosper of Aquitain: ‘That man is not a Catholic who says, that the grace of baptism, when received, does not take away original sin from those who have not been predestinated to life.’ (*Ad Cap. Gallorum, Sent.* 2) To this opinion also our brethren strongly object. But it does not appear equitable, that, whenever it is agreeable to themselves, they should be displeased with those who dissent from them, because they dissent from the Fathers; and again, that, whenever it is their good pleasure, the same parties do themselves dissent from the Fathers on this very subject.

But with respect to the sentiments of the ancient Christian Fathers, about *the damnation of the unbaptized solely on account of original sin*, they and their successors seem to have mitigated, or at least, to have attempted to soften down such a harsh opinion. For some of them have declared, ‘that the unbaptized would be in the mildest damnation of all;’ and others, ‘that they would be afflicted, not with the punishment [*sensus*] of feeling,

but only with that of loss.' To this last opinion some of them have added, 'that this punishment would be inflicted on them without any stings from their own consciences.' Though it is a consequence of not being baptized, that the parties are said to endure only the punishment of *loss*, and not that of *feeling*; yet this *feeling* exists wherever the stings or gnawings of conscience exists, that is, where the gnawing worm never dies. But let our brethren consider what species of damnation that is which is inflicted on account of sin, and from which no gnawing remorse proceeds.

From these observations, thus produced, it is apparent what opinion ought to be formed of the Fourteenth Article. It is at least so dependent on the Thirteenth, that it ought not to have been composed as a separate article, by those who maintain that there is no cause why infants should perish, except original sin which they committed in Adam, or which [*propagatum est in ipsos*] they received by propagation from Adam. But it is worth the trouble to see, on this subject, what were the sentiments of Dr Francis Junius, who a few years ago was Professor of Divinity in this our University. He affirms, that 'all infants who are of the covenant and of election, are saved;' but he presumes, in charity, that 'those infants whom God calls to himself, and timely removes out of this miserable vale of sins, are rather saved' (*De Naturâ et Gratiâ*, R. 28). Now, that which this divine either 'affirms according to the doctrine of faith,' or 'presumes through charity,' may not another man be allowed, without the charge of heresy, to hold within his own breast as a matter of opinion, which he is not in the least solicitous to obtrude on others or persuade them to believe? Indeed, 'this accepting of men's persons' is far too prevalent, and is utterly unworthy of wise men. And what inconvenience, I pray, results from this doctrine? Is it supposed to follow as a necessary consequence from it, that, if the infants of unbelievers are saved, they are saved without Christ and his intervention? Borrius, however, denies any such consequence, and has Junius assenting with him on this subject. If the brethren dissent from this opinion, and think that the consequences which they themselves deduce are agreeable to the premises, then all the children of unbelievers must be subject to condemnation, *the children of unbelievers*, I repeat, who are 'strangers from the covenant.' For this conclusion no other reason can be rendered, than their being the children of those who are 'strangers from the covenant.' From which it seems, on the contrary, to be inferred, that all the children of those who are in the covenant are saved, provided they die in the age of infancy. But since our brethren deny this inference, behold the kind of dogma which is believed by them. 'All the infants of those who are strangers from the covenant are damned; and of the offspring of those parents who are in the covenant, some infants that die are damned, while others are saved.' I leave it to those who are deeply versed in these matters, to decide, whether such a dogma as this ever obtained in any church of Christ.



## 13 Article XV

**If the Heathen, and those who are strangers to the true knowledge of God, do those things which by the powers of nature they are enabled to do, God will not condemn them, but will reward these their works by a more enlarged knowledge, by which they may be brought to salvation.**

### Answer

This was never uttered by me, nor indeed by Borrius, under such a form, and in these expressions. Nay, it is not very probable, that any man, how small soever his skill might be in sacred things, would deliver the apprehensions of his mind in a manner so utterly confused and indigested, as to beget the suspicion of a falsehood in the very words in which he enunciates his opinion. For what man is there, who, *as a stranger to the true knowledge of God*, will do a thing that can in any way be acceptable to God? It is necessary that the thing which will please God, be itself good, at least, in a certain respect. It is further necessary, that he who performs it knows it to be good and agreeable to God. 'For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin,' that is, whatsoever is done without an assured knowledge that it is good and agreeable to God. Thus far, therefore, it is needful for him to have a true knowledge of God, which the Apostle attributes even to the Gentiles (Rom. i. 18–21, 25, 28; ii. 14, 15). Without this explanation there will be a contradiction in this enunciation. 'He who is entirely destitute of the true knowledge of God, can perform something which God considers to be so grateful to Himself as to remunerate it with some reward.' These, our good brethren, either do not perceive this contradiction; or they suppose, that the persons to whom they ascribe this opinion are such egregious simpletons as they would thus make them appear.

Then, what is the nature of this expression, 'if they do those things which the powers of nature enable them to perform?' Is 'nature,' when entirely destitute of grace and of the Spirit of God, furnished with the knowledge of that truth which is said to be 'held in unrighteousness,' by the knowledge of 'that which may be known of God, even his eternal power and Godhead,' which may instigate man to glorify God, and which deprives him of all excuse, if he does not glorify God as he knows Him? I do not think, that such properties as these can, without falsehood and injury to Divine Grace, be ascribed to 'nature,' which, when destitute of grace and of the Spirit of God, tends directly downward to those things which are earthly.

If our brethren suppose, that these matters exhibit themselves in this [foolish] manner, what reason have they for so readily ascribing such an undigested paragraph to men, who, they ought to have known, are not entirely destitute of the knowledge of sacred subjects? But if our brethren really think that man can do some portion of good by the powers

of nature, they are themselves not far from Pelagianism, which yet they are solicitous to fasten on others. This Article, enunciated thus in their own style, seems to indicate that they think man capable of doing something good ‘by the powers of nature;’ but that, by such good performance, he will ‘neither escape condemnation nor obtain a reward.’ For these attributes are ascribed to the subject in this enunciation; and because these attributes do not in their opinion, agree with this subject, they accuse of heresy the thing thus enunciated. If they believe that ‘a man, who is a stranger to the true knowledge of God,’ is capable of doing nothing good, this ought in the first place, to have been charged with *heresy*. If they think that no one ‘by the powers of nature,’ can perform any thing that is pleasing to God, then this ought to be reckoned as an *error*, if any man durst affirm it. From these remarks, it obviously follows, either that they are themselves very near the Pelagian heresy, or that they are ignorant of what is worthy, in the first instance or in the second, of reprehension, and what ought to be condemned as heretical.

It is apparent, therefore, that it has been their wish to aggravate the error by this addition. But their labour has been in vain; because, by this addition, they have enabled us to deny that we ever employed any such expression or conceived such a thought; they have, at the same time, afforded just grounds for charging them with the heresy of Pelagius. Thus the incautious hunter is caught in the very snare which he had made for another. They would, therefore, have acted with far more caution and with greater safety, if they had omitted their exaggeration, and had charged us with this opinion, which they know to have been employed by the scholastic divines, and which they afterwards inserted in the succeeding Seventeenth Article, but enunciated in a manner somewhat different, ‘God will do that which is in Him, for the man who does what is in himself.’ But, even then, the explanation of the schoolmen ought to have been added, ‘that God will do this, not from (the merit of) condignity, but from (that of) congruity; and not because the act of man merits any such thing, but because it is befitting the great mercy and beneficence of God.’ Yet this saying of the schoolmen I should myself refuse to employ, except with the addition of these words: ‘God will bestow more grace upon that man who does what is in him by the power of divine grace which is already granted to him, according to the declaration of Christ, *To him that hath shall be given,*’ in which he comprises the cause why it was ‘given to the apostles to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,’ and why ‘to others it was not given’ (Matt. xiii. 11, 12). In addition to this passage, and the first and second chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, which have already been quoted, peruse what is related in the Acts of the Apostles, (10, 16, 17), about Cornelius the Centurion, Lydia, the seller of purple, and the Bereans.



## 14 Article XVI

**The works of the unregenerate can be pleasing to God, and are (according to Borrius) the occasion, and (according to Arminius) the impulsive cause, by which God will be moved to communicate to them his saving grace.**

### Answer

About two years ago, were circulated Seventeen Articles, which were attributed to me, and of which the fifteenth is thus expressed: ‘Though the works of the unregenerate cannot possibly be pleasing to God, yet they are the occasion by which God is moved to communicate to them his saving grace.’ This difference induces me to suspect that the negative, (*cannot*), has been omitted in this Sixteenth Article, unless, perhaps, since that time, having proceeded from bad to worse, I now positively affirm this, which, as I was a less audacious and more modest heretic, I then denied. However this may be, I assert that these good men neither comprehend our sentiments, know the phrases which we employ, nor, in order to know them, do they understand the meaning of those phrases. In consequence of this, it is no matter of surprise that they err greatly from the truth when they enunciate our sentiments in their words, or when they affix other (that is, their own) significations to our words. Of this transformation, they afford a manifest specimen in this article.

1. For the word ‘the unregenerate,’ may be understood in two senses,
  - a) Either as it denotes those who have felt no [*actum*] motion of the regenerating Spirit, or of its tendency or preparation for regeneration, and who are therefore, destitute of the first principle of regeneration.
  - b) Or it may signify those who are in the process of the new birth, and who feel [*actus*] those motions of the Holy Spirit which belong either to preparation or to the very essence of regeneration, but who are not yet regenerate; that is, they are brought by it to confess their sins, to mourn on account of them, to desire deliverance, and to seek out the Deliverer, who has been pointed out to them; but they are not yet furnished with that power of the Spirit by which the flesh, or the old man, is mortified, and by which a man, being transformed to newness of life, is rendered capable of performing works of righteousness.
2. A thing is pleasing to God, either as an initial act, belonging to the commencement of conversion, or as a work perfect in its own essence, and as performed by a man who is converted and born again. Thus the confession, by which any one acknowledges himself to be ‘a cold, blind and poor creature,’ is pleasing to God; and the man, therefore, flies to Christ to ‘buy of him eye-salve, white raiment, and

gold' (Rev. iii. 15–18). Works which proceed from fervent love are also pleasing to God. See the distinction which Calvin draws between 'initial and filial fear;' and that of Beza, who is of opinion that 'sorrow and contrition for sin do not belong to the essential parts of regeneration, but only to those which are preparatory;' but he places 'the very essence of regeneration in mortification, and in vivification or quickening.'

3. 'The occasion,' and the impulsive cause, by which God is moved,' are understood not always in the same sense, but variously. It will answer our purpose if I produce two passages, from a comparison of which a distinction may be collected, at once convenient and sufficient for our design. The king says (Matt. xviii. 32), 'I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredest me.' And God says to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 16, 17), 'Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, in blessing, I will bless thee.' He who does not perceive, in these passages, a difference [*impulsionis*] in the impelling motives, as well as [*placentiae*] in the pleasure derived, must be very blind with respect to the Scriptures.
4. 'The saving grace of God' may be understood either as primary or secondary, as [*praeveniente*] preceding or subsequent, as operating or cooperating, and as that which knocks or opens or enters in. Unless a man properly distinguishes each of these, and uses such words as correspond with these distinctions, he must of necessity stumble, and make others appear to stumble, whose opinions he does not accurately understand. But if a man will diligently consider these remarks, he will perceive that this article is agreeable to the Scriptures, according to one sense in which it may be taken, but that, according to another, it is very different.

Let the word 'unregenerate' be taken for a man [*jam renascitur*] who is now in the act of the new birth, though he be not yet actually born again; let 'the pleasure' which God feels be taken for an initial act; let the impulsive cause be understood to refer to the final reception of the sinner into favour; and let secondary, subsequent, cooperating and entering grace be substituted for 'saving grace;' and it will instantly be manifest, that we speak what is right when we say: 'Serious sorrow on account of sin is so far pleasing to God, that by it, according to the multitude of his mercies, he is moved to bestow grace on a man who is a sinner.'

From these observations, I think, it is evident with what caution persons ought to speak [*ubi*] on subjects on which the descent into heresy, or into the suspicion of heresy, is so smooth and easy. And our brethren ought in their prudence to have reflected that we are not altogether negligent of this cautiousness, since they cannot be ignorant that we are filly aware how much our words are exposed and obnoxious to injurious interpretations, and even to calumny. But unless they had earnestly searched for a multitude of Articles, they might have embraced this and the preceding, as well as that which succeeds, in the same chapter.

## 15 Article XVII

**God will not deny his grace to any one who does what is in him.**

### Answer

This Article is so naturally connected with those which precede it, that he who grants one of the three, may, by the same effort, affirm the remainder; and he who denies one may reject all the others. They might, therefore, have spared some portion of this needless labour, and might, with much greater convenience, have proposed one article of the following description, instead of three: 'It is possible for a man to do some good thing without the aid of grace; and if he does it, God will recompense or remunerate that act by more abundant grace.' But we could always have fastened the charge of falsehood upon an article of this kind. It was, therefore, a much safer course for them to play with equivocations, that the fraud contained in the calumny might not with equal facility be made known to all persons.

But with respect to this article, I declare that it never came into our minds to employ such confused expressions as these, which, at the very first sight of them, exclude grace from the commencement of conversion; though we always, and on all occasions, make this grace to precede, to accompany, and to follow; and without which, we constantly assert, no good action whatever, can be produced by man. Nay, we carry this principal so far as not to dare to attribute the power here described, even to the nature of Adam himself, without the help of Divine grace, both infused and assisting. It thus becomes evident, that the fabricated opinion is imposed on us through calumny. If our brethren entertain the same sentiments, we are perfectly at agreement. But if they are of opinion that Adam was able by nature, without supernatural aid, to fulfill the law imposed on him, they seem not to recede far from Pelagians, since this saying of Augustine is received by these our brethren: 'Supernatural things were lost, natural things were corrupted.' Whence it follows, what remnant soever there was of natural things, just so much power remained to fulfill the law — what is premised being granted, *that Adam was capable by his own nature to obey God without grace*, as the latter is usually distinguished in opposition to nature. When they charge us with this doctrine, they undoubtedly declare, that in their judgment, it is such as may fall in with our meaning; and, therefore, that they do not perceive so much absurdity in this article as there is in reality; unless they think that nothing can be devised so absurd that we are not inclined and prepared to believe and publish.

