

A Dissertation on the True and Genuine Sense of

**The Seventh Chapter of St Paul's Epistle
to the Romans**

By That Famous Divine The Rev. James Arminius, D.D.
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*This admirable treatise was prepared about the close of the year 1599, while the author was a pastor at Amsterdam

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Dedication

TO THE MOST HONOURABLE AND NOBLE WILLIAM BARDESIUS, LIEUTENANT OF WARMENHUYSEN, A NOBLEMAN WHO IS OUR PATRON, AND WHO, ON MANY ACCOUNTS, IS TO BE HONOURED BY US.

Most Honourable and Noble Sir:

That expression of the Apostle Paul, by which he designates the doctrine of the Gospel as ‘the Truth which is according to godliness’ (Titus i. 1) is very remarkable and worthy of perpetual consideration. From this sentiment, with the leave of all good men, we may collect that this ‘Truth’ neither consists in naked theory and inane speculation, nor in those things which, belonging to mere abstract knowledge, only play about the brain of man, and which never extend to the reformation of their will and affections. But it consists in those things which imbue the mind with a sincere fear of God, and with a true love of solid piety, and which render men ‘zealous of good works.’ Another passage, not less famous and remarkable, in the same epistle and by the same Apostle, tends greatly to confirm and illustrate this view of the matter; it is thus expressed: ‘For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world’ (Titus ii. 11, 12). Whosoever they be, therefore, that profess themselves the heralds of this Divine ‘Truth,’ they ought to give additional diligence that, casting aside all curious and thorny questions, and those idle subtilities which derive their origin from human vanity, they commend to their hearers this one and only ‘godliness,’ and that they seriously instruct them in faith, hope and charity. And, in return, those of their auditors who are enamored with this ‘Truth,’ are bound strenuously to conform themselves to this course of conduct, — to pass by and to slight all other things which may come across their path, and constantly to aim at this ‘godliness’ alone, and keep their eyes intent upon it. For both clergy and laity may receive this as a principle, — that they are yet rude and complete strangers in true theology, unless they have learned so to theologize, that theology may bear the torch before them to that piety and holiness which they sedulously and earnestly pursue.

If this admonition ever was necessary, it is undoubtedly the more necessary at this time; because we see impiety overflowing in every direction, like a sea raging and agitated by whirlwinds. Yet, amidst all this storm, such are the stupor and insensibility of men, that not a few who remain exactly the same persons as they formerly were, and who, indeed, have not changed the least particle of the manner of their impure life, still imagine themselves to be in the class of prime Christians, and promise themselves the favour of the Supreme God, the possessing of heaven and of life eternal, and of the company of Christ and of the blessed angels, with

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such great and presumptuous confidence, and with such security of mind, that they consider themselves to be atrociously injured by those who, judging them to be deceived in this their self-persuasion, desire them in any wise to entertain doubts about it. In a condition of affairs thus deplorable, no endeavour appears to be more laudable, than to institute a diligent inquiry into the causes of such a pernicious evil, and, by employing a saving remedy, to arouse erring souls from this diabolical lethargy, and induce them to alter their lives, under the felicitous auspices of the Gospel and the Spirit of Christ, to devote their energies to a solid amendment of manners, and thus, at length, from the Divine Word, to promise themselves, when answering this description, grace with God and eternal glory.

The causes of this evil are various, and most of them consist in certain erroneous and false conceptions which, being impressed on their minds, some men carry about with them, being either their own inventions, or furnished to them from some other quarter; yet, either in general or in particular, either directly or indirectly, such erroneous conceptions lay a stumbling-block and an impediment before the true and serious study of piety and the pursuit of virtue. We will not, in this place, introduce any mention of the impious conceptions of some men who do not believe either that there is a life eternal, or that, if it really exists, it is of such great and sublime excellence as it is described to be in the Holy Scriptures — who either despair of the mercy of God towards repentant sinners, or who consider it to be impossible to enter on that way of piety and new obedience which has been prescribed by the prince of our salvation. We say nothing about these persons, because they not only relax the asseverations and the promises of God, which are the true foundations of the Christian Religion, but they likewise entirely overturn them, and thus, with one effort, they pluck up, by the roots, all piety, and all desire and love of it, from the hearts of men.

We now begin to make some observations on those hypotheses, whether secret or avowed, which are injurious to piety, and which obtain among Christians themselves, whether they be publicly defended or otherwise. Among them, the first which comes under enumeration, is the dogma of *Unconditional Predestination*, with those which depend on it by a necessary connection; and, in particular, the so highly extolled *Perseverance of the Saints*, in a confidence in which such things are uttered by some persons as we dread to recite, for they are utterly unworthy of entering into the ear of Christians. It is no small impediment which these dogmas place in the way of piety. When, after a diligent and often-repeated perusal of the Holy Scriptures, after long meditations and ardent prayers to God, with fasting, our father, of blessed memory, thought that he had made a sure discovery of the baneful tendency of these dogmas, and had reflected upon them within his own breast, — and that, however strenuously they might be urged by certain divines, and generally instilled into the minds of students by Scholastic exercises, yet neither the Ancient Church nor the Modern, after a previous lawful examination of them, ever received them or allowed them to pass into matters that had obtained mature adjudication. When he perceived these things, he began by degrees, to propose his difficulties about them, and his objections against them, for the purpose of shewing that they were

not so firmly founded in the Scriptures as they are generally supposed to be; and, in process of time, being still more strongly confirmed in the knowledge of the truth, especially after the Conference which he had with Doctor FRANCIS JUNIUS, and in which he had seen the weakness of his replies, he began to attack those dogmas with greater boldness; — yet on no occasion was he forgetful of the modesty which so eminently became him. But, of the arguments with which he attacked those dogmas, this [on the seventh chapter of St Paul's epistle to the Romans] in which we have now engaged, was not the last, — that is, such was [*genius*] the nature of these doctrines that they were calculated to relax the study of piety, and thus to extinguish it. In that labour he also occasionally employed subtilities. and such reasons as are not at once obvious to the multitude; but they were subtle distinctions, necessary for overturning dogmas which, in his judgment, were very baneful. And, undoubtedly, as love is not conquered except by another love, so that subtlety, which is the inventor and establisher of falsehood, can scarcely be conquered and overturned without the subtlety which is the assertor of the truth and the convictor of falsehood. Therefore, the subtilities which he employed on that occasion, [his Conference with Junius], were useful and necessary; not insignificant, trifling, and invented for pleasure, ostentation or display. But with regard to other things, it is known to all those who were on terms of familiarity with him, — especially during the last years of his life, when he was much engaged in the Schools, in which it is an established custom principally to pursue subtilities, — what a rigid enemy he was of all subtilities and of lofty language; and even those whom he had among his students that differed on some other points from him, could testify, if they would conscientiously relate the truth, that he referred all things to use and to the practice of a Christian life; and thus that piety and the fear of the Divine Majesty uniformly breathed in his lectures, in his disputations, (both public and private), in his sermons, discourses and writings. But it is not necessary for us, in this place, to rehearse the method by which he proved the genius of unconditional predestination and its annexed dogmas to be adverse to godliness; because his writings on this subject are partly extant, and the remainder, under the Divine Auspices, will soon be published. It is better that prudent readers should listen to him uttering his own words, than to us who are but stammerers about him. The water is sweeter which we taste at the fountain, than that which we drink at a distance from the spring.

Various are the other hypotheses which operate as hindrances to piety, and the whole of which we are not able now to mention; but we will briefly discuss a few of those which occur, that we may not produce weariness in you, most noble sir, by our prolixity.

A capital error which first offers itself, and which closely adheres to the inmost core and fibers of nearly all mankind, is that by which they silently imagine in their own minds that illimitable mercy exists in God; and from this they opine that they will not be rejected, though they have indulged themselves a little too much in vicious pursuits, but that, on the contrary, they will continue to be dear to God and beloved. This error is in reality joined with notorious incredulity, and, in a great measure destroys the Christian Religion, which is founded on the blood of

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Christ. For, in this way, is removed all necessity for a pious life, and a manifest contradiction is given to the declaration of the Apostle, in which he affirms that ‘without holiness no man shall see God’ (Heb. xii. 14). Alas for the insanity of men, who have the audacity to bless themselves when they are cursed by God!

This is succeeded by the false hypothesis of others, who, revolving in their minds [*instituta*] the designs, the morals, and the life of mortals, and reflecting on the multitude, among men of all orders, of those who are wandering in error, conclude that the mercy of God will not permit eternally to perish so many and such infinite myriads of rational creatures, formed after the Divine Image. The consequence is, that, instead of performing their duty according to the tenor of Christianity, by opposing the torrent of impiety, they, on the contrary, suffer themselves to be carried away by the impulse of such views, and associate with the multitudes of those who are devious in error. They seem to forget that the many walk in the broad way, whose end, according to the truth of God, will be ‘destruction from the presence of the Lord.’ A multitude will preserve no man from perdition. Unhappy and most miserable solace, to have many companions in enduring everlasting punishment!

Let the force of this deception, likewise, be considered, that vices are dignified with the names of virtues, and, on the other hand, virtues receive the defiling appellation of vices. The effect of this is, that men, who are of themselves, prone to vicious indulgences, pursue them with the greater avidity when they are concealed under the mask of virtues, and, on the contrary, are terrified at virtues, in the attainment of which any difficulty is involved, as though they were clothed in the monstrous garb of the most horrid vices. Thus, among mankind, drunkenness obtains the name of *hilarity*; and filthy talking, that of *cheerful freedom*; while sobriety in food and drink, and simplicity in dress, are opprobriously styled *hypocrisy*. This is really to ‘call good *evil*, and evil *good*,’ and to seek an occasion, by which a man may cease from the practice of virtue, and devote himself to vicious courses, not only without any reluctance of conscience, but likewise at the impulse and instigation of his [seared] conscience. Into this enumeration, must come that shameful and false reasoning by which [*malesani*] unwise men infer, from those passages in Scripture in which we are said to be *justified by faith without works*, that it is not, therefore, necessary to attend to good works, they being of such a nature that without them we may be justified, and, therefore, saved. They never advert to the fact that, in other passages, it is recorded, True faith, that is, the faith by which we are justified, must be efficacious through charity; and that faith, without works, is dead, and resembles a lifeless carcass.

This vain idea also, in no trifling degree, consoles the men who try to flatter themselves in those vices to which they have a constitutional propensity, — that they are not given up to all vices, they have not run into every excess of wickedness, but, though addicted to certain vices peculiar to themselves, they feel an abhorrence for all others. As men are most ingenious in the invention of excuses for themselves, in support of this incorrect view are generally cited these common phrases: ‘No man lives without sin;’ ‘Every man is captivated by that which he finds to be pleasing to himself.’ Such men, therefore, consider themselves to be true Christians, and that,

on this account, it will be eternally well with them, when, as they foolishly persuade themselves, they abstain from most evils, and, as for the rest, they cherish only some one vice, a single Herodias alone. A most absurd invention! since no one is, no one can be, addicted to all vices at once; because some among them are diametrically opposed to others, and are mutual expellers. If this conceit be allowed, no mortal man either will or can be impious. The subjoined passage in the epistle of St James ought to recur to the remembrance of these persons: 'Whosoever shall offend in one point, he is guilty of all' (ii. 10). We are also commanded to 'lay aside,' not some one, but 'all malice, guile, and hypocrisy' (1 Pet. ii. 1), that we may thus the more fully devote ourselves to God.

Others suppose that, if in some degree their affections be partly drawn out towards God and goodness, they have adequately discharged their duty, though in some other part of their affections they are devoted to the service of the Prince of this world and of sin. These men assuredly have forgotten, that God must be adored and loved with the whole affections of the heart — that the Lord God of Heaven, and the prince of this world, are opposing masters, and, therefore, that it is impossible to render service to both of them at once, as our saviour has most expressly declared.

Not very dissimilar from this is that invention by which some persons divide their time into portions, and when they have marked off one part for God and Christ, and another part for the flesh and the affections, they imagine that they have most excellently performed their duty. But these men, whosoever they be, never reflect that our whole lives, and all the time of which they are composed, must be consecrated to God, and that we must persevere in the ways of piety and obedience to the close of life; and for this brief obedience of a time which is short at the longest, God has, of grace, covenanted to bestow on the obedient, that great reward of life eternal. Undoubtedly, if at any time a man falls, he cannot return into favour with God until he has not only deplored that fall by a sincere repentance, and is again converted in his heart to God, with this determinations, — that he will devote the remaining days of his life to God.

Those men must not be forgotten who are in this heresy, — that all those things which are not joined with blasphemy to God, and with notorious injury and violence to one's neighbour, and which, with regard to other things, bear the semblance of charity and benevolence, are not to be reckoned among the multitude of sins. According to their doctrine, they are at liberty to indulge their natural relish for earthly things, to serve their belly, to take especial care of themselves, to gratify their sensual and drunken propensities, to live the short and merry life which Epicurus recommends, and to do whatsoever a heart which is inclined to pleasure shall command; provided they abstain from anger, hatred, the desire of revenge, bitterness and malice, and the other passions which are armed for force and injury. If we follow these masters, we shall assuredly discover a far more easy and expeditious way to Heaven, than that which has been taught us by the Divine Ambassador of the Great God, whose sole business it was to point out the way to Heaven.

Occasion is also afforded to unjust conceptions respecting the extreme of piety, by the mode in which some theological subjects are treated, and by some ecclesiastical

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phrases which are either not sufficiently conformable to the Scriptures, or which are not correctly understood. We must briefly, and without much regard to order, animadvert on a few of these, for the sake of example. When our good works are invested with the relation of gratitude towards God, it is a well ascertained fact, that men collect from this that they are now the heirs and proprietors of life eternal, and are in a state of grace and everlasting salvation, before they ever begin to perform good works. This delusion makes them think it expedient also to follow the hypothesis, — that the performance of good works is not absolutely necessary. In this case, it must be maintained from the Scriptures, that a true conversion and the performance of good works form a prerequisite condition before justification, according to this passage from St John, ‘But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son cleanseth us from all sin’ (1 John i. 7). This is consonant with that celebrated passage in Isaiah, in which the Lord promises to the Jews the cleansing and the destruction of all their sins, even those which were of the most aggravated kind, after they turned themselves to him, and corrected their ways (Isa. i. 15–20). When the sacraments are considered only in the light of sealing to us the promises and the grace of God, but not as binding us to the performance of our duty and admonishing us of it, [*tractatio*] the discussion of them is not only defective, but it may also, through such defect, be accounted injurious to the work of personal piety. ‘Believers and the regenerate are still prone and inclined to every evil;’ and ‘the most holy among them have only the small beginnings of the obedience which is required.’ These are phrases which describe, in a manner far too low and weak, the efficacy of the new creation, and they are therefore *κατα το ρητον* in reality exceedingly dangerous. For the former of these phrases seems entirely to remove all distinction between the regenerate and the, while the latter seems to place such minutiae of obedience in the regenerate, as will induce a man, who has been accustomed to bless himself if he perceives even the slightest thought or motion about the performance of obedience, immediately to conclude himself to be a partaker of true regeneration.

When the continued imperfection of the regenerate, and the impossibility of keeping the law in this life, are urged unseasonably and beyond measure, without the addition of what may be done by holy men through faith and the Spirit of Christ, the thought is apt to suggest itself to the mind even of the most pious of their hearers, that they can do nothing which is at all good. Through this erroneous view, it happens that sometimes far less is attributed to the regenerate than the unregenerate are themselves able to perform. The ancient church did not reckon the question about *the impossibility of performing the law* among those which are capital: This is apparent from St Augustine himself, who expresses a wish that Pelagius would acknowledge it possible to be performed by the grace of Christ, and declares that peace would then be concluded. The Apostles of Christ were themselves occupied in endeavouring to convince men, when placed [*extra gratiam*] out of the influence of grace, of their incapability to perform obedience. But about the imperfection and impotency of the regenerate, you will scarcely find them employing a single expression. On the contrary, they attribute to believers the crucifying of the flesh

and the affections, the mortification of the works of the flesh, a resurrection to a new life, and walking according to the Spirit; and they are not afraid openly to protest, that by faith they overcome the world. The acknowledgment of their imperfection was but a small matter, because that was a thing previous to Christianity. But the glory of Christians lies in this — that they know the power of the resurrection of Christ, and, being led by the Spirit of God, they live according to the purest light of the gospel. The distribution of Theology into GOD, and *the Acts of God*, introduces to us a speculative religion, and is not sufficiently well calculated to urge men to the performance of their duty. To this may be added that too subtle disquisition, which is an invention unsanctioned by Scripture, about the relations of those acts which are performed by us.

As unsuitable for the promotion of piety, seems likewise that deduction or [*oeconomia*] dispensation of our religion, by which all things are directed to [*fiduciam*] the assurance of special mercy as the principal part of our duty, and to the consolation which is elicited from it against the despair that is opposed to it, but in which all things are not directed to the necessary performance of obedience in opposition to security. It derives its origin from the idea that greater fear ought to be entertained respecting despair than respecting security, when the contrary to this is the truth. For in the whole history of the Old and New Testament, which comprises a period of so many thousand years, only a single instance occurs of a person in despair, and that was Judas Iscariot, the perfidious betrayer of his Saviour — the case of Cain being entirely out of the question; while, on the contrary, as the world was formerly, so is it now, very full of persons in a state of security, and negligent of the duty divinely imposed on them; yet these men, in the mean time, sweetly bless their souls, and promise themselves grace and peace from God in full measure.

To proceed further: To these and all other delusions of a similar nature, we ought to oppose a soul truly pious, and most firmly rooted in the faith of God and Christ, exercising much solicitous caution about this, — not to be called off from the serious and solid study of piety, and not to yield ourselves up to sins or to take delight in them, either through the deceptive force of any conceits, such as have now been enumerated or any others, or by the incautious use of any phrases and the sinister distortion [*tractationum*] of particular subjects; but, on the contrary, denying all ungodliness, let us sedulously and constantly walk in the paths of virtue; and let us always bear in mind the very serious admonition which the Apostle Paul propounds to the Ephesians; having dehorted them from indulging in impurity and other crimes, he says: ‘Let no man deceive you with vain words’ or reasons; ‘for, because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience’ (Verse 6). It is worthy of observation, how significantly the hypothesis and arguments on which men depend when they bless themselves in their vices, are designated as ‘vain speeches;’ For ‘*vain*’ they truly are; that is, false and deceitful are those reasons with which men are deceived while they are in bondage to their lusts, and persuade themselves that they are in a state of grace and salvation, when, on the contrary, they are in a state of wrath and eternal perdition; — than which, no other more capital imposture or deception can be produced.

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But, beside those things of which we have made previous mention, and which place obstructions to the progress of piety, another also occurs, which particularly belongs to the subject on which we are now treating; that is, the depraved and perverted interpretation of certain passages of Scripture, by which, in general, either all attention to good works is superseded, or in particular some part of it is weakened. This kind of hindrance ought undoubtedly to be reckoned among those which are the greatest; for thus either evil itself seems to be established by divine authority, or a more remiss pursuit of good, which, of the two, is without exception the greater evil. Wherefore, as all those persons deserve praise who endeavour to overturn every kind of hypothesis that is injurious to piety, so those among them are worthy of the highest commendation who try to give a correct interpretation, and such as is agreeable to ‘the form of sound words,’ of those passages which are, through common abuse, generally so explained as, by such exposition, either directly or indirectly to countenance a disorderly course of life,

- to free them from such a depraved interpretation, and
- to act as torch-bearers, in a thing so useful and necessary to Christian people and chiefly to the pastors of the church.

Many are those passages which are usually distorted to the injury of godliness; and from which we shall in this place select only the three following.

1. In the Proverbs of Solomon it is said, ‘A just man falleth seven times.’ This sentence is in the mouth of every one, with this gloss superadded, ‘*in a day*,’ which is an interpolation to be found in the Latin Vulgate. This passage ought to be understood of falling into misfortune; yet it is most perversely interpreted to signify a fall into sin, and thus contributes to nourish vices.
2. In the prophecy of Isaiah, when the Jewish church, after having been defiled by manifold idolatries, by her defection from God, and by other innumerable crimes, was severely punished for all these her foul transgressions; in a tone of lamentation, complaining of the heaviness of her punishment, and at the same time making humble confession of her sins, she acknowledges, amongst other things, that ‘her righteousnesses are as the cloth of a menstruous woman,’ designating by this phrase the best of those works which she had performed during her public defection. This passage, by a pernicious contortion, is commonly corrupted; for it is very constantly quoted, as if the sense to be inferred from it was, that each of the excellent works of the most eminent Christians, and therefore that the most ardent prayers poured forth in the name of Christ, deeds of charity performed from a heart truly and inwardly moved with mercy, and the flowing of the blood of Martyrs even unto death for the sake of Christ, — that all these are as the cloth of a menstruous woman, filthy, detestable and horrid things, and thus mere abominations in the sight of God. And as this name is, in the Scriptures, bestowed only on flagitious crimes and the greatest transgressions, it further follows [from this mode of reasoning] that

the best and most excellent works differ in no respect from the most dreadful wickedness. When a man has once thoroughly imbibed this conceit, will he not cast away all care and regard for piety? Will he not consider it of no great consequence whether he leads a bad or a good life? And will he not, in the mean time, indulge in the persuasion, that he can, notwithstanding all this, be a true disciple of Christ Jesus? The reason, undoubtedly, seems to be evident, since, according to this hypothesis, the best works are equally filthy with the worst crimes in the sight of God.

3. In this number of abused passages is included the Seventh Chapter of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, from the fourteenth verse to the end of the chapter; that is, if the Apostle be understood, in that chapter, to be speaking about a man who is regenerated. For then it will follow that a renewed man is still ‘carnal, and sold under sin,’ that is, the slave of sin; that ‘he wills to do good, but does it not; but the evil which he wills not, that he does;’ nay, that he is conquered, and ‘brought into captivity to the law of sin,’ that is, under the power and efficacy of sin. From this view it is further deduced, that, if any one be regenerate, it is sufficient for him ‘to will that which is good,’ though with a will that is incomplete, and that is not followed by action; and ‘not to will that which is evil,’ though he actually perpetrates it. If this view of that chapter be correct, then all attention to piety, the whole of new obedience, and thus the entire new creation, will be reduced to such narrow limits as to consist not in *effects*, but only in *affections* or feelings. Every man, at first sight, perceives how languid, cold and remiss such a belief will render all of us, both in our abstaining from evil, and in the performance of that which is good. Those, indeed, who defend this opinion, have their subterfuges and palliatives; but they are of such a kind, that the comment is generally repugnant to the text on which it is founded. With respect to the exercise of piety, it is dangerous for men to have this conceit previously impressed on their minds: ‘This chapter must be understood about regenerate persons;’ for they who hold it as a foundation, in other things wander wherever they are led by their feelings, and never recollect the glosses proposed by their teachers. This effect was observed by St Augustine, and being afraid of giving offense, in the more early period of his Christian career, he interpreted the passage as applicable to a man under the law, but in his latter days he applied it to a man under grace; but he held this opinion in a much milder form than it is now maintained, and almost without any injury to godliness. For ‘*the good*’ which the Apostle says ‘he willed but did not,’ St Augustine interprets into ‘a refraining from concupiscence;’ and ‘*the evil*’ which the Apostle declares ‘he willed not and yet did,’ he interprets as ‘an indulgence in concupiscence;’ — though this novel interpretation involves a wonderful mixture of the preceptive and prohibitive parts of the law. Modern interpreters [among the Calvinists] understand it as relating to actual good and evil — a most notable distinction! But as our venerated father laboured with all diligence in removing the other

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hindrances of piety, so did he principally expend much toil and unwearied study in searching out the true meaning of such passages of Scripture as were imperfectly understood, particularly if they placed a stumbling-block in the way of those who were studious of piety. If, in that species of labour, he ever had eminent success, it must undoubtedly be confessed that it was in his attempts on this Seventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; for he wrote a commentary on it of great length, which, with the greatest accuracy, he prepared and finished, and which we now publish.

When he returned from Geneva to his native country, he understood this very chapter as it is now commonly explained; having been instructed in that view of it by his teachers, whose authority was so great among the students, that not one of the latter durst even inquire about any thing which they uttered. But when, in the exercise of his ministry in the church of Amsterdam, he had afterwards taken Epistle to the Romans as the subject of a series of discourses from the pulpit, and when he had come to the explication of the Seventh chapter, concerning the received interpretation of which he had then begun to conceive scruples in his mind, because it seemed both to undervalue the grace of regeneration and to diminish all zeal and attention to piety; he diligently considered the chapter from the beginning to the conclusion with a good conscience, as it was proper that he should do, and as the nature of his public function required; he collated it with those passages which preceded it and followed; he revolved all of them, in their several particulars, as in the presence of God; he read all the various commentators upon it which he could procure, whether among the ancients, those of the middle ages, or among the moderns; and, at length, after having frequently invoked the name and aid of Almighty God, and having derived his chief human assistance from the commentaries of Bucer and Musculus on that part of Holy Writ, he discovered that the received interpretation could not bear the scrutiny of truth, but that the passage was to be entirely understood in reference to a man living under the law, in whom the law has discharged its office, and who, therefore, feeling true contrition in his soul on account of sins, and being convinced of the incapability of the law to save him, inquires after a deliverer, and is not, in fact, a regenerated man, but stands in the nearest grade to regeneration. This explanation of the chapter he publicly delivered from the pulpit; because he thought that such a course was allowable by the liberty of prophesying, which ought always to have a place in the church of Christ. Though this diligence in elucidating the Scriptures, and the candour which he displayed, deserved singular praise and commendation, especially from all persons of the ecclesiastical order, yet, by some zealots, in whom such a conduct was the least becoming, it was received in a manner which shewed that the author ranked no higher with them than as one who, instead of receiving a reward, ought to be charged with mischief and insanity. Such is the result of employing a sedulous care in the investigation of the Scriptures, and of cultivating the

liberty of prophesying; and it is esteemed a preferable service, to render the servants of Christ the slaves of certain men who lived only a short time before ourselves, and almost to canonize their interpretation of the Scriptures as the only rule and guide for us in our interpretation.

When our father perceived these things, he began to write this commentary, which at length he brought to a conclusion. If God had granted him longer life, he would have corrected his production with greater accuracy, as he had already begun to do; but as he was prevented by death, and thus rendered incapable of giving it a final polish, and yet as, in the judgment of many great men, it is a work that is worthy to see the light, we have now ventured to publish it. Here then,

- **FIRSTLY**, the author proposes his own sentiments, and proves them by deductions from the entire chapter, as well as from the connection in which it stands with the preceding and following chapters.
- **SECONDLY**. He shows that this interpretation has never been condemned, but has always had the greatest number of supporters.
- **THIRDLY**. He defends it from the black charge of Pelagianism, and demonstrates that it is directly opposed to that error.
- **FOURTHLY**. He contends that the interpretation now generally received is quite new, and was never embraced by any of the ancients, but rejected by many of them.
- **LASTLY**. And that it is injurious to grace and hurtful to good morals.

He then enters into a comparison of the opinion of St Augustine, and of that which is now generally received with his own interpretation; and concludes the work with a friendly address to his fellow-ministers.

It was our wish, most noble Bardesius, to dedicate and address this work to your Mightiness; for this desire, we had several reasons. From the first entrance on his ministry, a sacred friendship subsisted between our revered father and that nobleman of honoured memory, your excellent father — a friendship which continued till our venerable parent came down to the grave, full of years and loaded with honours. You, as the lawful inheritor of your father's possessions, have also succeeded in his place as the heir of his friendships; and this is the reason why the closest intimacy was formed between you and our good father, immediately after your return from your travels, which you had undertaken for the purpose of prosecuting your studies and visiting foreign nations. You were accustomed to place a high estimate on his endowments, and frequently consulted him on questions of Theology, and very often acted upon his advice, — as he did, also, upon yours. But

- after he had reflected in his mind, that he was not the slave of men, but the servant of Jesus Christ, and that he was under an oath [to the observance of] his words alone;

Dedication

- when, on this account, he had begun freely to inquire into the sentiments invented by men, and into their truth and necessity, and, after comparing them with the Scriptures, had also occasionally proposed, with great modesty, his doubts concerning them, and His animadversions on them;
- when for this reason, many of those who were formerly his acquaintances and intimate friends, became alienated from him as from one who had removed the ancient land-marks out of their places;
- and when some of them, by degrees, both in public and private, began either to take an occasion or to make one, to circulate sinister reports concerning him, while others, with sufficient plainness, openly renounced all friendship with him;
- and when the whole chorus of ecclesiastical zealots had excited each other to rise up against him;

yet, amidst all these things, you took no offense, but, having weighed the matter in the just balance of your judgment, you persisted to cherish a constant love for him. When he was debilitated by a slow and constant malady, as soon as the mildness of the weather and the intervals in his disorder would permit his removal, you invited him to your house in a manner the most friendly, and, on his arrival, you received him as the angel of the Lord; and a friendship, thus pure and refined, you cultivated with him, until he departed out of this life, and ascended to Christ, his Lord and Master. Besides, after his decease, by your conduct to our afflicted family, you shewed yourself such a one as it became that man to be who was not a pretended friend to the survivors of his departed friend; affording, by words and deeds, such substantial proofs of your kindness and beneficence towards his sorrowing widow and distressed orphans, as far exceed the febleness of our expressions. Therefore, unless we wished not only to be the most ungrateful of mortals, but likewise to be generally depicted as such, it was exceedingly proper in us, while the posthumous writings of our revered parent are occasionally issuing from the press, to inscribe some portion of them to your very honourable and most friendly name, and by this method, as by a public document, to testify at once before the whole world our gratitude to you as well as our vast obligations.

To these considerations, we may add that our father had determined within himself, if God had granted him life and leisure, to write a system of the whole Christian Religion, not drawing it out of the stagnant lakes of Egypt, but out of the pure fountains of Israel, and to inscribe it to your Mightiness. As he was unable to execute his purpose, partly through the multiplicity of his engagements, and partly through the lingering nature of his disorder, you have here, in the place of the other world, the present Commentary; for in no other way than this, can the design of our father now be fulfilled. We hope the subject itself, which is treated in this Commentary, will not be disagreeable to you; for it is one which is excellently accordant with your genius and disposition. It is a fact which is well known to all those who are

acquainted with you and which you do not wish to be regarded as a secret, but which you openly profess, as often as occasion demands, that you take no delight in those thorny disputations and discussions which contribute nothing to the practice of the Christian life; but that you place the chief part of religion in the pursuit of real and solid piety. As our honoured father also shows in this work that his wishes and purposes were in this respect similar to yours, we have thought that nothing could be more appropriate than to dedicate to a man of extensive learning, who is likewise deeply attached to the interests of religion, a work which is highly conducive to the promotion of piety.

Accept, therefore, with a cheerful heart and a serene countenance, this small gift, which we and our dear mother are desirous to commit to posterity, that it may perpetually remain as an endless monument of that sacred friendship which subsisted between you and JAMES ARMINIUS, our venerated parent, and, at the same time, of our own great obligations to you. To you, who have been under the influence of mercy towards our afflicted family, may the Lord God in return shew mercy; and may he enrich you and your very honourable family with every kind of heavenly blessings, to the glory of his name and to the salvation of all of us! Amen.

So pray those who are most attached to your mightiness,

THE NINE ORPHAN CHILDREN OF JAMES ARMINIUS,
OF OUDEWATER.

LEYDEN, 13th August, 1612.

Introduction

1 What is the subject of inquiry concerning the meaning of this chapter?

The subject of inquiry concerning the meaning of the Seventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and particularly of the latter part of it, which is treated upon from the beginning of the fourteenth or fifteenth verse to the end of the chapter, is this: ‘Does the Apostle there treat of himself, such as he then was?’ Or, which is almost the same question, ‘Under his own person, does he treat about *a man living in the possession of the grace of Christ*, or does he there personate *a man placed under the law*?’ This question is also usually proposed in other words, thus: ‘Does the Apostle there treat about *a man who is still unregenerate*, or about *one who is already regenerated through the Spirit of Christ*?’ The latter question differs a little in its meaning from the former,

1. because the word ‘*unregenerate*’ has a more extensive signification, embracing even those who are under the law, and at whose state the Apostle has also briefly glanced in the ninth verse of this chapter, and
2. because the same word, with some persons, denotes not only the mere absence of regeneration, but likewise of all those things which are necessarily previous to regeneration; and these previous things are so far from being excluded by the words, ‘*under the law*,’ that, on the contrary, a great part of them is necessarily comprehended in the ample compass of that state which these words describe. This ought not to be passed over without some animadversion; because this notion about the word ‘*unregenerate*’ which many persons have previously formed, is no small cause why they think they must reject the opinion, which declares that this passage of Scripture relates to an unregenerate man, that is, to one not only devoid of regeneration, but likewise of all those things which usually precede regeneration; and why they suppose that they ought to approve of the one contrary to this, without any further attentive consideration of the words and of the things signified.

2 The manner in which this question is made a subject of dispute; Formerly, a latitude of sentiment respecting it, was permitted

But this question has now become a subject of dispute, not as one of those about which the writers who treat on Catholic doctrine may be allowed to maintain different sentiments, but as if it was one of such importance and weight to the truth of faith, that, without great detriment to truth and manifest heresy, no determination can be made concerning it except in one way, which is the affirmation that the Apostle is there treating about a man who lives under grace and is regenerate. This judgment about the question seems new to me, and is one which was never heard in the church before these our times. In those better days, liberty was granted to the divines of the church to maintain an opinion on the one part of this question or on the other, provided they did not produce an explanation of their meaning that was at variance with the articles and doctrines of faith. The thing itself will shew that it is possible to do so in this matter, and such was the persuasion which was entertained on the subject by those who granted this liberty of sentiment, because no man ever supposed that any opinion was to be tolerated in the church which could not admit of an explanation that was agreeable to the doctrines and articles of belief.

3 Those who explain this passage as relating to a man under the law, are rashly charged with having some affinity with the Pelagian heresy

Those who explain this passage in reference to a man living under the law, are charged with holding a doctrine which has some affinity to the two-fold heresy of Pelagius, and are said to ascribe to man, without the grace of Christ, some true and saving good, and, taking away the contest between the flesh and the spirit which is carried on in the regenerate, are said to maintain a perfection of righteousness in the present life. But I ingenuously confess that I detest, from my heart, the consequences which are here deduced; in the mean time, I do not perceive how they can flow from such an opinion. If any one will deign to prove this, I will instantly abjure an opinion thus [*praecedaneum*] conducting to heresy; knowing that nothing can be true, from which a falsehood may, by good consequence, be concluded. But if this cannot be demonstrated, and if I can make it evident that neither these heresies, nor any other, are derived from this opinion when it is properly explained, then, under these circumstances, it seems that I may require, in my own right, that no molestation shall be offered to me, or to any one else, on account of this opinion. If I shall confirm this opinion by arguments which are not only probable, but likewise incapable of refutation, or which at least have a greater semblance of probability than those by which the contrary opinion is supported, then let me be allowed to

request that, by at least an equal right, this sentiment may obtain a place with the other in the church. If, lastly, I shall prove that the other opinion as it is in these days explained by most divines, cannot, without the greatest difficulty, be reconciled to many of the plainest passages of Scripture, that it is in no small degree injurious to the grace of the indwelling Spirit, that it has a hurtful effect on good morals, and that it was never approved by any of the Ancient Fathers of the church, but, on the contrary, disapproved by some of them, and even to St Augustine himself; then may I be permitted by a most deserved right to admonish the defenders of that other sentiment, that they reflect frequently and seriously, whether they be wishful to excite the wrath of God against themselves by an unjust condemnation of this better opinion and of those who are its defenders.

4 Distribution of the subjects to be discussed in this Commentary

Having premised these things, let us now enter on the matter itself, which shall be treated by us after being distributed in the following parts:

1. I will show that, in this passage, the Apostle does not speak about himself, nor about a man living under grace, but that he has transferred to himself the person of a man placed under the law.
2. I will make it evident that this opinion has never been condemned in the church as heretical, but that it has always had some defenders among the divines of the church.
3. I will show that no heresy, neither that of Pelagius, nor any other, can be derived from this opinion, but that it is most evidently opposed to Pelagianism, and that in a most distinguished manner and designedly, it refutes the grand falsehood of Pelagius.

Confining myself within the bounds of necessary defense, I might, after having explained these three heads, conclude this treatise, unless it might seem to some one advisable and useful to confute by equal arguments the contrary opinion, especially as it is explained in these days. This I will attempt in other two chapters, subjoined to the preceding three, which will then be analogous and appear as parallels to the last two.

4. Therefore, I will prove that the meaning which some of our modern divines attribute to the Apostle in this was not approved by any of the Ancient Fathers of the church, not even by St Augustine himself, but that it was repudiated and confuted by him and some others.
5. And, lastly, I will demonstrate, that this opinion, as explained in these days by many persons, is not only injurious to grace, but likewise adverse to good morals.

Introduction

God grant that I may meditate and write nothing but what is agreeable to his sacred truth. If, however, any thing of a contrary kind should escape from me, which is a fault of easy occurrence to one who 'knows but in part, and prophesies in part;' I wish that neither to be [considered as] spoken nor written. I make this previous protestation against any such thing; and will, in reality, declare those things which possess greater truth and certainty, when any one has taught them to me.

Part I
First Part

1 The thesis to be proved

THE Apostle, in this passage, is treating neither about himself, such as he then was, nor about a man living under grace; but he has transferred to himself the person of a man placed under the law.

Or as some other persons express it:

The Apostle, in this passage, is not treating about a man who is already regenerate through the Spirit of Christ, but [*suscepisse*] has assumed the person of a man who is not yet regenerate.

1. To the proof of the thesis, must be premised and prefixed definitions or descriptions of the subjects which it comprises. The subjects are — *the Apostle himself, a man placed under grace, a man placed under the law, a man regenerate by the Spirit of Christ, and a man not yet regenerate.*
2. I have set the Apostle apart from those who are regenerate and placed under grace, not because I would take him away from the number of regenerate persons, among whom he holds a conspicuous station, but because some people have thought proper to deduce, from the description of the apostolical perfection, arguments by which they prove, that the Apostle could not, in this passage, be speaking concerning himself, as he then was; because those things which he here ascribes to himself are at variance with some things that, in other passages, he writes about himself, and because they are a disgrace to his eminent state of grace, and to his progress in faith and newness of life. But since it is certain, that the Apostle has not, in this chapter, treated of himself personally, as distinguished from all other men of whatsoever condition or order they may be, but that he, under his own person, described a certain kind and order of men, whether they be those who are under the law and not yet regenerate, or those who are regenerate and placed under grace, omitting the description of the Apostle, we will first see what is meant by being *under grace* and *under the law*, and what by *being regenerate*, and *not yet regenerate* or *unregenerate*; yet we will do this in such a man that, in the subsequent establishment of our own opinion, we may produce arguments drawn from the description given by the Apostle.
3. The expression, therefore, *to be under the law*, does not signify merely that the man is liable to perform it, or that he is bound to obey the commands of the law; in which sense all men generally, both those who are said in the ninth verse of this chapter to be ‘without law,’ are reckoned to be under the law by right of creation, and those also who are under grace, are considered to be

A description of the Terms contained in the Thesis.

The Reason why the Description of the Apostle is here omitted.

What is meant by ‘being under the law.’

1 *The Thesis to be Proved*

under the law by the further fight of redemption and sanctification, and yet in such a manner as not to be under its rigor, because they are under the law to Christ, who makes his people free from the rigor of the law. But because the office of the law concerning sinners is two-fold

- *the one*, to conclude sinners under the guilt of that punishment which is denounced by the law against transgressors, and to condemn them by its sentence
- *the other*, first to instruct sinners and to give them assurance about its equity, justice and holiness, and afterwards to accuse them of sin, to urge them to obedience, to convince them of their own weakness, to terrify them by a dread of punishment, to compel them to seek deliverance, and, generally, to lead, govern and actuate sinners according to its efficacy.

Therefore, with regard to the *First* office of the Law, all sinners universally are said to be under it, even those who are without law and have sinned without it; 'for they shall also perish without law (Rom. ii. 12) yet they are not to be condemned without a just sentence of the law. In relation to the *Second* office of the law, they are said to be under its dominion, government, lordship and (pedagogy) tutelage, who are ruled and actuated by the efficacy and guidance of the law, in whom it exerts its power, and exercises these its operations, whether some of them or all, whether more or less, in which respect there may be, and really are, different degrees and orders of those persons who are said, in this second view, to be under the law. But in this passage, we define *a man under the law* to be 'one who is under its entire efficacy and all its operations;' the design of the Apostle requiring this, as we shall afterwards perceive.

*What it is to be
'under grace.'*

4. This phrase 'to be under grace,' answers in opposition to the other of being 'under the law,' since the effect of this grace is two-fold. The *First* is, to absolve a sinful man from the guilt of sin and from condemnation; the *Second* is, to endow man with the Spirit of adoption and of regeneration, and by that Spirit to vivify or quicken, to lead, actuate and govern him. Hence, not only are they said to be 'under grace' who are free from guilt and condemnation, but likewise they who are governed and actuated by the guidance of grace and of the Holy Spirit. But since we are in this place discussing, not properly the condemnation of sin, but the tyranny and dominion which it violently exercises over those who are its subjects, by compelling them with its own force to yield it complete obedience, and to which are opposed in vain the efficacy and power of the law; and since we are now treating, not about the remission of sins, but about that grace which inhibits or restrains the force of this tyrant and lord, and which leads men to yield it due obedience; therefore we must restrict the expressions, 'to be under the law,' and 'to be under grace,' to the latter signification

- that he is ‘under the law’ who is governed and actuated by the guidance of the law,
- and that he is ‘under grace’ who is governed and actuated by the guidance of grace.

This will be rendered evident from the fourteenth verse of the sixth chapter, when accurately compared with the preceding and following verses of the same chapter, and from the 17th and 18th verses of the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Galatians, when they are properly applied to this matter. Yet if any one be desirous of extending these passages to the two-fold signification of each of the expressions, he has my free permission for such extension; for it cannot prove the least hindrance in the inquiry and discovery of the truth of the matter which is the subject of our present discussion.

5. Let us now see about the regenerate and the unregenerate man. That we may define him with strictness, as it is proper to do in oppositions and distinctions, we say that a regenerate man is one who is so called, not from the *commenced* act or operation of the Holy Spirit, though this is regeneration, but from the same act or operation when it is perfected with respect to its essential parts, though not with respect to its quantity and degree; he is not one ‘who was once enlightened, and has tasted of the heavenly gift, and was made partaker of the Holy Ghost, and who has tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come’ (Heb. vi. 4, 5); because the explanation given by most of our divines to this passage, applies only to unregenerate persons. Neither is he one who ‘has escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and who has known the way of righteousness’ (2 Pet. ii. 20, 21); or they explain this passage also as applicable solely to the unregenerate. Nor is it a man who ‘heareth the law, and has the work of the law written in his heart, whose thoughts mutually accuse or else excuse themselves, who rests in the law, makes his boast of God, knows his will, and approves the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law’ (Rom. ii. 13–18). Neither is he one who ‘has prophesied in the name of the Lord, and in his name cast out devils’ (Matt. vii. 22); and who ‘has all faith, so that he could remove mountains’ (1 Cor. xiii. 2). Nor is he one who acknowledges himself to be a sinner, mourns on account of sin, and is affected with godly sorrow, and who is fatigued and ‘heavy laden’ under the burden of his sins (Matt. xi. 28); for such persons as these Christ came to call, and this call precedes justification and sanctification, that is, regeneration (Rom. viii. 30). Neither is it he who ‘knows himself to be wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;’ for this is the man whom Christ ‘counsels to buy’ of him the things necessary for himself (Rev. iii. 17, 18). This interpretation is not invalidated by the fact that the church of Laodicea is said not to know herself; for the ‘counsel’ or advice bestowed will never persuade her to buy those things of Christ, unless she have previously known herself to be such a one as

What is meant by ‘a regenerate man?’

1 The Thesis to be Proved

is there described. Nor is he one who knows that a man cannot be justified by the works of the law, and who, from this very circumstance, is compelled to flee to Christ, that in him he may obtain justification (Gal. ii. 16). Nor is he a man, who, acknowledging himself as being unworthy even to lift up his eyes to heaven, and who, smiting on his breast, has exclaimed, *God be merciful to me a sinner!*

This has been well observed by Beza in his *Refutation of the calumnies of Tilman Heshusius*, where he makes a beautiful distinction between ‘the things which precede regeneration’ and ‘regeneration itself’ and thus expresses himself:

‘It is one thing to inquire by what methods God prepares for repentance or [*renovationem*] newness of life, and it is another to treat on repentance itself. Let, therefore, the acknowledgment of sin and godly sorrow be the beginning of repentance, but so far as God begins in this way to prepare us for newness of life, in which respect it was the practice of Calvin deservedly to call this fear *initial*. Besides, in the description of penitence we are not so accustomed as some people are, to call these dreadful qualms of conscience *the mortification of the flesh or of the old man*; though we know that the word of God is compared to a sword, which, in some manner, slays us, that we may offer ourselves for a sacrifice to God; and St Paul somewhere calls afflictions [*mortificationem*] the death of Christ which we carry about with us in the body. For it is very evident that, by the mortification or death of the flesh and of the old man, or of our members, St Paul means something far different: He means not that efficacy of the Spirit of Christ which may terrify us, but that which may sanctify us, by destroying in us that corrupt nature which brought forth fruit unto death. Besides, we also differ from some persons on this point, not with respect to the thing itself, but in the method or form of teaching it, that they wish faith to be the second part of penitence, but we say that μετανοια [a change of mind for the better], by which term we understand, according to Scripture usage, renovation of life or newness of living, is the effect of faith,’ etc. (*Opuscula*, tom. i, fol. 328).

Such are the sentiments of Beza; but how exactly they agree with those things which I have advanced, will be rendered very apparent to any man who will compare the one with the other.

Consonant with these is that which John Calvin says about *Initial Fear*, in the following words: ‘They have probably been deceived by this — that some persons are tamed by the qualms or terrors of conscience, or [*formantur*] are prepared by them for obedience, before they have been imbued with the knowledge of grace, nay, before they have tasted it. And this is that *Initial*

Fear which some persons reckon among the virtues, because they discern that it approaches nearly to a true and just obedience. But this is not the place for discussing the various ways by which Christ draws us to himself, or prepares us for the pursuit of piety,' etc.

But a regenerate man is one who comprises within himself all the particulars which I shall here enumerate: 'has put off the old man with his deeds, and has put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge, which agrees with the image of him who created him' (Col. iii. 9, 10). has received from God 'the Spirit of wisdom and revelation through the knowledge of Him, the eyes of his understanding being illuminated' or opened (Ephes. i. 18). He has put off, 'concerning the former conversation, *the old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and he is renewed in the spirit of his mind, and has put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness' (Ephes. iv. 22–24). He, 'with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, is changed into the same image from glory to glory, even us by the Spirit of the Lord' (2 Cor. iii. 18). He is 'dead to sin; his old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth he should not serve sin; he is freed from sin, and is alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord?' (Rom. vi. 2, 6, 7, 11); 'he is crucified with Christ; nevertheless he lives, yet not he; but Christ liveth in him; and the life which he now lives in the flesh, he lives by the faith of the Son of God' (Gal. ii. 20). Being one of Christ's followers, 'he has crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts, and now lives in the Spirit' (v. 24, 25). 'By our Lord Jesus Christ, the world is crucified unto him, and he unto the world' (vi. 14). 'In Christ Jesus the Lord, he is also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ' (Col. ii. 11). 'In him, God worketh both to will and to do' (Phil. ii. 13). 'He is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in him; through the Spirit, he mortifies the deeds of the body; he is led by the Spirit of God, and does not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit' (Rom. viii. 4, 9, 13, 14).

Uniting in a brief manner, all the parts and fruits of generation into one summary, we say A regenerate man is he

- who has a mind freed from the darkness and vanity of the world, and illuminated with the true and saving knowledge of Christ, and with faith,
- who has affections that are mortified, and delivered from the dominion and slavery of sin, that are inflamed with such new desires as agree with the Divine Nature, and as are prepared and fitted for newness of living,
- who has a will reduced to order, and conformed to the will of God,
- who has powers and faculties able, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to contend against sin, the world and Satan, and to gain the victory over them, and to bring forth fruit unto God, such as is meet for

1 The Thesis to be Proved

repentance

- who also actually fights against sin, and, having obtained the victory over it, no longer does those things which are pleasing to the flesh and [*concupiscentiae*] to unlawful desires, but does those which are grateful to God; that is, he actually [*declinat*] desists from evil and does good
 - not indeed perfectly, but according to the measure of faith and of the gift of Christ, according to [*modulo*] the small degree of regeneration, which, begun in the present life, must be gradually improved or increased, till at length it is perfected after this short life is ended
 - not with respect to essential parts, but with respect to quantity, as we have already declared
 - not always without interruption, (for he sometimes stumbles, falls, wanders astray, commits sin, grieves the Holy Spirit, etc.), but generally, and for the most part, he does good.

Who is ‘an unregenerate?’

6. But an unregenerate man is,

- not only he who is entirely blind, ignorant of the will of God, knowingly and willingly contaminating himself by sins without any remorse of conscience, affected with no sense of the wrath of God, terrified with no compunctions visits of conscience, not oppressed with the burden of sin, and inflamed with no desire of deliverance;
- but it is also he
 - who knows the will of God but does it not
 - who is acquainted with the way of righteousness, but departs from it
 - who has the law of God written in his heart, and has thoughts mutually accusing and excusing each other
 - who receives the word of the Gospel with gladness, and for a season rejoices in its light
 - who comes to baptism, but either does not receive the word itself in a good heart, or, at least, does not bring forth fruit
 - who is affected with a painful sense of sin, is oppressed with its burden, and who sorrows after a godly sort
 - who knows that righteousness cannot be acquired by the law, and who is, therefore, compelled to flee to Christ.

For all these particulars, in what manner soever they be taken, do not belong to the essence and the essential parts of regeneration, penitence, or repentance, which are mortification and vivification and quickening; but they are only things preceding, and may have some place among the beginnings, and, if

such be the pleasure of any one, they may be reckoned the causes of penitence and regeneration, as Calvin has learnedly and nervously explained them in his *Christian Institutes* (lib. iii, cap. 3). Besides, even true and living faith in Christ precedes regeneration strictly taken, and consisting of the mortification or death of the old man, and the vivification of the new man, as Calvin has, in the same passage of his *Institutes*, openly declared, and in a manner which agrees with the Scriptures and the nature of faith. For Christ becomes ours by faith, and we are engrafted into Christ, are made members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, and, being thus planted with Him, we coalesce or are united together, that we may draw from Him the vivifying power of the Holy Spirit, by which power the old man is mortified and we rise again into a new life. All these things cohere together with each other in a certain order, and must thus also be considered, if any one be desirous of knowing them not confusedly but distinctly, and of explaining them well to others. But we are not, in this place, treating about all the unregenerate in general, but only about those in whom the law has exerted all its efficacy, and who are, on this account, reciprocally said to be under the law.

2 The connection of the seventh chapter with the sixth

1. Having, from necessity of the thing and of order, thus premised these things, let us now proceed to treat on the question and the thesis itself. But it will be useful, briefly to place before our eyes the sum of the whole chapter, its disposition and distribution; that, after having considered the design of the Apostle, and those things which conduce to that design, and which have been brought forward by the Apostle as subservient to his purpose, his mind and intention, may the more plainly be made known to us. That this may the more appropriately be done, the matter must be traced a little further backward.

The Design of the Apostle in the Sixth Chapter.

In the 12th and 13th verses, as well as in the preceding verses of the Sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle had exhorted all the believers at Rome to contend strenuously against sin, and not to suffer sin to domineer or rule over them, or to exercise authority in their mortal body; but to devote themselves to God, and to yield their members as the instruments of righteousness unto God; and he demonstrated and confirmed the equity of his exhortation by many arguments, especially by those which are deduced from the communion of believers with Christ. But, in order to animate them the more powerfully to this spiritual contest, — the persuasion to enter on which was to be wrought not only by a demonstration of its equity, but also by a promise of its felicitous and successful issue, — in the 14th verse of the same chapter, he proposed to them the certain hope of victory, declaring ‘sin shall not have dominion over you.’ For nothing can so strongly incite men to engage manfully and with spirit in this warfare, as that certain confidence of obtaining the victory which the Apostle promises in these words. But he grounds his promise, in the 14th verse, on a reason drawn from it, and on the power and ability of that [grace] under the guidance and auspices of which they were about to contend against sin, or from that state in which they were then placed it, and through Christ, when he says, ‘For ye are not under the law but under grace,’ thus extolling the powers of grace at the expense of the contrary weakness of the law, as though he had said,

I employ these continual exhortations to induce you strenuously to engage in the conflict against sin; and I do this, not only because I consider it most equitable that you should enter into that warfare, while I have regard to your communion with Christ, but also because I arrive at an assured hope, while I view your present condition, that

2 The Connection between the sixth and seventh Chapter

you will at length enjoy the victory over sin, through that under whose auspices you fight; and it can by no means come to pass, that sin shall have dominion over you, as it formerly had; for you are under grace, under the government and guidance of the Spirit of Christ, and no longer under the law. if you were still in that state in which you were before faith in Christ, that is, if you were yet under the law, I might indulge in despair about declaring a victory for you, as placed under the dominion of sin. Such a victory over the power of sin contending within you, you would not be able to obtain by the strength or power of the law, which knows how to command, but affords no aid for the performance of the things commanded, how great soever might be the exertions which you made to gain the battle under the auspices of the law.

But this reasoning, in the first place, possessed validity to prove the necessity of the grace which was offered and to be obtained in Christ alone, in opposition to those who were the patrons of the cause of the Law against the Gospel, and who urged that covenant, the law of works, against the covenant of grace and the law of faith. This reasoning also contributed greatly to the design which the Apostle proposed to himself in the principal part of this epistle. His design was to teach that, not the Law, but ‘the Gospel is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth,’ both because by the Law, and by the works of the Law, no man can be justified from the sins which he has committed, and because, by the power and aid of the same Law no one can oppose himself to the power of sin to shake off its yoke, and, after having been freed from its yoke, to serve God, since he immediately falls in the conflict. But in Christ Jesus, as He is offered to us through the gospel, and apprehended by faith we can obtain both these blessings

- *the forgiveness of sins* through faith in his blood,
- and *the power of the Spirit of Christ*,

by which, being delivered from the dominion of sin, we may, through the same Spirit, be able to resist sin, to gain the victory over it, and to serve God ‘in newness of life.’

These things in the sixth chapter may be perceived at one glance when placed before the eyes in the following order:

THE PROPOSITION OF THE APOSTLE

- *Dehortatory.* Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.’
- *Hortatory.* ‘But yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.’

THE REASON

‘For sin shall not have dominion over you.’

HENCE, AN ENTHYMEME, WHOSE

- *Antecedent is*, ‘Sin shall not have dominion over you.’
- *Its Consequent*, ‘Therefore, neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God,’ etc.

THE PROOF OF THE ANTECEDENT OR OF THE REASON

‘For ye are under grace; therefore, sin shall not have dominion over you.’

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE PROOF FROM ITS CONTRARY

‘For ye are not under the Law.’

A BRIEF EXPLICATION OF THE PROOF, AND OF ITS ILLUSTRATION

‘If, indeed, you were yet under the law, as you formerly were, sin would have the dominion over you as it once had; and, having followed its commands and impulses, you would not be able to do any other than yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.

‘But as you are now no longer under the law, but under grace, sin shall not in any wise have the dominion over you, but by the power of grace you shall easily resist sin, and yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.’

From the 14th verse, the Apostle perseveres in the same exhortation throughout the remainder of the Sixth chapter, with a slight intermission of this argument, yet having previously refuted the objection which might be deduced from it; being about to resume the same argument, and to treat it more at large, in the whole of the Seventh chapter, and in the former part of the Eighth, since, as we have already perceived, the prosecution of this argument contributes very materially to his design.

2. But the Apostle treats this subject in the order and method which was demanded by reason itself, and by the necessity of its discussion. For he had said, ‘Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.’

A short Disposition of this Argument.

2 The Connection between the sixth and seventh Chapter

3. In these words, are contained the four following enunciations:

- a) Christians are not under the Law.
- b) Christians are under Grace.
- c) Sin shall have dominion over those who are under the Law.
- d) Sin shall not have dominion over those who are under Grace.

*Four
Enunciations
of it.*

Of these four enunciations, the Second and the Fourth are necessary and sufficient to persuade in favour of this exhortation; but the First and the Third are adduced, both for the sake of illustration, and because they were required by the principal design of the entire epistle. The former of these [pairs of conjoint enunciations] is well known to all who understand the nature of a separated axiom and the mutual relation which exists between its parts; but the latter of them will be rendered very apparent by the deduction of the epistle itself, and on a diligent inspection of its conformation.

*This Distribution
is treated in or-
der [in the Sev-
enth Chapter].*

4. The Apostle, therefore, thought that these four axioms ought to be treated by him in order, and indeed always with the mention of the conclusion which he was desirous to infer from them as from premises; and in which the sum of the exhortation consisted.

*The two former
Enunciations are
contained in con-
junction.*

5. But the Apostle treats those two former enunciations conjointly, such a course being required by their nature. For he gives one thing to those from which he takes another away, and this very properly; because there exists one and the same cause why the one should be attributed and the other taken away, why they are under Grace and not under the Law. This cause is expressed in the fourth verse of the Seventh chapter, in the following words: ‘Ye, also, are become dead to the Law in the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another.’

*What therefore is
proved by them.*

6. But in the first four verses, the Apostle proves that Christians or believers are not under the Law, but under Grace; which proof may be comprised in this syllogism:

- They who are dead to the Law, and this in the body of Christ, that they may be married to another, even to Christ, are no longer under the Law, but are now under Grace;
- But Christians are dead to the Law, that they should be married to another, even to Christ;
- THEREFORE, Christians are no longer under the Law, but under Grace.

The first part of the proposition, — ‘They who are dead to the Law, are no longer under the Law,’ is expressed in the first verse of the Seventh chapter in these words: ‘The Law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth.’ The latter part of it, — ‘They who are made Christ’s are under Grace, — is

included in the fourth verse, from which it may be deduced. But a confirmation of the first part of the Proposition is added, in the first verse, from the testimony of the consciences of those who are expert in the knowledge of the Law; and the same part of the Proposition is illustrated, in the second and third verses, by a simile, that of marriage, in which the woman is no longer liable to the law of her husband than ‘so long as he liveth;’ but when he is dead, she is free from the law of her husband, so that she may be allowed to transfer herself to another man without committing the crime of adultery. The application of this comparison is evident, the difference only being observed, — that the Apostle has declared, by a change in the mode of speaking, that *Christians are become dead to the Law*, and not that *the Law is become dead to them*. This change of speech is attributed by some persons to the prudence of the Apostle, who wished to avoid the use of a phrase which he previously knew would be offensive to the Jews. By others it is transferred to the nature of the thing, in which they say that *Sin*, and not *the Law*, sustained the part or person of the husband, because in the sixth verse sin is said to be dead; but this makes nothing to our present purpose.

The Assumption, in the fourth verse, is in these words: ‘we also are become dead to the Law in the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Christ.’ This Assumption is illustrated, FIRST, by the Efficient Cause of that mortification or death, which is the crucifixion and the resurrection of the body of Christ, and the communion of believers with Christ in that crucifixion and in the rising again of His body. SECONDLY. This Assumption is illustrated by the Final Cause of deliverance, which contains the scope or design of the apostolical exhortation, that is, ‘to bring forth fruit unto God.’ But he perseveres in the same end in the two subsequent verses, the sixth and seventh, by treating it through a comparison of things similar, as he had also done in the nineteenth verse of the Sixth chapter. The parallel is, *that we serve God*, and since *we are not now in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of Spirit, and are delivered from the Law, that thing being dead in which we were held, it is equitable that we bring forth fruit unto God; because when we were in the flesh, the motion of sins, existing through the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death*.

The Conclusion is not openly inferred, but is understood, which is a mode of frequent occurrence, because the Proposition, or Question to be treated, does not differ from the Conclusion *in the matter*, but only *in the mode of position*.

7. But though these two verses, the fifth and sixth, have such a relation to those things which preceded as has been already explained, yet they are likewise to be referred to those which follow. For the third and fourth enunciations are proposed in these two verses, — the third in the fifth verse, and the fourth in the sixth. For, this expression, ‘The motions of sins, which are by the law, are vigorous, or operate in the members of men who are yet in the flesh,’

The Third and Fourth enunciations are proposed in the fifth and sixth verses.

2 The Connection between the sixth and seventh Chapter

(verse 5) is tantamount in meaning to these words: ‘Sin has the dominion over those who are under the law.’ These words likewise, ‘But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, $\omega\sigma\tau\epsilon$, so that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter,’ (verse sixth), agree well with the following: ‘Sin shall not have the dominion over those who are under grace.’ This will be rendered evident if any one translates the particle $\omega\sigma\tau\epsilon$, as an ancient interpreter has done, by the words ‘*so that*,’ and understands it not of the end or intention, but of the issue or event, as the almost perpetual use of that particle requires. For the sense is this: ‘When we were yet in the oldness of the letter and under the law, then we were held under sin; and when we are now delivered from the law and placed in newness of spirit, we are able to serve God in righteousness and true holiness,’ agreeably to this state of our newness of living.

8. But let us now more closely inspect how this third enunciation is treated, since in it is laid the principal part of the controversy. The exposition of the whole matter consists of the proposing of the enunciation, and of its investigation, the latter of which is partly *an explanation*, and partly *an application of the cause*. Both of these are briefly joined to the Proposition, as it is laid down in the fifth verse of this chapter; wherefore they are more copious, and better accommodated to the more prolix investigation, than as they are proposed from the fourteenth verse of the sixth chapter.

9. (1.) For that proposition is, ‘Sin,’ or, as it is more energetically expressed, ‘The motions of sins have the dominion over those who are under the law.’ This attribute is likewise more nervously expressed by this method of speech, by which the motions of sins are said to have existence by the law itself.

Two effects of this dominion, therefore, are added to the proposition for the sake of explication.

- One is, *its vigour, and its working in the members*;
- The Other is, *its bringing forth fruits unto death*.

The cause why, in men under the law, ‘the motions of sins work in their members to bring forth fruit unto death,’ is rendered in these words, ‘when we were in the flesh.’ For the reference to the time preceding is taken from the carnal state, which state comprises the cause why, in times past, ‘the motions of sins did work in our members.’ As if the Apostle had said,

It is not wonderful that the motions of sins have had the dominion over us, and have worked in our members to bring forth fruit unto death; for we are in the flesh; and the law itself is so far from being able to hinder this dominion and to restrain the vigorous growth of sin, that these motions are by the law far more fervid and vehement, — not through the fault of the law, but through the wickedness and obstinacy of sin that holds the dominion and abuses its power.

In the Third Enunciation lies the principal part of the Controversy; its Deduction consists of the Proposition of the Enunciation and of its Method of being treated. The Proposition of the Enunciation.

10. (2.) This Proposition, therefore, is more largely explained, from the seventh verse to the fourteenth; and its cause is fully treated from the fourteenth verse inclusive, to the end of the chapter. The Explanation is occupied about this two-fold effect

- *the working of sin,*
- and *its fructification* by which it brings forth fruit unto death.

The Rendering of the Cause is continually intent upon what is said in the fifth verse, ‘*When we were in the flesh.*’ But on both these points, we must carefully guard against bringing the law under the suspicion of blame, as though it were of itself the cause of depraved desires in us, and of death; when it is only the occasion, upon which sin violently seizes, and uses it to produce these effects in men who live under the law. In the Explanation, both these effects are removed from the law, and they are attributed to sin as to their proper cause; yet this is done in such a way, that it is at the same time added, that sin abuses the law to produce these effects.

11. (i) The former of these Effects is removed from the law, in the seventh verse, by these words: ‘What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid.’ That is, as if he had said,

Can it, therefore, be attributed to the law that it is itself, or the cause of depraved desires in us, because it is called in the fifth verse, *the motions of sin which are by the law?*

The Apostle replies, that it is very wrong to entertain even the bare thought of such a thing concerning the law. He subjoins a proof of this removal of the first Effect, from the contrary effect which the law has; for *the law is the index of sin, or that which points it out*; therefore, it is neither sin nor the cause of sin. He then illustrates this proof by a special example: ‘For I should not have known concupiscence, unless the law had said, *Thou shalt not desire or covet.*’

But the same Effect is, in the eighth verse, attributed to sin, in these words: ‘But sin wrought in me all manner of concupiscence,’ yet so that it abuses the law as an occasion to produce this effect. This is intimated in the words which immediately follow: ‘Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me,’ etc. The latter effect [the fructification of sin] is proved in the next verse, in these words: ‘For, without the law, sin was dead; but, on the approach of the law, sin revived,’ which is illustrated by its opposite privatives, ‘For I was alive when sin was dead; but when sin revived then I died;’ but, as this was done by the law, it is evident that sin abused the law to produce this effect. But the Apostle here joins the second effect to the first, (because they cohere together by nature, and the former is the cause of the latter), and thus in the tenth and eleventh verses, ascribes death to sin, which abuses the law, yet so as to excuse

The Investigation of the Proposition, consisting of a larger Explanation, and the Rendering of the cause.

A larger Explanation of the Seventh Chapter, from the seventh verse to the fourteenth.