We esteem this article as one of such great absurdity that we would not be soon induced to attribute it to any person of the least skill in sacred matters. For how can a man, without the assistance of Divine Grace, perform any thing which is acceptable to God,

and which he will remunerate with the saving reward either of further grace or of life eternal? But this article excludes primary grace with sufficient explicitness when it says, 'To him who does what is in himself.' For if this expression be understood in the following sense: 'To him who does what he can by the primary grace already conferred upon him,' then there is no absurdity in this sentence: 'God will bestow further grace upon him who profitably uses that which is primary;' and, by the malevolent suppression of what ought to have been added, the brethren openly declare that it was their wish for this calumny to gain credence.

## 16 Article XVIII

**God undoubtedly converts, without the external preaching of the Gospel, great numbers of persons to the saving knowledge of Christ, among those [ubi est] who have no outward preaching; and he effects such conversions either by the inward revelation of the Holy Spirit, or by the ministry of angels (Borrius and Arminius).**

### Answer

I never uttered such a sentiment as this. Borrius has said something like it, though not exactly the same, in the following words: 'It is possible that God, by the inward revelation of the Holy Spirit, or by the ministry of angels, instructed the wise men, who came from the east, concerning Jesus, whom they came to adore.' But the words '*undoubtedly,*' and '*great numbers of persons,*' are the additions of calumny, and is of a most audacious character, charging us with that which, it is very probable, we never spoke, and of which we never thought; and we have learned that this audacity of boldly affirming any thing whatsoever, under which the junior pastors generally labour, and those who are ignorant of the small stock of knowledge that they possess, is an evil exceedingly dangerous in the church of Christ.

1. Is it probable, that any prudent man will affirm that 'something is undoubtedly done in great numbers of persons,' of which he is not able, when required, to produce a single example? We confess, that we cannot bring an instance of what is here imputed to us. For, if it were produced by us, it would become a subject of controversy; as has been the fate of the sentiments of Zwinglius concerning the salvation of Socrates, Aristides, and of others in similar circumstances, who must have been instructed concerning their salvation by the Holy Ghost or by angels. For it is scarcely within the bounds of probability, that they had seen the Sacred Scriptures and had been instructed out of them.
2. Besides, if this saying of Christ had occurred to the recollection of our brethren, 'Speak, Paul! and hold not thy peace: For I have much people in this city' (Acts xix. 9, 10), they would not so readily have burdened us with this article, who have learned from this saying of Christ, that God sends the external preaching of his word to nations, when it is his good pleasure for great numbers of them to be converted.
3. The following is a saying in very common and frequent use. 'The ordinary means and instrument of conversation is the preaching of the Divine word by mortal men, to which therefore all persons are bound; but the Holy Spirit has not so bound himself to this method, as to be unable to operate in an extraordinary way, without the intervention of human aid, when it seemeth good to Himself.' Now if our brethren had reflected, that this very common sentence obtains our high approval, they would

not have thought of charging this article upon us, at least they would not have accounted it erroneous. For, with regard to the FIRST, what is *extraordinary* does not obtain among ‘great numbers of persons;’ for if it did, it would immediately begin to be *ordinary*. With regard to the SECOND, if ‘the preaching of the word by mortal men,’ be ‘the ordinary means,’ by which it is also intimated that some means are extraordinary, and since the whole of our church, nay, in my opinion, since the whole Christian world bears its testimony to this, then indeed it is neither a heresy nor an error to say, ‘Even without this means [without the preaching of the word] God can convert some persons.’ To this might likewise be added the word ‘undoubtedly.’ For if it be doubtful whether any one be saved by any other means, (that is, by ‘means extraordinary,’) than by human preaching; then it becomes a matter of doubt, whether it be necessary for ‘the preaching of the Divine word by mortal men,’ to be called ‘the ordinary means.’

4. What peril or error can there be in any man saying, ‘God converts great numbers of persons, (that is, *very many*), by the internal revelation of the Holy Spirit or by the ministry of angels; ‘provided it be at the same time stated, that no one is converted except by this very word, and by the meaning of this word, which God sends by men to those communities or nations whom He hath purposed to unite to himself. The objectors will perhaps reply, ‘It is to be feared, that, if a nation of those who have been outwardly called should believe this, rejecting external preaching, they would expect such an internal revelation or the address of an angel.’ Truly, this would be as unnatural a subject of fear, as that a man would be unwilling to taste of the bread which was laid before him, because he understands, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ But I desist; lest, while instituting an examination into the causes of this fear, I should proceed much further, and arrive at a point to which our brethren might be unwilling for me on this occasion to advance. A word is sufficient for the wise.

## 17 Article XIX

**Before his fall, Adam had not the power to believe, because there was no necessity for faith; God, therefore, could not require faith from him after the fall.**

### Answer

Unless I was well acquainted with the disposition of certain persons, I could have taken a solemn oath, that the ascription of this article to me, as the words now stand, is an act which is attributed to them through calumny. Can I be of opinion that 'before his fall Adam had not the power to believe; 'and, forsooth, on this account, 'because there was no necessity for faith.' Who is unacquainted with that expression of the apostle? 'He who approaches to God must believe [or have believed] that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.' I do not think, that there is a single Mahometan or Jew who dare make any such assertion as this article contains. The man who will affirm it, must be ignorant of the nature of faith in its universal acceptation. But who is able to love, fear, worship, honour and obey God, without faith, that is the principle and foundation of all those acts which can be performed to God according to his will?

This calumny against me is audacious and foolish. But I think, it was the wish of its inventors to have added the words, '*the power to believe in Christ;*' and indeed they ought to have made this addition. Yet perhaps some one is insane enough to say, that 'all faith in God is faith in Christ.' being inclined to such persuasion by the argument 'that there is now no true faith in God, which is not faith in Christ.' I say therefore, I affirm and assert, I profess and teach, 'that, before his fall, Adam had not the power to believe in Christ, because faith in Christ was not then necessary; and that God therefore could not require this faith from him after the fall:' That is to say, God could not require it on this account, 'because Adam had lost that power of believing by his own fault,' which is the opinion of those who charge me with the doctrine of this article. But God could have required it, because he was prepared [after the fall] to bestow those gracious aids which were necessary and sufficient for believing in Christ, and therefore to bestow faith itself in Christ.

But since I here confine myself to a simple denial, the proof of these three things is incumbent upon the brethren who affirm them.

1. The Proposition,
2. The Reason added, and
3. The Conclusion deduced from it.

The PROPOSITION is this: 'Before his fall, Adam had the power to believe in Christ.'

The REASON is, 'because this faith was necessary for him.'

The CONCLUSION is, 'Therefore God could of right demand this faith from him after the fall.'

1. A certain learned man endeavours to prove the PROPOSITION, which he thus enunciates. 'Before his fall, Adam had an implanted power to believe the Gospel,' that is 'on the hypothesis of the Gospel;' or, as I interpret it, 'If the Gospel had been announced to him.' The argument which this learned man employs in proof is, 'Because Adam did not labour under blindness of mind, hardness of heart, or perturbation of the passions; (which are the internal causes of an incapacity to believe;) but he possessed a lucid mind, and [*recta*] an upright will and affections, and, if the Gospel of God had been announced to him, he was able clearly to perceive and approve its truth, and with his heart to embrace its [*bonitatem*] benefits.'
2. I do not suppose any one will disapprove of the REASON which they assign, and therefore I do not require a proof of it from them; yet I wish the following suggestions to be well considered, if *faith in Christ* was not necessary for Adam, to what purpose was *the power of believing in Christ* conferred upon him?
3. But the necessity of proving the CONCLUSION is incumbent on our brethren, because they express it themselves in those terms, and indeed with a reason added to it, 'Because Adam by his own fault through sin lost that power.' Out of respect to the person, I will abstain from a confutation of this argument; not because I account it incapable of a satisfactory refutation, which, I hope, will in due time make its appearance.

I will now produce a few arguments in proof of my opinion.

FIRST. With regard to the *Proposition*, I prove, 'that, before his fall, Adam did not possess the power to believe in Christ.'

1. Because such a belief would have been futile. For there was no necessity, no utility in believing in Christ. But nature makes nothing in vain; much less does God.
2. Because, prior to his sin, God could not require of him faith in Christ. For Faith in Christ is faith in Him as a saviour from sins; he therefore, who will believe in Christ ought to believe that he is a sinner. But, before Adam had committed any offense, this would have been a false belief. Therefore, in commanding Adam to believe in Christ, God would have commanded him to believe a falsehood. That power, then, was not capable of being produced into an act, and is on the same account useless.
3. Faith in Christ belongs to a new creation, which is effected by Christ, in his capacity of a Mediator between sinners and God. This is the reason why He is called 'the Second Adam,' and 'the New Man.' It is not, therefore, matter of wonder, that the capability of believing in Christ was not bestowed on man by virtue of the first creation.
4. Faith in Christ is prescribed in the Gospel. But the Law and the Gospel are so far opposed to each other in the Scriptures, that a man cannot be saved by both of them at the same time; but if he be saved by the Law, he will not require to be saved by



the Gospel; if he must be saved by the Gospel, then it would not be possible for him to be saved by the Law. God willed to treat with Adam, and actually did treat with him, in his primeval state, before he had sinned, according to [*formulae*] the tenor of the legal covenant. What cause, therefore, can be devised, why God, in addition to the power of believing in Himself according to the Law, should likewise have bestowed on Adam the power of believing the Gospel and in Christ? If our brethren say, 'that this power was one and the same,' I will grant it, when the word 'power' is taken in its most general notion, and according to its most remote application — that of the power of understanding and volition, and also the knowledge of common things and of all notions impressed on the mind. But I shall deny the correctness of their observation, if the word 'power' is received as signifying any other thing than what is here specified. For that wisdom of God which is revealed in the Gospel excels, by many degrees, the wisdom which was manifested by the creation of the world and in the law.

SECONDLY. With regard to the *Reason*, 'Because there was no necessity for Adam in his primitive condition to believe in Christ.' No one will refute this argument, unless by asserting, that God infused a power into man, which was of no service, and which could be of none whatever, except when man is reduced to that state into which God himself forbids him to fall, and into which he cannot fall but through the transgression [*prevaricationem*] of the Divine command. But I must here be understood as always speaking about a power to believe the Gospel and in Christ, as distinct from a power of believing in God according to the legal prescript.

THIRDLY. With regard to what belongs to the *Conclusion* which is to be deduced from the preceding, I will burden it only with one absurdity. If matters be as they have stated them, 'that man in his primeval state possessed a power to believe in Christ,' when no necessity existed for the exercise of such faith in Christ; and if this power was withdrawn from him after the fall, when it began to be really necessary for him; such a dispensation of God has been very marvelous, and completely opposed to the Divine wisdom and goodness, the province of which consists in making provision about things necessary for those who live under the government and care of these attributes.

I desist from adding any more; because the absurdity of this dogma will not easily obtain credit with such persons as have learned to form a judgment from the Scriptures, and not from prejudices previously imbibed. I will only subjoin, that this dogma never obtained in the church of Christ, nor has it ever been accounted an article relating to faith.



## 18 Article XX

**It cannot possibly be proved from the Sacred Writings, that the angels are now confirmed in their estate.**

### Answer

This article also has been besprinkled with calumny; though I am of opinion, that it was done in ignorance by him from whose narration it is attributed to me. For I did not deny that this fact was incapable of proof from the Scriptures; but I inquired of him, ‘if it be denied, with what arguments from Scripture will you prove it?’ I am not so rash as to say, that no proof can be given from Scripture for a matter, whose contrary I am not able satisfactorily to establish by Scripture, — at least if such proof has not produced certainty in my own mind. For I ought to believe, that there are other persons who can prove this, though I am myself incapable; as those persons, in like manner, with whom I occasionally enter into conversation, ought to believe thus concerning themselves because I cannot instantly deny that they are unable to do what, I am sure, they will experience much difficulty in performing. For they must themselves be aware, that from their frequent conversations, and from the sermons which they address to the people, some judgment may be formed of their own progress in the knowledge of the truth and in understanding the Scriptures. I wish them, therefore to undertake the labour of proving that, about which they will not allow me to *hesitate*.

I know what has been written by St Augustine, and others of the Fathers, about the estate of the angels, about their blessedness, their confirmation in good, and the certainty by which they know that they will never fall from this condition. I also know, that the schoolmen incline towards this opinion. But when I examine the arguments which they advance in its support, they do not appear to me to possess such strength as may justly entitle it to be prescribed for belief to other persons as an approved article of faith.

The passage generally quoted from St Matthew (xxii. 30), ‘But they are as angels of God in heaven,’ treats only on the similitude [between young children and angels], in neither marrying nor being given in marriage; he does not say, that the angels of God are now happy in heaven.

That in Matt. xviii. 10, ‘In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven,’ does not speak of *the beatific vision*, but of that vision with which those who stand around the throne of God wait for his commands. This is apparent from the design of Christ, who wished thus to persuade them ‘not to offend one of these little ones;’ their beholding God, helps to confirm this persuasion, not the beatific sight, but such a sight of God as is suited for the reception of the [Divine] commands to keep these little ones.

‘But ye are come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels’ (Heb. xii. 22). This does not necessarily prove, that angels are now blessed and confirmed in good; because, even now, those who are neither beatified nor confirmed in good do themselves belong to that celestial city, that is, those who are said to have ‘come to this heavenly city,’ who still ‘walk by faith,’ and ‘see through a glass darkly’ (1 Cor. xiii. 12). ‘Then the angels will be in a more unhappy condition than the souls of pious men, who are now enjoying blessedness with Christ and in his presence.’ This reason which they adduce is not conclusive. For ‘the angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of eternal salvation’ This service of theirs will endure to the end of the world. In the mean time, ‘those who have died in the Lord, rest from their labours’ (Rev. xiv. 13).

Neither is that a stronger argument, which says, ‘It is possible for the angels to fall, if they are not confirmed in good; and therefore they must always of necessity be tormented by a fear of their fall, which may happen; and by a fear which is the greater, on account of the clearer knowledge that they have of the evil into which the apostate angels are fallen.’ For it is possible for the angels to be assured of their stability, that is, that they shall never fall away, although they be neither blessed, nor so far confirmed in that which is good as not to be capable of falling. They may be assumed, either with such a certainty as excludes all anxious ‘fear that hath torment,’ but is consistent with that ‘fear and trembling,’ with which we are commanded to ‘work out our salvation,’ who are said to have ‘the full assurance of faith’ concerning our salvation.

But what necessity is there to enter into this disputation, which cannot without great difficulty be decided from the Scriptures; and which, when it is decided, will be of small service to us. Let us rather devote our attention to this study. Doing now the will of God as the angels do in heaven, let us endeavour to be enabled hereafter to become partakers with them of eternal blessedness. This is especially our duty, since the things which have been written for us respecting the state of angels, and which are commanded to be received by faith, are exceedingly few in number.

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This, therefore, is my reply to the former twenty of these articles, which have been ascribed partly to me alone, and partly also to Borrius. There is not one of them whose contrary has been believed by the Church Universal and held as an article of faith. Some of them, however, are so artfully constructed, that those which are their opposites savour of novelty and send forth an odour of falsehood. Beside the fact, that the greatest part of them are attributed to us through calumny. I now proceed to the consideration of the eleven which follow that I may see whether the fabricators have acted in a more happy and judicious manner, either in imputing them to me, or in reckoning them as errors or heresies. May God direct my mind and my hand, that I may with a good conscience declare those things which are in unison with the truth, and which may conduce to the peace and tranquillity of our brethren.

## 19 Article XXI (I.)

**It is a new, heretical and Sabellian mode of speaking, nay, it is blasphemous, to say 'that the Son of God is *αυτοθεον* (very God),' for the Father alone is very God, but not the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

### Answer

Most of those persons who are acquainted with me at all, know with what deep fear, and with what conscientious solicitude, I treat that sublime doctrine of a Trinity of Persons. The whole manner of my teaching demonstrates, that when I am explaining this article I take no delight either in inventing new phrases, that are unknown to Scripture and to orthodox antiquity, or in employing such as have been fabricated by others. All my auditors too will testify, how willingly I bear with those who adopt a different mode of speaking from my own, provided they intend to convey a sound meaning. These things I premise, lest any one should suppose, that I had sought to stir up a controversy about this word, with other persons who had employed it.

But when, in the course of a particular disputation, a certain young man with much pertinacity and assurance defended not only the word itself, but likewise that meaning which I believe and know to be contrary to all antiquity, as well as to the truth of the Scriptures, and was not backward in expressing his serious disapproval of the more orthodox opinions; I was compelled to explain what were my sentiments about the word and its meaning.

I said that the word is not contained in the Scriptures; yet, because it had been used by the orthodox, both by Epiphanius, (Heres. 69), and by some divines in our days, I do not reject it, provided it be correctly received.

But it may be received in a two fold signification, according to the etymon of the word; and may mean, either *one who is truly and in himself God*, or *one who is God from himself*. In the former signification, I said, the word might be tolerated; but in the latter, it was in opposition to the Scriptures and to orthodox antiquity.

When the opponent still urged, that he received the word in this last sense, and that Christ was indeed *αυτοθεον*, that is, *God from himself*, who has in reality an essence in common with the Father, but not communicated by the Father; and when he asserted this with the greater boldness, because he knew that in this opinion he had Trelectrius of pious memory agreeing with him, from whose instructions he appeared to have derived his ideas on the subject; I said that this opinion was a novel one, which was never heard of by the ancients, and unknown both to the Greek and Latin Fathers; and that, when rigidly examined, it would be found to be heretical, and nearly allied to the opinion of Sabellius,

which was, — *that the Father and the Son are not distinct persons, but one person called by different names.* — I added, that, from this opinion, the entirely opposite heresy might likewise be deduced, which is, — *that the, Son and the Father are two different persons, and two collateral gods;* this is blasphemous.

I proved my remarks by the following brief arguments:

- FIRST. It is the property of the person of the Father, *to have his being from himself,* or, which is a better phrase, *to have his being from no one.* But the Son is now said to have his being from himself, or rather, from no one: therefore, the Son is the Father; which is Sabellianism.
- SECONDLY. If the Son have an essence in common with the Father, but not communicated by the Father, he is collateral with the Father, and, therefore, they are two gods. Whereas, all antiquity defended *the unity, the Divine essence in three distinct persons,* and placed a salvo on it by this single explanation, ‘that the Son has the same essence directly, which is communicated to him by the Father; but that the Holy Spirit has the very same essence from the Father and the Son.’

This is the explanation which I adduced at that time, and in the maintenance of which I still persist: and I affirm, that in this opinion I have the Scriptures agreeing with me, as well as the whole of antiquity, both of the Greek and the Latin churches. It is therefore most wonderful, that our brethren have dared to charge this upon me as an erroneous sentiment. Yet, in doing this, they do not act with sincerity, since they do not explain the word *αυτοθεν* by removing its ambiguity; which they undoubtedly ought to have done, lest any person should suppose that I denied the Son to be in every sense, and therefore that he is not very and true God. This they ought the more particularly to have done, because they know that I have always made a distinction between these significations, and have admitted one of them, but rejected the other.

Since the matter really stands thus, I might simply accuse this article of making a false charge; because in a certain sense I confess the Son to be *αυτοθεν* also the Holy Spirit, and not the Father alone. But, for the sake of justifying this phrase and opinion, the framers of it declare, ‘When it is said, *the Son is God from himself,* then the phrase must be received in this sense, *the essence which the Son has, is from himself,* that is, *from no one.* For the Son is to be considered as he is God, and as he is the Son. *As God,* he has his being from himself. *As the Son,* he has it from the Father. Or two things are to be subjects of consideration in the Son, his essence and his relation. *According to his essence,* the Son is from no one or from himself. *According to his relation,* he is from the Father.’

But I answer,

- FIRST. This mode of explanation cannot, except by an impropriety of speech, excuse him who says, ‘the Son has indeed an essence in common with the Father, but not communicated.’
- SECONDLY. ‘The essence, which the Son has, is from no one,’ is not tantamount to the phrase, ‘the Son, who has an essence, is from no one.’ For, ‘Son’ is the name of a person that has relation to a Father, and therefore without that relation it cannot become a subject either of definition or of consideration. But ‘Essence’ is something

absolute: and these two are so circumstanced between themselves, that ‘essence’ does not enter into the definition of ‘Son,’ except indirectly, thus, ‘he is the Son, who has the Divine essence communicated to him by the Father;’ which amounts to this, ‘he is the Son, who is begotten of the Father.’ For, *to beget*, is *to communicate his essence*.

- THIRDLY. These two respects in which He is God and in which He is the Son, have not the same affection or relation between each other, as these two have, ‘to exist from himself or from no one,’ and ‘to exist from the Father,’ or ‘to have his essence from himself,’ or ‘from no one,’ and ‘to have it from the Father:’ which I demonstrate thus by two most evident arguments.

1. ‘God’ and ‘the Son’ are consentaneous and subordinate: for the Son is God. But ‘to derive his being from no one’ and ‘to derive it from another,’ ‘to have his essence from no one,’ and ‘to have it from another,’ are opposites, and cannot be spoken about the same person.
2. In the comparison which they institute, those things which ought to be collated together are not properly compared, nor are they opposed to each of their parallels and classes or affinities. For a double ternary must here come under consideration, which is this:

HE IS GOD: —            HE IS THE FATHER: —            HE IS THE SON: —  
*He has the Divine essence:    He has it from no one:    He has it from the Father:*

These are affinities and parallels.

1. ‘He is God,’ and ‘has the Divine essence.’
2. ‘He is the Father,’ and, ‘has the Divine essence from no one.’
3. ‘He is the Son,’ and, ‘has the Divine essence from the Father.’

But, by the comparison which our objectors institute in their explanation, these things will be laid down as parallels. ‘He is God,’ and ‘has his essence from no one.’ If this comparison be correctly formed, then either the Father alone is God, or there are three collateral Gods. But far be it from me to charge with such a sentiment as this those who say, ‘the Son is *αυτοθεον* that is, God from himself.’ For I know that they occasionally explain themselves in a modified manner. But their explanation does not agree with the phraseology which they employ. For this reason Beza excuses Calvin, and openly confesses ‘that he had not with sufficient strictness observed the difference between these particles *a se* and *per se*.’<sup>1</sup>

I have stated only what follow as consequences from these phrases, and from the opinion which agrees with them; and I have therefore said, that people must refrain from the use of such phraseology. I abstain from proofs, multitudes of which I could bring from the Scriptures and the Fathers; and if necessity require, I will immediately produce them: for I have had them many years in readiness.

GOD — *is from eternity* — having the Divine Essence.

THE FATHER — *is from no one* — having the Divine Essence from no one, which others say is ‘from himself.’

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<sup>1</sup>Praefat. in Dialog. Athanasii

19 Article XXI (I.)

THE SON — *is from the Father* — having the Divine Essence from the Father.

This is a true parallelism, and one which, if in any manner it be inverted or transposed, will be converted into a heresy. So that I wonder much, how our brethren could consider it proper to make any mention of this matter; from which they would with far more correctness and prudence have abstained, if, while meditating upon it, they had weighed it in equal balances.



## 20 Article XXII (II.)

**It is the summit of blasphemy to say, that God is freely good.**

### Answer

In this article likewise, our brethren disclose their own disgraceful proceedings, which I would gladly allow to remain buried in oblivion. But, because they recall this affair to my recollection, I will now relate how it occurred.

In a disputation, it was asked, ‘can necessity and liberty be so far reconciled to each other, that a person may be said *necessarily* or *freely* to produce one and the same effect?’ These words being used properly according to their respective strict definitions, which are here subjoined. ‘An agent acts *necessarily*, who, when all the requisites for action are laid down, cannot do otherwise than act, or cannot suspend his acting. An agent acts *freely*, who, when all the requisites for action are laid down, can refrain from beginning to act, or can suspend his acting,’ I declared, ‘that the two terms could not meet in one subject.’ Other persons said, ‘that they could,’ evidently for the purpose of confirming the dogma which asserts, ‘Adam sinned *freely* indeed, and yet *necessarily*: FREELY, with respect to himself and according to his nature: NECESSARILY, with respect to the decree of God.’

Of this their explanation I did not admit, but said *Necessarily* and *Freely* differ not in respects, but in their entire essences, as do *Necessity* and *Contingency*, or what is *Necessary* and what is *Contingent*, which, because they divide the whole amplitude of being, cannot possibly coincide together, more than can *Finite* and *Infinite*. But *Liberty* appertains to *Contingency*.

To disprove this my opinion, they brought forward an instance, or example, in which Necessity and Liberty met together; and that was God, who is both necessarily and freely good. This assertion of theirs displeased me so exceedingly, as to cause me to say, that it was *not far removed from blasphemy*. At this time, I entertain a similar opinion about it; and in a few words I thus prove its *falsity*, *absurdity*, and *the blasphemy* [contained] *in the falsity*.

1. Its *Falsity*. He who by *natural necessity*, and according to his very essence and the whole of his nature, is good, nay, who is Goodness itself, the Supreme Good, the First Good from whom all good proceeds, through whom every good comes, in whom every good exists, and by a participation of whom what things soever have any portion of good in them are good, and more or less good as they are nearer or more remote from it.
  - He is not FREELY good. For it is a contradiction in an adjunct, or an opposition in an apposition.

- But God is good by natural necessity, according to his entire nature and essence, and is Goodness itself, the supreme and primary Good, from whom, through whom: and in whom is all good, etc.
  - THEREFORE, God is not freely good.
2. Its *Absurdity*. Liberty is an affection of the Divine Will; not of the Divine Essence, Understanding, or Power; and therefore it is not an affection of the Divine Nature, considered in its totality.
- It is indeed an effect of the will, according to which it is borne towards an object that is neither primary nor adequate, and that is different from God himself; and this effect of the will, therefore, is posterior in order to that affection of the will according to which God is borne towards a proper, primary and adequate object, which is himself.
  - But Goodness is an affection of the whole of the Divine Nature, Essence, Life, Understanding, Will, Power, etc.
  - THEREFORE, God is not freely good; that is, he is not good by the mode of liberty, but by that of natural necessity.

I add, that it cannot be affirmed of anything in the nature of things, that it is freely, or that it is this or that freely, not even then when man was made what he is, by actions proceeding from free will: as no man is said to be ‘freely learned,’ although he has obtained erudition for himself by study which proceeded from free will.

3. I prove that *Blasphemy* is contained in this assertion: because, if God be freely good, (that is, not by nature and natural necessity), he can be or can be made *not good*. As whatever any one wills freely, he has it in his power *not to will*; and whatever any one does freely, he can refrain from doing. Consider the dispute between the ancient Fathers and Eunomius and his followers, who endeavoured to prove that the Son was not eternally begotten of the Father, because the Father had neither *willingly* nor *unwillingly* begotten the Son. But the answer given to them by Cyril, Basil, and others, was this: ‘The Father was neither willing nor unwilling; that is, He begat the Son not by will, but by nature. The act of generation is not from the Divine Will, but from the Divine nature.’<sup>1</sup> If they say, ‘God may also be said to be *freely good*, because He is *not good by co-action* or *force*.’ I reply, not only is co-action repugnant to liberty, but nature is likewise; and each of them, nature and co-action, constitutes an entire, total and sufficient cause for the exclusion of liberty. Nor does it follow, ‘co-action does not exclude liberty from this thing; therefore, it is *freely* that which it actually is. A stone does not fall downwards by co-action; it, therefore, falls by liberty. Man wills not his own salvation *by force*, therefore, he wills it *freely*.’ Such objections as these are unworthy to be produced by MEN; and in the refutation of them shall I expend my time and leisure, Thus, therefore, the Christian Fathers justly attached blasphemy to those who said, ‘the Father begat the Son *willingly*, or by his own will;’ because from this it would follow, that the Son had [*principium*] an origin similar to that of the creatures. But with how much greater equity does blasphemy fasten itself upon those who declare, ‘that God is

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<sup>1</sup>Cyrilli Thes. contra Haeret. lib. i. c. 8

*freely* good? For if he be *freely* good, he likewise *freely* knows and loves himself, and besides does all things *freely*, even when He begets the Son and breathes forth the Holy Spirit.