2 The Connection between the sixth and seventh Chapter

the law also from the effect of death, as it is expressed in the tenth verse, ‘the commandment which was unto life;’ the cause of death being transferred to sin, in the expression, ‘for sin, taking occasion by the commandment,’ etc. But he follows up his exculpation of the law, in the twelfth verse, by a description of the nature of the law, that it ‘is holy, and just, and good,’ and, therefore, by no means the cause of death — an insinuation against the law which he indignantly repels in the former part of the thirteenth verse, by saying, ‘God forbid that that which is good, should be made death unto me.’ But in the latter part of this verse, he ascribes the same effect to sin, with the addition of a two-fold end, both of them inclining to the disparagement of sin itself, in these words: ‘That sin might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin, by the commandment, might become exceedingly sinful.’ As though he had said:

Sin, by this abuse of the law to seduce and kill us, has produced the effect, that, in return, its own depravity and perverseness be made manifest by the law. This perverse depravity consists in sin working death by the law which is good, and in being made exceedingly sinful by the commandment which is just and holy, and that it might only become as it were a sinner above measure by its own [*malitia*] wickedness, but also might be declared to be such by the indication of the law, which it has so shamefully abused to produce these effects.

But it is apparent from the whole of this explanation, that the Apostle has so attempered his style as to draw a conclusion of the necessity of the grace of Christ, from the efficacy of sin, and from the weakness of the law. This will be still more perspicuous, if we briefly comprise this explanation of the Apostle in the following form:

Sin has the dominion over those who are under the law, by working in them all manner of concupiscence through the law itself, and also by killing them through it, yet so that the law is free [*utrâque culpâ*] from all blame in both cases, since, it is holy and good, the index of sin, and was given for life. But sin is so powerful in men who are still under the law, that it abuses the law to produce those effects in a man who is under subjection to it; by which abuse of the law, sin, on the other hand, takes away *the reward* from the law, that its own perverse and noxious disposition and tendency may be manifested [*indicio*] by the indication of the law. From these circumstances a man who is under the law is compelled to flee to grace, that he may by its beneficent aid be delivered from the tyranny of such a wicked and injurious master.

12. (ii) The rendering of the cause follows from the fourteenth verse to the end of the chapter; in which, as we have already observed, the utmost care is evinced not to impose any ignominy on the law, or to ascribe any blame to it; and the entire [*noxa*] mischief is attributed to the power of sin, and to the weakness of that man who is under the law. But the cause is briefly given in the fourteenth verse, in these words: ‘For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.’ But in order that this rendering of the cause may be accurately understood, we must again consider that proposition, the cause of which the Apostle determines in this place to explain, and which is this: ‘Sin has dominion over those who are under the law;’ or, ‘The motions of sins, which are by the law, work in men who are under the law.’
- The Rendering of the Cause, from the fourteenth verse to the end of the Seventh Chapter.*
13. That the cause of this may be fully and perfectly rendered, it must be shown why the law cannot weaken the force and tyranny of sin in those who are under the law, and why sin holds those who are under the law bound and obnoxious to itself as by some right of its own. Therefore, this rendering of the cause consists of two parts: The FIRST is contained in these words: ‘For truly the law is spiritual; but I am carnal.’ That the particle ‘*indeed*’ or ‘*truly*’ must be added, is proved both by its relative $\delta\epsilon$, ‘*but*,’ as well as by the very subject. The SECOND is contained in these words: ‘For I am sold under sin;’ that is, I am under the dominion of sin, as one who is constituted a purchased servant by the right of sale, and like one who becomes the bond-slave of sin. As though the Apostle had said,
- That the law is incapable of hindering [*vigorem*] the strength and operation of sin in men who are under the law, arises from this, — that men under the law are carnal; in whom therefore the law, though it is spiritual, does not possess so much power as to enable it to restrain the strong inclination of the flesh to things which are evil and contrary to the law. And since sin, by a certain right of its own, exercises dominion over those men who are under the law, therefore it comes to pass that they have been made bond-slaves to sin, and are bound and ‘fettered like a purchased menial.’
14. The Apostle immediately subjoins a proof, in the fifteenth verse, not so much of the fact that a man *under the law is carnal*, as that *he is the slave of sin*. But the proof is taken from the peculiar adjunct or effect of a purchased servant, in these words: ‘For that which I do I allow not.’ For a servant does not do that which seems good to himself, but that which his master is pleased to prescribe to him; because thus is the word [*agnosco*] ‘I allow’ used in this passage, for ‘I approve.’ But if any one thinks that it is here used in its proper signification, the argument will be the same, and equal its validity; ‘for,’ as Christ has told us, ‘the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth;’ (John xv. 15;) neither is his Lord bound, nor is he accustomed, to make known to his servant all his will, except so far as it seems proper to himself to employ
- The fourteenth verse contains the Rendering of a two-fold Reason.*
- The Proof of this is contained in the fifteenth verse.*

2 The Connection between the sixth and seventh Chapter

the services of his menial through the knowledge of that will.

And a more ample Explanation of it.

15. But the first signification of the word is better accommodated to this passage, and seems to be required by those things which follow; for a more ample explanation of this argument is produced in the following words: 'For what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I;' which is an evident token of a will that is subjugated, and subject to the will of another; that is, to the will of sin. Therefore he is the servant and the slave of sin.

From which two Consectaries are deduced — the First in the sixteenth verse, and the Second in the seventeenth.

16. The Apostle now deduces two consectaries from this, by the First of which he excuses the law, and by the Second, he throws on sin all the blame respecting this matter, as he had also done in a previous part of the chapter. The First Consectary is, 'if, then, I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good' (16). That is,

if I unwillingly do that which sin prescribes to me, now, indeed, I consent unto the law that it is good, as being that against which sin is committed. I assent to the law that commands, though, while placed under the dominion of sin, I am unable to perform what it prescribes.

The Second Consectary is, 'Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me' (17). That is,

therefore, because I reluctantly do what I do, not at my own option but at that of another, that is, of my master, who is sin; it follows from this, that it is not I who do it, but sin which dwells in me, has the dominion over me, and impels me to do it.

From this, the Apostle returns to the Rendering of the Cause, in the eighteenth verse, and to the Proof of it.

17. Having treated upon these subjects in the manner now stated, the Apostle returns to the same rendering of the cause and the proof of it. The eighteenth verse contains the rendering of the cause, in these words: 'For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing:' Wherefore it is not surprising that the law, though it be spiritual, is not able to break the power of sin in a man who is under the law; for that which is good does not dwell, that is, has not the dominion, in a carnal man who is under the law. The Proof of this is subjoined in the same verse: 'For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.' Or, 'I do not find how I can perform any thing good.'

Its more ample Explanation follows in the nineteenth verse, from which is deduced the Second Consectary in the twentieth verse.

18. The more ample explanation of it is given in the nineteenth verse, 'For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do;' which is an evident token that no good thing dwelleth in my flesh. For if any good thing dwelt in my flesh, I should then be actually capable of performing that to which my mind and will are inclined. He then deduces once more the Second consectary, in the twentieth verse: 'Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.'

19. But from all these arguments, in the twenty-first verse he concludes the thing intended: 'I find then a law, [which is imposed in this way], that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.' That is, in reality, therefore, I find from the circumstance of 'to will being present with me,' but of not being capable of performing what is good, that evil or sin is present with me, and not only has it a place in me but it likewise prevails. This Conclusion does not differ in meaning from the rendering of the cause which is comprised in the fourteenth verse, in this expression: 'But I am carnal, sold under sin.' But in the two subsequent verses, the twenty-second and twenty-third, the Apostle proves the conclusion which immediately preceded; and, in proving it, he more clearly explains whence and how it happens, that a man who is under the law cannot have dominion over sin, and that, whether willing or unwilling, such a person is compelled to fulfill the lusts of sin; and he says, 'for I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.'
20. At the close, from a consideration of the miserable state of those men who are under the law, a votive exclamation is raised for their deliverance from this tyranny and servitude of sin, in the following terms: 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver (or snatch) me from the body of this death?' That is, not from this mortal body, but from the dominion of sin, which he here calls *the body of death*, as he calls it also in other passages *the body of sin*.
21. To this exclamation he subjoins a reply — 'the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, will deliver thee' — or a thanksgiving, in which the Apostle [*significat*] intimates, in his own person, whence deliverance must be sought and expected. In the last place, a Conclusion is annexed to the whole investigation, in the latter part of the twenty-fifth verse, in which is briefly defined the entire condition of a man under the law, that had been previously and at great length described; 'so then, with the mind, I myself, serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin.' And in this manner is concluded the Seventh chapter.
22. But in order that these arguments, after having been reduced to a small compass, may be perceived at a single glance, let us briefly recapitulate this second part likewise, in the following manner:

We have already declared, that sin has dominion over those men who are under the law: But the cause of this is, that, though the law itself is spiritual, and though the men who are under it consent unto it that it is good, and though they will what is good and delight in the law of God after the inward man; yet these very men who are under the law are carnal, sold under sin, have no good thing dwelling in their flesh, but have sin dwelling in them, and evil is present with

The Conclusion of the thing intended, in the twenty-first verse, and the Proof of it is given in the twenty-second and twenty-third verses.

A votive Exclamation for the Deliverance of a man who is under the law, occurs in the twenty-fourth verse.

An Answer or a Thanksgiving reference to that Exclamation, is given in the former part of the twenty-fifth verse, and the Conclusion of the whole Investigation, in which the State of a man who is under the law is briefly defined in the latter part of the twenty-fifth verse.

A brief Recapitulation of the Second Part.

them; they have likewise a law in their members which not only wars against the law of their mind, but which also renders them captives to the law of sin which is in their members. Of this matter it is a certain and evident token, that the good which such men would, they do not; but the evil which they hate, that they do; and that when they will to do good, they do not obtain [*posse*] the ability. Hence it is undoubtedly evident, that they are not themselves the masters of their own acts, but sin which dwelleth in them; to which is also chiefly to be ascribed the culpability of the evil which is committed by these men who are like the reluctant perpetrators of it. But [*hinc*] on this account, these persons, from the shewing of the law, having become acquainted with their misery, are compelled to cry out, and to implore the grace of Jesus Christ.

2.1 Verse the fourteenth

A closer Investigation of this Question and a demonstration taken from the text itself, that the Apostle is here treating about a man placed under the Law, and not under Grace.

1. Having, in the preceding manner, considered the disposition and economy of the whole chapter, let us now somewhat more strictly investigate the question proposed by us, which is this: ‘Are those things which are recorded, from the fourteenth verse to the end of the seventh chapter, to be understood concerning a man who is under the law, or concerning one who is under grace?’

FIRST of all, let some attention be bestowed on the connection of the fourteenth verse with those which preceded it; for the *rational* particle γάρ ‘for,’ indicates its connection with the preceding. This connection shows, that the same subject is discussed in this verse, as in those before it; and the pronoun ἐγώ I, must be understood as relating to the same man, as had been signified in the previous verses by the same pronoun. But the investigation in the former part of the chapter was respecting *a man who is under the law*, and the pronoun ‘I’ had previously denoted the man who was under the law: Therefore, in this fourteenth verse also, in which a cause is given of that which had been before explained, *a man under the law* is still the subject. If it be otherwise, the whole of it is nothing less than loose reasoning; nor, in this case, have we ever been able to perceive even any probable connection, according to which these consequences that follow can be in coherence with the matters preceding, and which has been adduced by those who suppose that, in the first thirteen verses of this seventh chapter, the discourse refers to *a man under the law*, but that in the fourteenth verse and those which follow, the subject of the discourse is *a man under grace*. If any one denies this, let him attempt to make out the connection [between the two portions of the chapter which have just been specified]. Some of those who have entertained that opinion, perceiving the difficulty of such an undertaking, interpret this fourteenth verse as well as those which preceded it, as relating to *a man under the law*, but the fifteenth and following verses as applicable to *a man under*

grace. This, also, we shall hereafter perceive.

SECONDLY. In the same fourteenth verse, that man about whom the Apostle treats under his own person, is said to be *carnal*; but a man who is regenerate and placed under grace is not *carnal*, but *spiritual*. Therefore, it is a matter of the greatest certainty, that the subject of the Apostle in this verse is not a man placed under grace. But a man who is under the law is *carnal*; therefore, it is plain that the subject of discourse in this verse is *a man under the law*. I prove that a regenerate man, one who is placed under grace, is neither carnal, nor so designated in the Scriptures.

- In Romans viii. 9, it is said ‘but ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.’ And in the verse preceding, it is said, ‘so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God:’ But a regenerate man, one who is placed under grace, pleases God.
- In Romans viii. 5, it is said ‘They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh,’ but [as it is expressed in the same verse] *a man under grace* ‘minds the things of the Spirit.’
- In Gal. v. 24, it is said, ‘They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts;’ and they that ‘have crucified the flesh’ are not carnal. But men who are regenerate and placed under grace ‘are Christ’s and have crucified the flesh.’ Therefore, such men as answer this description are *not carnal*.
- In Romans viii. 14, it is said, ‘As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.’ Therefore, they are ‘led by the Spirit of God;’ but such persons are *spiritual*.

2. But it is here objected,

the same man may, in a different respect, be called *carnal* and *spiritual*

- ‘spiritual,’ so far as he is regenerate through the Spirit
- ‘carnal’ so far as he is unregenerate;

for, as long as man is in this mortal body, he is not fully regenerate. From this arises a two-fold signification of the work ‘carnal’:

- ONE denotes a man purely carnal, in whom sin has the dominion;
- THE OTHER denotes a man partly carnal and partly spiritual.’

ANSWER: I grant, according to the Scriptures, that man is not *fully and perfectly* regenerate so long as he is in the present life. But this admission must be correctly apprehended, that is, that such perfection be understood as relating not to the essence and essential parts of regeneration itself, but to the degree and measure of the quantity. For the business of regeneration

The manner in which CARNAL and SPIRITUAL are opposed to each other in the Scriptures.

2 The Connection between the sixth and seventh Chapter

[*non ita habet*] is not carried on in such a manner, that a man is regenerate or renewed with regard to some of his faculties, but remains with regard to others of them altogether *in the oldness* of depraved nature. But this second birth is ordered in the same manner as our first nativity, by which we are born human beings, — that is, partaking entirely of human nature, but not in the perfection of adult manhood. Thus also, does the power of regeneration pervade all the faculties of man, none of them excepted; but it does not pervade them perfectly at the first moment; for it is carried on gradually, and by daily advances, until it is expanded or drawn out to a full and mature age in Christ. Hence, the whole man is said to be regenerated, according to all his faculties, mind, affections and will; and he is, therefore, with regard to these, his regenerated faculties, a spiritual person.

But as in the Scriptures, a *spiritual* man and a *carnal* man are opposed to each other in their entire definitions, — for the former of them is *one who walks according to the Spirit*, and the latter is *he that walks after the flesh*, — and as the one is mentioned for the opposite of the other; in this respect indeed, the same man cannot be said to be at once both *spiritual* and *carnal*. And thus I reject, according to the Scriptures, this distinction of carnal persons, by which some of them are called *carnal*, in whom sin has dominion on the predominant part, and by which others receive the appellation of *carnal men*, in whom the flesh contends against the Spirit on the part which is less powerful; for the rejection of this distinction, I have the permission of Scripture, which is not accustomed to reckon the latter of these two classes in the number of carnal persons. This is expressed in a very significant manner by LEO, *On the Resurrection of Our Lord*, in the following words:

Though we are saved by hope, and still bear about with us corruption and mortal flesh, yet we are correctly said *not to be in the flesh* if carnal affections have not dominion over us, and we deservedly lay aside and discard the name of that thing whose *will* we no longer follow.

But were this, their distinction, allowed, still, that is not yet proved which they attempt, unless it be demonstrated that this man is called *carnal*, not in the first of these respects or senses, but in the second, — not because *sin has the dominion in him*, but because *the flesh contends against the Spirit*, which is a result that can never be deduced from the text itself. For it is evident that, in the man whom the Apostle here calls *carnal*, sin has the dominion, and the party of the flesh is more powerful in him than that of the Spirit. Because ‘sin dwelleth in him, he does the evil that he would not, and he does not the good which he would; to perform what is good, finds not; but sin, which dwelleth in him, perpetrates that which is evil; he is brought into captivity to the law of sin, or he is a captive under the law of sin.’ All these are certain and manifest tokens of sin, which has the dominion. Nor is it any valid objection, that the man is compelled, though unwilling and reluctant, to obey sin; for

the dominion of sin is two fold

- either with the consent of him who sins,
- or against his conscience, and his consent arising from his conscience.

For whether a servant obeys his Lord willingly or unwillingly, he is still the servant of him to whom he yields obedience. This is such a certain truth, that no one is able to come from the servitude of sin to liberty, except through this way, — the way of this hatred of servitude, and of this desire of obtaining deliverance.

3. But some one will say, ‘Even those who are under grace are called *carnal* in 1 Corinthians iii. 1, 2.’

I reply, The question does not relate to the word itself; but to its true meaning and the thing signified by it. We must try, therefore, whether this word has the same signification in this passage as it has in the Seventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. But they [at Corinth] are called *carnal* with respect to knowledge, and in reference to [*affectus*] feeling or inclination. In this sense, being [*rudes*] unskillful and inexperienced in the doctrine of piety, and the knowledge of the gospel, they are called *carnal* in opposition to those who are *spiritual*, who know how to ‘judge all things’ (1 Cor. ii. 15), and who are also called ‘who are *perfect*,’ in (1 Cor. ii. 6), and, in this sense, ‘babes in Christ,’ and those who have need to be fed with milk are called *carnal*. But with respect to feeling or inclination, those men are called *carnal* in whom human and carnal affections have the dominion and prevail, and who are said, in other passages, *to be in the flesh*, and *to walk according to the flesh*, in opposition to those who are *spiritual*, who, ‘through the Spirit, have mortified the deeds of the flesh and have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts.’ But the Apostle seems here to bestow this appellation on the Corinthians, or on some of them, with this two-fold reference; for he says that, *with respect to knowledge*, they are ‘babes in Christ,’ that is, unskillful and inexperienced in the doctrine of piety, who had to be ‘fed with milk, and who were not able to bear solid food.’ But *with respect to affections*, he says that they ‘are carnal, and walk as men,’ on account of the contentions and divisions which prevailed among them, from which it was evident that, in them, the flesh had the predominance over the Spirit. But in whatever sense or manner the word is used in this passage, it brings no advantage to the cause of those who declare that the Apostle calls himself a *carnal man* in Romans vii. 14. For if the same word is not used in 1 Corinthians iii. 1, in a sense similar to that which it bears in Romans vii. 14, then it is adduced in an unlearned and useless manner in elucidation of this question; for equivocation is the fruitful parent of error. If the word is to be received in the same sense in both passages, then I am at liberty firmly to conclude from this, in favour of my opinion, that the Apostle cannot be called *carnal* in Romans vii. for under that appellation he severely reprehends the Corinthians because he ‘was not able to speak unto

An Objection taken from 1 Corinthians iii. 1, 2; and a Reply to it.

2 The Connection between the sixth and seventh Chapter

them as unto *spiritual* persons,' since they were such as were still *carnal*; which he would have done without any just cause, if he were himself also comprehended under that title when understood in the same signification.

The meaning of the phrase, SOLD UNDER SIN. The views of Calvin and Beza on this verse.

4. THIRDLY. The same man about whom the Apostle is here treating, is also said, in this, the fourteenth verse, to be *sold under sin*, or, (which is the same thing), the slave of sin, and become its servant by purchase, which title can, in no sense whatsoever, be adapted to men placed under grace, — a misappropriation of epithet, against which the Scriptures openly reclaim in many passages:

- 'If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed' (John viii. 36).
- 'For he that is dead' is justified, that is, he 'is freed from sin' (Rom. vi. 7).
- 'But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin; being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness,' or those who are completely subject to it (Rom. vi. 17, 18).

But that the two things here specified [the service of sin, and that of righteousness] are so opposed to each other, as not to be able to meet together at once in the same individual, is evident from the twentieth verse of the same chapter: 'For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.' But that the same remark applies to a man who is under the law, is apparent from a comparison of 2 Corinthians iii. 17, 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,' with Gal. v. 18, 'But if ye be led of Spirit, ye are not under the law;' therefore, they who are *led of the Spirit* are free. But such persons are not under the law; therefore, those who are under the law are not free, but are *the servants of sin*. For, whether any one unwillingly, and compelled by the force of sin, obeys it, or whether it willingly, — whether anyone becomes the slave of sin by the deed of his first parents, or whether, in addition to this, 'he has sold himself to work evil in the sight of the Lord,' as it is related concerning Ahab in 1 Kings xxi. 20. In each of these cases is the man truly and deservedly called *the servant of sin*.

- 'For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage' (2 Pet. ii. 19).
- And 'whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin' (John viii. 34).
- 'Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?' (Rom. vi. 16).

For the different mode of servitude does not exempt or discharge [the subject of it] from servitude, but is conclusive that he is under it.

Should any one reply, concerning the man mentioned in Romans vii. 14,

that he is not SIMPLY called the servant of sin, but that he is so denominated WITH THIS RESTRICTION, — that he is the servant of sin *with respect to the flesh*, and not *with respect to the mind*, as is apparent from the last verse of the same chapter, which is an explanation of this verse,

I rejoin that this man is simply called the *servant of sin*, but of the description of those who unwillingly and with a reluctant conscience serve sin. But with respect to the manner in which the last verse of the chapter is to be understood, we shall perceive what it is when we arrive at that part.

But [*plerique*] the greater part of the divines of our [Protestant] profession acknowledge that this fourteenth verse must be understood as relating to an unregenerate man, to one who is not placed under grace. Thus Calvin observes on verse, ‘The Apostle now begins to bring *the law* and *the nature of man* a little more closely into hostile contact with each other.’ And on the subsequent verse he says, ‘He now descends to the more particular example of a man already regenerate.’ Thus also, Beza, against Castellio, in the refutation of the first argument to the thirteenth and fourteenth calumny (fol. 413), says, ‘St Paul exclaims that he is not sufficient even to think that which is good; and in another passage, considering himself [*extra*] not within the boundaries of grace, he says, *But I am carnal, sold under sin.*’

2.2 Verse the fifteenth

1. The fifteenth verse contains a proof of the affirmation in the preceding verse, which is, that the man about whom the Apostle is treating, is ‘sold under sin’ or is the bond-slave of sin.

For the argument is taken from the office and proper effect of a purchased servant, and of one who has no legal control over himself, but who is subjected to the power of another. For it is the property of a servant, not to execute his own will, but that of his lord, whether he does this willingly and with full consent, or he does it with the judgment of his own mind exclaiming against it, and with his will resisting it. This is expressed in no unskillful manner by ST AUGUSTINE, in his *Retractions* (lib. I, cap. i),

he who by the flesh that lusteth against the Spirit, does those things which he would not, lusteth indeed *unwillingly*; — and in this he does not that which he would; but if he be overcome [by the flesh lusting against the Spirit] he willingly consents to his lusts — and in this he does nothing but what he has willed, that is, devoid of righteousness and the servant of sin.

This is confirmed by ZANCHIUS, *On the Works of Redemption* (lib. i, cap. iii),

‘Undoubtedly Peter, therefore, denied Christ because he would, though he did not that with a full will, but reluctantly.

He does not approve of that which he does, neither does he do that which he would, but he does that which he hates.

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But the proof [which the Apostle adduces in the fifteenth verse] is accommodated to the condition of the man about whom he is treating, that is, of a man who is under the law, and who is the servant of sin just so far as to serve it not with full consent, but with a conscience crying out against it. For these are the words of the Apostle: 'For that which I do, I allow not,' that is, I do not approve of it. This sentiment, he explains and proves more at large in the words which immediately follow in the same verse: 'For what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do,' from which we frame this syllogism.

- He who approves not of that which he does, nor does that which he would, is the slave of another, that is, of sin;
- But the man about whom the Apostle is treating, approves not of that which he does, nor does what he would, but he does that which he hates:
- THEREFORE, the man who is in this place the subject of discussion, is the slave of another, that is, of sin; and therefore the same man is unregenerate, and not placed under grace.

The nature of the contest carried on in man.

2. But perhaps you will say, 'In this passage is described a contest in the man about whom the Apostle is treating, which contest cannot take place in a man who is unregenerate.'

ANSWER. In this passage, the contest between this man and sin is not described; but the dominion of sin, and the servitude of the man himself under sin, are demonstrated from the proper effect of a servant by purchase, which effect, in reality, is not produced by this man without much reluctance of conscience and great mental struggles, which precede the very production of the act; but this deed is not committed except by a mind which is conquered and overcome by the force of sin. Then I deny the preceding affirmation that, in an unregenerate man, of what description soever he may be, there is discovered no contest of the mind or conscience with the inclinations and desires of the flesh and of sin. Nay, I further assert and affirm, that, in a man who is under the law, there is necessarily a conflict *between the mind and conscience* on the one part, that prescribe those things which are just and honest, and *the inclinations or motions of sin*, on the other, which impel the man to things that are unlawful and forbidden. For the Scriptures describe to us a two-fold conflict against sin: The FIRST, that of the flesh, and of the mind or the conscience: The SECOND, that of the flesh, or sin, and of the Spirit.

The FORMER of these obtains in all those who have a knowledge of what is righteous and iniquitous, of what is just and unjust, 'in whose hearts is written the work of the law, and whose thoughts, in the mean while, either accuse or excuse one another,' as it is recorded in Romans ii. 15, 'who hold the truth in unrighteousness' (i. 18), whose consciences are not yet seared as with a hot iron, who are not yet 'past all feeling' (Ephes. iv. 19), and who know the will of their Lord, but do it not (Luke xii. 47).

3. This view of the matter is confirmed to us by St Augustine, in his book *The Exposition of certain propositions in the Epistle to the Romans* (cap. 3), in which he says,

Before the law, that is, in the state or degree before the law, we do not fight; because we not only lust and sin, but sins have also our approval. Under the law we fight, but are overcome; for we confess that those things which we do, are evil; and, by making such confession, we intimate that we would not do them. But, because we have not yet any grace we are conquered. In this [*gradu*] condition it is shown to us, in what situation we be; and while we are desirous of rising up, and still fall down, we are the more grievously afflicted, etc.

The opinion of St Augustine and Peter Martyr, respecting the conflict in men who are not born again.

This is likewise acknowledged by Peter Martyr, who observes, on Romans v. 8,

We do not deny that there is occasionally some contest of this kind in unregenerate men; not because their minds are not carnal and inclined to vicious pursuits, but because in them are still engraven the laws of nature, and because in them shines some illumination of the Spirit of God, though it be not such as can justify them, or can produce a saving change.

The *LATTER* contest, that between the flesh and the Spirit, obtains in the regenerate alone. For in that heart in which the Spirit of God neither is nor dwells, there can be no contest, — though some persons are said to ‘resist the Holy Spirit,’ and, to ‘sin against the Holy Ghost,’ which expressions have another meaning.

The difference between these two contests is very manifest from the diversity of the issue or consequence of each: For, in the *First*, the flesh overcomes; but, in the *Latter*, the Spirit usually gains the victory and becomes the conqueror. This may be seen by a comparison of this passage with Gal. v. 16, 17, — a comparison which we will afterwards undertake.

But from the proper effects of the law itself, it may be most certainly demonstrated that a contest against sin is carried on within a man who is so under the law as that it has discharged all its office towards him, and has exerted all its powers in him. For it is the effect of the law to convict a man, already convicted of sin, of the righteousness of God, to incite him to obedience, to convince him of his own weakness, to inflame him with a desire to be delivered, and to compel him to seek for deliverance. It is well known, however, that these effects cannot be completed without a contest against indwelling sin. But we have already said that about such a man as this the Apostle treats in this passage — one who is in this manner under the law.

If any man will yet obstinately maintain, that all unregenerate persons in general perpetrate that to the commission of which, sin and the flesh per-

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suade, with full consent and without any reluctance, let him not view it as a grievance if I demand proof for his assertion, since it is made against express testimonies of Scripture, and since many examples may be adduced in proof of the contrary, such as

- that of Balsam, who, against his own conscience, obeyed the king of Moab
- that of Saul, who, against his own conscience, persecuted David
- that of the Pharisees, who, through obstinate malice, resisted the Holy Spirit, etc.

But even that very common distinction, which sins are distinguished into those of *Ignorance*, *Infirmity* and *Malice*, is likewise by this method destroyed, if all unregenerate persons commit sin with full assent and without any struggle or reluctance. I am desirous also, on this occasion, to bring to the recollection of the adverse party, the steps or degrees by which God is accustomed to convert his children to himself from wickedness of life, and which, if they will diligently and without prejudice consider, they will perceive that the contest between the mind and the flesh, which is excited by the law, must of necessity be placed among the beginnings and the precursors of regeneration.

2.3 Verse the sixteenth

He consents to the Law that it is good; a Consectary deduced.

1. From what has preceded, a consectary or consequence is deduced for the excuse of the law, in the following words: ‘If then, I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.’ In this verse nothing is said, which may not, in the best possible manner and without any controversy, agree with one who is under the law. For unless a man under the law yields his assent to it that it is good, he is not at all under the law: For this is the first effect of the law in those whom it will subject to itself — to convince them of its equity and justice; and when this is done, such consent necessarily arises. It is also apparent from the first and second chapters of the epistle to the Romans, and from the tenth chapter, in which ‘a zeal of God touching the law’ is attributed to the Jews, that this consent is not peculiar to a regenerate man, nor is it the proper effect of the regenerating Spirit.

An Objection answered.

2. If any one say,

The subject in this passage is that assent by which a man assents to the whole law of God, and which cannot be in those who do not understand the whole law, but none among the unregenerate understands the entire law of God,

I reply, FIRST, it can never be affirmed with truth, that ‘none among the unregenerate understands the entire law’ while the following passages exclaim

against such an assertion: ‘That servant who knew his Lord’s will and did not according to it, shall be beaten with many stripes’ (Luke xii. 47). ‘Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing’ (1 Cor. xiii. 2); ‘Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth’ (1 Cor. viii. 1); ‘For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them’ (2 Pet. ii. 21).

SECONDLY. Neither can this affirmation be truly made in every case: ‘No man assents to the entire law unless he understands the whole of it;’ for he assents to the whole law who knows it to be from God and to be good, though he may not particularly understand all things which are prescribed and forbidden in the law. And where, among the regenerate, is that man to be found who dares to claim for himself such a knowledge of the whole law?

THIRDLY. That which is appropriately subservient to this purpose, is, a denial that this passage has any reference to that consent by which a man assents to all the precepts of the law as being specially understood; for neither do the words themselves indicate any such thing, nor does the analogy of the connection permit it. Because it is concluded from the circumstance of *his doing what he would not*, that he ‘consents unto the law that it is good’ which conclusion cannot be deduced from this deed if it be said, that this expression relates to the consent which arises from a special acquaintance with and an understanding of all the precepts of the law. For that which this man here says that he does, is a particular deed; it is, therefore, prohibited by some special precept of the law, the knowledge and approval of which is the cause why he who does that deed does it with reluctance. Hence, as from a consequent, it is concluded from this deed thus performed, (that is committed with a mind crying out and striving against it), that he who commits the deed in this manner, consents to the law that it is good.

3. But some one will perhaps rejoin and say,

This passage does not relate to *the consent of general estimation*, which may be possessed, and is so, in reality, by many of the unregenerate. But it has reference to *the consent of particular approbation*, which is the peculiar act of the regenerating Spirit.

A Second Objection.

Such an objector ought to know that those things which are confidently uttered without any attempt at proof, may, with equal freedom, be rejected without offering the smallest reason. The thing itself, however, evinces the contrary; for, *to consent to the law that it is good*, is not to approve in particular a deed which has been prescribed by the law; for this *consent of particular approbation* cannot consist with the perpetration of a deed which is particularly disapproved. But the commission of such an act agrees well with the consent about which the Apostle here treats.

2.4 Verse the seventeenth

He no longer himself perpetrates this evil, but it is done by sin that dwelleth in him. A Second Consectary deduced.

From this verse are drawn two arguments for the contrary opinion, both of which are refuted. The First Argument, and a reply to it.

1. From the preceding verses is deduced another consectary, by which this man transfers to sin all the blame of this matter; not to excuse himself, — that be far from him! (for the law has been given and written on his heart, that ‘his thoughts may accuse or else excuse one another’), — but to point out his servile condition under the dominion of sin. In this consectary, therefore, nothing can be contained which does not agree with a man who is under the law. If it were otherwise, the consectary would contain more than was to be found in the premises, which, it has been demonstrated, agree extremely well with a man who is under the law.
2. But let us see the words of the consectary: ‘Now then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,’ that is, sin that dwelleth in me, does this.’ From these words, the opposite party seem capable of eliciting two arguments in support of the opinion which affirms that *the Apostle is here treating about a regenerate man and one who is placed under grace.*

The First of these arguments is of this kind: —

- ‘It cannot be said of *unregenerate* men when they sin, that *they do not commit it themselves, but that it is committed by sin which dwells in them.*
- ‘But this is most appropriately said about the *regenerate*:
- ‘THEREFORE, the man about whom the Apostle here treats, is “not an UNREGENERATE man, but one who is REGENERATE”.’

ANSWER. The antecedent must be examined; for, when it is either granted or denied, the consequence is also granted or denied.

- a) It is evident, that it cannot *simply* be affirmed concerning any man, whatever his condition may be, that *he does of himself commit the sin which he commits*; for this is a contradiction in the adjunct; and the Apostle declares, that this man ‘does evil.’ Therefore, if this can be said with truth, the expression must be understood relatively and in a certain respect. But this relation or respect ought to be founded either in the man himself who perpetrates the offense, or in the perpetration itself.
 - i. If this respect be founded in the man himself, it must be thus generally explained and enunciated — ‘The sin which this man commits, *he does* as he is such a one; and *he does not* as he is such a one.’
 - ii. If the respect be founded in the perpetration and the effecting of the sin, then it must be taken from the varied relation of causes of the same kind to the effect.

But in this passage, the Apostle is treating on the *efficient cause* of sin, which is here allowed to be two-fold — THE MAN, and SIN DWELLING IN

HIM, but so as this may be said to be effected by indwelling sin, and not by the man. Wherefore, this effect must be taken from the distribution of the efficient cause, by which it is distributed into that which is *primary* and *principal*, and that which is *secondary* and *less principal*.

- b) It can by no means be said by him who is inspired with a sincere love of truth, that this two-fold respect is applicable only to a man who is regenerate and placed under grace, but that it does not at all appertain to a man placed under the law or does not in the least agree with him. For as this respect or relation is two-fold in THE REGENERATE, on account of the imperfection of regeneration in this life, and the remains of ‘the old man,’ according to which respect it may be said concerning a regenerate man, that ‘*as he is regenerate* he does this, and *as he is not regenerate* he does it not or does not do it perfectly;’ so, likewise, in A MAN UNDER THE LAW, the respect is two-fold on account of [*adventum*] the coming in of the law; for he is ‘carnal’ and ‘the servant of sin,’ and is under the law, that is, ‘he consents to the law that it is good,’ which consent is neither of the flesh nor according to the flesh, that is, it is not from depraved nature. Wherefore, it may be said concerning a man under the law, that he commits sin, not *as he is under the law*, nor *as he consents to the law that it is good*, but *as he is carnal and the servant of sin*.
- c) The second respect (according to which the effect, that has simply proceeded from two concurrent causes, is taken away from one of them and ascribed to the other) seems to hold the chief place in this passage, as it does also in this saying of the Apostle, ‘I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me’ (1 Cor. xv. 10). For it is well known to be a very general practice to ascribe the effect to the principal and primary of two concurrent causes, at the same time taking away the same effect from the secondary cause; especially if by some means, either beyond nature, or against the will and by the force of the superior cause, the secondary one has been drawn forth to efficiency. Thus, an ambassador who manages the cause of his Prince, is not said himself to act, but his Prince, who makes use of his services. Thus, much more appropriately, if a servant, who is oppressed by a tyrannical lord, does something against his own will at the command and through the compulsion of his lord, he will not himself be said to do this, but his lord who has the dominion over him. And it is most manifest, to every one who will look upon these words of the Apostle [*irretortis*] with unjaundiced eyes, that they convey this meaning; as is apparent from the epithet which is attributed to sin, the perpetrator of this evil, and by which the dominion of sin is denoted, that is, — ‘sin that dwelleth in me does it.’
- d) It is no matter of wonder, that ‘he does it not, but sin does it;’ for ‘when the law came, sin revived and he died’ (Rom. vii. 9). Therefore, the cause

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of actions, is that which lives, and not that which is dead.

It is apparent, then, that the first part of the antecedent in this argument is false, and on this account the second part is not reciprocal; therefore, the conclusion cannot be deduced from it by good consequence, which consequence concludes [that the Apostle is here treating] about a regenerate man, to the exclusion of the unregenerate.

The Second Argument and a Reply.

3. The SECOND argument is drawn from the adverbs of time, 'now,' and 'no more,' which are used in this verse; and from which a conclusion is thus drawn in favour of the same opinion: —

These adverbs have respect to time antecedent; but the time antecedent is the time when the man was not regenerate. As though he had said, *Formerly, when I was not yet regenerated, I committed sin; but now I no longer do this, because I am regenerated.* Therefore, it is apparent that this present time, which is signified by the adverb 'now,' must be understood concerning the state of regeneration, since it cannot be said concerning an unregenerate man, that *'though he formerly committed sin, he commits it no more.*

ANSWER. — I grant it to be a great truth, that these adverbs denote relation to time antecedent, and that in fact the passage is thus commodiously explained: *Formerly indeed perpetrated evil, but now I no longer do this.* But I deny that the time antecedent embraces the entire state before regenerations; for the state of unregeneracy, or that which is prior to regeneration, is distinguished by our author, the Apostle himself, into another twofold state, — *before or without the law, and under the law,* as it is expressed in the ninth verse of this very chapter. And the antecedent time, in reference to which it is said 'now' and 'no more,' comprises the state *without the law;* but the present time [described by the two adverbs] comprises the state *under the law.* As if he had said,

Formerly, when I was *without the law,* I committed sin, but now, when I am *under the law,* I no longer commit it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

This is in unison with what is said in the ninth verse: 'For I was alive without the law once,' or formerly; 'but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' For, while 'he was alive without the law,' he committed evil without any reluctance of mind or of will. Therefore, *at that time,* he did evil; but *now,* being placed under the law, he undoubtedly commits sin, but he does it against his conscience and not without resistance on the part of his will. Wherefore, the cause and culpability of sin must be ascribed, not so much to the man himself, as to the violent impulse of sin.

4. Thus far we have perceived, that this verse contains nothing which can afford support to the opposite opinion. Let us further see whether an argument may not be elicited from it, for establishing the truth of the other opinion, which declares that it must be understood concerning an unregenerate man, and one who is placed under the law:

An Argument from this verse in favour of true opinion.

- The Apostle says that ‘sin dwelleth in this man.’
- But sin does not dwell in those who are regenerate.
- THEREFORE, the Apostle is not, in this passage, treating about the regenerate or those who are placed under grace, but about the unregenerate and those who are under the law.

One of the premises of this syllogism is in the text: the other must be demonstrated by us. I am aware indeed, that this seems wonderful to those who are accustomed to the distinction of sin, by which one kind is called *ruling* or *governing*, and another receives the appellation of *sin existing within us*, or of *indwelling* and *inhabiting* sin, and who suppose that the former of these epithets is peculiar to the unregenerate, and the latter to the regenerate. But if any one require a proof of this distinction, those who ought to give it will evince a degree of hesitation. But is not one kind of sin *ruling* or *reigning*, and another *existing within* and not *reigning*, and is not the former peculiar to the unregenerate, and the latter to the regenerate? Who can deny, when the Scriptures affirm, that there are in us the remains of sin and of the old man as long as we survive in this mortal life? But what man, conversant with the Scriptures, shall distinguish *reigning* from *indwelling* or *inhabiting* sin, and will account indwelling sin to be the same as the *sin existing within*? Indeed, *indwelling* sin is *reigning* sin, and *reigning* is *indwelling*, and therefore sin does not dwell in the regenerate, because it does not domineer or rule in them. I prove the first part of this, both from the very signification of the word *to inhabit* or *dwell*, and from the familiar usage of the Scriptures.

5.

- a) Concerning the signification of the word, ZANCHIUS observes, in his treatise *On the Attributes of God*, ‘God is not said to dwell in the wicked, but he dwells in the pious. For what is it *to dwell in any place*? It is not simply *to be there*, as people are at inns and places of entertainment during journeys; but it *is to reign and have the dominion* at his pleasure as if in his own residence’ (lib. 2, cap. 6, quest. 3). On Ephes. iii. 17, the same ZANCHIUS says, — ‘In this proposition, *Christ dwells in your heart by faith*, the word *to dwell* is undoubtedly put metaphorically; the metaphor being taken, not from those persons who, as tenants or lodgers, and as strangers or travelers, tarry for a season in the house or inn belonging to another; but it is taken from masters of families, who, in their

On the word DWELLING, or INHABITING, according to its Signification, and the usage of Scripture, with quotations from Zanchius, Bucer, Peter Martyr, and Musculus.

2 The Connection between the sixth and seventh Chapter

own proper dwelling houses live at liberty, work, govern the family, and exercise dominion.’

BUCER observes, on the very passage which is the subject of our meditation, ‘He says that this destructive force or power dwells in him, that is, it entirely occupies him and has the dominion, as is the manner of those who are at their own house, in their proper dwelling and domicile. The Apostle Paul, and all Scripture, frequently employ this metaphor of inhabitation or residing; and by it they usually signify the dominion and the certain presence, [*fere ad solidum*] almost perpetually, of that which is said to inhabit.’ And this is one of his subsequent remarks: ‘When, in this manner, sin resides in us, it completely and more powerfully besieges us and exercises dominion.’

PETER MARTYR says, on Romans viii. 9, ‘The metaphor of habitation, or indwelling, is taken from this circumstance, — that they who inhabit a house, not only occupy it, but also govern in it and order [all things in it] at their own option.’

The subjoined remark is from MUSCULUS on this passage: — ‘And that he may evidently express this tyranny and violence of sin, he does not say, ‘Sin *exists* in me,’ but ‘Sin *dwells* in me.’ For by the word *to dwell* or *inhabit*, he shows that the dominion of sin is complete in him; and that sin has, as it were, fixed his seat, or taken up his residence, in him. Evil reigns in no place with greater power than in the place where it has fixed its seat; that is what we see in the case of tyrants. Thus, in a contrary manner, God is said to have dwelt in the midst of the children of Israel; because among no other people did he declare his goodness with such strong evidence, as he did among them, according to this expression of the Psalmist, *He hath not dealt so with any nation* (cxlvii. 20). In this sense, the word *to inhabit* or *to dwell*, is very often used in the Scriptures. When, therefore, the Apostle wished to declare the power and tyranny of sin in him, he said that it dwelt in him, as in its proper domicile, and thus fully reigned.’

CALVIN, in his *Institutes*, says (lib. iv, cap. 6, sec. 11), that we are circumcised in Christ, with a circumcision not made by hands, having laid aside *the body of sin* which dwelt in our flesh; which he calls the circumcision of Christ.

- b) What I have said, in accordance with Bucer, about the usage of Scripture, is plain from the following passages: ‘My Father and I will come unto him, and make our abode with him’ (John xiv. 23). ‘But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you’ (Rom. viii. 11). ‘For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I

will be their God, and they shall be my people' (2 Cor. vi. 16). 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith' (Ephes. iii. 17). 'When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grand-mother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in thee also' (2 Thess. i. 5). 'That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us' (i. 14). 'Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, *The Spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*' (James iv. 5). 'Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness?' (2 Pet. iii. 13). 'Thou has not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth' (Rev. ii. 13). According to this usage, the saints are said to be 'a habitation of God through the Spirit' (Ephes. ii. 22).

It is manifest, therefore, from the signification of the word and its most frequent usage in the Holy Scriptures, that *indwelling* sin is exactly the same as *reigning* sin.

But it is easy now, likewise, to demonstrate the second premise in the syllogism (p. 35), which is, 'Sin does not dwell in those who are regenerate.' For [according to the passages of Scripture quoted in the preceding paragraph] the Holy Spirit dwells in them. Christ, also, dwells in their hearts by faith; and they are said to be 'a habitation of God through the Spirit;' therefore, sin does not dwell in them; because no man can be inhabited by both God and sin at the same time; and when Christ has 'overcome the strong man armed,' he binds him hand and foot and casts him out, and thus occupies his house and dwells in it. Sin does not dwell in those who are 'dead to sin,' and 'in whom Christ liveth.' But the regenerate 'do not *live* in sin,' but are '*dead* to it' (Rom. vi. 2); and in them Christ dwelleth and liveth (Gal. ii. 20); therefore, sin does not dwell in the regenerate.

Let the two subjoined passages of Scripture be compared together: 'Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me' (Rom. vii. 17): 'I live; yet no more I, but Christ liveth in me' (Gal. ii. 20). We shall be able by this comparison most fully to demonstrate, that in this verse the Apostle has not been speaking about himself, but has taken upon himself to personate the character of a man who lives to sin, and in whom sin lives, dwells and operates. Yet it does not follow from this, that no sin is in the regenerate; for it has already been shown, that *to be* in any place, and there *to dwell*, *to have the dominion*, and *to reign*, are two different things.

2.5 The eighteenth and nineteenth verses

'In this man, (that is, in his flesh), dwelleth no good thing,' etc.

1. Let the 18th verse now be brought under consideration, in which the Apostle follows up the same Rendering of a Cause, and the Proof of it. THE RENDERING OF THE CAUSE is, 'For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing;' by which words the same thing is signified, as by the following: 'I am carnal.' For he is carnal, in whom no good thing dwelleth. THE PROOF is contained in these words: 'For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not.'
2. From this Rendering of the Cause, some persons have instituted an argument for the support of their opinion, in the following terms:
 - 'In this man, about whom the Apostle is treating, are the flesh, and some other thing either distinct or differing from flesh; otherwise, the Apostle would not have corrected himself by saying, *In me, that is, in my flesh.*
 - 'But in unregenerate persons, there is nothing else but the flesh;
 - 'THEREFORE, the man about whom the Apostle here treats, is a "regenerate person"'

An Argument for the contrary opinion is proposed from the eighteenth verse. The Answer to it.

ANSWER. I grant, that, 'in this man is some other thing diverse or distinct from the flesh;' for this is to be seen in the apostolical correction. But I deny, that 'in unregenerate persons is nothing else beside the flesh,' — *in those unregenerate persons*, I say, *who are under the law*, and about whom we are engaged in this controversy.

I adduce this reason for the justness of my negation; because in men *who are under the law* is a mind which knows some truth concerning God and 'that which may be known of God' (Rom. i. 18, 19), which has a knowledge of that which is just and unjust, and whose 'thoughts accuse or else excuse one another' (ii. 1–15), which knows that the indulgence of carnal desires is sinful (vii. 7), which says that 'men must neither steal nor commit adultery' (ii. 21, 22), etc., etc. To certain of *the unregenerate*, also is attributed some illumination of the Holy Ghost (Heb. vi. 4), a 'knowledge of the Lord and saviour Jesus Christ,' a 'knowledge of the way of righteousness' (2 Pet. ii. 20, 21) some acquaintance with the will of the Lord (Luke xii. 47), the gift of prophecy, etc., etc. (1 Cor. 13). That man who is bold enough to style such things as these '*the flesh*,' inflicts a signal injury on God and his Spirit. And indeed how, under the appellation of '*the flesh*' can be comprehended that which *accuses sin, convinces men of sin, and compels them to seek deliverance?*

There is, then, in *men who are under the law*, 'the flesh, and something beside the flesh,' that is, a mind imbued with a knowledge of the law and consenting to it that it is good; and in *some unregenerate persons* there is beside the flesh, a mind enlightened by a knowledge of the Gospel. But to the 'other

thing which is distinct from the flesh,' the Apostle does not, in this chapter, give the title *of the Spirit*, but that *of the Mind*.

The remark of MUSCULUS on this passage is as follows: 'Behold how cautiously the Apostle again employs the word *to dwell*. He does not say, 'I know that in me *is* no good thing;' for, whence could he otherwise approve of good things and detest those which are evil, consenting to 'the law of God, that is holy, and just, and good,' if he had in himself nothing of good? But he say, 'I know that in me *dwelleth* no good thing;' that is, it does not reign in me, does not possess the dominion, since it has seized upon sin for itself, and since the will earnestly desires that which is good, though it is not free, but weak and under restraint, enduring the power of a tyrant.'

3. But some one will here reply,

A Reply and its Rejoinder.

Not only is something different from the flesh attributed to this man, but the inhabitation or residence of good is likewise attributed to that which is different from the flesh; for, otherwise, that part of the verse in which the Apostle corrects himself, would not have been necessary; but in an unregenerate man, or one who is under the law, there is nothing in which good may reside. THEREFORE, this is a regenerate man, etc.

REJOINDER. While I concede the first of these premises, I deny the second which affirms, 'In an unregenerate man, or one who is under the law, there is nothing in which good may dwell or reside.' For in the mind of such a man dwells some good thing, that is, some truth and knowledge of the law. The signs of habitation or residence are the works which this knowledge and truth in the mind unfold or disclose. For instance:

- a conscience not only accusing a man of sin, but also convincing him of it
- the delivering of a sentence of condemnation against the man himself
- the enacting of good laws
- careful attention to public discipline
- the punishment of crimes
- the defense of good people
- despair of obtaining righteousness by the law and by legal works, [*compulsio*] the impelling necessity to desire deliverance and to seek for it.

These works, indeed, are most certain signs of the law dwelling and reigning in the mind of such a man as has been described.

On this point, I intreat, that no one will condemn as heresy that which he has yet either not heard, or not sufficiently considered. For I do not assert that good dwells and reigns in a man under the law, or in any of the unregenerate.

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For to reign in the mind, and, simply, to reign in the man, are not the same thing. Because, if this knowledge were simply to dwell and reign in the man, this very man would then live in a manner agreeable to his knowledge, the resistance of the flesh being repelled by that which would simply obtain the first and principal place in a man.

If any one closely considers this rendering of the cause, and accommodates it to the design of the Apostle, he will understand that the apostolical correction was both necessary and produced for this purpose, — that, notwithstanding the indwelling of something good in the mind of a man who is under the law, a proper and adequate cause might be given why, in such a man as this, [*affectus*] ‘the motions of sins’ flourish, and work all concupiscence: Which cause is this, — In the flesh of this man dwelleth no good thing. For if any good thing dwelt in his flesh, he would then not only know and will what is good, but would also complete it in actual operation, his [*affectus*] passions or desires being tamed and subdued, and subjected to the law of God. In reference to this, it is appositely observed by THOMAS AQUINAS on this very passage: — ‘And by this, it is rendered manifest that the good thing [or blessing] of grace does not dwell in the flesh; because if it dwelt in the flesh, as I have the faculty of willing that which is good through the grace that dwells in my mind, so I should then that of perfecting or fulfilling what is good through the grace that would dwell in my mind.’

*Another Reply
and its Rejoinder.*

4. But some one will object — ‘In the Scriptures, the whole unregenerate man is styled *flesh*. Thus, *For that he also is flesh* (Gen. vi. 3). *That which is born of the fish, is flesh* (John iii. 6).’

REPLY. — FIRST. This mode of speaking is metonymical, and the word *carne* ‘flesh,’ is used instead of *carnal*, by a usage peculiar to the Hebrews, who employ the abstract for the concrete. This is clearly pointed out by Beza, on the passage just quoted (John iii. 6), on which he observes: — ‘*Flesh* is here put for *carnal*, as, among the Hebrews, appellatives are frequently employed as adjectives. This was also a practice among the Greeks and Romans, as in the words, *καθαμα*, *scelus* etc.

SECONDLY. Though the word *flesh* in the abstract be urged, yet the *whole man* may be called *flesh*, but not the *whole of man*; for the mind which condemns sin and justifies the law, is not *flesh*. But this very same mind may in some degree be called *carnal*, because it is in a man who is carnal, and because [*caro*] the flesh, which fights against the mind, brings the whole man into captivity to the law of sin, and by this means has the predominance in that man.

*An Argument
from the same
words in favour of
the true opinion.*

5. But from these remarks may be constructed an argument in confirmation of the true sentiment, in the following manner:
 - In the *flesh* of a regenerate man dwells that which is good;

- THEREFORE, the man about whom the Apostle discourses is unregenerate.

I prove the Proposition from the proper effect of the indwelling Spirit; for the Holy Spirit crucifies the flesh with its affections and lusts, mortifies the flesh and its deeds, subdues the flesh to Himself, and weakens the body of the flesh of sin: And He performs all these operations by his indwelling. THEREFORE, good dwelleth in *the flesh* of a regenerate man. The Assumption is in the text itself; therefore, the Conclusion follows from it.

6. Let us now examine the proof of the affirmation, — that in the flesh of this man ‘dwelleth no good thing.’ This is contained in the words subjoined: ‘For to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not.’ From a comparison of the question to be proved, and the argument produced to prove it, it is apparent that the argument is contained in these words: ‘For I find not to perform that which is good,’ that is, *I attain not to the performance of that which is good.* This proof is taken from the effect; for as, from *the indwelling in the flesh of that which is good*, would follow *the performance of good*; so, from ‘no good thing dwelling in the flesh,’ arises *the impossibility of performing that which is good.* For these words, ‘for to will is present with me,’ are employed through a comparison of things that differ; which was necessary in this place, because the proof was to be accommodated to the man about whom the Apostle was treating: And this is the way in which the proof is accommodated, — ‘To will is indeed present’ with a man who is under the law; but the same man ‘does not find to perform that which is good,’ *because he is carnal.* From this it is apparent, that ‘he is carnal,’ and that ‘in his flesh dwelleth no good thing.’ If any good thing resided in his flesh, it would in that case restrain the strong force and desires of the flesh, and prevent their being able to hinder the performance of the good which he might will. But let the whole proof be stated in the following syllogism:

The Second Part of the eighteenth verse, ‘To will is present with this man, but how to perform that which is good, he finds not.’

- In the flesh of him who [*velle habet*] has the power to will, but who ‘does not find to perform that which is good,’ dwelleth no good thing;
- But the man about whom the Apostle is treating, has indeed the power of willing, but ‘does not find to perform that which is good;’
- THEREFORE, in the flesh of such a man as this, ‘dwelleth no good thing.’

It will not be denied by any one who is in the least degree acquainted with Logic, and who has accurately considered the eighteenth verse, that this is the syllogism of the Apostle. But from this proposition I may conclude the proposition of the syllogism which I have already adduced for confirming my opinion, and which is, ‘In the flesh of a regenerate man dwelleth some good thing,’ by this argument, ‘Because a regenerate man finds to perform that which is good.’ For the contrary would be a consequence from things contrary. That this may the more plainly appear, let us now see this proposition, with

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others which are deduced from it by inversion. The proposition is, ‘No man who is incapable of performing that which is good, has any good thing dwelling in his flesh;’ THEREFORE, by inversion, ‘No man who has that which is good dwelling in his flesh, is incapable of performing what is good.’ To this, is equivalent the following:

- ‘Every man who has any thing good dwelling in his flesh, is capable of performing what is good; in fact he is capable, because he has good dwelling within him,’ therefore, by simple Inversion in a necessary and reciprocal matter,
- ‘Every one who is capable of performing what is good, has good dwelling in his flesh.’ This is the major, from which I assume,
- ‘But a regenerate man can perform that which is good’ (Phil. 2).
- ‘THEREFORE, a regenerate man has good dwelling in his flesh;’ which was the major of the syllogism that I had previously adduced.

7. But the defenders of the contrary opinion seem to think, that, from this proof, they are able, for the confirmation of their own opinion, to deduce an argument, which they frame thus:

- He is a regenerate man, with whom *to will* that which is good is present:
- But *to will* that which is good, is present with this man;
- THEREFORE, this man is regenerate.

ANSWER. Before I reply to each part of this syllogism, I must remove the ambiguity which is in this phrase, ‘to will that which is good,’ or the equivocation in the word ‘to will.’ For it is certain, that there are two kinds of this volition or willing; since it is here asserted of one and the same man, that he is occupied both in *willing* and in *not willing* that which is good, concerning one and the same object;

- *in willing it*, as he [merely] wills, it
- but *in not willing it* as he does not perform it;

for this is the reason why he does not perform it, — *because he does not will it*, though [he acts thus] with a will which is, as it were, the servant of sin and compelled *not to will* [that which is good]. Again, he is occupied both in *not willing* and in *willing* that which is evil concerning one and the same object

- *in not willing it*, as he does not will it and hates it
- *in willing it*, as he performs the very same [evil] thing;

for he would not do it, unless he willed it, though [he acts thus] with a will which is impelled to will by sin that dwelleth in him.

ST AUGUSTINE gives his testimony to the expressions which I have here employed, in his *Retractions* (Lib. i, cap. 13).

An Argument for the contrary Opinion from the Second Part of this verse. The Answer to it, with distinctions between each kind of willing and nilling, with extracts from St Augustine, Zanchius and Bucer.

The remarks of BUCER on this passage are: — ‘Hence it came to pass that David did, not only that which he *willed*, but also that which he *willed not*. He did that which he *willed not*, not indeed when he committed the offense, but when the consideration of the divine law still remained, and when it was restored. He did that which he *willed*, just at the time when he actually concluded and determined about the woman presented to his view. So Peter,’ etc. (Fol. 368).

ZANCHIUS, also, in his book, *On the Works of Redemption*, observes — ‘This was undoubtedly the reason why Peter denied Christ, *because he willed so to do*, though not with a full will, neither did he willingly deny Him’ (Lib. i, cap. 3, fol. 25).

Wherefore, since it is impossible that there should be only a single genus of volition and nolition, or one mode of *willing* and *not willing*, by which a man *wills* the good and *does not will* the same good, and by which he *does not will* the evil and *wills* the same evil; this phrase, ‘to will that which is good’ and ‘not to will that which is evil,’ must have a twofold meaning, which we will endeavour now to explain.

- a) Because every volition and every nolition follows the judgment of the man respecting the thing presented as an object, each of them, therefore, is also different according to the diversity of the judgment. But the judgment itself, with reference to its cause, is two-fold: For it either proceeds from the mind and reason approving the law that it is good, and highly esteeming the good which the law prescribes, and [*contra*] hating the evil which it forbids; or, it proceeds from the senses and affections, and (as the expression is) from [*sensuali*] sensible knowledge, or that which is derived from the senses, and which approves of that which is useful, pleasant and delightful, though it be forbidden; but which disapproves of that which is hurtful, useless, and unpleasant, though it be prescribed. The former of these is called ‘the judgment of general estimation,’ the latter ‘the judgment of particular approbation or operation.’ Hence, one volition is from the judgment of general estimation; the other is from the judgment of particular approbation, and thus becomes a nolition. On this account, the will which follows *the judgment of general estimation* wills that which the law prescribes, and does not will that which the law forbids. But the same will, when it follows *the judgment of particular approbation*, wills the delectable or useful evil which the law forbids, and does not will the troublesome and hurtful good which the law prescribes.
- b) This distinction, when considered with respect to one and the same object contemplated in various ways, will be still further illustrated. For that object which is presented to the will, is considered either under a general form, or under one that is particular. Thus adultery is considered either in general, or in particular;

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- considered *in general*, adultery is condemned by reason as an evil and as that which has been forbidden by the law;
- considered *in particular*, it is approved, by the knowledge which is derived from the senses, as something good and delectable.

BUCER, when treating on this subject, in his remarks on the same verse, says: ‘But there is in man a two-fold will; —

- one, that by which he consents to the law;
- another, that by which he does what he detests.

The one follows the knowledge of the law by which it is known to be good; The other follows the knowledge which is derived from the senses, and which is concerning things present.’

- c) This volition and nolition may likewise be distinguished in another manner. There is one volition and nolition which follow *the last judgment* formed concerning the object; and another volition and nolition which follow *not the last* but the *antecedent* judgment. In reference to the former of these, volition will be concerning good; in reference to the latter, volition will be concerning the evil opposed to it, and contrariwise. Thus, likewise, concerning nolition. And with respect to the former, it will be volition; in respect to the latter, it will be nolition, concerning the same object, and the contrary. But the volition and nolition which follow not the last judgment, cannot so well be simply and absolutely called ‘volition’ and ‘nolition,’ as *velleity* and *nolleity*. Those, however, which follow the last judgment, are simply and absolutely called *efficacious volition and nolition*, to which the effect succeeds.
- d) Thomas Aquinas, on this very passage in Romans 7, says, that the former is *not a full will*, the latter is *a complete will*. But let this same distinction be considered as it is employed concerning God. For God is said to will some things *approvingly* as being good in themselves, but to will other things *efficaciously*, as simply conducing to his glory.

We must now consider the kind of *willing* and *nilling* about which the Apostle is here treating. He is treating,

- not about the volition and nolition *of particular approbation*, but about those *of general estimation*;
- not about the volition and nolition which are occupied concerning an object considered *in particular*, but concerning one *generally* considered;
- not about the volition and nolition which follow *the last* judgment, but about those which follow the *antecedent* judgment;
- not about *simple, absolute and complete* volition, but about that which is *incomplete*, and which rather deserves to be called *velleity*.

‘For the good that he would, he does not; but the evil which he would not, that he does.’ If he willed the good prescribed by the law, with the will of particular approbation, which follows the last judgment, he would then also perform the good which he had thus willed. If, in the same manner, he did not will the evil forbidden by the law, he would then abstain from it. This is explained, in a learned and prolix manner, by Bucer on this passage.

- a) I now come specially to each part of the syllogism, in which the MAJOR PROPOSITION seems to me to be reprehensible on two accounts:
- i. Because ‘*to will* that which is good, ‘which is here the subject of the Apostle’s argument, is not peculiar to the regenerate; for it also appertains to the unregenerate, — for instance, to those who are under the law, and who have in themselves all those things which God usually effects by the law;
 - ii. Because, even when used in that other sense, [as applicable to the regenerate], it does not contain a full definition of a regenerate man; for a regenerate man not only *wills* that which is good, but he also *performs* it; because ‘it is God who worketh in’ the regenerate ‘both *to will* and *to do*’ (Phil. ii. 13).

And ‘God hath prepared good works,’ that the regenerate ‘might walk in them;’ or, ‘he hath created them in Christ Jesus unto good works’ (Ephes. ii. 10). They are ‘new creatures’ (2 Cor. v. 17); are endued with that ‘faith which worketh by love’ (Gal. v. 6); and to them is attributed the observance, or ‘keeping of the commandments of God’ (1 Cor. vii. 19); they ‘do the will of God from the heart’ (Ephes. vi. 6); ‘have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which they were delivered’ (Rom. vi. 17) etc, etc. From these observations, it is apparent that the particle ‘only’ must be added to the proposition; for when this is appended, it will, at first sight, betray the falsehood and insufficiency of the proposition in this manner: ‘He is a regenerate man, with whom *only to will* that which is good is present.’

- b) To the ASSUMPTION, I reply that it is proposed in a mutilated form. For this, ‘to will is present with me,’ is not the entire sentence of the Apostle; but it is one part separated from another. without which it is not consistent. For this is a single discrete axiom: ‘To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not.’ But nothing can be solidly concluded from a passage of Scripture proposed in a form that is mutilated. I add that, when this latter part of the Apostle’s sentence is omitted, the reader is left in doubt concerning the kind of volition and nolition which is here the subject of investigation. But when the omission is supplied from the text of the Apostle, it plainly signifies that the subject of discussion is *inefficacious volition* and that of *general estimation*, but, as has already been observed, this kind of volition is not

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peculiar to the regenerate.

But the Assumption may be simply denied, as not having been constructed from the context of the Apostle. For St Paul does not attribute to the man about whom he is treating, that he wills that which is good and does not will that which is evil, but that he does that which is evil, and does not perform that which is good, to which attributes, something tantamount to a description is added, 'That which I would not,' and 'that which I would.' This description is added in accommodation to the state of the man about whom the Apostle is treating, and it is required by the method of demonstrative investigation. For he had determined to produce the proper and reciprocal cause, why the man about whom he is treating 'does not find to perform that which is good;' and therefore all other causes were to be removed, among which were the volition of good and the volition of evil, also ignorance of that which is good and that which is evil, etc. Thus, in that other disjunctive axiom, 'to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not,' the principal thing which is attributed to the man about whom the Apostle is treating, or that which is predicated concerning him, is that 'he does not find to perform that which is good;' for the illustration of which, is produced that differing attribute, 'to will indeed is present with me.' This is a remark which must be diligently observed by every one who engages in the inquiry, about the most correct manner in which this very difficult passage is to be understood.

An Argument for the true Opinion, from the eighteenth and nineteenth verses. The Proof of the Major Proposition, which alone can be called in question.

8. But the preceding observations make it evident that a contrary conclusion may be drawn from these two verses in the following manner:
 - He is not a regenerate man, with whom *to will* is indeed present, but *not to perform*, and who does not perform the good which he would, but who commits the evil which he would not; (this is from the description of regeneration and its parts).
 - But *to will* is present with this man, but *not to perform*; and the same man does not perform the good which he would, but commits the evil which he would not;
 - THEREFORE, the man about whom the Apostle is treating, is unregenerate.