## 21 Article XXIII (III.)

**It frequently happens that a creature who is not entirely hardened in evil, is unwilling to perform an action because it is joined with sin; unless when certain arguments and occasions are presented to him, which act as incitements to its commission [*Administratio*]. The management of this presentation, also, is in the hand of the Providence of God, who presents these incitements, that He may accomplish his own work by the act of the creature.**

### Answer

Unless certain persons were under the excitement of a licentious appetite for carping at those things which proceed from me, they would undoubtedly never have persuaded themselves to create any trouble about this matter. Yet, I would pardon them this act of officiousness, as the rigid and severe examiners of truth, provided they would sincerely and without calumny relate those things which I have actually spoken or written; that is, that they would not corrupt or falsify my sayings, either by adding to or diminishing from them, by changing them or giving them a perverted interpretation. But some men seem to have been so long accustomed to slander, that, even when they can be openly convicted of it, still they are not afraid of hurling it against an innocent person. Of this fact, they afford a luminous example in the present article. For those things which I advanced in the Theses, *On the Efficacy and Righteousness of the Providence of God concerning evil*, and which were disputed in the month of May, 1605, are here quoted, but in a mutilated manner, and with the omission of those things which are capable of powerfully vindicating the whole from the attacks of slander. The following are the words which I employed in the fifteenth thesis of that disputation.

But since an act, though it be permitted to [*potentiae*] the ability and the will of the creature, may yet be taken away [*potestati*] from his actual power or legislation; and since, therefore, it will very frequently happen, that a creature, who is not entirely hardened in evil, is unwilling to perform an act because it is connected with sin, unless when some arguments and occasions are presented to him, which resemble incitements to its commission [*Administratio*]. The management of this presenting [of arguments and occasions] is also in the hand of the Providence of God, who presents these incitements, both that He [*exploret*] may fully try whether the creature be willing to refrain from sinning, even when urged on, or provoked, by incitements; because the praise of abstaining from sin is very slight, in the absence of such provocatives; and that, if the creature wills to yield to these incitements, God may effect his own work by the act of the creature.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>PETER MARTYR, when commenting on these words in the Epistle to the Romans (ix. 19), 'Thou wilt

These are my words from which the brethren have extracted what seemed suitable for establishing the slander, but have omitted and quite taken away those things which, in the most manifest manner, betray and confute the calumny. For I laid down two ends of that administration by which God [*dispensat*] manages the arguments, occasions, incitements, and irritatives to commit that act which is joined with sin. And these two ends were neither collateral, that is, not equally intended; nor were they connected together by a close conjunction. The FIRST of them, which is *the exploration or trial of his creature*, God primarily, properly, and of himself intends. But the LATTER, which is, *that God may effect his own work by the act of the creature*, is not intended by God, except after he has foreseen that his Creature will not resist these incitements, but will yield to them, and that of his own free will, in opposition to the command of God, which it was his duty and within his power to follow, after having rejected and refused those allurements and incitements of arguments and occasions. But this article of theirs propounds my words in such a way, as if I had made God to intend this last end only and of itself, omitting entirely the first; and thus omitting the previous condition under which God intends this second end through the act of his creature, that is, *when it is the will of the creature to yield to these incitements*.

This calumny, therefore, is two-fold, and evidently invented for the purpose of drawing a conclusion from these, my words, — *that I have in them represented God as the author of sin*. A certain person, having lately quoted my expressions in a public discourse, was not afraid of drawing from them this conclusion. But this was purely through calumny, as I will now prove with the utmost brevity.

The reason by which it can be concluded, from the words that have been quoted in this article from my Thesis, ‘that God is the author of the sin which is committed by the creature,’ when God incites him by arguments and occasions, is universally, three-fold:

- The FIRST is, that God absolutely intends to effect his own work by the act of the creature, which act cannot be performed by the creature without sin. This is resolvable into two absolute intentions of God, of which the *First* is that by which he absolutely intends to effect this, his work; and the *Second*, that by which he absolutely intends to effect this work in no other way, than by such an act of a creature as cannot be done by that creature without sin.

The SECOND REASON is, that the creature being invited by the presenting of these allurements and provocatives to commit that act, cannot do otherwise than commit it; that is, such an excitation being laid down, the creature cannot suspend that act by which God intends to erect his work, otherwise God might be frustrated of his intention: Hence arises

- The THIRD REASON which has its origin in these two, — that God intends by these incentives to move the creature to perform an act which is joined to sin, that is, to move him to the commission of sin.

All these things seem, with some semblance of probability, to be drawn as conclusions from the words thus placed, as they are quoted in this their article, because it is represented

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say then unto me, Why doth He yet complain?’ says (Fol. 406 b), *When God deprives men of his assistance, and leaves them in such a depraved state, if he afterwards presents occasions by which the mind may be irritated, it cannot be denied, that God is in some way, yet not properly, the cause of the actions which ensue.*

as the sole and absolute end of this administration and presenting, — *that God effects his work by the act of the creature*. But those words which I have inserted, and which they have omitted, meet these three reasons, and in the most solid manner, confute the whole objection which rests upon them.

1. My own words meet the FIRST of these reasons thus: For they deny that God absolutely intends to effect his own work by the act of the creature; because they say that God did not intend to employ the act of the creature to complete his work, before he foresaw that the creature would yield to those incitements, that is, would not resist them.
2. They meet the SECOND by denying that, after assigning this presentation of incitements, the creature is unable to suspend his act; since they say, likewise, that, if it be the will of the creature to yield to these incitements, then God effects his own work by the act of the creature. What does this mean, *If it be his will to yield?* Is not the freedom of the will openly denoted, by which, when this presenting of arguments and occasions is laid down, the will can yet refuse to yield,
3. They also meet the THIRD: For they deny that God intends by those incitements to move the creature to the commission of an act which is joined to sin, that is, to commit sin, because they say, that God intends the trial of his creature, whether he will obey God even after having been irritated by these incitements. And when God saw that the creature preferred to yield to these incitements, rather than to obey him, then he intended — *not the act of the creature*, for that is unnecessary; because, his intention being now *to try*, he obtains *the issue of the act* performed by the will of the creature. But God intended to effect his own work by an act [*positum*] founded on the will and the culpability of the creature.

It is apparent, therefore, that these words which my brethren have omitted, most manifestly refute the calumny, and in the strongest manner solve the objection. This I will likewise point out in another method, that the whole iniquity of this objection may be rendered quite obvious:

That man who says, ‘God tries his creature by arguments and occasions of sinning, whether he will obey him even after he has been stirred up by incitements,’ openly declares that it is in the power of the creature to resist these incitements, and not to sin: otherwise, this [act of God] would be, not *a trial of obedience*, but *a casting down, and an impelling to necessary disobedience*. Then, the man who says, ‘God, by these provocatives and incitements, tries the obedience of his creature,’ intimates by these expressions, that those occasions and arguments which are presented by God when he intends *to try*, are not incitements and irritations *to sin*, through the end and aim of God. But they are incitements, *First*, By CAPABILITY according to [*affectum*] the inclination of the creature who can be incited by them to commit an act connected with sin. They are also incitements, *Secondly*, IN THEIR ISSUE, because the creature has been induced by them to sin, but by his own fault; for it was his duty, and in his power, to resist this *inclination*, and to neglect and despise these *incitements*.

It is wonderful, therefore, and most wonderful indeed, that any man, at all expert in theological matters, should have ventured to fabricate from my words this calumny against me. Against me, I say, who dare not accede to some of the sentiments and dogmas of my

brethren, as they well know, for this sole reason — *because I consider it flows from them that God is the author of sin!* And I cannot accede to them on this account — because I think my brethren teach those things from which I can conclude by good and certain consequence, *that God absolutely intends the sin of his creature*, and thence, that he so administers all things, as, when this administration is laid down, *man necessarily sins, and cannot, in the act itself, and in reality, omit the act of sin.* If they shew that the things which I say, do not follow from their sentiments, on this account at least, I shall not suffer myself to be moved by their consent in them. Let the entire theses be read, and it will be evident how solicitously I have guarded against saying any thing, from which by the most distant probability, this blasphemy might be deduced; and yet, at the same time, I have been careful to subtract from the providence of God nothing, which, according to the Scriptures, ought to be ascribed to it. But I scarcely think it necessary, for me now to prove at great length, that the fact of *God's Providential efficacy respecting Evil* is exactly as I have taught in those words; especially after I have premised this explanation. I will, however, do this in a very brief manner.

Eve was not only ‘a creature not entirely hardened in evil,’ but she was not at all evil; and she willed to abstain from eating the forbidden fruit because ‘it was connected with sin,’ as is apparent from the answer which she gave to the serpent: ‘God hath, said, *Ye shall not eat of it.*’ Her compliance with this command was easy, in the midst of such an abundance of fruit; and the trial of her obedience would have been very small, if she had been solicited with no other argument by the tempter. It happened, therefore, that, in addition to this, the serpent presented to Eve an argument of persuasion, by which [*irritaret*] he might stimulate her to eat, saying, ‘Ye shall not surely die, but ye shall be as gods.’ This argument, according to the intention of the serpent, was an incitement to commit sin: Without it, the serpent perceived, she would not be moved to eat, because he had heard her expressing her will to abstain from the act because it was ‘connected with sin.’

I ask now, Is [*administratio*] the whole management of this temptation to be ascribed to God, or not? If they say, ‘It must not be attributed to him,’ they offend against Providence, the Scriptures, and the opinion of all our divines. If they confess that it should be ascribed to him, they grant what I have said. But what was the end of this management? An experiment, or trial, whether Eve, when solicited by arguments, and stimulated by Satan, [*vellet*] would resolve to refrain from an act, that she might obtain from her Lord and Creator, the praise of obedience. The instance of Joseph's brethren, which is quoted in the Fifteenth Thesis of my Ninth Public Disputation, proves this in the plainest manner, as I have shown in that Thesis.

Let the case of Absalom be inspected, who committed incest with his father's concubines. Was not this *the Occasion* of perpetrating that act — God gave his father's concubines into his hands, that is, he permitted them to his power. Was not the *Argument* inducing him to commit that act, from which nature is abhorrent, furnished by the advice of Ahithophel, whose counsels were considered as oracles (2 Sam. xvi. 20–23)? Without doubt, these are the real facts of the case. But that God himself managed the whole of this affair, appears from the Scripture, which says that God did it (2 Sam. xii. 11–12).

Examine what God says in Deut. xiii. 1–3, ‘Thou shalt not obey the words of that prophet, who persuades thee to worship other gods, although he may have given thee a sign or a



wonder which may have actually come to pass? Is not the diction of ‘the sign,’ [by this false prophet], when confirmed by the event itself, an *Argument* which may gain [*authoritatem*] credit for him? And is not the credit, thus obtained, an incitement, or an argument to effect a full persuasion of that which this prophet persuaded? And what necessity is there for arguments, incitements and incentives, if a rational creature has such a propensity to the act, which cannot be committed without sin, that he wills to commit it without any argument whatsoever, Under such circumstances, the grand tempter will cease from his useless labour. But because the tempter knows, that the creature is unwilling to commit this act, unless he be incited by arguments, and opportunities be offered, he brings forward all that he can of incentives to allure the creature to sin. God, however, presides over all these things, and by his Providence administers the whole of them, but to an end far different from that to which the temptor directs them. For God manages them, *in the first place*, for the trial of his creature, and, *afterwards*, (if it be the will of the creature to yield), for Himself to effect something by that act.

If any think, that there is something reprehensible in this view, let them so circumscribe the right and the capability of God, as to suppose Him unable to try the obedience of his creature by any other method, than by creating that in which sin can be committed, and from which He commanded him by a law to abstain. But if He can try the obedience of his creature by some other method than this, let these persons shew us what that method is beside the presenting of arguments and occasions, and why God uses the former method more than the preceding one which I have mentioned. Is it not because he perceives, that the creature will not, by the former, be equally strongly solicited to evil, and that therefore it is a trivial matter to abstain from sin, to the commission of which he is not instigated by any other incentives?

Let the history of Job be well considered, whose patience God tried in such a variety of ways, and to whom were presented so many incitements to sin against God by impatience; and the whole of this matter will very evidently appear. God said to Satan; ‘Hast thou considered my servant Job, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and departeth from evil.’ Satan answered the Lord and said: ‘What wonder is there in this, since thou hast so abundantly blessed him. But try him now by afflictions.’ And the Lord said unto Satan: ‘Behold, all that he hath is in thy power. Only upon himself put not forth thine hand.’ What other meaning have these words than, *Behold, incite him to curse me! I grant thee permission, since thou thinkest small praise is due to that man who abounds with blessings, and yet fears me.* Satan did what he was permitted, and produced none of the effects; [which he had prognosticated]; so that God said, ‘Job still holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him.’ (ii. 3) This trial being finished, when Satan asked permission to employ against him greater incentives to sin, he obtained his request; and, after all, effected nothing. Therefore God was glorified in the patience of Job, to the confusion of Satan.

I suppose these remarks will be sufficient to free the words of my Theses from all calumny and from sinister and unjust interpretations. When I have ascertained the arguments which our brethren employ to convict these words of error, I will endeavour to confute them; or if I cannot do this, I will field to what may then be deemed the truth.



## 22 Article XXIV (IV.)

**The Righteousness of Christ is not imputed to us for Righteousness; but to believe [or the act of believing] justifies us.**

### Answer

I do not know what I can most admire in this article — the unskillfulness, the malice, or the supine negligence of those who have been its fabricators!