The Assumption is in the text of the Apostle; the Proposition alone, therefore, remains to be proved. Regeneration not only illuminates the mind and conforms the will, but it likewise restrains and [*ordinat*] regulates the affections, and directs the external and the internal members to obedience to the divine law. It is not he who wills, but he who performs the will of the Father, that enters into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. vii. 21). And, at the close of the same chapter, he is called a wise or prudent man 'who *doeth* the sayings of Christ,' not he who only *wills* them. Consult what has already been remarked

in the negation of the Proposition in that syllogism which was produced for the establishment of the contrary opinion; And,

- Those persons who fulfill the will of the flesh in its desires, are unregenerate;
- But this man fulfills the will of the flesh;
- THEREFORE, he is unregenerate.

But these [attributes] agree most appropriately with a man who is under the law,

- to will that which is good and not to will evil, as agreeing with one who ‘consents to the law that it is good,’
- but not to do that which is good and to do evil, as agreeing with one who is ‘carnal and the servant of sin.’

9. But perhaps some one will here reply,

*An Objection and
the Answer to it.*

From this man is not simply taken away *the performing* of that which is good, but the *completion* of it, that is, the perfect performance of it, a view of the matter which has the sanction of St Augustine, who gives this explanation of the word.

ANSWER. Omitting all reference to the manner in which the opinion of these persons agrees with that of St Augustine, which we shall afterwards examine, I affirm that this is a mere evasion. For the Greek verb *κατεργάζομαι* does not signify *to do any thing perfectly*, but simply *to do, to perform, to dispatch*, as is very evident from the verb *ποιω* ‘to do,’ which follows, and from this word itself as it is used in the fifteenth verse, where, according to their opinion, this verb cannot signify *completion* or *perfect performance*, — for the regenerate, to whom, as they understand it, this clause in the fifteenth verse applies, do not *perfectly perform* that which is evil. Let those passages of the Sacred Writings be consulted in which this word occurs, and its true meaning will be easily understood from Scripture usage.

I add that, in this sense, ‘the completion,’ that is, ‘the perfect performance’ of that which is good, can no more be taken away from a regenerate man, than ‘the willing’ of that which is good. For while the regenerate continue in this state of mortality, they do not ‘perfectly will’ that which is good.

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Another Reply and its Rejoinder. Not only some other things, but likewise those which precede things, that are saving, have a place in some of the unregenerate. With extracts in confirmation from St Augustine, and references to Calvin, Beza and Zanchius.

10. But some one will further insist, that ‘to will good’ and ‘not to will evil,’ in what mode and sense soever these expressions are taken, is ‘some good thing;’ and that, to an unregenerate man can be attributed nothing at all which can be called good, without bringing contumely on grace and the Holy Spirit.

To this I reply, We have already understood the quality and the quantity of this ‘good thing.’ But I am desirous to have proof given to me, that nothing at all which is good can be attributed to an unregenerate man, of what description soever he may be. According to the judgment which I have formed, the Scriptures in no passage, openly affirm this; neither do I think that, by good consequence from them, it can be asserted. But the contrary assertion may be most evidently proved:

- ‘The truth’ which is mentioned in Romans i. 18, is good, as being opposed to ‘unrighteousness;’ but this ‘truth’ is in some unregenerate persons.
- ‘The work of the law,’ which is mentioned in Romans ii. 15, is a good thing; but it is: written in the hearts’ of heathens, and that by God.
- ‘The taste of the heavenly gift, of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come’ (Heb. vi. 4, 5), is good; and yet it is in the unregenerate.
- ‘To have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and saviour Jesus Christ, and to have known the way of righteousness’ (2 Pet. ii. 20, 21), are good things; yet they belong to the unregenerate.
- ‘To receive the word of God with joy’ (Matt. xiii. 20), is good; and it appertains to the unregenerate.

And, in general, all those gifts of the Holy Spirit which are for the edification of the church, and which are attributed to several of the reprobate, are good things. (1 Cor. 12 and 13).

- To acknowledge themselves to be sinners, to mourn and lament on account of personal transgressions, and to seek deliverance from sin, are good things; and they belong to some who are unregenerate.

Nay, no man can be made partaker of regeneration, unless he have previously had within him such things as these. From these passages, it is evident that it cannot be said with truth, that nothing of good can be attributed to the unregenerate, what kind of men soever they may be.

If any one reply,

But these good things are not [*salutaria*] saving in their nature, neither are they such as they ought to be;

I acknowledge the justness of the remark. Yet some of them are necessarily previous to those which are of a saving nature; besides, they are themselves in a certain [*momento*] degree saving. That which has not yet come up to the point

toward which it aims, does not immediately lose the name of ‘a good thing’ The dread of punishment, and slavish fear are not that dread and fear which are required from the children of God; yet they are, in the mean time, reckoned by ST AUGUSTINE among those good things which precede conversion. In his thirteenth sermon on these words of the Apostle, *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear* (Rom. viii. 15), he says, ‘What is this word again? It is the manner in which this most troublesome schoolmaster terrifies. What is this word again? It is as ye received the spirit of bondage in Mount Sinai. Some man will say, *The Spirit of Bondage is one, the spirit of liberty another*. If they were not the same, the Apostle would not use the word *again*. Therefore, the spirit [in both cases] is the same; but, in the one case, it is on tables of stone in *fear*, in the other, it is on the fleshly tables of the heart in *love*,’ etc. In a subsequent passage he says, ‘You are now, therefore, not in fear, but in love, that you may be sons, and not servants. For that man whose reason for still doing well is his *fear* of punishment, and who does not *love* God, is not yet among the children of God. My wish, however, is that he may continue even to fear punishment. Fear is a bond-servant, love is a free man; and, if we may thus express ourselves, fear is the servant of love. Therefore, lest the devil take possession of the heart, let this servant have the precedence in it, and preserve a place within for his Lord and Master, who will soon arrive. Do this, act thus, even from fear of punishment, if you are not yet able to do it from a love of righteousness. The master will come and the servant will depart; because, when love is perfected, it casts out fear.’

CALVIN likewise numbers *initial fear* among good things; and BEZA, from the meaning attached to it by Calvin and himself, makes it to be preliminary to regeneration, as we have already perceived.

But these things, and others, (if any such there be), are attributed to the unregenerate, without any injury to grace and the Holy Spirit; because they are believed to be, in those in whom they are found, through the operation of grace and of the Holy Spirit. For there are certain acts which precede conversion, and they proceed from the Holy Spirit, who prepares the will; as it is said by ZANCHIUS, in his *Judgment on the First and Second Tome of the objections and answers of Pezelius*, which judgment is subjoined to the Second Tome. Consult likewise what we have cited in a preceding page from Beza against Tilman Heshusius.

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The dissimilar appellations by which the Scriptures distinguish those who are under Constraint through the Law, from those who are renewed or regenerated by the Grace of the Gospel.

11. What man is there who possesses but a moderate acquaintance with theological matters, and does not know, that the Holy Spirit employs the preaching of the word in this order, that he
 - may FIRST convict us of sin, by the law, of whose equity and righteousness he convinces the mind
 - may accuse us of being obnoxious to condemnation
 - may place before our eyes our own impotency and weakness
 - may teach us that it is impossible to be justified through the law (Rom. iii. 19–21)
 - may compel us to flee to Christ, using ‘the law as a schoolmaster, to lead us by the hand to Christ,’ who is ‘the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth?’ (Gal. ii. 16–21; iii. 1–29).

On this account, also, the unregenerate receive certain names or appellations, in the Scriptures: — They are called

- SINNERS, as they are contra-distinguished from the righteous that boasted themselves of their righteousness, which sinners Christ came to call
- LABOURING AND HEAVY-LADEN, to whom Christ came to afford refreshment and rest
- SICK AND INFIRM, and such as stand in need of a Physician’s aid, that they may be distinguished from those who supposed themselves to be ‘whole,’ and not to require the services of a Physician
- POOR AND NEEDY, to whom Christ came [*evangelizare*] to preach the gospel
- CAPTIVES AND PRISONERS IN BONDS, who acknowledge their sad condition, and whom Christ came to deliver
- CONTRITE IN SPIRIT AND BROKEN HEARTED, whom Christ came to bind up, etc.

SECONDLY. Having completed these effects by the law, the same Spirit begins to use the preaching of the gospel, by which he manifests and reveals Christ, infuses faith, unites believers together into one body with Christ, leads them to [*communione*] a participation of the blessings of Christ, that, remission of sins being solicited and obtained through his name, they may begin further to live in Him and from Him. On this account likewise, the very same persons are distinguished by certain other appellations in the Scriptures. They are called BELIEVERS, JUSTIFIED, REDEEMED, SANCTIFIED, REGENERATED, AND LIBERATED PERSONS, GRAFTED INTO CHRIST, CONCORPORATE WITH HIM, BONES OF HIS BONES, FLESH OF HIS FLESH, etc.

From this order, it appears that some acts of the Holy Spirit are occupied concerning those who are unregenerate, but who are to be born again, and

that some operations arise from them in the minds of those who are not yet regenerate, but who are to be born again. But I do not attempt to determine whether these be the operations of the Spirit as He is the Regenerator. I know that, in Romans viii. 15–17, the Apostle distinguishes between the Spirit of adoption and the Spirit of bondage. I know that, in 2 Corinthians iii. 6–11, he distinguishes between the ministration of the law and of death, and the ministration of the Gospel and of the Spirit. I know the Apostle said, when he was writing to the Galatians, that the Spirit is not received by the works of the law, but by the faith of the Gospel of Christ. And I think that we must make a distinction between the Spirit *as He prepares a temple for himself*, and the same Spirit *as He inhabits that temple when it is sanctified*. Yet I am unwilling to contend with any earnestness about this point, — whether these acts and operations may be attributed to the Spirit, the Regenerator, not *as He regenerates*, but *as He prepares the hearts of men* [ad suscipiendam] *to admit the efficiency of regeneration and renovation*. Hence, I think it is once generally clear, that this opinion is not contumelious to the Holy Spirit, nor can it take away from the Spirit any thing which is attributed to Him in the Scriptures; but that it only indicates the order according to which the Holy Spirit disposes and distributes his acts. I am not certain whether, on the contrary, it be not contumelious to *the Spirit of adoption who dwells in the hearts of the regenerate*, if he be said to effect in them a volition of this description from which no effect follows, but which [*deficiat*] fails or becomes defective in the very attempt, being conquered by the tyranny of sin that dwelleth within; and this in opposition to the declaration in 1 John iv. 4, ‘Greater is HE that is in you, than he that is in the world.’ Neither do I think it to flow as a consequence from this, that in Romans vii. 18, 19, the subject under investigation is *a man placed under grace*; for it is one thing

- to feel or perceive some effect of preparing grace;

and it is another

- to be under grace, or to be ruled, led and influenced by grace.

2.6 Verse the twentieth

We have already taken the twentieth verse into consideration. But I here briefly remind the reader, that in this passage, likewise, is manifestly discovered the truth of our exposition which has been adduced; because, in this verse, he says, both that *he does what he would not*, and yet that *he does not do it himself, but sin that dwelleth in him*. He does it, therefore, and he does it not; because he does it as a servant who is under compulsion by his master, and who does not execute his own will so much as that of his master, though it is also his own, otherwise he would not perform it; for he consents to the will of his master before he performs it, because he does it without co-action or force; for the will cannot be forced.

If he does that which he would not, then it is no more he that does it, but sin that dwelleth in him.

2.7 Verse the twenty-first

He finds that, where he would do good, evil is present with him.

The twenty-first verse contains a conclusion from the preceding, accommodated to the purpose of the Apostle upon which he is here treating. For, from the circumstance of this man knowing that ‘to will is present with him’ but not to perform it, he concludes, that ‘when he would do good, evil is present with him.’ But it must be observed, that, in the eighteenth verse, the Apostle employs the same phrase about *willing*, as he here uses about *evil*; and thus he says, that both to will good, and to will evil, are present with him, or [*adjacent*] lie close to him. And as ‘to will that which is good is present with him’ through his inclination for the law, and through his mind which approves of it as ‘just and good,’ so ‘to will evil is likewise present with him’ through a certain law of sin, that is, by the force and tyranny of sin, assuming to itself the power, and usurping the right or jurisdiction over this man.

We must now consider whether the *presence* and *adjacency* of each (if I may employ such a word) are of equal power; or whether the one prevails over the other, and which of them it is that acquires this ascendancy. It is manifest that the two are not equally potent, but that the one prevails over the other, and that, in fact, ‘evil is present’ in a more powerful and vehement manner: For that obtains and prevails in a man, through the command, instigation and impulse of which he is found to act and to cease from acting. But I wish to see it explained from the Scriptures, how such an assertion as this can be made with truth concerning a regenerate man who is placed under grace; for, in every passage, the sacred records seem to me to affirm the contrary.

2.8 The twenty-second and twenty-third verses

He delights in the Law of God, or he finds a kind of condelectation with it, after the inward man; but he sees another Law in his Members, warring against the law of his mind, etc.

1. In the twenty-second and twenty-third verses is adduced a clearer explanation and proof of the conclusion which had been drawn in the twenty-first verse, and which agrees with the very topic that the Apostle had, in this part, proposed to himself for investigation. But the proof is, properly, contained in the twenty-third verse; because that verse corresponds with these words, ‘When I would do good, evil is present with me,’ an affirmation which was to be proved. The proof is taken from the effect of *the evil which is present with the man*, and it is *the warfare against the law of his mind*, the victory obtained over him, and, after such victory, *the captivity of the man to the law of sin*. The twenty-second verse has reference to these words, ‘When I would do good;’ and it contains a more ample explanation of this willing, from the proper cause, and an illustration of the following verse from things diverse and disjunctive. But in these two verses is contained one axiom, which is appropriately called a *discrete or disjunctive axiom*; as is apparent from the use of the particle, δε ‘but,’ in the twenty-third verse, which is the relative of μεν though the latter is omitted in the twenty-third verse. It is likewise

apparent from the very form of opposition. The *antecedent* and *less principal* part of this axiom is contained in the twenty-second verse; the *consequent* and *principal part*, in the twenty-third. For the antecedent is employed for the illustration of the consequent, as is very manifest in all axioms. Thus, as in many similar instances, ‘I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me, shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with life’ (Matt. ii. 11). ‘Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day’ (2 Cor. iv. 16). For the particles, *indeed, though, since, when, etc.*, denote the antecedent and less principal part of the axiom; while the particles, *but, yet, then, etc.*, denote the consequent and principal part. ‘To delight in the law of God,’ or, ‘to find a sort of condelectation in it,’ ‘after the inward man,’ is the cause that *to will* is present with this man. ‘The evil which is present with him,’ is ‘the law of sin in his members.’ The effect, by which the presence of this evil is proved, is contained in these words, ‘Warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.’

I have considered it proper to offer these remarks to assist in forming a right judgment about a discrete or disjunctive axiom, lest any one should separate the one part from the other, and should account the less principal to be the principal one. Let us now further see what conclusion can be drawn from these two verses, in proof of the one opinion or of the other.

2. Those who hold sentiments contrary to mine, draw the following conclusion, from the twenty-second verse, for the establishment of their view of the subject:

- He who delights in the law of God after the inward man, is regenerate and placed under grace;
- But this man about whom the Apostle is treating delights in the law of God after the inward man;
- THEREFORE, this man is regenerate and placed under grace.

An Argument, from the twenty-second verse, for the contrary Opinion.

They suppose that, in the Proposition, they have a two-fold foundation for their opinion:

- a) Because ‘*the inward man*’ is attributed to this person.
- b) Because that same individual is said ‘*to delight in the law of God after the inward man.*’

For, they say, both these adjuncts can appertain to regenerate persons alone.

- The FIRST agrees with them only, because, in the Scriptures, ‘the *inward man*’ has the same signification as that of ‘the *new man* and the *regenerate*.’
- the SECOND, because it is declared concerning the pious, that ‘they meditate in the law of the Lord, and that their delight is in it, day and night?’

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An Answer to the PROPOSITION in this argument. The INWARD MAN signifies the MIND, as the OUTWARD MAN signifies the BODY.

3. To the Proposition, I reply,
- FIRST, that *the inward man* is not the same as *the new man or the regenerate*, either from the etymology of the word, or from the usage of Scripture; and *the inward man* is not peculiar to the regenerate, but that it also belongs to the unregenerate.
 - SECONDLY, that *to delight in the law of God*, or, rather, *to find a sort of condelectation in the law of God after the inward man*, is not a property peculiar to the regenerate and to those who are placed under grace, but that it appertains to a man placed under the law.

a) This is shown from the etymology of the word, and from the usage of Scriptures, especially in 2 Corinthians iv. 16, and in Ephes. iii. 16, 17.

- a) With regard to the FIRST, I say,
- i. from the etymology of the epithet, he is called *the inward man*, relatively and oppositely to *the outward man*. For there are two men in the same individual, the one existing within the other, and the one having the other first within himself. The First of these is the *hidden man of the heart* (1 Peter iii. 4), the Second is *the outward man of the body*; the Former is he who inhabits or dwells in, the Latter, he who is inhabited; the Former is calculated or adapted to invisible and incorporeal [*bona*] blessings, the Latter, to those which are earthly and visible; the Former is immortal, the Latter is mortal and liable to death. In these two words, not a single syllable occurs which can afford even the least indication of *regeneration*, and of the *newness* arising from regeneration. But these three epithets, the *inward man*, the *regenerate man*, and the *new man*, hold the following order among each other, which the words themselves indicate at the first sight of them. The *inward man* denotes the *subject*, the *regenerate man* denotes the *act*, of the Holy Spirit who regenerates; and the *new man* denotes the *quality* which exists in the inward man through the act of regeneration.
 - ii. The sense and usage of Scripture are not adverse to this signification, but, on the contrary, are very consentaneous to it. This will be apparent from a diligent consideration of those passages in which mention is made of ‘the inward man.’ One of them is the text now under discussion; the Second is 2 Corinthians iv. 16; and the Third is Ephes. iii. 16, 17. Let us at present take into consideration the last two passages.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 16.

The FORMER of the two is thus expressed: ‘for which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.’

From this verse itself, I shew that *the inward* and *the outward* man are not in this passage taken for *the new* and *the old* man; but that the *inward man* is to be understood as that which is incorporeal and inhabiting, so denominated from the interior of man, that is, his mind or soul; and that the *outward man* is here taken for that which is corporeal and inhibited, so denominated from the body, the exterior part of man. This I shew,

FIRST. Because, if *the outward* and *the inward* man were to be taken for *the old* and *the new* man, then this disjunctive mode of speech could not attain in this verse. For these two could not then be distinguished in this following manner from each other: ‘Though our *old man* perish, yet the *new man* is renewed day by day;’ for [as there stated] they are necessarily cohering, and mutually consequent on each other; because whatever is taken away from *the old* man, is so much added to *the new*. The absurdity of such a distinction will be still more manifest, if the same thing be thus proposed: ‘Though our old man be crucified, destroyed and buried, yet the new man rises again, is quickened or vivified, and is renewed still more and more.’ And, ‘Though we lay aside our former oldness, yet we make greater and still greater proficiency in newness of life.’ Let any one that pleases render himself ridiculous by employing the following language: ‘Though this youth unlearns and lays aside his ignorance, yet he daily makes a greater proficiency in the knowledge of necessary things.’

SECONDLY. The solace which the Apostle produces, in opposition to those oppressions and distresses to which holy people are liable, while they remain in this world, consists in the following words: ‘The inward man is renewed day by day;’ and not in these, ‘though our outward man perish.’ This is shown by the mode of speech adopted by the Apostle, indicating that this very ‘perishing of the outward man,’ which is effected through oppressions and distresses, is that against which the consolation, comprehended in the following words, is produced by the Apostle. The afflicted person says, ‘But our outward man is perishing.’ The Apostle replies to him,

Do not grieve on this account; for our inward man is renewed day by day, in the renewal of which consists our salvation. For we must not have regard to external and visible blessings, which conduce to the life of the outward man; because they are liable to perish. But we must highly estimate and regard internal and invisible things, which appertain to the life of the inward man; because these are eternal, and will never perish.

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But if, by this word, ‘the outward man’ were to be understood ‘the old man,’ then the Apostle must have produced this in the place of consolation, in the following manner:

Do not lament that you are liable to many afflictions and oppressions, for those are the very things by which your old man perishes, and by which the inward man is the more renewed.

But that the perishing of the *outward* man, and that of the *old* man, are not the same, is evident from this circumstance,

- that the former of these is against the very nature of man and the good of [*animalis*] natural life,
- but that the latter is against depraved nature, and is contrary to the life of sin in man.

THIRDLY. From the word ‘*renewed*,’ it is apparent that ‘the inward man’ is the subject of renovation or renewal, and of the act of the Holy Spirit.

I confess indeed, that it may be correctly said, ‘The new man is daily renewed more and more,’

- both because it is needful that this newness, which has been produced in a man by the act of the regenerating Spirit, should increase and be augmented day by day,
- and because the remains of the old man ought by degrees to be taken away and weakened yet more and more.

But even in this case the subject is the *inward man*, that is called *new* from the newness which now begins to be effected in him by the regenerating Spirit; for the subject of increasing and progressive renovation, and that of commencing renovation, are the same.

But the subject of incipient or commencing renovation is not *the new man*, (for he is not called *new* before the act of renovation, and prior to the quality impressed by that act), but it is *the inward man*. Therefore, though the new man be said to be renewed, (a phrase which I am not aware that the Scriptures employ), yet the subject is the inward man, which subject may receive the appellation of *the new man* from the quality impressed. As we say that a white man becomes whiter every day, whiteness being communicated to a white man not *as he is white*, but *as he is a man who has* [nigredinis adhuc quidpiam] *still some dark shades remaining, and who has not yet attained to that degree of whiteness which he desires*. Consonantly with this view, the Scriptures themselves use these words: ‘Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness’ (Ephes. iv. 23, 24). In this

passage the subject of renovation is called ‘the spirit of our mind,’ that is, the inward man, or the mind; and ‘the new man,’ in the same passage, is not the subject itself, but it is the quality which the subject ought to induce: This quality is there called ‘righteousness and true holiness.’

I have said that I am not quite certain whether the Scriptures use this phrase in any passage: I have felt this hesitation on account of Col. iii. 10, in which it seems to be so used; the Apostle saying, ‘and ye have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created him.’ But it will be obvious to every one who consider, the passage with diligence, that these words, ‘which is renewed,’ or, *τον ανακαινουμενον*, must be joined with what preceded, ‘and ye have put on the new man,’ that is, ‘that which is renewed,’ or, ‘the renewed,’ ‘in knowledge,’ etc., so as to be a description of the new man, not some new attribute of this new man. But to this criticism no great importance is attached; and I have said, I do not deny that the new man is renewed more and more.

The same thing is manifest from the rest of this passage (2 Cor. iv. 16). For, ‘the outward man’ (16), ‘an earthen vessel’ (7), ‘our body’ (10), ‘our mortal flesh’ (11), are all synonymous terms; as are also, ‘troubled,’ ‘perplexed,’ ‘persecuted,’ ‘bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus,’ ‘delivered unto death,’ and ‘perishing.’ This may be rendered very clear to the studious inquirer after the truth, who will compare the preceding and the succeeding verses with the 16th.

EPHESIANS III. 16, 17.

The latter of the two passages is thus expressed: ‘That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.’ From these verses, it is plain, that by *the inner man* is denoted the subject about which the Holy Spirit is occupied in his act and operation; and this operation is here denominated ‘a corroboration,’ or ‘a being strengthened.’ This is also plain from the synonym mentioned in the following verse, ‘that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;’ for ‘the heart,’ and ‘the inner man,’ are taken from the same thing. In this view of the subject I am supported by the very learned Zanchius, who writes in the following manner upon this passage: ‘We have asserted, and from 2 Corinthians iv. 16, we have demonstrated, that by the term *inner man* is signified the principal part of man, that is, the mind, which consists of the understanding and the will, and which is usually denoted by the word

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heart, in which the affections or passions flourish; as, on the contrary, by the term *outward man*, no other thing can be understood than the corporeal part of man, which [*vegetatur*] grows, possesses senses, locomotion,' etc. And in a subsequent passage, he says, 'Therefore, by this particle, *in the inner man*, the Apostle teaches, that as the gift of might or strength, so likewise the other virtues of the Spirit, have not their seat in the vegetative or growing part of man, but in his mind, heart, spirit,' etc.

b) *Proofs of this are given at great length from the Ancient Christian Fathers.*

b) Because it is not only held for a certainty by some persons, that 'the inward man' is the same with *the new* and *the regenerate man*, from which they venture to assert, 'that the regenerate alone possess the inward man;' but because this is also urged as an article of belief, let us therefore see what a great portion of the Divines of the Christian Church here understood by the epithet, 'THE INWARD MAN.'

THE ANCIENT FATHERS

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

The Apostle gives two appellations to the man, — his *person* and his *mind* (*Strom.* lib. 3, fol. 194).

TERTULLIAN

'But,' says the Apostle, 'though our outward man be destroyed,' that is, the flesh, by the force of persecutions, 'yet the inward man is renewed day by day,' that is, the mind, by the hope of the promises. (*Against the Gnostics*, cap. 15).

Having, therefore, obtained the two men mentioned by the Apostle

- the inward man, that is, the mind,
 - and the outward man, that is, the flesh

the Heretics have in fact adjudged *salvation* to the mind, that is, to the inward man, but *destruction* to the flesh, that is, to the outward man; because it is recorded 2 Corinthians iv. 16, 'for though our outward man perish,' etc. (*On the Resurrection of the Body*, cap. 40).

From without, wars that overcome the body; inwardly, fear that afflicts the mind. So, 'though our *outward man* perish,' *perishing* will not be understood as losing our resurrection, but as sustaining vexation; and this, not without *the inward man*. Thus it will be the part of both of them to be glorified together, as well as to be fellow-sufferers (*Ibid*).

For though the Apostle calls the flesh ‘an earthen vessel,’ which he commands to be honourably treated; yet it is also called, by the same Apostle, ‘the outward man,’ that is, the clay which was first [*incisus*] impressed and engraved under the title of *man*, not of *a cup*, of *a sword*, or of any *small vessel*; for it was called ‘a vessel’ [*nomine*] on account of its capacity, which holds and contains the mind. But this flesh is called ‘man,’ from community of nature, which renders it *not an instrument* in operations, but *a minister* or assistant (*Ibid.* cap. 16).

AMBROSE.

‘For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.’ he says that his mind delights in those things which are delivered by the law; and thus it is the inward man (*On Rom.* vii. 22).

‘Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.’ The flesh perishes or wastes away by afflictions, stripes, famine, thirst, cold and nakedness; but the mind is renewed by the hope of a future reward, because it is purified by incessant tribulations. For the mind is profited in afflictions, and does not perish; so that when additional temptations occur, [*quotidie acquirat ad meritum*] it makes daily advances in worthiness; because this ‘perishing’ is profitable also to the body for its immortality [*merito*] through the excellence of the mind (*On 2 Corinthians* iv. 16).

‘I delight in the law of God after the inward man.’ Our inward man is that which was made after the image and likeness of God; the outward man is that which was formed and shaped from clay. As therefore there are two men, there is likewise a two-fold [*conversatio*] course of conduct: One is that of the inward man, the other that of the outward man. And, indeed, most of the acts of the inward man extend to the outward man. As the chasteness of the inward man also passes to the chastity of the body. For he who is ignorant of the adultery of the heart, is likewise unacquainted with the adultery of the body, etc. It is, therefore, the circumcision of the inward man; for he who is circumcised has stripped off the enticements of his whole flesh, as his foreskin, that he may be in the Spirit, and not in the flesh; and that in the Spirit he may mortify the deeds of his body, etc., etc. When our inward man is in the flesh, he is in the foreskin (*Letter 77th, to Constantius*).

BASIL THE GREAT

‘Let us make man according to our image.’ He means the inward man, when he says, ‘Let us make man,’ etc., etc. — Listen to the Apostle, who says, ‘Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.’ How do I know the two men? One of them is apparent; the other is hidden in him who appears, it is the invisible, the inward man. We have then a man within us; and we are twofold; and what is said

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is very true, — that we are inward. (*Homily 10th, on the six Days of Creation*).

‘Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me.’ God *made* the inward man, and *fashioned* the outward man. For ‘the fashioning’ belongs to clay; but ‘the making’ appertains to that which is after his own image. Wherefore the thing which was *fashioned* is the flesh, but that which was *made* is the mind (*Ibid. Homily 11*).

Since there are, indeed, two men, as the Apostle declares, the one outward and the other inward, we must also, in like manner, receive the age in both, according to him whom we behold, and according to him whom we understand in secret (*Discourse on the beginning of the Proverbs of Solomon*).

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

‘But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.’ If any one, therefore, says that our inward man dwells in the outward man, he repeats an important truth; yet he will not [*ideo*] on this account seem to divide [*unum*] the unity of man (*On the Incarnation, of the only-begotten Son*, cap. 12).

MACARIUS

The true death consists in the heart, and is hidden, when our inward man is dead. If therefore any one has passed over from death to the hidden life, he in reality lives forever, and dies no more, etc., etc. — Sin acts secretly upon the inward man and the mind, and commences a conflict with the thoughts (*Homily 15*).

The members of the soul are many: such as the mind, the conscience, the will, the thoughts which accuse or else defend. But all these have been collected together into one reason; yet they are the members of the soul. But the soul is single, that is, the inward man (*Homily 7*).

‘The inward man’ and ‘the soul’ are taken for the same thing, (in his *27th Homily*).

CHRYSOSTOM

‘But though our outward man perish,’ etc. How does it perish? While it is beaten with stripes, is driven away, and endures innumerable evils. ‘Yet the inward man is renewed day by day.’ How is it renewed? By faith, hope and alacrity, that it may have the courage to oppose itself to evils. For, the more the evils which the body endures, the greater is the hope which the inward

man entertains, and the more bright and resplendent does it become, as gold which is examined or tested by much fire. (*On 2 Corinthians* iv. 16).

Let us now see what is said by one who stands higher than many:

AUGUSTINE

But who, except the greatest mad man, will say that in the body we are, or shall afterwards be, like God, That likeness, therefore, exists in the inward man, 'which is renewed in the knowledge of God, after the image of him that created him' (*Tom. 2, Epist. 6*).

By this grace, righteousness is written in the inward man, when renewed, which transgression had destroyed (*On the Spirit and the Letter, cap. 27*).

As he called him the inward man when coming into this world, because the outward man is corporeal as this world is. (*On the Demerits and Remission of Sin, lib. 1, cap. 25; Tom. 7*).

As the eyes of the body derive no aid from the light, that they may depart from it with eyelids closed and turned in another direction, but in order to see, they are assisted by the light, (nor can this be done at all, unless the light lends its aid), so God, who is the Light of the inward man, assists [*obrutum*] the drowsiness of our mind, that we may perform something that is good, not according to our righteousness, but according to his own (*ibid. lib. 2, cap. 5*).

If, in the mind itself, which is 'the inward man,' perfect newness were formed in baptism, the Apostle would not declare, 'Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day' (*ibid. cap. 7*).

As that tree of life was placed in the corporeal Paradise, so this wisdom is in the spiritual Paradise, the former of them affording vital vigour to the senses of the outward man, the latter to those of the inward man, without any change of time for the worse (*ibid. cap. 21*).

Behold, then, of how many things are we ignorant, — not only such as are past, but also of those which are present, concerning our nature, and not only in reference to the body, but likewise I, reference to the inward man; yet we are not compared to the beasts (*Tom. 7. On the Soul and its Origin, lib. 4, cap. 8*).

Because the thing is either the foot itself, the body, or the man, who hobbles along with a lame foot; yet the man cannot avoid a lame foot, unless he have it healed. This can also be done in the inward man, but it must be by the grace of God through Jesus Christ (*On Perfection against Caelestius, fol. 1, letter f.*).

Thus also the mind is the thing of the inward man, robbery is an act, avarice is a vice, that is, a quality, according to which the mind is evil, even when it does nothing by which it can render any service to avarice or robbery (*ibid.*)

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Beside the inward and the outward man, I do not indeed perceive that the Apostle makes another inward of the inward man, that is, the innermost of the whole man (*On the Mind and its Origin*, lib. 4, cap. 4).

He confesses in the same passage, that the mind is the inward man to the body, but he denies that the spirit is the inward man to the mind.

Some persons have also made this supposition, that now the inward man was made, but the body of the man afterwards, when the Scripture says, 'And God formed man of the dust of the ground' (*Tom. 3. On Genesis according to the letter*, lib. 3, cap. 22).

The Apostle Paul wishes 'the inward man' to be understood by the spirit of the mind, 'the outward man' in the body and this mortal life. Yet it is sometimes read in his Epistles, that he has not called both of these together 'two men,' but one entire man whom God made, that is, both that which is the inward man, and that which is the outward. But he does not make him after his own image, except with regard to that which is inward, not only what is incorporeal, but also what is rational, and which is not within beasts (*Tom. 6. Against Faustus the Manichee*, lib. 24, cap. 1).

Behold God is likewise proclaimed, by the same Apostle, as Former of the outward man. 'But now hath God set the members every one in the body as it hath pleased him' (*ibid.*).