1. Their NEGLIGENCE is apparent in this, that they do not care how and in what words they enunciate the sentiments which they attribute to me; neither do they give themselves any trouble to know what my sentiments are, which yet they are desirous to reprehend.
2. Their UNSKILLFULNESS. Because they do not distinguish the things which ought to be distinguished, and they oppose those things which ought not to be opposed.
3. The MALICE is evident, because they attribute to me those things which I have neither thought nor spoken; or because they involve matters in such a way as to give that which was correctly spoken the appearance of having been uttered in perverseness, that they may discover some grounds for calumny. But, to come to the affair itself.

Though in this article there seem to be only two distinct enunciations, yet in potency they are three, which must also be separated from each other to render the matter intelligible.

- The FIRST is, ‘the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us.’
- SECOND, ‘the righteousness of Christ is imputed for righteousness.’
- THIRD, ‘the act of believing is imputed for righteousness.’

For thus ought they to have spoken, if their purpose was correctly to retain my words; because the expression, ‘justifies us,’ is of wider acceptation than, ‘is imputed for righteousness.’ For God justifies, and it is not imputed for righteousness. Christ, ‘the righteous servant of God, justifies many by his knowledge.’ But that by which He thus does this, is not ‘imputed for righteousness.’

1. With regard to the FIRST. I never said, ‘the righteousness of Christ is not imputed to us.’ Nay, I asserted the contrary in my Nineteenth Public Disputation on *Justification*, Thesis 10. ‘The righteousness by which we are justified before God may in an accommodated sense be called *imputative*, as being righteousness either in the gracious estimation of God, since it does not according to the rigor of right or of law merit that appellation, or as being the righteousness of another, that is, of Christ,

it is made ours by the gracious imputation of God.' I have, it is true, placed these two in alternation. By this very thing I declare, that I do not disapprove of that phrase. 'The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, because it is made ours by the gracious estimation of God,' is tantamount to, 'it is imputed to us;' for 'imputation' is 'a gracious estimation.' But lest any one should seize on these expressions as an occasion for calumny, I say, that I acknowledge, 'the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us' because I think the same thing is contained in the following words of the Apostle, 'God hath made Christ to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him' (2 Cor. v. 21).

2. I have said, that I disapprove of the SECOND enunciation, 'the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us for righteousness.' And why may not I reject a phrase which does not occur in the Scriptures, provided I do not deny any true [*sensum*] signification which can be proved from the Scriptures? But this is the reason of my rejection of that phrase. 'Whatever is imputed *for* righteousness, or *to* righteousness, or *instead of* righteousness, it is not righteousness itself strictly and rigidly taken. But the righteousness of Christ, which He hath performed in obeying the Father, is righteousness itself strictly and rigidly taken. THEREFORE, it is not imputed for righteousness.' For that is the signification of the word 'to impute,' as Piscator against Bellarmine, when treating on Justification (from Romans iv. 4), has well observed and satisfactorily proved.

The matter may be rendered clearer by an example. If a man who owes another a hundred florins, pays this his creditor the hundred which he owes, the creditor will not speak with correctness if he says, 'I impute this to you for payment.' For the debtor will instantly reply, 'I do not care any thing about your imputation;' because he has truly paid the hundred florins, whether the creditor thus esteems it or not. But if the man owe a hundred florins and pay only ten, then the creditor, forgiving him the remainder, may justly say, 'I impute this to you for full payment; I will require nothing more from you.' This is the gracious [*aestimatio*] reckoning of the creditor, which the debtor ought also to acknowledge with a grateful mind. It is such an estimation as I understand as often as I speak about the imputation of the righteousness which is revealed in the Gospel,

- whether *the obedience of Christ* be said to be imputed to us, and to be our righteousness before God,
- or whether *faith* be said to be imputed for righteousness.

There is, therefore, a crafty design latent in this confusion. For if I deny this, their enunciation, they will say I deny *that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us*. If I assent to it, I fall into the absurdity of thinking *that the righteousness of Christ is not righteousness itself*. If they say, that the word 'impute' is received in a different acceptation, let them prove their assertion by an example; and when they have given proof of this, (which will be a work of great difficulty to them), they will have effected nothing. For 'the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us by the gracious estimation of God.' It is imputed, therefore, either by the gracious estimation of God for righteousness; or it is imputed by his [*non gratiosâ*] non-gracious estimation. If it be imputed by His *gracious* estimation for righteousness, (which must be asserted), and if it be imputed by His *non-gracious* estimation; then

it is apparent, in this confusion of these two axioms, that the word 'impute' must be understood ambiguously, and that it has two meanings.

3. The THIRD is thus enunciated: 'Faith, or the act of believing, is imputed for righteousness' which are my own words. But omitting my expressions, they have substituted for them the phrase, 'The act of believing justifies us.' I should say, 'They have done this *in their simplicity*,' if I thought they had not read the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which this phrase is used eleven times, 'Faith, or the act of believing, is imputed for righteousness.' Thus it is said in the third verse, 'Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; that is, *his believing* was thus imputed. Our brethren, therefore, do not reprehend ME, but the APOSTLE, who has employed this phrase so many times in one chapter, and who does not refrain from the use of the other phrase, 'to be justified by faith, and through faith,' in the third and fifth chapters of the same epistle. They ought, therefore, to have reprehended, not the phrase itself, but the signification which I attach to it, if I explain it in a perverted manner. Thus incorrectly should I seem to have explained the Apostle's phrase if I had said, '*The righteousness of Christ* is not imputed to us or does not justify us, but faith, or the act of believing, does.' But I have already replied, that this assertion concerning me is untrue, and I have declared that I believe both these expressions to be true, '*The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us*,' and '*Faith* is imputed for righteousness.' When they place these phrases in opposition to each other, they do this, not from the meaning which I affix to them, but from their own; and, therefore, according to the signification which they give to them severally, they fabricate this calumny, which is an act of iniquity. But they will say, that I understand this phrase, 'Faith is imputed for righteousness,' *in its proper acceptation*, when it must be *figuratively* understood. This they ought, therefore, to have said, because this alone is what they were able to say with truth. Such in fact are my real sentiments on this subject; and the words make for the proper acceptation of the phrase. If a *figure* lies concealed under it, this ought to be proved by those who make the assertion.



## 23 Article XXV (V.)

**The whole of that in which we appear before God, justifies us: But we appear before God, not only by Faith, but also by Works: Therefore, we are justified before God, not only by Faith, but likewise by Works.**

### Answer

A man who is ignorant of those things which [*aguntur*] are here the order of the day, and who reads this article, will undoubtedly think, that, in the point of justification, I favour the party of the Papists, and am their professed defender. Nay, he will suppose, that I have proceeded to such a pitch of impudence, as to have the audacity to maintain a conclusion directly contrary to the words of the Apostle, who says, ‘We conclude, therefore, that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law.’ But when he shall understand the origin of this article, and why it is charged on me, then it will be evident to him that it arises from calumny and from a corruption of my words. I deny, therefore, that I made that syllogism, or ever intended to draw that conclusion, or to propound those things from which such a conclusion might be deduced.

This brief defense would suffice for all upright minds, to give a favourable interpretation, if perchance anything had been spoken which could give occasion to unjust suspicion. But it will be labour well bestowed, for me to transcribe my own words from a certain Disputation on JUSTIFICATION, from which this article has been taken; that it may appear with what kind of fidelity they have made their extract. The Ninth Thesis in it is thus expressed:

From these things, thus laid down according to the Scriptures, we conclude, that JUSTIFICATION, when used for the act of a judge, is either purely the imputation of righteousness, [*factam*] bestowed, *through mercy* from the throne of grace in Christ the Propitiation, on a sinner, but on one who believes; or that man is justified before God, *of debt*, according to the rigor of justice, without any forgiveness. Because the Papists deny the latter, they ought to concede the former. And this is so far true, that, how highly soever any one of the saints may be endowed with Faith, Hope, and Charity, — and how numerous soever and excellent may be the works of Faith, Hope, and Charity, which he has performed, — yet he will not obtain from God, the Judge, a sentence of Justification, unless He quit the tribunal of His severe justice, and place Himself in the throne of Grace, and out of it pronounce a sentence of absolution in his favour, and unless the Lord of his Mercy and Pity, graciously account for righteousness the whole of that good with which the Saint appears before Him. For woe to a life of the greatest innocence, if it be judged without

mercy! This truth even the Papists seem to acknowledge, who assert, that the works of the saints cannot stand before the judgment of God, unless they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ (*Public Disput.* XIX).

Thus far my Thesis. Could any person imagine that the major in this article can, according to my sentiments and design, be deduced from it, ‘The whole of that in which we appear before God, justifies us;’ how can this be deduced, when I say, ‘that not even this good, which the Papists are able or know how to attribute to the most holy men, can obtain from God a sentence of justification, unless He, through mercy from the throne of grace, reckon this graciously for righteousness.’ Who does not perceive, that I grant this through sufferance and concession?’ ‘God considers and esteems for righteousness all this good in which, the Papists say, the saints appear before God.’ I yield this, that I may the more firmly confute them; and I thus obtain, ‘that not even that total can be accounted for righteousness, except graciously and through mercy.’ This conduct is real malignity, and a violent distortion of my words; on account of which I have indeed no small occasion given to me of complaining before God of this injury. But I contain myself, lest my complaint to God should be detrimental to their souls; I would rather beseech God to be pleased to grant them a better mind.

The matter, [with regard to me], stands thus; as if any one should say to a Monk or a Pharisee, who was boasting of his virtues and works of his faith, hope, love, obedience, voluntary chastity and similar excellences: ‘O man! unless God were to omit the severity of his [*judicii*] justice, and unless from the throne of Grace, He were to pronounce a sentence of absolution concerning thee, unless He were graciously to reckon all that good of thine, however great it may be, and thus to account it for righteousness, thou wouldst not be able to stand before Him, or to be justified.’ — I declare, and before Christ I make the declaration, that this was my [*mentem*] meaning. And every man is the best interpreter of his own expressions. But let it be allowed, that I have said these things from my own sentiments; was this proposition [of their fabrication] to be deduced from my words? If it was, they ought to have proceeded thus according to scientific method. They ought to have briefly laid down the enunciation which I employed, and which might be in this form: ‘Unless God graciously account for righteousness the whole of this good in which a saint appears before Him, that saint cannot be justified before God.’ From which will be deduced this affirmative proposition, ‘If God graciously accounts for righteousness this good in which a holy man appears, then this holy man can be justified before God,’ or ‘he will then be justified before God.’ The word ‘the whole,’ has a place in the negative proposition; because it *conduces to the exaggeration*. But it ought not to have a place in that which is affirmative. Let this question, however, have a place here: Why have my brethren omitted these words? ‘The Lord graciously of his mercy, from the throne of his Grace, having omitted the severity of judgment, accounts that good for righteousness.’ And why have they proposed only these? ‘The whole of that in which we appear before God, justifies us.’ This is, indeed, not to deny the fact; but a pretext is thus sought for calumny, under the equivocation of the word ‘justifies,’ as justification may be either of grace, or of debt or severe judgment. But I have excluded that which is *of debt or severe judgment from my expressions*, and have included only *the Justification which is of grace*. Let these remarks suffice for the Major Proposition.

I now proceed to the assumption that they have subjoined to this Proposition, which is theirs and not mine. It reads thus: ‘But we appear before God, not only by Faith, but



also by Works' Then is it your pleasure, my brethren, *to appear thus before God?* David was not of this opinion, when he said: 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant. For in thy sight shall no man living be justified,' or 'shall justify himself' (Psalm cxliii. 2). Which is thus rendered by the Apostle Paul, 'For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified' (Gal. ii. 16). But perhaps you will say, that you do not appear before God 'by the works of the law, but *by works produced from faith and love.*' I wish you to explain to me, what it is *to appear by faith,* and what *to appear by works;* and whether it can possibly happen, that *a man may appear both by faith and works.* I know, the saints who will be placed before the tribunal of the Divine Justice, have had Faith, and through Faith have performed good Works. But, I think, they appear and stand before God with this confidence or trust, 'that God [*proposuit*] has set forth his Son Jesus Christ as a Propitiation through Faith in his blood, that they may thus be justified by the Faith of Jesus Christ, through the remission of sins.' I do not read, that Christ is constituted a Propitiation *through Works in his blood,* that we may also *be justified by Works.*

My desire indeed is, to appear before the tribunal of God thus, [with this Confidence or Trust in Christ, as a Propitiation through Faith in his blood] and 'to be graciously judged through mercy from the throne of grace'. If I be otherwise judged, I know I shall be condemned; which sore judgment may the Lord, who is full of clemency and pity, avert according to his great mercy, even from you, my brethren, though you thus speak, whether the words which you use convey your own meaning, or whether you attribute this meaning to me. I also might thus draw wonderful conclusions from this assumption, which is laid down, if an accusation were to be set aside by retaliation or a recriminating charge, and not by innocence. But I will not resort to such a course, lest I seem [*paria referre*] to return evil for evil; though I might do this with a somewhat greater show of reason.



## 24 Article XXVI (VI.)

**Faith is not the instrument of Justification.**

### **Answer**

In the enunciation of this article is given another proof of desperate and [*profligatae*] finished negligence. What man is so utterly senseless as universally to deny, that Faith can be called ‘an instrument,’ since it receives and apprehends the promises which God has given, and does also in this way concur to justification, But who, on the other hand, will venture to say, that, in the business of justification, faith has no other relation than that of an instrument? It should therefore be explained, how faith is an instrument, and how, as an instrument, it concurs to justification.