The Apostle says that 'the old man' is nothing more than *the old* [course of] *life*, which is in sin, and in which men live according to the first Adam, concerning whom he declares, 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' Therefore, the whole of that man, both in his outward and inward part; has become old on account of sin, and is sentenced to the punishment of mortality, etc. (*ibid.*).

And therefore, by such a cross, the body of sin is emptied, that we may 'not now yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin;' because this inward man also, if he be really renewed day by day, is certainly old before he is renewed. For that is an inward act of which the Apostle speaks thus: 'Put off *the old man*, and put on *the new man*' (*Tom. 3. On the Trinity*, lib. 4, cap. 3).

But now the death of the flesh of our Lord belongs to the example of the death of our outward man, etc. — And the resurrection of the body of the Lord is found to appertain to the example of the resurrection of our outward man' (*ibid.*).

Come now, let us see where is that which bears some resemblance to the confines of the man, both the outward and the inward; for, whatever we have in the mind in common with the beasts, is correctly said still to belong to the outward man; For not only will *the body* be accounted as 'the outward

man,' but likewise certain things united to its life, by which the joints of the body and all the senses flourish and grow, and with which it is furnished for entering upon outward things. When the images of these perceptions, infixed in the memory, are revisited by recollection, the matter is still a transaction which belongs to the outward man. And in all these things we are at no great distance from the cattle, except that in the shape of our bodies we are not bending downwards, but erect (*On the Trinity*, lib. 12, cap. 1).

While ascending, therefore, inwardly by certain degrees of consideration through the parts of the mind, another thing begins from this to occur to us, which is not common to us with the beasts; thence reason has its commencement, that the inward man may not be known (*ibid.* cap. 8).

Both believers and unbelievers are well acquainted with the nature of man, whose outward part, that is, the body, they have learned the lights of the body; but they have learned the inward part, that is, the mind, within themselves (*ibid.* lib. 13, cap. 1).

Besides, the Scriptures thus attest it to us in this, — that, when these two things also are joined together and the man lives, and when likewise they bestow on each of them the appellation of *man*, calling the mind 'the inward man,' but the body 'the outward man,' as though they were two men, while both of them together are only one man (*Tom. 5. On the City of God*, lib. 13, cap. 24. See also lib. 11, cap. 27 and 3).

As this outward and visible world nourishes and contains the outward man, so that invisible world contains the inward man (*Tom. 8. On the First Psalm*).

He who believes in Him, eats and is invisibly fattened, because he is also invisibly born again. The infant is within, the new man is within; where young and tender vines are planted, there are they filled and satiated (*On John*, Tract 26).

THEOPHYLACT

Moreover, 'the outward man,' that is, the body, 'perishes.' How is this? While it is beaten with stripes, while it is driven about. 'But the inward man,' that is, the spirit and the mind, 'is renewed.' By what means? When it hopes well, and freely acts, as though suffering and rejoicing on account of God (*On 2 Corinthians* iv. 16).

VIGILIUS

Let us spiritually advert to the spiritual expressions of the Apostle, by which he testifies, that he has seen and handled the word of God, not with his bodily eyes and hands, but with the members of the inner man (*Against Eutychus*, lib. 4).

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PROCOPIUS OF GAZA

The substance of man, if you consider his inward man, is this image of God; if you take his outward man into consideration, his substance will be the earth, or the dust of the ground. Yet one and the same is the man in the composition which is completed from both of them (*On Genesis*, cap. 1).

BERNARD

As the outward man is recognized by his countenance, so is the inward man pointed out by his will (*Sermon 3, On Ascension Day*).

LEO THE GREAT

When the outward man is slightly afflicted, let the inward man be refreshed; and withdrawing corporeal fullness from the flesh, let the mind be strengthened by spiritual delights (*Sermon 4, On Quadragesima Sunday*).

GREGORY NAZIANZEN

But in this, our nature, every care is towards the inward man of the heart, and every desire is directed to it (*Apology for his Flight*).

GREGORY NYSSEN

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. God speaks thus respecting the inward man. 'But,' you will say, 'you are giving a dissertation upon reason. Shew us man after the image of God. Is reason the man?' Listen to the Apostle: *Though your outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* By what means? I own that man is two-fold, one who is seen, another who is hidden, and whom he that is seen does not perceive. We have, therefore, an inward man, and in some degree are two-fold. For I am that man who is inward; but I am not those things which are outward; but they are mine. Neither am I the hand, but I am the reason which is in the mind; but the hand is a part of the outward man (*On Genesis*, i. 26).

Thus, when the inward man, whom God denominates *the heart*, has wiped off the rusty filth which, on account of his depraved thirst, had grown up with his form; he will once more recover the likeness [of God] with his original and principal form, when he will become good (*On the Beatitudes*).

a) MODERN DIVINES

Let us now see the opinions of certain Divines of our own age and religious profession, on the inward man.

c) *Similar Proofs are adduced from Modern Divines.*

CALVIN

Though the reprobate do not proceed so far with the children of God, as, after the casting down of the flesh, to be renewed in the inner man, and to flourish again (*Instit.* lib. 2, cap. 7, sect. 9).

But the reprobate are terrified, not because their inward mind is moved or affected, but because, as by a bridle cast upon them, they refrain less from outward work, and inwardly curb their own depravity, which they would otherwise have shed abroad (*ibid.* sect. 10).

Besides, since we have already laid down a two-fold regimen in man, and as we have, in another place, said enough about the other, which is placed in the mind, or the inward man, and which has reference to life eternal, etc. (*ibid.* lib. 4, cap. 20, sect. 1).

Though the glory of God shines forth in the outward man, yet the proper seat of it is undoubtedly in the mind (*ibid.* lib. I, cap. 15, sect. 3).

Some persons perversely and unskillfully confound *the outward man* with *the old man*. For *the old man*, about whom the Apostle treats in Romans vi. 6, is something far different. In the reprobate, also, the outward man perishes, but without any counterbalancing compensation (*On 2 Corinthians* iv. 16).

BEZA

Is renewed, that is, acquires fresh strength, lest the outward man, who is sustained by the strength of the inward man, should be broken when assaulted with fresh evils, for which reason, the Apostle said, in the 12th verse, ‘So, then, death worketh in us’ (*On 2 Corinthians* iv. 16).

BUCER

In HOLY persons, likewise, there are two men, an inward and an outward one. St Paul says, ‘Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.’ As, therefore, man is two-fold, so, likewise, are his judgment and his will two-fold: A fact which our Lord himself was not ashamed to confess, when he said to his Father, ‘nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.’ By saying this, ‘not what I will, but what thou wilt, be done,’ he undoubtedly shewed that he willed what the Father willed; and yet, at the same time, he acknowledges that this was his will: ‘Remove this cup from me.’ Our Lord, therefore, acknowledges the existence within himself of two wills, one of which was apparently at variance with the other (*On Romans* 5, Fol. 261).

FRANCIS JUNIUS

The outward man hears the word of God outwardly, but the inward man hears it inwardly (*On the Three Verities*, lib. 3, cap. 2. fol. 182).

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But then, as in ecclesiastical administration, not only the inward man is informed in the knowledge of God, but as aids and services are also sought by the outward man, so far as the external signs of the communion of saints are required to feed and promote the inward communion, in this cause, likewise, we acknowledge that God has delegated his authority to the magistrate (*On Ecclesiast. lib. 3, cap. 5*).

PISCATOR

The outward man, that is, the body, as he had previously called it. The inward man, that is, the soul or mind (*On 2 Corinthians iv. 16*).

THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND

When, indeed, from the depraved heart, and from the inward man, evil fruits do proceed, a necessary consequence of this is that he who is desirous of boasting that he is pure, must demonstrate the truth of his assertion by a spontaneous approval of the commands of Christ, and by a willing obedience to them (*A Pamphlet, in which they give a Reason for the Excommunication of Koolhaes, fol. 93*).

JOHN DRIEDO

The inward man is the rational mind unfolded in its powers, which never perishes. But the body, adorned with its senses, is called 'the outward man,' or 'our man who is outward and corruptible,' as the Apostle says in 2 Corinthians iv. 16, 'though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.' Again, he says, in Romans vii. 22, 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man' (*On Grace and Free Will, fol. 262*).

The Apostle Paul frequently does not understand the same thing by 'the old man' and by 'the outward man,' nor has he signified the same thing by 'the new man' and by 'the inward man;' but in the inward man are found both the old and the new man. For, in the mind, *oldness* of this kind is formed at the same time as *newness*. In it, the likeness is either heavenly or earthly, that is, either a carnal will, living according to the exciting feel of Sin, or a Spiritual will, living according to the Spirit of God (*ibid.*).

I am aware that the divines of our profession frequently take 'the inward man' for *the regenerate* and this *new man*; but then they do not consider 'the inward man,' except with a certain quality infused into it by the Holy and Regenerating Spirit, with which quality, when the inward man is considered, he is then correctly called *regenerate* and a *new man*. If any one urges that the very designation of 'the inward man' possesses, of itself, as great a value with those Divines as do the titles of 'the regenerate' and 'the new man,' I shall desire him to demonstrate, by sure and stable arguments, that the meaning adopted by those Divines is conformable to truth.

4. Let us now approach to the other foundation, which is that this man, to whom it is attributed that 'he delights in the law of God,' is regenerate; and that this attribute can agree with no other than a regenerate person. That we may be able to clear up this matter in a satisfactory manner, we must see what is meant by this phrase, 'to delight in the law of God;' or 'to feel a joint delight with the law of God,' as it appears the Greek text is capable of being rendered, and as an ancient version has it; for the verb, *συνηδομαι* seems to signify *the mutual pleasure* which subsists between this man and the law, and by which not only this man feels a joint delight in the law, but the law also feels a similar delight in him.

The meaning of the phrase, 'to delight in the law of God after the inward man.'

'I feel a joint delight with the law of God,' that is, I delight with the law: the same things are pleasing to me as are pleasing to the law. This interpretation may be illustrated and confirmed by a comparison of similar phrases, which frequently occur in other passages of the New Testament;

- *Συναγωνισασθα μοι* 'that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me'
- *Συναναπαυσωμαι υμιν* 'that I may with you be refreshed' (Rom. xv. 30, 32),
- *Συνηθλησαν μοι* 'those women who laboured with me in the gospel' (Phil. iv. 3),
- *Συμμαρτυρει τω πνευματι υμων* 'the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God' (Rom. viii. 16),

from which St Chrysostom not inappropriately explains, 'I feel a joint delight with the law,' by this paraphrase, 'I assent to the law that it is well applied, as the law, also, in return, assents to me, that it is a good thing for a man to will to do it.' He takes this explanation of the phrase from the text itself, which kind of interpretation not only may obtain, but likewise ought to be employed, in this passage, since there is no other in the whole of the Scriptures in which this same phrase is used.

If any one wishes to attach the same meaning to the phrase as to that which is used in Psalm i. 2, 'But his delight is in the law of the Lord;' let him who says this, know that it is incumbent on him to produce proof for his assertion. This is not unreasonably required of him, because the antecedents and the consequences which are attributed to the man who is denoted in the First Psalm and described as being *blessed*, are not only vastly different from those things which are attributed to the man on whom we are now treating, but are likewise quite contrary to them. Conceding, however, this for the sake of argument, but by no means absolutely granting it, (which I am far from doing), we must observe, that this man [in Romans vii. 22] is said, not simply 'to delight in the law of God,' or 'to feel a joint delight with the law of God,' but he does so with restriction and relatively, that is 'according to the inward man.' This restriction intimates that 'the inward man' has not obtained the

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pre-eminence in this man, but that it is weaker than the flesh; as the latter is that which hinders it from being able, in operation and reality, to perform the law, to which it consents, and in which it delights.

He who will compare the following verse with this will perceive that the cause of that restriction is the one which we have here assigned. For in the subsequent verse (the 23rd), it is not said, 'But I see another law in my members, according to which I do not delight in the law of God,' such as the opposition ought to have been, it, by that restriction, the Apostle wished only to ascribe this 'delighting' to the man *according to one part of him*, and to take it away according to *the other part of him*. But since the Apostle not only takes this 'delighting' from *the other part of him*, but likewise attributes it to the power of *warring against that inward man and overcoming him*, it is evident that the restriction has been added on this account, — to shew that, in the man who is now the subject of discussion, 'the inward man' has not the dominion, but is, in fact, the inferior.

Let him who is desirous to contradict these remarks, shew us, in any passage in which regenerate persons are made the subject of investigation, a similar restriction employed, and adduced for another purpose. From these observations, therefore, it appears that the Proposition is most deservedly denied. Let us now attend to the Assumption.

An answer to the ASSUMPTION, which is shown to be proposed in a mutilated form, by the omission of those things which are mentioned in the twenty-third verse.

An Argument, from the twenty-third verse, for the contrary opinion.

a) *An Answer to the Proposition in it.*

5. I say that the Assumption is proposed in a mutilated form, as it was previously in the argument produced from the eighteenth verse. For with it, the Apostle joins the following verse, in such a manner that the twenty-third verse may be the *principal* part of a compound and discrete axiom, employed for the purpose of proving what the Apostle intended. But that which is now placed in the Assumption, is a *less principal* part, conducing to the illustration of the other by separation. From this, it follows that the Conclusion cannot be deduced From the premises, because the Proposition is destitute of truth, the Assumption mutilated, and the Conclusion itself, beyond the purpose of the Apostle and contrary to his design.
6. Let us see whether any thing further can be brought from the twenty-third verse for the demonstration of the contrary opinion.
 - The man who has within him, beside the law of his members, the law of his mind, which is contrary to the other, is a regenerate man.
 - Such a man is the one mentioned in this passage;
 - THEREFORE, he is a regenerate man.
- a) The defenders of the contrary opinion believe the proposition in this syllogism to be true, because 'the law of the mind' is opposed to 'the law of the members,' as it consents to the law of God, — a quality which they suppose to belong only to the regenerate. This, they think, is confirmed

from the circumstance, — that the same Apostle expressly calls a certain mind, in Col. ii. 18, ‘a fleshly mind,’ which he likewise calls in Romans viii. 7, ‘the carnal mind.’

But the Proposition cannot be supported by these passages; for it is simply false, and those arguments which are produced in proof of it are inappropriate. For to some of the regenerate also, (that is, to those who are under the law, who have some knowledge of the law, who have thoughts accusing or else excusing them, and who know that concupiscence is sin), belongs something beside ‘the law of the members,’ ‘a fleshly mind,’ and one that is ‘carnal,’ which is opposite and repugnant to these: And this is ‘the work of the law written in their hearts;’ which is neither ‘the law of the members,’ ‘a fleshly mind,’ nor one that is ‘carnal,’ but it contends with them. For a conscience or consciousness of good and evil, which compels a man, though in vain, to good, and deters him from evil, is directly opposed to ‘the law of the members’ impelling to evil, and ‘to the carnal affections which cannot be subject to the law of God.’ For this conscience consents to the law of God, and is the instrument of the same law even in an unregenerate man to accuse and convict him. We may, therefore, be permitted to deny that Proposition, and to demand stronger proofs for it.

- b) With regard to the Assumption, we may say the same as we did about the Assumption in the previous syllogism — that it is not fully proposed, as it ought to have been, and it omits those things which were joined together in the text of the Apostle. But those things are of such a description, as, when added to the Assumption, will easily point out the falsity of the Proposition; that is, such is the opposition in this man between *the law of the members* and *that of the mind*, that the former not only ‘wars against’ the latter, but likewise obtains the conquest in the fight; that is, ‘it brings man into captivity under the law of sin.’ From these observations also it is evident, that no good Consequence can ensue from the Assumption.
7. But let us now try, whether something cannot be deduced from these two verses for the establishment of our opinion. It appeals indeed to me, that I can from them deduce an invincible argument for the refutation of the contrary opinion, and for the confirmation of my own.
- a) The argument in refutation of the contrary opinion may be stated in the following manner:
- The law of the mind which wars against the law of the members, is conquered by the law of the members, so that the man ‘is brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members’ (*as it occurs in this very passage*);
 - But the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, when warring against the law of the members, overcomes the latter; so that it liberates the

b) *And to the Assumption.*

A most irrefragable Argument deduced from these two verses.

a) *To the Refutation of the contrary opinion.*

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man, who had been brought into captivity under the law of sin, from the law of sin and death (Rom. viii. 2):

- THEREFORE, *the law of the Spirit* is not *the law of the mind*; neither is *the law of the mind, the law of the Spirit*.

This is evident from simple inversion, and from this very syllogism, the premises being so transposed, as for the Assumption to take the place of the Proposition, and *vice versa*: and, therefore, the word ‘mind’ is not used in this passage for ‘*the Spirit*.’

This argument is irrefragable. Let him who is desirous of proving the contrary, make the experiment, and he will find this to be the result. But its peculiar force will be more correctly understood towards the close of this investigation, in which is more fully explained the whole of the matter about which the Apostle is here treating.

b) *To the Establishment of the true one, which at first is proposed in an ample manner, and afterwards in an abridged form.*

b) For the Confirmation of my own opinion, I deduce the following argument from these verses: —

- That man, who delights indeed in the law of God after the inward man, but who, with the law of his mind warring against the law of his members, not only cannot prevail against the latter, but is also conquered by it and brought into captivity under the law of sin, while the law of his mind fruitlessly contends against it, is an unregenerate man, and placed, not under grace, but under the law;
- But though this man delights in the law of God after the inward man, and though with the law of his mind he wars against the law of His members; yet not only is he unable to prevail against the law of his members, but he is likewise brought into captivity under the law of sin by the law of his members, the law of his mind maintaining a strong but useless contest;
- THEREFORE, the man [described] in this passage is unregenerate, and placed, not under grace, but under the law;

Or, to state the argument in a shorter form, omitting whatever it is possible to omit: —

- That man in whom the law of the members so wages war against the law of the mind, as, when the latter is overcome, or at least while it offers a vain resistance, to bring the man himself into captivity under the law of sin, is unregenerate, and placed under the law;
- But in this man, about whom the Apostle is treating, the law of the members so wages war with the law of the mind, as, when the latter is overcome, or at least while it offers a vain resistance, to bring the man himself into captivity under the law of sin;
- THEREFORE, this man is unregenerate and placed under the law.

- c) The truth of the proposition rests on these three reasons:
- i. Because a regenerate man not only with the law of his mind wages war against the law of his members, but he does this principally with the law of the Spirit, that is, by the strength and power of the Holy Spirit; for it is said in Gal. v. 17: ‘The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.’
 - ii. Because far different is the result of that contest which, by the strength and power of the Spirit, or by ‘the law of the Spirit,’ a regenerate man maintains against the law of the members and against the flesh. For the law of the Spirit always obtains the victory, except when the man ceases from employing it in the battle, and from defending himself with it against the invading temptations of the flesh, Satan, and the world.
 - iii. Because [*non competat*] it is not an attribute of a regenerate man, of one who is placed under grace, *to be brought into captivity under the law of sin*; but that, rather, is his which is ascribed to him in the second verse of the following chapter: ‘The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.’ For when he was formerly placed under the law, he was in captivity under the strength and power of sin.

c) *The Proposition is proved by three Reasons, which are confirmed against all Objections.*

I will now confirm these reasons against the objections which are, or which can be, made against them.

Against the FIRST it may be objected: —

Since ‘the law of the mind,’ and ‘the law of the Spirit,’ are one, they are in this argument unskillfully distinguished; both because no one fights against the law of the members except by the law of the Spirit, or by the strength and power of the Holy Spirit; and therefore *the law of the mind is the law of the Spirit.*

To this I reply, it has already been proved, that the law of the mind, and the law of the Spirit, are not the same, and that the conscience also wages war against the law of the members in those men who are under the law.

Against the SECOND REASON it may be objected,

‘Even the regenerate themselves ‘offend in many things’ (James iii. 2). There is on earth ‘no man that sinneth not’ (1 Kings viii. 46). The regenerate cannot say with truth ‘that they have no sin’ (1 John i. 8).’

With other objections similar in their import.

To these, I reply, that I heartily acknowledge all these things, but that I do not perceive how by means of them the Second Reason can be

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weakened. For these expressions are not repugnant to each other, 'In many things the regenerate offend,' and 'The regenerate most generally gain the victory in the contest against sin,' that is, when they use the arms with which they are furnished by the Holy Spirit.

d) *It is proved from the Scriptures, that, in the Conflict against sin, the regenerate usually obtain the Conquest.*

d) If any one says, 'In this contest, the regenerate are more frequently the conquered than the conquerors,' I shall request him to explain how then it can be declared concerning the regenerate, 'that they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;' for, 'to be the conquered' is 'to fulfill the desires of the flesh;' and he who usually does this, 'walks after the flesh.' But many passages of Scripture teach that this contest, which the regenerate maintain against sin by the strength and power of the Holy Spirit, has generally a felicitous and successful termination; 'For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth Jesus to be the Son of God' (1 John v. 4, 5). 'Submit yourselves therefore to God; resist the devil, and he will flee from you' (James iv. 7). Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world' (1 John iv. 4). 'Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand' (Ephes. vi. 11, 13). 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me' (Phil. iv. 13). 'All things are possible to him that believeth' (Mark ix. 23). This truth also is proved, by various examples, through the whole of Hebrews xi. 'Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, — unto him be glory,' etc. (Ephes. iii. 20, 21). 'Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling,' 'and to present you, faultless, before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, — to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory,' etc. (Jude 24, 25). 'They that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit. If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.' (Rom. viii. 5, 13, 37). By many other passages of Scripture, this may also be proved.

GALATIANS V. 16–18

A special Consideration of the Text, Gal. v. 16–18, and a Collation of it with this passage.

8. But let us now consider Gal. v. 16–18, and let us compare it with Romans vii. 22, 23, the passage at present under investigation, that it may also clearly appear, from such consideration and comparison, that the result of the contest between the Spirit and the flesh is generally this: — the Spirit departs from the combat the conqueror of the flesh, especially as, in this Seventh Chapter to the Romans, we perceive an entirely contrary issue or result is described

and deplored. The passage may be thus rendered: ‘This I say then, Walk in the Spirit and fulfill not that after which the flesh lusteth,’ or ‘ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.’ ‘For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law?’

The exhortation of the Apostle occurs in the sixteenth verse; and, on account of the ambiguity of the Greek word, it may be read in two different ways, ‘fulfill not,’ or ‘ye shall not fulfill.’ If the former rendering be adopted, then the exhortation consists of two parts, of which the one teaches what must be done, and the other what must be omitted; that is, we must walk in the Spirit, and the desires of the flesh must not be fulfilled.’ But if the clause be rendered in the second manner, then the sixteenth verse contains an exhortation in these words: ‘Walk in the Spirit;’ and a consecutory subjoined to the exhortation in these words: ‘And ye shall not fulfill the desires or lusts of the flesh.’ The latter mode of reading the passage seems to be more agreeable to the mind of the Apostle; for he had previously, in the thirteenth verse, exhorted the Galatians not to abuse their Christian liberty for carnal licentiousness and lasciviousness. But now, in the sixteenth verse, he produces a remedy, by which they will be able to restrain and curb [*impetum*] the assaults and the power of the flesh, and which is, — if they walk in the Spirit, it shall then come to pass, that they shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

In the Seventeenth verse a reason is added, that is deduced from the contrariety or contest which subsists between the flesh and the Spirit, and from either the end or the result of this contest.

- a) The contrariety or contest is described in these words: ‘For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.’ From which is manifest the necessity both of *the Exhortation*, not to abuse their Christian liberty to carnal licentiousness, and not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh; and of *the Remedy*, by which alone the lusts of the flesh can be curbed and restrained, and which is this: — ‘if they walk in the Spirit, that lusteth against the flesh.’ For it is from this enmity and contrariety which subsists between the flesh and the Spirit that the conclusion is drawn, ‘If ye walk in the Spirit, ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.’ From this it is also manifest, that this latter mode of rendering is better adapted to the meaning of the Apostle.
- b) The end or result of this contest is described in these words: ‘And these are contrary the one to the other, that ye may not do the things that ye would.’ I have said that the end or the issue of the contest is here described; because some persons suppose that its issue, and not its end, is pointed out in this passage.
 - i. But the particle, $\omega\kappa$ ‘that,’ which is used by the Apostle, signifies the

end or intention, and not the result or issue; and this interpretation is entirely agreeable to the mind of the Apostle. 'For the Spirit lusteth against the flesh' for this purpose, 'that we may not do those things' which we lust according to the flesh, and 'which we would,' the consequence of which is, 'if we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh.' And, on the contrary, since 'the flesh also lusteth against the Spirit' for this purpose, 'that we may not do those things which we lust according to the Spirit,' it follows that if we walk in the flesh or according to the flesh, we shall not fulfill the desires of the Spirit. But this rendering is agreeable to the scope or design of the Apostle, 'that ye may not do what things soever ye would according to the flesh.'

- ii. If we assert that the result or issue is here signified, then the meaning will likewise be two-fold. For it will be possible for it to be as follows: 'The flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do those things which *according to the Spirit ye would.*' It may likewise be this: 'So that ye cannot do these things which, *according to the flesh ye would.*' That is, this contest obtains the following result, 'that ye cannot do those things which, *according to the Spirit, ye would;*' or, 'that ye cannot do those things, which, *according to the flesh, ye would.*' But let us see which of these two meanings is the more suitable: Truly, the latter of them is. It is not only more suitable, but likewise necessary, if the Apostle is here treating about the issue or result. This will be still more apparent from the absurdity of the admonition, if the passage be explained in the other sense: The Apostle admonishes the Galatians, 'to walk in the Spirit, and not to fulfill the desires of the flesh;' (for we will now retain this rendering of the latter clause, as that which is more consentaneous with the meaning that explains the passage concerning this issue or result); and the persuasion to this will then be: 'For the flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other, by this result, that ye cannot do those things which, *according to the Spirit, ye would.*' This indeed is not to exhort, but to dissuade and dehort by a forewarning of the unhappy result.

Besides, reason itself requires, according to [logical] scientific usage, that what has been proposed be drawn out in the Conclusion; otherwise the parts of connection will be broken. But the Proposition was either this, 'Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh,' or it was this: 'Walk in the Spirit, and fulfill not the lusts of the flesh.' I am desirous to have it demonstrated to me, by what means this proposition can be concluded from the eighteenth verse understood about the issue or result, by which the flesh hinders the Galatians from doing that which, *according to the Spirit,* they would.

But it has been already shown, that each of these Propositions may be fairly concluded from the passage, when understood as relating to the end or intention of the conflict, nay, when also understood as referring to the issue or result when the Spirit is the conqueror. It is apparent, therefore, not only that this is the *end* or *design* of the contest which is here mentioned from the lusting of the Spirit, but that this is likewise its *issue* or *result* from the strength and power of the Spirit, — that, when the flesh is subdued, the Spirit comes off as the conqueror; and that the man who, by the Spirit, wages war against the flesh, and who walks in the Spirit, does not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

From these is inferred a Consectary in the eighteenth verse: ‘But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law;’ that is, if ye walk in the Spirit, if under the guidance of the Spirit ye contend against the lusts of the flesh, and contend so as not to fulfill them, from these circumstances you may assuredly conclude that ye are not under the law.

In this Consectary, we see, that the phrases, ‘to be under the law,’ and ‘not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh,’ are opposed to each other; for the latter of them is descriptive of the proper effect of the guidance of the Spirit. Wherefore, the phrases, ‘to be under the law,’ and ‘to fulfill the lusts of the flesh,’ are consentaneous and of the same import. But this is the very thing which is asserted in Romans vi. 14: ‘For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.’ From this, it is apparent, that the dominion of sin, which is the cause why the lusts of the flesh are fulfilled, prevails in those persons who are under the law. But since the dominion of sin does not obtain in those who are under grace, (and, in fact, on this account, because they are under grace), it is therefore evident that these phrases, ‘to be under grace,’ and ‘to be led by the Spirit,’ are consentaneous, nay, that they are exactly the same. For the effect of each of them is one and alike, and that is, to prevent sin from having dominion over a man, and to hinder man from fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, which is also explained at great length in Romans 8, in a manner agreeable to that which is briefly laid down in this seventeenth verse, that is, ‘The Spirit is contrary to the flesh for this purpose, — that men may not do those things which, according to the flesh, they would.’ But, from Romans 7 it is very plain, that the result of that contest is different from the one upon which the Apostle is here treating: For, in that chapter, the man does that which, after the flesh, he would, and does not what he is said to will after the inward man; the law of God, the law of the mind, and the inward man, vainly attempting to restrain the power of sin and to

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hinder the lusts of the flesh, because all these [strive as they may] are debilitated through the flesh.

*An Objection,
and a Reply to it.*

9. If any one urge this as an Objection,

It likewise befalls the best of the regenerate, that they do not the things which, according to the Spirit, they would, but that they fulfill the lusts of the flesh;

I perfectly assent to the truth of this, if the small addition be made, that 'this SOMETIMES happens to the regenerate.' For if such be their general practice, they do not now walk in the Spirit; though this is a property of the regenerate. I say, that Romans vii does not describe what sometimes befalls the pious, and that it contains a description of the state of that man about whom the Apostle is there treating, that is, of a man who is under the law, before he is led by the guidance of grace, and is governed by the motions of the Holy Spirit. This is confirmed by the passage in Gal. v. 16–18.

Then I reply, Such a case as this does not occur from the circumstance of the Spirit, who has for a long time maintained a strenuous contest with the desires of the flesh, being at length conquered, and yielding on account of impotence or weakness: But it happens, because the man is either overtaken with temptation and overcome, before he begins to oppose to it the arms of the Spirit and of grace; or, in the progress of the conflict, he throws out of his hands those arms which, at the commencement, he began to use; or he uses them no longer, having begun the battle in the Spirit, but ending in the flesh. In no other way than in this can it happen, that the flesh, the world and Satan can overcome us; because 'greater is He who is in us, than he that is in the world 'as has already been pointed out in several passages. Without manifest ignominy and contumely poured on Divine Grace and on the Spirit of Christ, no other cause can be assigned why the pious, and those who are placed under grace, should SOMETIMES be conquered by the flesh, the world and Satan; for either the Spirit that is in us is not the stronger of the two; or, while lusting and fighting against the flesh, He overcomes. And how can it possibly come to pass, that He who has conquered the flesh while it was still in its full strength, and has thus subjected us to Himself, should not be able to gain the victory over the flesh when it is crucified and [*mortificata*] dead in the body of Christ?

*An Objection to
the Third Reason,
and a Reply.*

10. To the THIRD REASON it is objected,

Even the regenerate may in some degree and relatively be said to be captives under sin, that is, so far as they are not yet fully regenerated, and still feel within themselves the motions of the flesh lusting against the Spirit, from which they are not completely delivered while they continue in this mortal body.

I grant the antecedent, but I deny the consequence; for so far are the Scriptures from ascribing the detention of the regenerate as captives under sin, to the imperfection of regeneration and to the remains of the flesh, that they are said with respect to this very regeneration to be freed from the yoke and slavery of sin and from the tyranny of the Devil. ‘The remains of sin [*supersunt*] survive in the regenerate,’ and, ‘The regenerate are detained as captives by the remains of sin,’ are contradictory affirmations: For the former of the two is a token of sin conquered and overcome; the latter attributes victory and triumph to sin. After the Holy Spirit has commenced the mortification and death of sin, what is the act of the same Spirit respecting sin? Undoubtedly it is the persecution of the remains of sin, that He may subdue and extinguish them until they no longer exist; ‘and when their place is sought after, it is no more to be found,’ as St Augustine has elegantly observed, when treating on this matter in a passage of his Works.

But the cause why such an opinion as this is entertained, is because ‘deliverance from sin’ and ‘slavery under its tyrannical power,’ ‘a being loosed from the chains of Satan’ and ‘captivity under his tyranny,’ are so accounted as if they can concur together, as the phrase is, *in remissis gradibus*, and meet together in one subject, in much the same manner as the colour of *white* and that of *black* meet together in *green*, and *heat* and *cold* meet together in *lukewarmness*. Yet this matter stands in a situation vastly different; for liberty cannot consist with even the smallest portion of servitude or captivity; though it may labour under great difficulties in resisting its assaulting foes, and though it may occasionally come out of the conflict with [*aliquam*] something like a defeat. But if the matter stood in the relation of similes which have been adduced, yet even then it could not be said, ‘This man is partly free from sin, and partly its slave and captive;’ but a necessity would then arise for the existence of a third thing from these two, which might obtain the name of ‘a medium between the extremes,’ belonging neither to this nor to that. But I am desirous to see some passage of Scripture adduced, where that is said about the regenerate, and about those who are placed under grace, which is ascribed to the man about whom the Apostle is treating, or what is equivalent to it.

ISAIAH LXIV. 6

11. But a passage is produced from the Prophet Isaiah to prove that pious persons, and those who are placed under grace are, by the law of their members, brought into captivity under the law of sin. The degree of correctness with such an affirmation is made, will be very manifest from a comparison of the two passages. That in Isaiah (lxiv. 6) says, ‘But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.’ The passage in Romans

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(vii. 23), now under investigation, is this. 'But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.'

Let us now approach and institute a comparison. The subject of the first of these passages is, the captivity by which the children of Israel were led away into exile on account of their sins; the subject of the latter is, captivity under sin; therefore, this is to pass over to a different genus, contrary to the method observed in every approved discussion.

In the former of these passages, the subject is the punishments which that people deservedly suffered on account of *the actual* sins which they had committed against God; but, in the latter, the subject is the cause whence it arises that the man who consents to the law of God, and who, with the law of his mind, wages war against the law of his members, is conquered and overcome, so that he actually commits sin, to which he is instigated and impelled by sin which dwelleth in him. Wherefore, the latter passage treats upon *the CAUSE of actual sin*, and the former upon *the PUNISHMENTS of actual sins*. For this phrase, 'We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away,' does not signify that those men were impelled to some kind of sin through the depraved lusts of the flesh, as by a vehement wind, or that they melted away, as it were, into sins; but it signifies, that, on account of actual sins, which are distinguished by the appellation of 'our iniquities,' they are driven away into banishment as by a wind, and were scattered about as leaves. Let this passage be compared with the First Psalm, in which similar declarations are made concerning the wicked. Consult our interpreters of Holy Writ, such as Calvin, Musculus, Gualther, etc., and it will be evident, even with respect to the things which precede it, that the whole of this passage is unaptly cited by many persons to prove what they are desirous to establish.

For the plainer and more obvious explanation of this matter we must observe, that there is a two-fold captivity under the tyranny of sin;

- *the one*, that of our primeval origin from Adam, according to which we are all born 'children of wrath' and the servants of sin;
- *the other*, that of our own particular act, when, by actual transgressions, we subject and bind ourselves still more to sin, and engage in its service.

Some persons will have this two-fold servitude to have been allegorically typified by the Egyptian and Babylonian captivities. For the Israelites, in their parents, entered into Egypt; and while there, after a lapse of years, they began to be oppressed and to be regarded as servants. The same people, on account of their sins, were led away, by the violence of their enemies, into captivity in Babylon.

But the captivity about which the Apostle is here treating, is posterior to the first of these two kinds; for *the law of the members*, which we have from our primeval origin, waging war with *the law of the mind*, when the latter

is overcome, brings a man who is under the law into captivity to the law of sin, that very man who was formerly conceived in sin and born in iniquity. And, to express the whole in one word, he who was born in sin and originally under captivity to it, is brought into captivity under the law of sin by means of actual sins.

From these observations, therefore, it is apparent, that the Proposition of our syllogism is true, and stands unshaken against all these objections. The Assumption stands in the very text of the Apostle; from which the Conclusion follows, that the man about whom the Apostle treats in this passage, is an unregenerate man, and not placed under grace, but under the law.

2.9 Verse the twenty-fourth

1. From the condition of this man, when accurately considered by himself, follows the mournful lament and exclamation, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death, or from this body of death?’ Of this, a two-fold explanation is produced, according the double meaning of the words — either ‘from the body of this death,’ or ‘from this body of death,’ — which some people interpret by ‘this mortal body that we bear about with us,’ and others, by ‘that body of sin which has the dominion in a man who is under the law, and which renders him liable to death.’ The latter interpretation, however, is more agreeable both to the phrase and to the context; for the pronoun, *τουτου* must not be referred to *Σωματος* ‘the body,’ but to *Θανατου* ‘death,’ to which it is most nearly conjoined; and the clause ought to be rendered thus: ‘Who shall deliver me from the body of this death,’ [which is sin not only existing within me, but dwelling and reigning]? as it is expressed in the 17th and 20th verses.
2. For the Apostle attributes a *body* to sin in the sixth verse of the Sixth chapter of this epistle: ‘Our old man is crucified with him, that THE BODY OF SIN might be destroyed,’ the destruction of which is followed by a deliverance from the servitude of sin, as it is expressed in the same verse. The phrase also occurs in Col. ii. 11: ‘In putting off the Body of the Sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.’ Wherefore, according to this mode of reading it, the meaning of the exclamation is, ‘Who shall deliver me from this tyranny of sin, which, reigning in me and dwelling in my flesh, bringing me into captivity and subjecting me to itself, brings certain death to me?’
3. Some other persons are urgent about a different rendering, and give this meaning to the words, ‘Who shall deliver me from this mortal body?’ That is, as the Apostle speaks in another passage, ‘I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.’ But this meaning does not agree with the exclamation,
 - a) On account of the construction, which declares that the pronoun, *τουτου* ‘this,’ must not be referred to the body, but to death.

The lamentable Exclamation, O wretched man that I am! A two-fold reading of it.

The Body of Death is the Body of Sin.

By four Reasons it is proved that the Body of Death is not our mortal Body.

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- b) Because the preceding verses do not permit this meaning to be entertained. For the force and tyranny of sin, dwelling in this man, and impelling him to fulfill his desires, is the subject on which the Apostle is here treating. But ‘the deliverance’ which is earnestly sought in this 24th verse, opposed to ‘the captivity’ which is the subject of the 23rd verse.
- c) On account of the thanksgiving which is appended to it, and which ought not to be subjoined to a desire which was not then fulfilled [if the meaning of the phrase were, *this mortal body*].
- d) Because the grace of Christ is not simply to deliver out of this mortal body, but to free us from the body of sin and from its dominion. It is true indeed, that, through the blessed $\alpha\nu\alpha\lambda\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu$, ‘dissolution’ or ‘departure,’ for which we are waiting in the faith and hope of Christ, rest is granted to us from all our labours, and from the conflict of lusts with which we are inwardly attacked. But in this passage the Apostle is treating, not about the conflict and impulse of lusts which exist within us, but about the fulfilling of those lusts by that impulse to which ‘the law of the mind’ opposes itself in vain.

This is confirmed by the testimonies of St Augustine and Epiphanius.

4. ST AUGUSTINE is one of my supporters, who says, in his Treatise *On Nature and Grace* (cap. 53),

The saints most certainly do not pray to be delivered from the substance of the body, which is good, but from carnal vices; from which no man is delivered without the grace of the saviour, nor at the time of his departure from the body, when it dies.

It is no injury to my interpretation, that St Augustine here says, that, according to his interpretation, ‘*Saints or holy persons* pray for deliverance from carnal vices’ etc.; I only point out what he understood by ‘the body of death.’

On the Perfection of Justice, against Celestius, St Augustine also says,

It is one thing, therefore, to depart out of this body, which the last day of the present life compels all men to do; but it is another thing *to be delivered from the body of this death*, which Divine grace alone, through Jesus Christ, imparts to his saints and believers?

Epiphanius, *On the 64th Heresy*, (lib.2, tom. I), from Methodius, says, ‘Wherefore, O Aglaophon, he does not call this body death, but sin which dwells in the body through the lust of the flesh, and from which God has delivered him by his coming?’

An Argument in favour of the true Opinion.

5. (1) Wherefore, from the 24th verse, when rightly understood, I argue thus for the establishment of my own opinion:
- Those men who are placed under grace are not wretched;

- But this man is wretched;
- THEREFORE, this man is not placed under grace.

The Assumption is in the text, and thus placed beyond all controversy.

In reference to the Proposition, perhaps some one will say,

Men, placed under grace, are partly blessed, and partly wretched

- *blessed*, as they are regenerate and partakers of the grace of Christ
- *wretched*, as they still have within them the remains of sin, with which they ought to maintain a constant warfare.

This is a sure sign of a felicity which is not yet full and perfect.

I confess that, while the regenerate continue as sojourners in this mortal life, they do not attain to a felicity that is full, complete in all its parts, and perfect. But I do not recollect ever to have read [in the Scriptures] that they are, on this account, called ‘wretched’ with regard to the ‘spiritual life which they live by faith of the Son of God,’ though, in reference to this natural life, ‘they be of all men most miserable’ (1 Cor. xv. 19). The opposite to this may be easily proved from the Scriptures: ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, — they that mourn, — that hunger and thirst after righteousness,’ etc. (Matt. v. 3–12).

‘But,’ some one will rejoin, ‘Is it not wretched to contend with the remains of sin, to be buffeted by the messenger of Satan, sometimes to be overcome, and to be grievously injured?’ It is undoubtedly desirable that this were not necessary, that it never occurred, that they might be delivered from the messenger of Satan; but the contenders, and those who are thus buffeted, cannot be called ‘wretched’ on account of that *contest* and *buffeting*. But it is wretched indeed, *to be overcome*; yet neither are they called ‘wretched,’ who, though they be sometimes conquered, more frequently obtain the victory over the world, sin and Satan.

6. (2)

- He who desires to be delivered from the body of this death, that is, from the dominion and tyranny of sin, is not placed under grace, but under the law.
- But this man desires to be delivered from the dominion and tyranny of sin;
- THEREFORE, this man is not placed under grace, but under the law.

Another Argument in its favour.

The Proposition is true, because regenerate men, and those who are placed under grace, are free from the servitude and tyranny of sin, — not indeed perfectly free, — but yet so far as to render it impossible for them to be said to be under the dominion and servitude of sin, if the person who speaks

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concerning them be desirous of talking in accordance with the Scriptures. But it has been already proved, that this man is desirous of being freed from the body of sin which dwells and reigns within him; therefore, the Conclusion regularly follows.

2.10 Verse the twenty-fifth

Various Readings of the first clause, from the Ancient Fathers.

1. ST CHRYSOSTOM reads the former part of this verse thus: 'I thank,' etc., which is also the reading of THEOPHYLACT.

This is the reading of ST AMBROSE: 'The Grace of God through Jesus Christ.' ST JEROME, also, against Pelagius, adopts the same reading.

ST AUGUSTINE renders the clause thus: 'By the Grace of God through Jesus Christ.' (*Discourse 5. On the Words of the Apostle.* Tom. 10).

EPIPHANIUS renders it, 'The Grace of God through Jesus Christ' (*From Methodius against Origen, Heresy 64, lib. 2, tom. 1*).

But this clause contains a thanksgiving, in which St Paul returns thanks to God that he, in his own person, has been delivered from this body of sin, about which he had been treating, and to which that man was liable whose character he was then personating. In this, thanksgiving is contained, by implication, an answer to the preceding interrogatory exclamation; that is, 'The grace of God will deliver this man from the body of this death, from which he could not be delivered by the law.' This is directly and openly explained by some copies of the Greek original, in which this verse is thus read: 'The grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,' that is, 'This grace will deliver me, or the man whose character I have been personating, from the body of this death' — a thing which it was the chief purpose of the Apostle to prove in this investigation.

In the latter clause, this man is said 'to serve the law of God with his mind, but with his flesh, the law of sin.'

2. In the latter part of the same verse, is something resembling a brief recapitulation of all that had been previously spoken, in which the state of the man about whom the Apostle is here treating, is briefly defined and described in the following words: 'So then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin.' In the correct explanation of these phrases, lies an important key for the clear exposition and dilucidation of the whole matter; these phrases must, therefore, be subjected to a diligent examination.

'To serve God,' and 'to serve the law of God,' are not the same thing.

3. Those persons who interpret this passage as relating to a regenerate man and to one placed under grace, are desirous to intimate, by these phrases, that St Paul, so far as he was regenerate, 'served God,' but that so far as he was unregenerate, and still partly carnal, 'he served sin.' They also take 'the mind' in the acceptation of the regenerated portion of man, and 'the flesh' for that portion of him which is not yet regenerate; and they suppose that 'to serve the law of God' is the same thing as 'to serve God,' and that 'to serve the law

of sin' is the same thing as 'to serve sin.' But neither of these suppositions can be proved by this text or by other passages of Scripture.

- a) For the Apostle is not accustomed to bestow on man, *as he is regenerate*, the epithet of '*the mind*,' but that of '*the Spirit*.' And this he does for a very just reason; for 'the mind' is the subject of regeneration, 'the Holy Spirit' is the effector of it, from communion with whom a participation also with his name arises. Besides, 'the mind' is attributed to the flesh: 'Vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind' (Col. ii. 18). The gentiles are said to have 'walked in the vanity of their mind' (Ephes. ii. 17). Idolaters are 'given over to a reprobate mind' (Rom. i. 28); and the Apostle mentions 'men of corrupt minds' (1 Thess. vi. 5; 2 Tim. iii. 8).
- b) But that 'to serve God' is not the same as 'to serve the law of God,' and 'to serve sin' is not the same as 'to serve the law of sin,' is evident,

FIRST. *From the difference of the words themselves.* For it is very probable, that different phrases denote different meaning. If any one denies this, the proof of his position is incumbent on himself.

SECONDLY. *From the words of Christ*, who denied the possibility of any man serving two masters, God and Mammon, God and sin. If any one say that 'it is possible for this to be done in a different respect, that is, *to serve God with the mind, and to serve sin with the flesh*,' I reply that, by such a petty distinction as this, the general affirmation of Christ is evaded, to the great detriment of piety and Divine Worship, and that a wide door will thus be opened for Libertines and Pseudo-Nicodemites. But some one will say, 'The Apostle expressly affirms this, which I deny, and my denial will be supported by the phrases themselves, when correctly explained, as they will soon be; for this man serves sin, and not God.'

THIRDLY. From the perpetual usage of the Scriptures, which are not accustomed to employ these restrictions when any man is said to serve God, or to serve sin. Wherefore, since they are employed in this passage, it is exceedingly probable that the same thing is not signified by these different phrases.

- 4. But the subject itself, upon which the Apostle here treats, when placed plainly before the eyes, may disclose to us the true meaning of these phrases; so that the man who will inspect it with [*probo*] honest eyes, and with eyes desirous to investigate and ascertain the truth alone, may have that with which to satisfy himself.

The various kinds of law mentioned in this chapter, with a diagram, and the explanation of it.

The Apostle, therefore, here makes mention of four laws.

- a) The law of God.
- b) The law of sin.
- c) The law of the mind.

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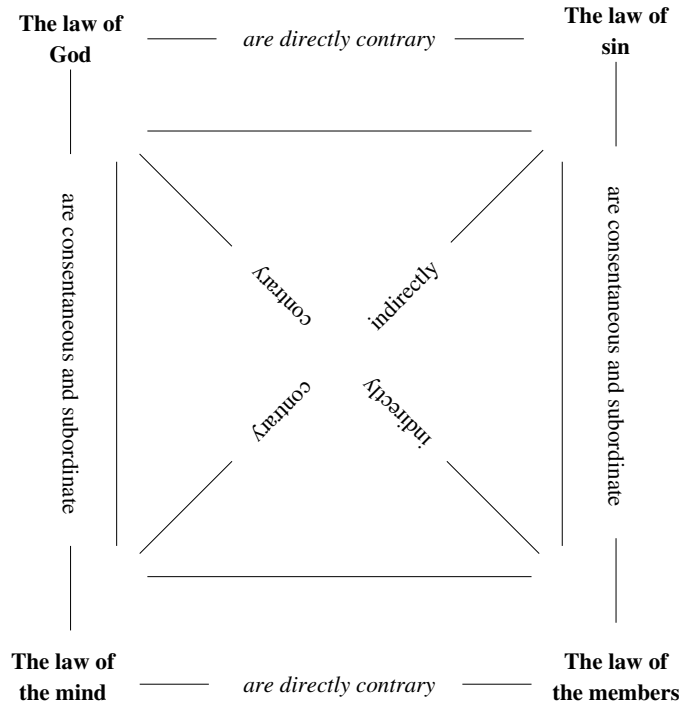


Figure 2.1: Law

d) The law of the members.

They are opposed to each other and agree together in the following manner:

- ‘The law of God,’ and ‘the law of sin,’ are directly opposed; as are likewise ‘the law of the mind,’ and ‘that of the members.’
- ‘The law of God,’ and ‘the law of the mind,’ agree together; as do likewise ‘the law of sin,’ and ‘the law of the members.’
- From this, it follows that ‘the law of God,’ and ‘the law of the members,’ are indirectly opposed; as are also ‘the law of sin,’ and ‘that of the mind.’

But it will be possible to render these things more intelligible by the subjoined diagram 2.1:

‘The law of God’ and ‘the law of sin,’ obtain in this place the principal dignity. ‘The law of the mind’ and ‘that of the members’ are placed as hand-maids or assistants to them, rendering due service to their superiors; for ‘the mind delights in the law of God,’ and ‘the law of the members brings a man into captivity to the law of sin’ (Rom. vii. 22, 23). These things being premised, I proceed to the explanation.

The Apostle here lays down two lords, who are completely contrary to each other, and directly opposed, GOD and SIN — the former of these, the lawful Lord; the latter, a tyrant, and, by violent means, usurping dominion over man,

— by the fault indeed of man himself, and by the just judgment of God. Both of them impose a law on man.

- God imposes his law, that man may obey Him in those things which it prescribes;
- and sin imposes its law, that man may obey it in ‘the lusts thereof,’ which it proposes by a certain law of its own.

The former is called ‘the law of God;’ the latter, ‘the law of sin.’ By the former, God endeavours to lead the man, who is *placed under the law*, to yield obedience to Him; by the latter, sin strives and attempts, by every kind of violence, to compel the man to obey him. By his law, God prescribes those things which are ‘holy, and just, and good;’ by its law, sin proposes those things which are useful, pleasant, and agreeable to the flesh. Now both of them, God and sin, have, in *this man who is under the law*, something which favours their several causes and purposes, and which assents to each of these laws.

- God has *the mind*, or ‘the law of the mind;’
- sin has *the flesh*, or the law of the flesh, or ‘of the members.’

The mind, consenting to the law of God, that it ‘is holy, and just, and good;’ *the flesh*, assenting to the law of sin, that it is useful, pleasant and agreeable; ‘the law of the mind,’ which is the knowledge of the Divine law, and an assent to it; ‘the law of the members,’ which is an [*affectus*] inclination and propension towards those things which are useful, pleasant, and agreeable to the flesh, that is, towards these mundane, earthly and visible objects.

In the 23rd verse of this chapter, these two laws are said to be ἀντιστρατευόμενοι, ‘waging war together,’ like soldier, who are in the field of battle, and drawn up in hostile array against each other, that the one army may overcome that which is opposed to it, and may gain the victory for its Lord and General. ‘The law of the mind’ fights for ‘the law of God,’ and ‘the law of the members’ marches under the banner of ‘the law of sin;’ the former, that, after having conquered the flesh and the law of the members, it may bring man into subjection to the law of God, with this design, — that man may serve God; the latter, that, after having overcome the law of the mind, it may sentence man to bondage, and ‘bring him into captivity to the law of sin,’ with this design, — that man may serve sin.

The conflict between these two contending parties, is about man, whom God wishes to bring into subjection to himself; and sin eagerly indulges the same wish. The former of these prescribes his own law to him; the latter also prescribes its law; and both of them employ their own military forces, that they severally have in the man, each to obtain the victory for himself.

From these explanations it will now appear what the phrases signify;

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- ‘With the mind to serve the law of God,’ is, with a mind consenting to the law of God, to perform its military services to that law, for the purpose of bringing man into subjection to God;
- ‘With the flesh, to serve the law of sin,’ is with the flesh assenting to the desires of sin, to render its military services to the law of sin, in order to bring man into captivity to that law and to subject him to sin.

The end, therefore, or the intention of the battle is, that man may be brought into subjection either to the law of God, or to the law of sin; that is, that he may walk either according to the flesh, or according to the mind.

The act tending to this end, is the waging of war, which is indeed actual hostility, and an inimical encounter between the parties; but it is also the employment of persuasion towards man, without whose assent neither party can obtain this its end. The mind, adverse to the flesh, persuades the will of man to do that which is holy, and just, and good, and to reject what is merely delectable. The flesh, repugnant to the mind, persuades the same human will to set aside and disregard that which is holy, and just, and good, and to embrace that which is capable of affording present delight and usefulness.

The effect produced by the mind on the will, is the volition of good and the hatred of evil; the effect which the flesh produces on the same will, is the volition of evil and the nolation of good. This is a change of the will, first to one party, and then to the other.

But the issue or result declares which of the parties in this man has produced the stronger and more powerful effect. But this is the result of the conflict, [as it is described in the twenty-third verse], *the non-performance of good, the non-omission of evil*, a token of the impotence of the mind, which commanded good to be done, and forbade the commission of evil, which approved of the performance of good, but disapproved of the perpetration of evil; and it is *the commission of what is evil, the omission of what is good*, the captivity of man under the law of sin, plainly demonstrating that, in this man, the party of sin and of the flesh is the more powerful of the two, the law of the mind fruitlessly striving against it.

The cause of this result is the weakness of the law, which has been debilitated by the flesh (Rom. viii. 3), and the force and pertinacious power of the flesh in this man, the effect of which is, that the man does not walk according to the law but according to the flesh, and does not march according to the law of the mind but according to that of the members.

But if to this conflict be added a stronger force of the Spirit of Christ, — who does not write the letter of the law on tables of stone, but impresses the love and fear of God on the fleshly tables of the heart, — then are we permitted not only to hope for a different result, but it is also given us assuredly to obtain a successful issue. This is indicated by the Apostle in Romans viii. 2: ‘For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the

law of sin and death.’ For it comes to pass, by means of the power of this Spirit, that the man, who had previously been ‘brought into captivity to the law of sin,’ is delivered from it, and ‘no longer walks after the flesh, but after the Spirit;’ that is, in his life, he follows the motion, [*actum*] the influence, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which motion, influence and guidance tend indeed to the same end as that to which the law of God, and the law of the mind, endeavoured to lead the man, but with an energy not equal; as not being able to complete their attempt, on account of the hindrance of the law of sin and of the members. This is likewise the cause why this man is said to walk not according to the law of the mind, but according to the Spirit, [a phrase frequently employed by the Apostle in Romans 8], and ‘to be led of the Spirit, and not to be under the law’ (Gal. v. 18). Not indeed because the man who lives according to the Spirit, does not live according to the law of God; but because the Spirit of Christ, and not the law, is the cause why the man regulates his life according to the law of God. For the law knows how to command, but cannot afford any assistance, — a doctrine which St Augustine frequently inculcates.

5. From these observations, it may now be evident, that even from this (25th) verse, nothing can be adduced in proof of the contrary opinion; but that the opinion which explains the passage as referring to a man under the law, is also established by this verse. For this man, *as he is under the law*, ‘with his mind serves the law of God;’ but, *as he is carnal*, ‘with his flesh he serves the law of sin,’ and he serves it so as to bring himself into captivity to the law of sin, — his mind and conscience vainly struggling against it.

From this verse nothing can be obtained in Confirmation of the contrary opinion.

Nor is it of the least service for the establishment of the other opinion, that the Apostle says, ‘I myself;’ for he had previously used the word ‘I’ in many instances in this chapter, even when he said, ‘Sin wrought in me all manner of concupiscence’ (verse 8); ‘for I lived,’ or I was alive, ‘without the law once; but, when the commandment came, I died’ (9); ‘I found the commandment to be unto death to me’ (10); ‘Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me’ (11), and other passages. But the Pronoun, *αυτος* [in our English version, translated ‘myself,’] which is an adjunct to the Pronoun ‘I,’ indicates that this Pronoun ‘I’ must be referred to the person about whom he had been previously treating. For it is the Demonstrative [Pronoun] of the nearest antecedent; as though he had said, ‘I am he about whom I have already been discoursing.’ This is likewise evident, because he concludes from the preceding verses, that the man whose character he took on him self to personate, (the prudence of [him who was under the influence of] the Holy Spirit requiring such personation), ‘with his mind serves the law of God, but with his flesh the law of sin.’ Let those things be taken into consideration which, in his Epistle, the Apostles writes concerning himself, and let them be compared with the particulars of the description here given; and it will then clearly appear, that the Apostle, in this passage, was by no

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means treating about himself, such as he was at that time.

3 Recapitulation

1. But now, if not disagreeable, let all these things be collected together, and in a compendious form be exhibited before the eyes, that they may at one glance be examined, and a judgment formed concerning them (Table 3.1).

The things which are thus opposed to each other must not be disjoined, while they are attributed to the man about whom the Apostle here treats; but they ought both to be united together, and jointly attributed to him. For this is required by [*ratio*] the analogy of the subject itself that is under the law and the dominion of sin

- *As he is under the law*, the particulars enumerated in the first column belong to him
- *As he is under the dominion of sin*, those in the second column are his attributes.

But the mode by which the Apostle joins these things with each other, and attributes them to this man in a conjoint form, is that of a *disjunctive* enunciation. This is indicated by the frequent use of the particle, $\delta\epsilon$ which is the post-positive of $\mu\epsilon\nu$ itself, or what immediately follows it. The one without the other does not render a sentence complete; but $\mu\epsilon\nu$ ‘indeed, truly,’ denotes that something will follow, and $\delta\epsilon$ ‘but, yet, then,’ that something has preceded, with which the former or the latter part of the sentence ought to be joined. This remark must be diligently observed in the consideration of Romans vii, as must likewise the following, — that both parts are not of the same order and dignity, but that the latter clause [in which $\delta\epsilon$ is used as the connecting word] is the chief and principal one, for whose explanation, illustration and amplification, the former clause [in which $\mu\epsilon\nu$ occurs] is employed; as a Proposition, or the first part of a sentence, is for its Rendition or concluding part. Those latter particulars, therefore, [which are here inserted in the second column], belong to the more ample explanation and proof of the proper cause, on account of which a man who is under the law cannot resist sin, but sin has the dominion over him. But the former particulars [enumerated in the first column] belong or conduce to the excusing of the law, lest the blame of this crime could be justly ascribed to it. From all which things united together the conclusion may be drawn that the man about whom the Apostle is treating, must, on account of the predominant flesh and of sin which dwells in his flesh, be still reckoned in the number of carnal persons. But, because he is under the law, and so under it that it has effected in him whatever is usually effected by the law in transferring and conducting man as a sinner to the grace

What distinctly belongs to the Man described in this Chapter, both as he is under the Law, and as he is carnal and the Slave of Sin.

3 Recapitulation

Table 3.1: THE MAN ABOUT WHOM THE APOSTLE IS HERE TREATING, SO FAR AS HE IS

UNDER THE LAW	CARNAL AND THE SLAVE OF SIN
He allows not, or approves not of, that which he does	<i>He does that which he allows not, or of which he disapproves</i>
He wills indeed that which is good	<i>But he does not what is good</i>
He hates evil	<i>And yet he does that which is evil</i>
He consents to the law of God that it is good	<i>Yet he does that which he would not</i>
He has it [in him] to will that which is good	<i>But he finds evil present with him, and he finds not [how] to perform what is good</i>
It is no longer himself that does evil	<i>But the evil is done by sin which dwelleth in him</i>
He truly delights in the law of God after the inward man	<i>But he has another law in his members</i>
According to the law of his mind he wages war with the law of his members	<i>But the law of his members wages war against the law of his mind, so as to bring the man into captivity to the law of sin</i>
This causes him to exclaim, Who shall deliver me	<i>From this misery, and the body of this death?</i>
With his mind, therefore, he serves the law of God	<i>But with his flesh he serves the law of sin</i>

of Christ, he must, [*propediem*, almost at any hour], speedily be taken out from the number of carnal persons, and placed in a state of grace; in which higher state, he will no longer be put to the necessity of fighting, under the auspices and guidance of the law, against the vigorous and lively ‘motions of sins;’ but, by the power of grace and under the guidance and influence of the Holy Spirit, he will contend against his crucified and mortified [*affectus*] inclinations, till he obtain over them, when they are nearly dead and buried, a complete victory.

The inconsistent state of a Man who is under the Law.

2. The man who will reflect upon this *inconsistent* state, if I may so denominate it, will easily perceive, that the things which the Apostle has here written, must be referred to this state. For, diligently, and as if purposely, he exercises caution over himself not to employ the word ‘Spirit’ in any passage in his description of this state; yet this word, the use of which he here so carefully avoids, is that which he employs in almost every verse of the next chapter (Rom. 8), and which is so familiar to this Apostle in all his epistles, as to seem to be perpetually before his eyes and his mind, especially when he is treating about the regenerate and their duty to God and their neighbour, and also

when he treats upon the contest which the pious still have with the flesh and the remains of sin. The thoughtful consideration of this single matter is able and ought to cause doubts in the minds of those who interpret this portion of holy writ as applicable to regenerate persons and those who are placed under grace, if they only be animated with a sincere desire of ascertaining the truth, and love the truth for its own sake, even when it does not agree with their own preconceived opinions.

3. I am also desirous that all men seriously consider how God leads us to faith, in his Son, and to the obedience of faith, and what means he uses to convert a sinner. We know that God employs his Holy Word to produce this effect; we know that this Word consists of two essential and integral parts, the Law and the Gospel; we know, also, that the Law must first be preached to a sinner, that he may understand and approve it, that he may explore and examine his life by it when it is known and approved, that, when such examination is completed, he may acknowledge himself to be a sinner, and by his demerits, deserving of damnation, that he may mourn and be sorrowful on account of sin, and may detest it, that he may understand himself to be in urgent need of a Deliverer, and that he may be instigated and compelled to seek Him.

The Manner in which God leads a Sinner to Penitence, Faith in Christ, and the Obedience of Faith.

To a man who is thus prepared by the Law, the grace of the Gospel must be announced, which, being manifested to the mind by the Holy Spirit, and by the same Spirit sealed on the heart, produces faith within us, by which we are united to Christ; that, holding communion with Him, we may obtain remission of sins in his name, and may draw from him the vivifying power of his Spirit. By this quickening power, the flesh is mortified with its affections and lusts, and we are regenerated to a new life, in which we not only *will* or resolve to bring forth the fruits of gratitude to God, but we are likewise *capable* to bring them forth, and *actually do so* by this same Spirit, ‘who worketh in us both *to will* and *to do*.’

Let any man now describe to me out of the Scriptures the proper effects which flow from the preaching of the Law, in the minds of those whom God has decreed to convert to a better life; and I will instantly present to him a man, such as he who is described to us by the Apostle, under his own person, in this chapter (Rom. vii).

But are these effects through the preaching of the law produced in this man, without the grace of Christ, and the operation of the Holy Spirit?

What man can have the audacity to affirm this, unless he be one of the prime defenders of Pelagian doctrine, He who, by the preaching of the Law, (the Holy Spirit blessing such preaching, and co-operating with it), is compelled to flee to the Grace of Christ, is not instantly, or at once, under Grace, or under the influence, guidance and government of the Spirit. For, ‘the Law is our schoolmaster [to bring us] unto Christ’ (Gal. iii. 24). ‘Christ is the end of the

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Law for righteousness to every one that believeth' (Rom. x. 4). 'By the Law is the knowledge of sin' (iii. 20).

This representation of it confirmed by St Augustine and Musculus. How far this is the Work of the Regenerating Spirit.

4. ST AUGUSTINE, when treating upon the use of the Law, says, in his *Reply to the two epistles of the Pelagians to Boniface*, 'The law, as a schoolmaster, leads and conducts a man to this grace of God, by terrifying him concerning his transgressions of the law, that [*quod*] something may be conferred on him which it was not able to bestow.' And in a subsequent passage, 'We do not, therefore, make void the Law through faith, but we establish the Law,' which, by terrifying men, leads them to faith. Therefore, 'because the law worketh wrath,' that grace may bestow, on the man who is thus terrified and [*converso*] turned to fulfill the righteousness of the law, the mercy of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is the Wisdom of God, and concerning whom it is written, *He beareth in his tongue Law and Mercy.*

- LAW, by which he may terrify;
- MERCY, by which He may afford relief;
- LAW by a servant;
- MERCY, by Himself etc., etc. (lib. 4, cap. 5).

Let St Augustine also be consulted, in his Treatise *On Corruption and Grace*, in the first chapter of which he speaks thus appropriately to the matter under discussion: 'The Lord himself has not only shown us from what evil we may turn aside, and what good we may perform, which the letter of the law alone is able to shew; but he also assists us, that we may turn aside from evil and may do good, which no one can do without the Spirit of grace. If this grace be wanting, the law is present for this purpose, — to bring us in guilty and to kill us, on which account, the Apostle says, *The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life* (2 Cor. iii. 6). He, therefore, who lawfully uses the law, learns in it evil and good; and, not confiding in his own [*virtute*] strength, he flees to grace, [*qua praestante*] by the aid of which he ceases from evil and does good. But what man thus flees to grace, except when *his steps are directed by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way?* (Psalm xxxvii. 23). And by this also, the act of desiring the assistance of grace is the beginning of grace.'

Consult also the Fifth chapter of the same Treatise, in which the following passage occurs: 'You are not willing to have your faults pointed out. You are unwilling that they should be smitten, and that you should feel useful grief, which may induce you to seek a physician. You are not desirous to have yourself shown to yourself, that when you perceive your own [mental] deformity you may be very importunate for a reformation of yourself, and may supplicate God not to suffer you to remain in this foul and deformed condition.'