It is, at least, not the instrument of God; not that which He uses to justify us. Yet this is the meaning first intended to be conveyed by these words, when rigidly taken. For God is the primary Cause of justification. But since justification is an estimate of the mind, although made at the command of the Will, it is not performed by an instrument. For it is when God wills and acts by his Power, that He employs instruments. Then, in these words, ‘Believe in Christ, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee,’ or, which is the same thing, ‘and thou shalt be justified;’ I say, that Faith is *the requirement of God*, and *the act of the believer* when he answers the requirement. But they will say, ‘that it is the act of apprehending and accepting, and that therefore, this faith bears relation to an instrument?’ I reply, Faith *as a quality* has in that passage relation to the mode of an instrument; but the acceptance or apprehension itself is *an act*, and indeed one of obedience, yielded to the gospel. Let that phrase likewise which is so often used by the Apostle in Romans vi, be seriously considered, ‘Faith is imputed for righteousness.’ Is this FAITH *as an instrument*, or *as an act*? St Paul resolves the question, by a quotation from the book of Genesis, when he says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness.’ The thing itself, as it is explained by our brethren, also solves the question. ‘Faith is imputed for righteousness on account of Christ, the object which it apprehends.’ Let this be granted. Yet the apprehending of Christ is nearer than the instrument which apprehends, or by which He is apprehended. But apprehending is an act; Therefore, Faith, not as it is *an instrument*, but as it is *an act*, is imputed for righteousness, although such imputation be made on account of Him whom it apprehends. In brief, [*potentia*] the Capability or the Quality by which any thing is apprehended, and the apprehension itself, have each relation to the object which is to be apprehended, the former *a mediate* relation, the latter *an immediate*. The latter, therefore, is a more modest metonymy, as being derived from that which is nearer; even when it is granted that this phrase, — ‘it is imputed for righteousness’ — must be explained by a metonymy. The

man, then, who says, 'the act of faith is imputed for righteousness, does not deny that faith as an instrument concurs to justification.

It is evident, therefore, from this answer, that our brethren fabricate and 'get up' articles of this kind without the least care or solicitude, and charge me with them. This, I think, will be acknowledged even by themselves, if they examine how they manufactured those Nine Questions<sup>1</sup> which, two years ago, by the consent of their Lordships the Curators of our University, they endeavoured to offer to the Professors of Divinity, that they might obtain their reply to them. Gravity and sobriety are highly becoming in Divines, and serious solicitude is required to the completion of such great matters as these.

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<sup>1</sup>Chapter 31 on page 97

## 25 Article XXVII (VII.)

**Faith is not the pure gift of God, but depends partly on the grace of God, and partly on the powers of Free Will; that, if a man will, he may believe or not believe.**

### Answer

I never said this, I never thought of saying it, and, relying on God's grace, I never will enunciate my sentiments on matters of this description in a manner thus desperate and confused. I simply affirm, that this enunciation is false, 'Faith is not the pure gift of God;' that this is likewise false, if taken according to the rigor of the words, 'Faith depends partly on the grace of God, and partly on the powers of Free Will' and that this is also false when thus enunciated, 'If a man will, he can believe or not believe.' If they suppose, that I hold some opinions from which these assertions may by good consequence be deduced, why do they not quote my words? It is a species of injustice to attach to any person those consequences, which one may frame out of his words as if they were his sentiments. But the injustice is still more flagrant, if these conclusions cannot by good consequence be deduced from what he has said. Let my brethren, therefore, make the experiment, whether they can deduce such conseqtaries as these, from the things which I teach; but let the experiment be made in my company, and not by themselves in their own circle. For that sport will be vain, equally void of profit or of victory; as boys sometimes feel, when they play alone with dice for what already belongs to them.

For the proper explanation of this matter, a discussion *on the Concurrence and Agreement of Divine grace and of Free Will, or of the human Will*, would be required; but because this would be a labour much too prolix, I shall not now make the attempt. To explain the matter I will employ a *simile*, which yet, I confess, is very *dissimilar*; but its dissimilitude is greatly in favour of my sentiments. A rich man bestows, on a poor and famishing beggar, alms by which he may be able to maintain himself and his family. Does it cease to be a pure gift, because the beggar extends his hand to receive it? Can it be said with propriety, that 'the alms depended partly on *the liberality* of the Donor, and partly on *the liberty* of the Receiver,' though the latter would not have possessed the alms unless he had received it by stretching out his hand? Can it be correctly said, *because the beggar is always prepared to receive*, that 'he can have the alms, or not have it, just as he pleases?' If these assertions cannot be truly made about a beggar who receives alms, how much less can they be made about the gift of faith, for the receiving of which far more acts of Divine grace are required! This is the question which it will be requisite to discuss, 'what acts of Divine grace are required to produce faith in man?' If I omit any act which is necessary, or which concurs, [in the production of faith], let it be demonstrated from the Scriptures, and I will add it to the rest.

It is not our wish to do the least injury to Divine Grace, by taking from it any thing that belongs to it. But let my brethren take care, that they themselves neither inflict an injury on Divine Justice, by attributing that to it which it refuses; nor on Divine Grace, by transforming it into something else, which cannot be called GRACE. That I may in one word intimate what they must prove, such a transformation they effect when they represent 'the sufficient and efficacious grace, which is necessary to salvation, to be irresistible,' or as acting with such potency that it cannot be resisted by any free creature.

## 26 Article XXVIII (VIII.)

**The grace sufficient for salvation is conferred on the Elect, and on the Non-elect; that, if they will, they may believe or not believe, may be saved or not saved.**

### Answer

Our brethren here also manifest the same negligence. They take no pains to know what my sentiments are; they are not careful in examining what truth there is in my opinions; and they exercise no discretion about the words in which they enunciate my sentiments and their own. They know that I use the word 'Election' in two senses.

1. For the decree by which God resolves to justify believers and to condemn unbelievers, and which is called by the Apostle, 'the purpose of God according to election' (Rom. ix. 11).
2. And for the decree by which He resolves to elect these or those nations and men with the design of communicating to them the means of faith, but to pass by other nations and men.

Yet, without this distinction, they fasten these sentiments on me; when, by its aid, I am enabled to affirm, not only, Sufficient Grace is conferred on, or rather is *offered* to, the Elect and the Non-elect; but also, 'Sufficient Grace is not offered to any except the Elect.'

1. 'It is offered to the Elect and the Non-elect,' because it is offered to unbelievers, whether they will afterwards believe or not believe.
2. 'It is offered to none except the Elect,' because, by that very thing which is offered to them, they cease to be of the number of those of whom it is said, 'He suffered them to walk in their own ways' (Acts xiv. 16); and, 'He hath not dealt so with any nation' (Psalm cxlvii. 20).

And who shall compel me to use words of their prescribing, unless proof be brought from scripture that the words are to be thus and in no other way received?

I now proceed to the other words of the article. 'That, if they will, they may believe or not believe, be saved or not saved.' I say, in two different senses may these words be received, 'if they will, they may believe,' that is, either by their own powers, or as they are excited and assisted by this grace. 'Or they may not believe,' while rejecting this grace by their own free will, and resisting it. 'They may be saved or not saved,' that is,

- *saved* by the admission and right use of grace,
- *not saved* by their own [*malitia*] wickedness, rejecting that without which they cannot be saved.

To the whole together I reply, that nothing is declared in these words, in whatever manner they may be understood, which St Augustine himself and his followers would not willingly have acknowledged as true. I say, in these words are enunciated the very sentiments of St Augustine; yet he was the chief champion against the Pelagian heresy, being accounted in that age its most successful combatant. For in his treatise *on Nature and Grace* (cap. 67), St Augustine speaks thus:

Since He is every where present, who, by many methods through the creature that is subservient to Him as his Lord, can call him who is averse, can teach a believer, can comfort him who hopes, can exhort the diligent man, can aid him who strives, and can lend an attentive ear to him who deprecates; it is not imputed to thee as a fault, that thou art unwillingly ignorant, but that thou neglectest to inquire after that of which thou art ignorant; not that thou dost not collect and bind together the shattered and wounded members, but that thou despisest Him who is willing to heal thee.

The book entitled *The Vocation of the Gentiles*, which is attributed with a greater semblance of probability to Prosper, than to St Ambrose, has the following passage:

On all men has always been bestowed some measure of heavenly doctrine, which, though it was of more sparing and hidden grace, was yet sufficient, as the Lord has judged, to serve some men for a remedy, and all men for a testimony (Lib. 2, c. 5).

In the commencement of the ninth chapter of the same book, he explains the whole matter by saying:

The Grace of God has indeed [*principaliter*] the decided pre-eminence in our justifications, persuading us by exhortations, admonishing us by examples, affrighting us by dangers, exciting us by miracles, by giving understanding, by inspiring counsel, and by illuminating the heart itself and imbuing it with the affections of faith. But the will of man is likewise subjoined to it and is united with it, which has been excited to this by the before mentioned succours, that it may co-operate in the Divine work within itself, and may begin [*exercere ad meritum*] to follow after the reward which, by the heavenly seed, it has conceived for the object of its desire, ascribing the failure to its own mutability, and the success (if the issue be prosperous) to the aid of grace. This aid is afforded to all men, by innumerable methods both secret and manifest; and the rejection of this assistance by many persons, is to be ascribed to their negligence; but its reception by many persons, is both of Divine grace and of the human will.

I do not produce these passages, as if I thought that either my brethren or I must abide by the sentiments of the Fathers, but only for the purpose of removing from myself the crime of Pelagianism in this matter.



## 27 Article XXIX (IX.)

**Believers can perfectly fulfill the Law, and live in the world without sin.**

### Answer

This is what I never said. But when a certain person once, in a public disputation on the *Baptism of Infants*, was endeavouring, by a long digression, to bring me to the point

- either to declare that believers could perfectly fulfill the law of God,
- or that they could not

I declined an answer, but quoted the opinion of St Augustine, from the Second Book of his Treatise *On the Demerits and Remission of Sins, against the Pelagians*. That passage, I will here transcribe, that I may defend myself against the charge of Pelagianism; because, I perceive that the men with whom I have to do, consider even these sentiments to be Pelagian, though they can on no count whatever, be reckoned such.

St Augustine says:

We must not instantly with an incautious rashness, oppose those who assert that it is possible for man to be in this life without sin. For if we deny the possibility of this, we shall derogate both from *the free will of man*, which desires to be in such a perfect state by willing it; and from *the Power or Mercy of God*, who effects it by the assistance which He affords. But it is one question *whether it be possible*, and another *whether such a man actually exists*. It is one question, *If such a perfect man is not in existence when it is possible, why is he not?* And it is another, not only *whether there is any one who has never had any sin at all*, but likewise, *whether there could at any time have been such a man, or that it is now possible?* In this fourfold proposal of questions, if I be asked 'is it possible for a man to exist in the present life without sin;' I shall confess, *that it is possible by the grace of God, and by man's free will* (cap. 6).

In another of his works, St Augustine says:

Pelagius disputes correctly, *that they confess it not to be impossible, by the very circumstance of either many or all persons wishing to do it* [perfectly to fulfill the law of God]; but let him confess whence it is possible, and peace is instantly established. For the possibility arises from the grace of God through Christ Jesus, etc. (*On Nature and Grace, against the Pelagians*, cap. 59, 60).

And in a subsequent passage:

For it may be made a question among true and pious Christians, *Has there ever been, is there now, or can there be, in this life, any man who lives so justly as to have no sin at all?* Whosoever doubts about the possibility of the existence of such a person *after this life*, he is destitute of understanding. But I am unwilling to enter into a contest, about this possibility even in the present life.

See the paragraphs which immediately succeed in the same chapter.

And in the 69th chapter of that work, he says:

By the very thing, by which we most firmly believe that a just and good God could not command impossibilities, we are admonished both of what we may do in things easy of accomplishment, and of what we may ask in matters of difficulty; because all things are easy to charity, etc.

I do not oppose this opinion of St Augustine; but I do not enter into a contest about any part of the whole matter. For I think the time may be far more happily and usefully employed in prayers to obtain what is lacking in each of us, and in serious admonitions that every one endeavour to proceed and to press forward towards the mark of perfection, than when spent in such disputations.

But my brethren will say, that in the 114th question of our Catechism this very subject is treated, and that it is there asked, ‘Can those persons who are converted to God, perfectly observe the Divine Commands?’ The answer subjoined is, [*minime*] ‘By no means.’ — To this observation I reply, that I do not say anything against it; but that the reason of the negative answer [or scriptural proof added] is about *the act*, when the question itself is about *the possibility*; and that, therefore, from this, nothing is proved. It is also well known that this answer had been rejected by some persons; and that it was only by the intervention of the brethren, who added an explanation to it, that it afterwards obtained the approbation of the same individuals. But I shall be perfectly willing to enter into a conference with my brethren about this matter, whenever it shall be convenient; and I hope we shall easily agree in opinion.

## 28 Article XXX (X.)

**It may admit of Discussion, whether Semi-Pelagianism is not real Christianity.**

### **Answer**

In a certain lecture I said, that it would be easy, under the pretext of Pelagianism, to condemn all those things of which we do not approve, if we may invent [*semi*] *half, quarter, three-fourths, four-fifths Pelagianism*, and so upwards. And I added, that it might admit of discussion, *whether Semi-Pelagian is not real Christianity*. By these remarks it was not my wish to patronize Pelagian doctrine; but I was desirous to intimate, that something might be accounted as Semi-Pelagianism which does not depart from the truth of Christian doctrine. For as, when a departure is once made from the truth, the descent towards falsehood becomes more and more rapid; so, by receding from falsehood, it is possible for men to arrive at truth, which is often accustomed to stand *as the mean* between two extremes of falsehood. Such indeed is the state of the matter in Pelagianism and Manicheism. If any man can enter on a middle way between these two heresies, he will be a true Catholic, neither inflicting an injury on Grace, as the Pelagians do, nor on Free Will as do the Manichees. Let the Refutation be perused which St Augustine wrote against both these heresies, and it will appear that he makes this very acknowledgement. For this reason it has happened, that, for the sake of confirming their different opinions, St Augustine's words, when writing against the Manichees, have been frequently quoted by the Pelagians; and those which he wrote against the Pelagians, have been quoted by the Manichees.

This, therefore, is what I intended to convey; and that my brethren may understand my meaning, I declare openly, 'that it will be quite as easy a task for me to convict the sentiments of some among them of Manicheism, and even of Stoicism, as they will be really capable of convicting others of Pelagianism, whom they suspect of holding that error.' But I wish us all to abstain from odious names of this description, as they are employed without producing any benefit. For he who is accused will either deny that his sentiments are the same as those of Pelagius; or, if he acknowledges the existence of a similarity, he will say that Pelagius was wrongly condemned by the Church. It would be better then to omit these epithets, and to confer solely about the matter itself; unless, approaching to the opinion of the Papists, we hold that what has once been determined by the Church, cannot be drawn into controversy.



## 29 Article XXXI (XI.)

**It is not correctly said in the Catechism, that ‘God is angry with us for [*innata*] birth-sins;’ because original sin is a punishment. But whatever is a punishment is not properly a sin.**

### Answer

Nearly two months ago, a certain minister of God’s word, came to me, desirous, as he declared, to confer with me about the opinion which I held concerning the Catechism and Dutch Confession being subjected to examination in our National Synod. On this subject we had some conversation together, and I concluded the expression of my opinion with this syllogism:

- Every human writing which is not [αυτοπιστον] in itself entitled to implicit credit, not authentic, and not divine, may be examined, and indeed ought to be; when it can be done in order, and after a legitimate manner, that is, in a Synod, to which [the consideration of] these writings belongs.
- But such productions are the Catechism and our Confession.
- THEREFORE, they may and ought to be subjected to examination.

When he had wearied himself in opposing a few things to this syllogism, which I soon dispersed by the clearest light of truth, he began to inquire what [objections] they were which I had against the Confession and Catechism; I replied, that I had nothing against those formularies, for that would be an act of prejudging, which I would not take upon myself; but that there were matters in those two productions, about which it was my wish to confer in a legitimate and orderly manner, with my brethren at their own time, in a Synod, whether on every point they be agreeable to the scriptures, or whether they dissent in any respect from them. For this purpose, that if, after a serious and strict examination, they be found to agree with the scriptures, they may be approved and confirmed by recent and fresh sanctions; or that, if found to dissent from them, they may be corrected as commodiously as possible.

He became urgent with me, therefore, and requested that I would disclose to him those points about which I was desirous to confer; and he declared, that he asked this favour for no other reason than that he might be able himself to think seriously about them. Unwilling positively to deny this his request, I began to produce some parts of the Confession, and especially the Fourteenth Article. But he said, ‘that he made small account of this, because he thought something might easily be discovered in the Confession, which did not perfectly and in every respect correspond with the scriptures, at least with regard to its phraseology, for it was the composition of only a few persons, and in fact was written

in the earliest times of the Reformation from Popery; and that he perceived very little danger in the Confession being corrected in some passages, since it was not much in use among the people.’

But when he began to be still more urgent concerning the Catechism, desirous in that particular likewise to gratify him, I adduced some passages, and, among others, the Answer to the Tenth Question, in which God is said ‘by horrid methods to be angry both on account of birth-sins, and on account of those also which we ourselves commit,’ etc. I said two things, in these words, might admit of discussion.

1. Whether we could correctly call [this universal taint in our nature] ‘birth-sins’ in the plural number.

I had scarcely made this remark, when he, without waiting for any further explanation, said, ‘that on one occasion, while he was explaining the Catechism to some students, he had himself begun to think whether it was a good and proper phrase; but that he had defended it by this argument — *The Catechism employs the plural number on account of original sin itself, and on account of the sin committed by Adam which was the cause of that original sin.*’ But as I considered that kind of defense to be unworthy of any confutation, I said, it was better for him at once to own that these words required emendation, than to give such an explanation of them.

After this conversation, I added another remark.

2. It may admit of discussion, whether God could be angry on account of original sin which was born with us, since it seemed to be inflicted on us by God as a punishment of the actual sin which had been committed by Adam and by us in Him.

For, in that case, the progress would be infinite, if God, angry on account of the *actual* sin of Adam, were to punish us with this *original* sin; were He again to be angry with us for this original sin, and inflict on us another punishment; and, for a similar cause were He a third time to be angry on account of that second punishment which had been inflicted, *guilt* and *punishment* thus mutually and frequently succeeding each other, without the intervention of any actual sin.

When to this observation he replied, ‘that still it was sin.’ I said, I did not deny that it was *sin*, but it was not *actual* sin. And I quoted the seventh chapter of *the Epistle to the Romans*, in which the Apostle treats on the sin, and says that ‘it produces in the unregenerate all manner of concupiscence,’ thus intimating that we must distinguish between actual sin, and that which was *the cause of other sins*, and which, on this very account might be denominated ‘sin.’

Matters were at that interview discussed between us in this placid manner, and for the purpose which I have just stated; and I know that I never spoke upon this subject in any other place. Yet this our conversation was related to a certain learned man, the very same day on which it occurred, either by the minister himself, or by some one who had heard it from him. I had it from the lips of this learned man himself; who urged it against me as an objection, within a few days after the minister and I had held this discourse: for the minister had resided at this learned man’s house, [during his stay in Leyden].

Is it equitable that things which are thus discussed among brethren for the sake of conference, should be instantly disseminated, and publicly proclaimed as heretical? I confess

that I am devoid of all discernment, if such conduct as this is not the very violation of the law of all familiarity and friendship. Yet these are the persons who complain, that I decline to confer with them; that, when I am calmly asked, I refuse to declare my sentiments; and that I hold their minds in suspense!!

To this article, therefore, I briefly reply: It is false that I said, 'that this is not correctly expressed in the Catechism.' For I told that minister openly, [*non ferre praejudicium*] that I would not prejudge the matter; that I was desirous to wait for the judgment of my brethren on matters of this kind, and on others which were comprised in the Catechism and Confession; and that, after things had been thus maturely and accurately weighed, something determinate might be concluded.

But a previous conference of this description seems to be attended with some utility on this account, — it prevents any man from offering to the Synod itself for examination and adjudication those matters which, by such a private conversation as this, he might understand to have no difficulties in them. Let the brethren recall to mind what was asked of the Professors of Divinity in our University, by the Synod of South Holland, held at Gorchum, and let them compare it among themselves. We are asked diligently to read through the Confession and Catechism, and, if we find anything in them which merits animadversion, to announce the same seasonably and in order. And this, on my own part, I promised to do. For this purpose, is not a private conference with brethren highly useful, that what can be removed by it may not be proposed to the Synod for discussion, But that minister and I had known each other for many years; I had also long held epistolary correspondence with him, and had conversed with him on the articles of faith. On this account therefore, I thought that I ought to comply with his request, as an experiment whether he could expedite the affair.





## 30 Conclusion

This then is the answer which I have thought proper to make, at present, to the THIRTY-ONE ARTICLES that have been objected against me. If I have not given satisfaction by it to some men, I am prepared to confer in order with any of them upon these subjects and others which pertain to the Christian Religion, for this purpose,

- that we may either agree in our sentiments; or,
- if this result cannot be obtained by a conference, that we bear with each other, when it has become evident how far we severally proceed together in the matter of religion, and what things they are of which we approve or disapprove, and that these points of difference are not of such a description as to forbid professors of the same religion to hold different sentiments about them.

Some persons perhaps will reproach me with ‘appearing sometimes to answer with doubt and desitation, when it is the duty of a Divine and a Professor of Theology to be fully persuaded about those things which he will teach to others, and not to fluctuate in his opinions.’ To these persons I wish to reply.

1. The most learned man, and he who is most conversant with the Scriptures, is ignorant of many things, and is always but a scholar in the school of Christ and of the Scriptures. But one, who is thus ignorant of many things, cannot, without hesitation, give answer in reference to all things about which an opportunity or necessity for speaking is presented either by adversaries or by those who wish to ask and ascertain his sentiments by private or public conference and disputation. For it is better for him to speak somewhat doubtfully, than [*affirmanter*] dogmatically, about those things of which he has no certain knowledge; and to intimate that he himself requires daily progress, and seeks for instruction as well as they. For I think no one has proceeded to such a pitch of audacity, as to style himself a master that is ignorant of nothing, and that indulges no doubts about any matter whatever.
2. It is not everything which becomes a subject of controversy that is of equal importance. Some things are of such a nature as to render it unlawful for any man to feel a doubt concerning them, if he have any wish to be called by the name of Christian. But there are other things which are not of the same dignity, and about which those who treat on catholic sentiments [such orthodox doctrines as are held by all real Christians], have dissented from each other, without any breach of truth and Christian peace. Of what description those subjects may be which are discussed in these Articles, and about which I have appeared to answer with hesitation, and whether they be of absolute necessity, may likewise become in due time a topic of discussion.
3. My reply [to these thirty-one Articles] is not peremptory: Not that I have in them said anything against conscience, but because I did not consider it requisite to bring

forward, in the first instance, all those things which I might be able to say. I accounted my answer sufficient, and more than sufficient, for all those objections, which have not the slightest foundation on any reasons whatsoever; not only because they were untruly charged against me, but because they did not impinge against the truth of the Scriptures. In the greater number of these Articles, I might have discharged the whole of my duty, in simply denying them, and in demanding proof. But I have gone further than this, that I might in some degree give satisfaction, and that I might besides challenge my brethren to a conference, if they should think it necessary. This I will never decline, provided it be lawfully instituted, and in such a manner as to inspire hopes of any benefits to be derived from it. If after that conference it be discovered that,

- either because I am ignorant of necessary things which ought to be taught in the Church and in the University;
- or because I hold unsound opinions about articles on which some importance is placed for obtaining salvation and for the illustration of divine glory;
- or because I doubt concerning such things as ought to be delivered dogmatically and inculcated with seriousness and rigor,

if for these reasons it be discovered that, according to this our unhappy [natural] condition, I am unworthy to hold any office in the Church or University, (for who is sufficient for these things), I will, without reluctance, resign my situation, and give place to a man possessed of greater merit.

But I wish to advise my brethren, particularly those of them who are my juniors, and who have not ‘their senses so much exercised’ in the Scriptures as to be enabled to deliver out of those Scriptures determinate opinions about all things, that they be not too bold in asserting anything, of which when required to give their reasons, they will be able with great difficulty to produce them; and, besides, that they be sedulously on their guard lest, after they have strenuously affirmed anything which I call in doubt without employing the contrary affirmation, and it be discovered that the arguments which I employ in justification of my doubts are stronger than those on which they rely in that their affirmation, they incur the charge of immodesty and arrogance among men of prudence, and from this very circumstance be accounted unworthy of the place which they hold with so much presumption. For it becomes a Bishop and a Teacher of the Church, not only to hold fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by his sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers (Tit. i. 9, 7), but likewise not to be given to self-will, arrogance, and boldness. Into which faults novices easily fall (1 Tim. iii. 6), who, ‘by their inexperience, are unacquainted with the vast difficulty with which the eye of the inward man is healed, that it may be enabled to look upon its sun; with the sighs and groans by which we are able in any small degree to attain to an understanding of God; with the labour necessary for the discovery of truth; and with the difficulty of avoiding errors.’<sup>1</sup> Let them consider, that nothing is more easy for them, than not only to assert, but also to think, that they have discovered the truth. But they will themselves at length acknowledge the real difficulties with which the discovery is attended, when with seriousness and earnestness they enter into a conference about the matters in controversy, and

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<sup>1</sup>Augustinus ad Epist. Manichaei quam vocant Fundamental.

have after a rigid examination discussed all those things which may have been alleged on both sides.



# 31 Nine Questions

EXHIBITED, BY THE DEPUTIES OF THE SYNOD, TO THEIR LORDSHIPS THE CURATORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEYDEN, FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING AN ANSWER TO EACH OF THEM FROM THE PROFESSORS OF DIVINITY; AND THE REPLIES WHICH JAMES ARMINIUS GAVE TO THEM, IN NOVEMBER, 1605. WITH OTHER NINE OPPOSITE QUESTIONS

## THE NINE QUESTIONS

### I

*Which is first, ELECTION, or FAITH TRULY FORESEEN, so that God elected his people according to faith foreseen?*

## NINE OPPOSITE QUESTIONS

### I

Is the decree 'for bestowing Faith on any one,' previous to that by which is appointed 'the Necessity of Faith to salvation?'

## ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

The equivocation in the word '*Election*,' makes it impossible to answer this question in any other manner, than by distinction. If therefore 'Election' denotes 'the decree which is according to election concerning the justification and salvation of believers.' I say Election is prior to Faith, as being that by which Faith is appointed as the means of obtaining salvation. But if it signifies 'the decree by which God determines to bestow salvation on some one,' then Faith foreseen is prior to Election. For as believers alone are saved, so only believers are predestinated to salvation. But the Scriptures know no Election, by which God precisely and absolutely has determined to save anyone without having first considered him as a believer. For such an Election would be at variance with the decree by which he hath determined to save none but believers.

### II

*If it be said, 'that God, by his eternal decree, has determined and governs all things and every thing, even the depraved wills of men, to [certos] appointed good ends,' does it follow from this, that God is the author of sin?*

### II

Is 'to determine or direct all things and every thing, even the depraved wills of men, to appointed good ends,' the same thing as 'to determine that man be made [*vitiosus*] corrupt, by which a way may be opened for executing God's absolute decree concerning damning some men through wrath, and saving others through mercy?'

## ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

Sin is the transgression of the law; therefore, God will be the author of sin, if He cause any man to transgress the law. This is done by denying or taking away what is necessary for fulfilling the law, or by impelling men to sin. But if this ‘determination’ be that of a will which is already depraved, since it does not signify the denying or the removing of grace nor a corrupt impelling to sin, it follows, that the consequence of this cannot be that God is the author of sin. But if this ‘determination’ denote the decree of God by which He resolved that the will should become depraved, and that man should commit sin, then it follows from this that God is the author of sin.

III

*Does original sin, of itself, render man [reum] obnoxious to eternal death, even without the addition of any actual sin? Or is the guilt of original sin taken away from all and every one by the benefits of Christ the Mediator?*

III

If some men are condemned solely on account of the sin committed by Adam, and others on account of their rejection of the Gospel, are there not two peremptory decrees concerning the damnation of men, and two judgments, one Legal, the other Evangelical?

ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

Those things which in this question are placed in opposition to each other, easily agree together. For original sin can render man obnoxious to eternal death, and its guilt can be taken away from all men by Christ. Indeed, in order that guilt may be removed, it is necessary that men be previously rendered guilty. But to reply to each part separately: It is perversely said, that ‘original sin renders a man obnoxious to death,’ since that sin is the punishment of Adam’s actual sin, which punishment is preceded by guilt, that is, an obligation to the punishment denounced by the law. With regard to the second member of the question, it is very easily answered by the distinction of the soliciting, obtaining, and the application of the benefits of Christ. For as a participation of Christ’s benefits consists in faith alone, it follows that, if among these benefits ‘deliverance from this guilt’ be one, believers only are delivered from it, since they are those upon whom the wrath of God does not abide.

IV

*Are the works of the unregenerate, which proceed from the powers of nature, so pleasing to God, as to induce Him on account of them to confer supernatural and saving grace on those who perform them?*

IV

Are a serious [*sensus*] consciousness of sin, and an *initial* fear so pleasing to God, that by them He is induced to forgive sins, and to create a *filial* fear?

ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

Christ says, ‘To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.’ Not, indeed, because such is the worthiness and the

excellence of the use of any blessing conferred by God, either according to nature or to grace, that God should be moved by its merits to confer greater benefits; but, because such are the benignity and liberality of God, that, though these works are unworthy, yet He rewards them with a larger blessing. Therefore, as the word [*placeo*] '*pleasing*' admits of two meanings, we can reply to the question proposed in two ways

- either *affirmatively*, if that word be viewed as signifying 'to please,' 'to find favour in his eyes,' and 'to obtain complacency for itself;'
- or *negatively* if '*placeo*' be received for that which it also signifies, 'to please by its own excellence.'

Yet it might be said, that good works are rewarded, in a moral view, not so much through the powers of nature, as by some operation in them of the Holy Spirit.

V

*Can God now, in his own right, require faith from fallen man in Christ, which he cannot have of himself? But does God bestow on all and every one, to whom the Gospel is preached, sufficient grace by which they may believe, if they will?*

V

Can God require that man to believe in Jesus Christ, for whom He has determined by an absolute decree that Christ should not die, and to whom by the same decree He has determined to refuse the grace necessary for believing?

#### ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

The parts of this question are not opposed to each other; on the contrary, they are at the most perfect agreement. So that the latter clause may be considered the rendering of a reason, why God may require from fallen man faith in Christ, which he cannot have of himself. For God may require this, since he has determined to bestow on man sufficient grace by which he may believe. Perhaps, therefore, the question may be thus corrected: 'Can God, now, in his own right, demand from fallen man faith in Christ, which he cannot have of himself, though God neither bestows on him, nor is ready to bestow, sufficient grace by which he may believe?' This question will be answered by a direct negative. God cannot by any right demand from fallen man faith in Christ, which he cannot have of himself, except God has either bestowed, or is ready to bestow, sufficient grace by which he may believe if he will. Nor do I perceive what is false in that reply, or to what heresy it has affinity. It has no alliance with the Pelagian heresy: for Pelagius maintained, that with the exception of the preaching of the Gospel, no internal grace is required to produce faith in the minds of men. But what is of more consequence, this reply is not opposed to St Augustine's doctrine of Predestination; 'yet this doctrine of his, we do not account it necessary to establish,' as Innocent, the Roman Pontiff, has observed.

VI

*Is justifying faith the effect and the [purum] mere gift of God alone, who calls, illuminates, and reforms the will? and is it [proprium] peculiar to the elect alone from all eternity?*

VI

Can that be called a *mere gift* which, though offered by the pure liberality of Him who makes the offer, is still capable of being rejected by him to whom it is offered? But does a voluntary acceptance render it unworthy of the name of a *gift*? It may likewise be asked, 'Is faith bestowed on these who are to be saved? Or is salvation bestowed on those who have faith?' Or can both these questions be answered affirmatively in a different respect? If they can, how is it then that there is not in those decrees a circle, in which nothing is first and nothing last?

ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

A double question requires a double answer.

1. To the first I reply, Faith is the effect of God illuminating the mind and sealing the heart, and it is his mere gift.
2. To the second I answer, by making a distinction in the word *Election*. If it be understood as signifying *Election to salvation*; since this, according to the scriptures, is the election of believers, it cannot be said, 'Faith is bestowed on the elect, or on those who are to be saved,' but that 'believers are elected and saved.' But if it be received for *the decree by which God determines variously to administer the means necessary to salvation*; in this sense I say that Faith is the gift of God, which is conferred on those only whom He hath chosen to this, that they may hear the word of God, and be made partakers of the Holy Spirit.

VII

*May every one who is a true believer be assured in this life of his individual salvation; and is it his duty to have this assurance?*

VII

Does justifying faith precede, in the order of nature, remission of sins, or does it not? And can any man be bound to any other faith than that which justifies?

ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

Since God promises eternal life to all who believe in Christ, it is impossible for him who believes, and who knows that he believes, to doubt of his own salvation, unless he doubts of this willingness of God [to perform his promise.] But God does not require *him to be better assured of his individual salvation* as [*debitum*] a duty which must be performed to himself or to Christ; but it is a consequence of that promise, by which God engages to bestow eternal life on him who believes.



## VIII

*May true believers and elect persons  
entirely lose faith for a season?*

## VIII

May any man who has faith and  
retains it, arrive at such a moment,  
as, if he were then to die, he would  
be damned?

## ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

Since *Election to Salvation* comprehends within its limits not only Faith, but likewise perseverance in Faith; and since St Augustine says, ‘God has chosen to salvation those who he sees will afterwards *believe* by the aid of his preventing or preceding grace, and who will *persevere* by the aid of his subsequent or following grace; ‘*believers* and *the elect* are not correctly taken for the same persons. Omitting, therefore, all notice of the word ‘Election,’ I reply, believers are sometimes [*comparatos*] so circumstanced, as not to produce, for a season, any effect of true faith, not even the actual apprehension of grace and the promises of God, nor confidence or trust in God and Christ; yet this is the very thing which is necessary to obtain salvation. But the apostle says, concerning faith, in reference to its being a quality and a capability of believing, ‘some, having cast away a good conscience concerning faith, have made shipwreck.’

## IX

*Can believers under the grace of the  
New [Testament] Covenant, perfectly  
observe the law of God in this life?*

## IX

May God, or may He not, require of  
those who are partakers of the New  
[*Testament*] Covenant, *that the flesh  
do not lust against the Spirit*, as a  
duty corresponding with the grace of  
that covenant?

## ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION

The performance of the law is to be estimated according to the mind of Him who requires it to be observed. The answer will be two-fold, since He either wills it to be rigidly observed in the highest degree of perfection, or only according to epieikeian clemency; that is, if he require this according to clemency, and if the strength or powers which he confers be proportionate to the demand.

1. Man cannot perfectly perform such a law of God, if it be considered as to be performed according to rigor.
2. But if he require it according to *ἐπιεικείαν* clemency, and if the powers conferred be proportionate, (which must be acknowledged, since He requires it according to the evangelical covenant), the answer is, It can be perfectly observed.

But the question about [*potentia*] capability is not of such great importance, ‘provided a man confesses that it is possible to be done by the grace of Christ,’ as St Augustine justly observes.

## REMARKS ON THE PRECEDING QUESTIONS, AND ON THOSE OPPOSED TO THEM

In reply to some queries which Uytenbogard had addressed to Arminius, concerning these *Nine Questions* and their opposites, the latter gave his friend the following explanation, in a letter dated the 31st of January, 1606:

I. In answer to the First Question, this is the order of the decrees.

1. It is my will to save believers.
2. On this man I will bestow faith and preserve him in it.
3. I will save this man.

For thus does the first of these decrees prescribe, which must necessarily be placed foremost; because, without this, faith is not necessary to salvation, and therefore no necessity exists to administer the means for faith. But to this is directly opposed the opinion which asserts, that faith is bestowed on him on whom God had previously willed to bestow salvation. For, in this case, it would be his will to save one who did not believe. All that has been said about the difference of the decree and its execution, is futile; as if, in fact, God willed salvation to any one prior to faith, and yet not to bestow salvation on any others than believers. For, beside the consistent agreement of these, [the decree and its execution], it is certain that God cannot will to bestow that which, on account of his previous decree, He cannot bestow. As therefore faith is, in a general manner, placed before salvation by the first decree; so it must, specially and particularly, be placed before the salvation of this and that man, even in the special decree which has the subsequent execution.

III. To the Third Question I shall in preference oppose the following: Has God determined peremptorily to act with some men according to the strict rigor of the law, as He did with the fallen angels, and to act with others according to the grace of the Gospel? If they deny this, I have what I wish. But if they affirm it, such a sentiment must be overwhelmed with absurdities; because in such a case God would have acted towards many men with greater severity, than towards the fallen angels, who, as being creatures purely spiritual, each sinned of himself, through his own wickedness without persuasion from any one.

IV. They will not be able to deny my Fourth opposite Question. For remission is promised to those who confess their sins; and the fear is called initial in reference to the filial *fear* which follows. If they acknowledge it, but say, 'Yet God is not induced by them;' I will then command them to erase the same word out of their interrogatory, and in a better form to enunciate their own opinion.

V. They will not consider it their duty entirely to deny my Fifth opposing Question. If they affirm it, they will declare a falsehood, and will incur the ill opinion of all prudent persons, even of those who are weak. Let them therefore search out what they may place as an intermediate postulate between theirs and mine, and I will then show that it co-incides either with their postulate or with mine.

VI. I have placed two questions in opposition to the Sixth, because their question is also a double one. On the First of them you require no observation.

About the Second I have said, for the sake of explanation, that it is a circle, in which nothing is first and nothing last,' but in every part of it a beginning and an end are found—which cannot, without absurdity, have place in the decrees of God. I ask, has God determined to bestow salvation on those who believe, or to bestow faith on those who are to be saved? If both of these be asserted, I ask, which of them is the first, and which the last? They will reply, *Neither*; and it is then a circle. If they affirm the latter, *that God has determined to bestow faith on those who are to be saved*; I will prove, that He has determined to bestow salvation on those who believe, and shall then have formed a circle, notwithstanding their unwillingness. If they adduce the different respect, I will endeavour to confute it; which cannot be a work of much difficulty in so very plain a matter.

VII. In the Seventh opposite Question, I had regard to the expression, *Is it his duty?* for about its possibility there is no contention. But justifying faith is not that by which *I believe* that my sins are remitted; for thus the same thing will be *the object* and *the effect* of justifying faith. By this [justifying faith] I obtain remission of sins, therefore it precedes the other object; [the remission of sins;] and no one can believe that his sins are remitted, unless he knows that he believes by a justifying faith. For this reason, also, no one can believe that his future sins will likewise be remitted, unless he knows that he will believe to the end. For sins are forgiven to him who believes, and only after they have been committed; wherefore the promise of forgiveness, which is that of the New Testament, must be considered as depending on a condition stipulated by God, that is FAITH, without which there is no [*pactum*] covenant.

VIII. With respect to the Eighth Question, let a distinction be made between Faith as it is a *quality or habit*, and between the same as it is *an art*. Actual believing justifies, or [*ipsum credere*] the act of believing is imputed for righteousness. Because God requires actual faith; for our capability to perform which, He infuses that which is *habitual*. Therefore, as actual faith does not consist with moral sin, he who falls into mortal sin may be damned. But it is possible for a believer to fall into mortal sin, of which David is seen as an instance. Therefore, he may fall at such a moment as, if he were then to die, he would be damned. If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.' Therefore, if it does condemn us, we have no confidence, we cannot have any; because God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.' What is said about the impossibility of this event, *because*, [as they assert] *God has determined not to take such persons out of the world at that moment*, — conduces nothing in favour of their hypothesis. For this is opposed to final destruction, not to temporary, and to their total destruction for a season, — which is the subject of their Eighth Question.

IX. If it be replied to my Ninth opposing Question, that, in the covenant of grace, God requires a duty which is impossible to man; they will be forced to confess, that, in addition to this covenant, another is necessary, according to which God pardons a duty not performed according to that covenant of grace; as it was necessary that there should be another covenant, by which God might pardon a duty not performed according to the legal covenant.

And thus shall we proceed on *ad infinitum*. At length we must arrive at the point from which we can say, *God save sinners, of his infinite mercy, which is limited by no conditions prescribed by his equity*. This seems to be an expression which will be entirely conformable to the whole doctrine of those who urge absolute predestination, For, since wrath and mercy are opposed to each other, as wrath is infinite, may not mercy too, be infinite? According to their doctrine, whatever they oppose to the contrary, *Wrath makes men sinners, that it may have those whom it can punish*. But they expressly say, *Mercy makes men believers by an omnipotent force, and preserves them from the possibility of falling, that it may have those whom it can save*. But, as Nicasius Van der Schuer says, if God could make a sinner, that He might have one whom He could punish; He could also punish without sin; therefore He could likewise mercifully save without faith. And as WRATH willed to have a just title for damnation, through the intervention of sin, so it became MERCY to save, without the intervention of any duty, that it might be manifest that the whole is of mercy without the semblance of justice. I say, *without the semblance of justice*; because it begets faith by an irresistible force, and by an irresistible force it causes man to continue in faith to the end, and thus necessarily to be saved, according to the decree, *he that believes and perseveres, shall be saved*. This being laid down, all equity is excluded, as well from the decree of predestination to salvation, as from that of predestination to death. These objections, I am conscientiously of opinion, may, without calumny, be made to their sentiments; and I am prepared to maintain this very thing against any patron whatsoever of those sentiments. For they do not extricate themselves when they say, that man spontaneously sins, and believes by a spontaneous motion. For that which is *spontaneous*, and that which is natural, are not in opposition. And that which is *spontaneous* coincides with that which is *absolutely necessary*; as, a stone is moved downwards; a beast eats, and propagates its species; man loves that which is good for himself. — But all excuses terminate in this *spontaneous* matter.’