And in the Sixth chapter, he says: 'Therefore, let the damnable origin be reprehended, that [*voluntas*] a WILLINGNESS for regeneration may arise out of

the sorrow consequent on such reprehension; yet, if he who is thus chastised be a son of the promise, that, when the noise of the correction sounds outwardly and the strokes of the whip are heard, God may work inwardly in him also to WILL by his secret inspiration.'

MUSCULUS says, in his *Common Places*, in the chapter *On Laws* (fol. 124), 'The law causes me not only to understand, but likewise with anguish and remorse of conscience to feel and experience that sin is in me. The proper effect of the law is, that it convicts us of being inexcusably guilty of sin, subjects us to the curse, and condemns us (Gal. iii), and when we are deeply affected with [*sensu*] the smart of sin and condemnation, it renders us, anxious and earnest in our desires for the grace of God. Hence, arises that of the Apostle, which is the subject of his investigation in Romans 7, and at the close of which he exclaims, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* THE GRACE OF GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

'But is this, therefore, the work of the regenerating Spirit?' *With regard to the* END, I confess that it is; but *with regard to the* EFFECT itself, I dare not make any assertion. For Mortification and Vivification, which, as integral parts, contain the whole of regeneration, are completed in us by our participation of the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. vi). In Romans viii. 15, the Apostle distinguishes between 'the Spirit of bondage to fear,' and 'the Spirit of adoption.' Many persons denominate the former of these, 'a legal Spirit,' and the latter 'the Spirit of the Gospel of Christ.' I, therefore, make the service of the Spirit of bondage to precede that of the Spirit of adoption, though both of them tend to one design. Whence, it appears that this my explanation of the seventh chapter is not contrary to the true doctrine *concerning the law and its use, and the necessity of the grace of Christ*; but that the Doctors of the Church, who give a different interpretation of it, have not reflected on this matter when they entered on an explanation of the chapter. For, since they teach, from the Scriptures, the very same thing as I suppose the Apostle here to make the subject of his investigation, we do not differ from each other in our opinion of doctrines, but only in this single circumstance, — that they do not think this passage relates to that head of doctrine, which, I affirm, is professedly treated in it: Yet, in this opinion, I do not stand alone, but I have many others with me, as we shall afterwards perceive.

5. Some one may here object,

that by this, my explanation, a three-fold state of man is laid down, when the Scriptures acknowledge but a two-fold state; and that three kinds of men are introduced, when no more than two are known to the Scriptures; — that is, the state of regeneration and that which precedes regeneration, believers and unbelievers, regenerate and unregenerate men, etc.

To this I reply,

To this it is objected that a three-fold State of Man is thus laid down. A Reply to this Objection.

3 Recapitulation

- a) that in my explanation three *consistent* states of men are not laid down, neither are there three distinct and perfectly opposite kinds of men; but that it teaches [*quantum*] how much the law has the power of effecting in a man, and how the same individual is compelled by the law to flee to the grace of Christ.
- b) I say that the state of the man described in this chapter is not a *consistent* one, but is rather a grade or step from the one to the other
 - from a state of *impiety and infidelity* to a state of *regeneration and grace*
 - from the *old state* in Adam to the *new state* in Christ.

According to this grade or step, the man is denominated by some persons *renascent*, [or in the article of being born again]. And, truly, the distance of the one of these states from the other is far too great, for a man to be able to pass from one to the other without some intermediate steps.

- c) I deny that there is any absurdity in laying down a three-fold state of man, regard being had to the different times; that is, a state *before* or *without the law*, one *under the law*, and another *under grace*. For the Apostolical Scriptures make mention of such a three-fold state in the two chapters now under consideration, and in Romans vi and vii, and Galatians iv and v.

ST AUGUSTINE says, in his book, *The Exposition of certain Propositions in the Epistle to the Romans* (cap. 3), 'Therefore we distinguish the four [*gradus*] conditions of man, into that BEFORE *the law*, UNDER *the law*, *under grace*, and *in peace*. In the state *before the law*, we follow the lusts of the flesh; *under the law*, we are drawn along with them; *under grace*, we neither follow those lusts, nor are drawn by them; *in peace*, there is no lusting of the flesh. *Before the law*, therefore, we do not fight; *under the law*, we fight,' etc., etc.

Consult also BUCER, in his commentary on this passage. For he lays down a three-fold man,

- i. a profane man who does not yet believe in God,
- ii. a holy man who loves God, but who is weak to prevail against sin, and
- iii. lastly, a man furnished with a stronger portion of the Spirit of Christ, so that he is able, not only to repress and condemn the flesh, but likewise to live, in reality, the life of God, with pleasure, and with confirmed and perpetual [*studio*] diligence.

Let, therefore, the whole of his commentary on this passage be perused, and it will appear that, with respect to the substance of the matter, the difference is very slight between his explanation of it, and that which I

have now given. This I shall also clearly prove in the following chapter, by passages cited from the same commentary.

But let us see whether the Scriptures themselves do not, in many places, propose three kinds of men, and give us a description of a three-fold state. In Rev. iii. 15, 16, some persons are described, as being neither *hot* nor *cold*, but *lukewarm*. Christ says that he came not to call to repentance 'the righteous,' that is, those who esteemed themselves as such, but 'sinners,' that is, those who owned themselves, or who, on his preaching, would own themselves to be of that description (Matt. ix. 13). Christ calls to himself those who are fatigued, weary, heavy-laden, and oppressed with the burden of their sins (Matt. xi. 28), but drives away from him those who are proud and puffed up with arrogance on account of their own righteousness (Luke xviii. 9). 'Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, *We see*; therefore, your sin remaineth' (John ix. 41). In the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, is intimated to us a three-fold description of men: One kind in the Pharisee, Two kinds in the Publican, one *before* his justification, the other *after* it. But who can enumerate all the similar instances, Indeed, such enumeration is unnecessary. It is rather a matter of surprise, that, as the books of our divines are filled with such distinctions, they did not occur to their minds when meditating on this passage, in which this matter [of the different conditions or states of man] is professedly treated.

4 IV. The connection between the seventh and the eighth chapters

1. But I may now be permitted to confirm this my interpretation from some of the first of the verses of the next chapter, provided they be diligently compared with those in the Seventh chapter.
2. For, in the *First Verse*, a Conclusion is inferred from verses of the preceding chapter, which is agreeable and accommodated to the principal design proposed by the Apostle through the whole of this Epistle. The words are these: ‘There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’

That this verse contains a conclusion, is evident from the illative particle ‘therefore,’ and indeed a Conclusion not deduced from the former part of the last verse in the seventh chapter, but from the entire investigation, which consists of these two parts:

Men do not obtain righteousness, and power to conquer sin and to live in a holy manner, by means either of the law of nature or that of Moses; but, through the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ, those very blessings are gratuitously bestowed on them who work not, but believe on Christ.

But these two things, JUSTIFICATION which consists of remission of sins, and THE SPIRIT [*sanctificationis*] OF HOLINESS by which believers are enabled to overcome sin and to live in a holy manner, are parts of the gracious covenant into which God has entered with us in Christ: ‘I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, etc.; for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more’ (Heb. viii. 10, 12). Therefore, when the Apostle had proceeded so far with the proof of this thesis (having in the first five chapters treated *on righteousness and remission of sins*, and in the Sixth and Seventh chapters, *on the power to conquer sin and live in a holy manner*), he now infers this conclusion: ‘There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’

The emphasis of the conclusion lies in these words: ‘Who are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,’ to the exclusion of those who are under the law, and for whom is prepared certain condemnation, as

The Truth of the interpretation of the Seventh Chapter, as it has been so far deduced by the Author, is proved from some of the early Verses of the Eighth Chapter when compared with those which precede them.

The First Verse.

4 The Connection between the seventh and eighth Chapters

being persons out of Christ, and subjected to the dominion of sin — as if the Apostle had said,

From all these things, therefore, it is apparent that condemnation impends over all those who are under the law, because they neither perform the law, nor are able to perform it; but that freedom from condemnation granted only *to those who are in Christ, and who walk according to the Spirit.*

But that the emphasis lies in these words: ‘Those who are in Christ Jesus,’ to the exclusion of the others, is apparent,

- a) From the fact, that this very part is repeated. though in other words, which are these, ‘who walk after the Spirit.’
- b) Because the exclusion of other persons is openly placed in the repetition, ‘who walk not after the flesh.’
- c) From the subject, itself, of the Apostle’s investigation, which is this: ‘The Gospel and not the Law, is the power of God to salvation to those who believe and do not work.’ Wherefore, in order that the Conclusion may correspond with the Proposition, it ought to be read and understood with the opposition here produced.
- d) From other conclusions in this Epistle, inferred in similar cases: ‘therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law’ (Rom. iii. 28). Also, in the twenty-seventh verse of the same chapter, ‘Where is boasting then, It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No; but by the law of faith.’ ‘But it was written for us also, to whom it shall be imputed,’ that is, to those who ‘believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead’ (iv. 24). And it appears that these things are spoken in opposition, to the complete exclusion of another opposite, thus: ‘But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness’ (iv. 5). ‘For the promise was not made to Abraham through the law, but through the righteousness of faith’ (13). ‘Ye are become dead to the law, that ye should be married to Christ’ (vii. 4). As, likewise, in the passage at present under consideration, ‘There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,’

From these remarks, it is apparent that the words after the flesh, but after the Spirit,’ do not belong to the description either of the subject or of the attribute of the preceding conclusion, as if *they* were described *who* are in Christ, but that they are the consequent or the antecedent itself of the same conclusion, though enunciated in a form somewhat different. This is likewise evident from the very words; for the Pronoun, *τοις*, ‘those,’ which is properly subservient to this matter, is not used in this clause.

3. The same thing is taught in the second verse, in which these two things are united, 'the law of the Spirit of life IN CHRIST JESUS,' that have reference to these two things in the preceding verse, 'THOSE IN CHRIST JESUS,' and walking after the Spirit.' But let us inspect the verse itself, which reads thus: 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.'

Before we compare this verse with that which preceded it, we must give a preliminary explanation of the phrases used in it. 'The law of the Spirit' is, therefore, called [*jus*] the right, the power, and the force or virtue of the Holy Spirit; for the Apostle continues in the mode of speaking which he had previously adopted in the seventh chapter, where he attributes a law to *sin*, to *the mind* and to *the members*, that is, the power and force of commanding and impelling. The Spirit is here called that 'of life,' that is, 'the vivifying Spirit' by a phrase familiar to the Hebrews, who employ the genitive cases of Substantives instead of Adjectives; as 'the city of God,' 'the man of God,' 'the God of Justice,' etc. But the Spirit is thus designated in opposition or distinction to the law of the letter, or the letter of the law, which is weak for the work of vivification, and knows nothing more than to kill; according to this passage, 'The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life' (2 Cor. iii. 6), and according to this: 'for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law' (Gal. iii. 21).

But this 'law of the Spirit of life' is said to be 'in Christ Jesus,' not because it is only in the person of Christ Jesus, but because it can be obtained in Jesus Christ alone; according to this declaration: 'Believers receive the Spirit, not by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith' (Gal. iii. 2, 5). This phrase, 'in Christ,' is very often used in the same manner in the apostolical writings. But that the phrase is to be received in this sense also in the present passage, is manifest,

- a) From the scope or design of the Apostle, which is to teach, that not through the law, but through the grace of Christ, believers obtain righteousness and the Holy Spirit, by whose power they may be enabled to have dominion over sin, and to yield their members instruments of righteousness unto God.
- b) From comparing this passage with the first verse. For, 'to those who are in Christ Jesus,' is attributed freedom from condemnation, because 'the vivifying Spirit in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death.'
- c) Because this 'vivifying Spirit' does not 'deliver from the law of sin and death,' except as it is communicated 'to those who are in Christ Jesus.'

But to this 'Spirit of life' is attributed that 'it makes *those who are in Christ Jesus* free from the law of sin and death;' that is, from the power and tyranny of sin reigning, and killing by means of the law. This deliverance or emancipa-

4 The Connection between the seventh and eighth Chapters

tion is opposed to 'the captivity unto the law of sin,' of which mention is made in Romans vii. 23, and to 'the body of death' which is mentioned in verse the twenty-fourth. From this 'law of sin,' and from this 'body of death,' a man who is under the law could be delivered neither through the law of Moses, nor through 'the law of the mind' which 'consents to the law of God.' But from this is also most admirably proved the Conclusion deduced in the first verse from those which preceded it [in the Seventh chapter]. For 'deliverance from the law of sin and death' is opposed to 'condemnation;' and, therefore, when the former of those is laid down, the latter is removed.

This deliverance is attributed 'to those who are in Christ Jesus,' and 'who walk according to the Spirit,' from which it follows, that they are made free from condemnation. But the reason why this deliverance is attributed to that subject, arises from the cause of deliverance, that is, the vivifying Spirit, which Spirit, as it exists in Christ and is to be obtained in him, is likewise in 'those who are in Christ Jesus.' Wherefore, it is not at all wonderful, that this Spirit exercises his own proper force and efficacy in those persons in whom He dwells; and since this force or virtue is so peculiar to Him, that He has it not in common with the law of Moses, it follows from this, that those only 'who are in Christ Jesus' and are partakers of his Spirit, or that those who, being in Christ Jesus, are partakers of his Spirit, are delivered from condemnation, while those who are under the law remain under condemnation, as being those who are overcome by 'the law of the members,' and have been 'brought into captivity under the law of sin,' no successful resistance being offered by 'the law of the mind,' which 'consents to the law of God.'

We have already said that, from a comparison of this verse with the twenty-third verse of the preceding chapter, an unanswerable argument is deducible in proof — that, in the two verses now specified, the Apostle is not treating about the same man; but that, in the twenty-third verse of the Seventh chapter, he treats about a man who is under the law, and in this second verse, about one who is under grace; because the man described in the former of these verses is '*brought into captivity* under the law of sin and death,' and this by 'the law of the members,' 'the law of the mind' offering fruitless resistance; but the man who is mentioned in the second verse, by the power of the life-giving Spirit, whom he has obtained in Christ Jesus, is '*made free* from the same law of sin and death.'

*The Third Verse.
A Comparison of
the Former Part
of it with Romans
vii. 5 and 14, and
of the Latter Part
of it with the
Sixth Verse of the
same Chapter.*

4. Let us consider the third verse, in which the same thing may appear still more plainly to us; for in it the cause is explained why men who are under the law, cannot be made free from the dominion and condemnation of sin; but it is shown that this is obtained for them and effected by Christ. But the cause is this, because deliverance from the law of sin and death, or freedom from condemnation, could not be obtained except by the condemnation of sin, that is, except sin had been previously despoiled of the [assumed] right which it

possessed, and of its power which it exercised over men who were subject to it. But it possessed the right and power of exercising dominion and of killing. But sin could not be despoiled of its right, and deprived of its power, by the law; for the law was rendered 'weak, through the flesh,' for the performance of such an arduous service. When God saw this state of things, and was unwilling the unhappy race of men should be perpetually detained under the tyranny and condemnation of sin, 'he sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and indeed for sin,' that is, for destroying it, and he condemned sin in the flesh of his Son, who bore sin in his own body [on the tree] and took away from it that authority over us which it possessed, and weakened its powers.

From these remarks it appears that this passage, which has hitherto been accounted one of great difficulty, is plain and perspicuous, provided each part of it be arranged aright, in the following manner: 'For God, having sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; which was a thing impossible to the law, because it was weakened through the flesh.' For 'that which the law could not do' is, 'the condemnation of sin in the flesh?'

Hence it is manifest, that this verse briefly explains the whole cause why sin reigns unto death over men who are under the law, and why it possesses neither the authority nor the power of reigning over 'those who are in Christ Jesus' and under grace. This may be briefly shown from a comparison of those things which had been previously said, with this verse. For these words, 'what was impossible to the law because it was weakened by the flesh,' agree with the following declaration, contained in the fifth verse of the preceding chapter: 'When we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which are by the law, did work in our members;' and with these words in the fourteenth verse, 'We know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal;' they also agree with the eighteenth verse, 'I know that in me, [that is, in my flesh], dwelleth no good thing.'

But these words, 'God, in the flesh of his Son, condemned sin,' agree with what is said in the sixth verse, of the preceding chapter: 'But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held;' that is, sin being condemned which held us bound and in subjection to it. But, in this passage, the cause is more fully explained, that in the flesh of Christ such condemnation was effected.

The Fourth Verse, and a Comparison of it with Romans vii. 4. A Paraphrastical Recapitulation of those things which are taught in the First Four Verses of the Eighth Chapter, and their Connection with the preceding Chapter.

5. From these observations is deduced the meaning of the fourth verse, plainly agreeing with those which preceded. It is this, after it had come to pass, that sin was condemned in the flesh of the Son of God, the right or authority of the law was completed and consummated in those who are in Christ Jesus, and who walk after the Spirit; so that they are no longer under the guidance and government of the law, but under the guidance of Him who has delivered us from sin, and who has claimed us for his own people.

This is plainly expressed by the Apostle, in the fourth verse of the preceding chapter, in these words: 'Ye also are become dead to the law in the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.' For these phrases agree with each other: 'Ye are become dead to the law,' and, 'the right or authority of the law is fulfilled or completed in you.' And, 'in the body of Christ ye are become dead to the law,' is the same as, 'sin was condemned in the flesh of Christ, that the right or authority of the law might be fulfilled in us.' But when the right of the law is completed and consummated by the condemnation of sin which was effected in the flesh of Christ, we belong or are married to another, that is, the right is transferred from the law to Christ, that we may be no longer under the law, but under Christ, and may live under grace and the guidance of his Spirit.

For these words, 'that the right or authority of the law might or may be fulfilled in us,' must not be understood as if, when sin had been condemned in the flesh of Christ, the right or authority of the law was still to be completed; but that after the condemnation of sin in the flesh of Christ, the right of the law was actually fulfilled. Several forms of speech, similar to this, are used in this manner in the Scriptures. For instance: 'All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet (Matt. i. 22): 'He came and dwelt in a city called *Nazareth*, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, *He shall be called a NAZARENE*' (ii. 23). 'He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephtholim, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, *The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephtholim, etc., light is sprung up to them who sat in the region and shadow of death*' (iv. 13–16). 'He cast out the spirits With His word, and healed all that were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, *Himself took our infirmities,*' etc. (viii. 16, 17). See also Matt. xii. 17; xiii. 35; xxvi. 56. In all these examples, the phrase, 'that it might be fulfilled,' evidently means that *the prediction was actually fulfilled by those acts* which are mentioned in the several passages. This is also signified by a phrase different from the preceding, in Matt. xxvii. 9, 'THEN WAS FULFILLED that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet.' It is lawful also to change the mode of speech in this verse (Rom. viii. 4), into another [*consimile*] exactly of the same import: 'Then was fulfilled the right or authority of the law in us.' In addition to

these, consult Matt. xxvii. 35; Luke xxi. 22; John xiii. 18; xvii. 12; xviii. 9; and innumerable other passages.

From this explication it is apparent, that this portion of Holy Writ (Rom. viii. 1–4), is plain and perspicuous, though, without this interpretation, it is encompassed with much obscurity, as almost all interpreters have confessed, while they have laboured hard to explain it.

We will now, by permission, compress all these remarks into a small compass, and briefly recapitulate them; what I have advanced will then become far more evident. Let us do this in the following manner:

Since, therefore, we have already seen, that men under the law are held captive under the dominion and tyranny of sin, we may easily conclude from this, that those only who are in Christ Jesus, and who walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh, are free from all condemnation; because the law, the right, the power, the force or virtue of the vivifying Spirit, which is and can be obtained in Jesus Christ alone, has liberated [*tales*] persons of this description from the law, the power and this force of sin and death, from the empire and dominion of sin, and of its condemnation. Christ Jesus could lawfully do this by his Spirit, as being the person in whose flesh sin was condemned, that it has no longer any right, neither can have any, over those who are Christ's; in which flesh, indeed, He was sent by his Father, because this very thing was impossible to the law, weakened as it was through the flesh. And thus it has come to pass, that the right of the law, which it had over us when we were still under the law, is completed or fulfilled in persons of this description, who have become Christ's people through faith, that they might hereafter live, be influenced, and governed by his grace and according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. From these things we may certainly conclude that sin cannot have dominion over them, and therefore, that they are able to yield their members instruments of righteousness to God, as those who have been translated from the death of sin to the life of the Spirit.'

But these topics the Apostle pursues as far as the sixteenth verse of this Eighth chapter, in a manner accommodated to the same scope or design as we have hitherto pointed out; and he seems always mindful of the exhortation which he had given in Romans vi. 12, 13; from the conjoint reason in which he descends into the succeeding long investigation.

These observations, however, may suffice, lest we be too operose in demonstrating a matter that is so plain and perspicuous.

Part II
Second Part

5 The opinion which is to be corroborated by testimonies

We will now approach to the Second Part of our Proposition, which we have judged it right to treat for the purpose of making it evident to all men, that the opinion which I defend is not of recent growth, neither has it been fabricated by my brain, nor borrowed from some heretic, but that it is very ancient, and approved by a great part of the Doctors of the Primitive Church, and that, besides, it has never been so far rejected, by those who have given a different interpretation to the passage, as to induce them to judge it worthy of being branded with the black mark of heresy.

This Opinion, which explains Romans 7, as relating not to a Man under Grace, but to one who is placed under the Law, and to one who is not yet regenerated by the Spirit of Christ, was never yet condemned in the Church of Christ, as heretical, but has always had some defenders among the Doctors of the Church.

6 The most ancient and most respectable of the Christian fathers approve of the interpretation which we give to this chapter

1. IRENAEUS

Irenaeus thus cites part of this chapter in lib. 3, cap. xx, ‘On this account, therefore, he, who through the virgin is EMMANUEL, *God with us*, the Lord himself, is the sign of our salvation; because He was the Lord who saved them, as through themselves [*non habebant salvari*] they possessed not the means of being saved. On account of this also, when St Paul is shewing the weakness of man, he says, *I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing*, thus intimating that the blessing of salvation is not from us, but from God. And again, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* He then infers a Deliverer, *the Grace of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Irenaeus

In this quotation, [when referring to St Paul’s declaration], he does not say, ‘a regenerate Man,’ ‘a believer,’ or Christian,’ but simply ‘*a man,*’ under which appellation, neither the Scriptures nor the Fathers are accustomed to speak of one who is a Christian, a believer, and a regenerate man.

2. TERTULLIAN

For though he denied that in His flesh dwelt any good thing, [*sed*] yet it was according to the *law of the letter* in which he was; but according to the *law of the Spirit*, with which he connects us, he delivers from the weakness of the flesh. He says, ‘For the law of the Spirit of life hath manumitted thee from the law of sin and death.’ For though he seems to dispute on the part of Judaism, yet he directs to us the integrity and plenitude [*disciplinarum*] of instructions, on account of whom, as labouring ‘in the law through the flesh, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.’ (*On Chastity*, cap. 17).

Tertullian

In this sentence, Tertullian openly affirms, that the passage must be explained concerning ‘a man who is under the law of the letter.’ Nor is it a very great objection if any one assert, that this book was written by him while he was in a heresy; for on this point he was not heretical, and the opinion, it is apparent, had then obtained, that this chapter was to be understood in this manner.

6 Christian Fathers Approve of our Interpretation

3. ORIGEN

Origen

But with respect to what he says, 'but I am carnal, sold under sin,' on this occasion, as a teacher of the Church, he takes upon himself the personation of the weak, on which account he has also said in another passage, 'to the weak became I also as weak.' Therefore, in this passage St Paul is made 'a carnal man and sold under sin,' to those who are the weak, (that is, to the carnal), and who are sold-under sin, and he speaks those things which it is their practice to utter under the pretext either of excuse or of accusation. Speaking, therefore, as in their person, he says, 'but I am carnal, sold under sin,' that is, living according to the flesh, and reduced, [as a servant] by purchase, to the power of sin, lust and concupiscence; 'for that which I do, I allow not,' etc.

And he (that is, *Paul the carnal man*) here says, 'now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.' But in other passages *Paul the spiritual man* says, 'I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.' Therefore, as he thus ascribes his labours, not to himself, but to the grace of God which worked in him; so does that carnal man attribute the evil works, not to himself, but to sin that dwelleth and worketh in him. On this account he says, 'now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me; for in me, (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing.' For Christ does not yet dwell in him, neither in his body yet the temple of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, this man whose character is personated is not in every respect averse from good things, but in purpose and in will he begins to seek after good things. But he cannot yet obtain such things [*in rebus*] in reality and in works. For there is a certain infirmity of this kind in *those who receive the beginnings of conversion*, that when they truly will instantly to do every thing that is good, the effect does not immediately follow the will (*On Romans 7*).

4. CYPRIAN

Cyprian

When treating upon the contest between the flesh and the Spirit, in his Sixth *Discourse On the Lord's Prayer*, as well as in his pamphlet *On the Celibacy of the Clergy*, Cyprian does not cite Romans vii, but he quotes Gal. v. 17, 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh,' etc. But that he understood Romans 7, to relate not only to the indwelling of sin, but also to its dominion, is evident from his *Prologue concerning the Cardinal Works of Christ*, in which, among other remarks, the following occurs:

If I do not know who it is that inscribed this law in my members that it may, with such violent domination, oppress the Spirit, and that the better and more worthy nature may succumb to the worse, I must patiently endure it if I do not understand the Almighty Operator of the universe.

He adds, in a subsequent passage of the same prologue:

It is difficult to understand wherefore this law of sin, in this and in similar individuals, oppresses the law of righteousness, and wherefore weak and enervated reason so miserably falls, when it is able to stand; especially when this defect depends on the sentence of damnation, and the ancient transgression has obtained this inevitable punishment.'

5. CHRYSOSTOM

When treating professedly on this portion of holy writ and explaining it, in his *Comment on Romans 7*, Chrysostom, after confirming what he had advanced in the preceding verses, expresses himself in the following manner:

Chrysostom

Therefore, Paul subjoined this assertion, 'but I am carnal, sold under sin.' Thus describing a man who lives *under* the law and *before* it. Therefore, sin itself is adverse to the law of nature. For this is what he says, 'Warring against the law of my mind.' It also imposes on the law of nature a universal contest and warfare, when it afterwards draws up in battle array the forces of sin. For the Mosaic law was lastly added [*ex abundantia*] beyond what was necessary. But, though the former law teaches indeed those things which ought to be done, and though the latter unites in extolling them; yet neither the one nor the other has performed any execution in this battle against sin. So great is the tyranny of sin, so wonderfully prevailing and overcoming! This is likewise intimated by St Paul, when, after announcing the conflict of opposing and predominant sin, he says: 'But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.' For he does not simply say, 'conquering me,' but 'rendering me a captive to the law of sin.' Neither does he say, 'bringing me into captivity to the impulse of the flesh or of carnal nature,' but 'bringing me into captivity to the law of sin,' that is, to the tyranny and power of sin.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Do you here behold how amazingly great is the tyranny of wickedness, and how it also overcomes *the mind* which 'finds a condelectation, or joint delight, in the law of God?' For he says,

It is not that any one says I hate the law of God or am averse to it, and am brought into captivity to sin. For I find a condelectation in the law, I consent to it, and flee to it.

Yet it was not able to save him when he fled *to it*. But Christ has saved him, when he was fleeing, *from it*. Here you acknowledge the great excellence of grace.

And in his *Commentary on Romans* viii. 9, he says:

After sin has been destroyed, this difficult warfare is terminated by the grace of the Holy Spirit, through which the contest is now become easy to us. For this

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grace first Crowns us [as Victors], and then leads us forth to battle honourably attended by numerous auxiliary forces.

6. BASIL THE GREAT

Basil the Great

But we will now adduce what he has said in another passage, when delivering the same doctrine, in a manner far more objurgatory: 'For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not,' etc. And, prosecuting this speculation in more particulars, *that it is impossible for him who is held captive by sin to serve the Lord*, he manifestly points out to us our Deliverer from this tyranny, while he says, 'O wretched man that I am I who shall deliver me from this body of death, I give thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord,' etc. (*On Baptism*, lib. 1, fol. 409).

It is, therefore quite necessary, both from the things already related, and from others of a similar kind, (if we have not received the blessing of God in vain), that we be FIRST delivered from [*dominio*] *the power of the Devil, who leads the man that is detained in captivity by sin to [the commission of] those evils which he would not*, and THEN, having denied all things present, and our own self, and having left all kindred feeling for this life, that we become the Lord's disciples, as he hath himself said, 'If any man will come to me, let him deny himself,' etc. (*ibid.*)

This is what he who is unwillingly drawn by sin ought to know, that he is governed by another sin pre-existing in himself, which while he [*ultra*] willingly serves, with regard to other things he is led by it even to those which he does not will. As it is said in Romans vii, 'For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin,' etc., quoted as far as the seventeenth verse, 'but sin that dwelleth in me (*Summary of Morals*, Sum. 23, cap. I, fol. 477).

The spirit or mind, which [*patitur*] is the patient bearer of the dominion of the affections or inclinations, is not permitted by them to be free to [do] those things which it wills, according to the speculation of the Apostle already related, who said, 'but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I' (*Compendium of Questions explained*, Quest. 16, fol. 563).

'Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,' God himself permitting even this to befall us for our good, if by any means the mind, through those things which it reluctantly suffers, may be brought to understand that which has the dominion over it; and if, knowing itself, that it unwillingly serves sin, it recover from the snare of the Devil, and seek for the mercy of God which is prepared to receive those who are legitimately penitent (*ibid.*)

7. THEODORET

Theodoret

But I am carnal.] He introduces a man before [he has obtained] grace, who is

beset with motions and perturbations of mind. For he denominates that man carnal who has not yet obtained spiritual grace (*On Romans* 7).

For what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do.] The law beautifully effects one thing, that is, it teaches what is evil, and induces a hatred of it on the mind. But these words, 'I would not,' and 'I hate,' signify weakness, and not necessity. For we do not sin, as being impelled by necessity or by some force; but, being enticed by pleasure, we do those things which we abhor as wicked and flagitious deeds (*ibid.*).

I delight in the law of God after the inward man.] He has called the mind 'the inward man' (*ibid.*).

But I see another law in my members, warring, etc.] He bestows on sin the appellation of 'the law of sin.' It exerts its operation when the corporeal perturbations of the mind [*exiliunt*] are in lively motion; but, on account of that supineness with which the mind has invested itself from the beginning, it is unable to restrain them. Though the mind has cast away its own liberty, yet it has patience enough to serve them. But though the mind thus serves them, yet it hates servitude; and commends him who brings an accusation against servitude. After the Apostle had discoursed on all these topics, that he might show what sort of people we were before grace, and our condition after grace, and having taken on himself the personation of those who, before grace, had been besieged and encompassed by sin; therefore, as though he was completely surrounded by a mass of enemies, and led away into captivity and compelled to become a slave, and seeing no aid from any other quarter, he grievously groans and laments; he shows that help could not be afforded by the law, and he cries out, 'O wretched man that I am!' (*ibid.*).

There is therefore now no condemnation, etc.] For the perturbations of our mind do not overcome us who are now unwilling, because we have accepted the grace of the Divine Spirit (*On Romans* 8).

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, etc.] As he called sin 'the law of sin,' so does he call the vivifying Spirit 'the law of the Spirit.' he says, that the grace of this Spirit, through faith in Jesus Christ, has endowed thee with a two-fold liberty; for it has not only broken the power of sin, but it has also destroyed the tyranny of death (*ibid.*).

8. CYRIL

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, etc.] *Cyril* Therefore, when the Only-begotten became man for us, the law of sin was indeed abolished in the flesh; and our affairs were brought back again that they may return to their first origin. For death, corruption, pleasures and other lusts prevailed, which, having corruption as their assistant, committed depredations on the weak and infirm mind. (*Against Julian*, lib. 3, fol. 184).

So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the

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law of sin. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, etc., quoting the whole passage down to the 5th verse.] For the flesh and the spirit manifestly fight the one against the other; that is, carnal prudence and the motions [*insitarum*] of innate lusts war against [*virtus*] the power of life according to the Spirit. Though the Divine Law urges us that we ought to choose the good, yet [*concupiscentia*] the desire of the flesh is born, towards that which is contrary. But now that is loosened which hindered, and the law of sin is weakened; but the law of the Spirit has prevailed. On what account, 'For God hath sent his own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin, that He might condemn sin in the flesh.' Now, in what manner was not the incarnation of the WORD exceedingly useful, For even 'our sin is here condemned in the flesh.' But if the WORD had not been made flesh, our affairs would have remained without any amendment, and we should now be serving in the flesh the law of sin, no one having abolished it within us (*On the True Faith, to the Queens*, lib. i, fol. 283).

We confess, therefore, that, by Adam's personal transgression of the law, the human substance has been corrupted; and that, by the pleasures of the flesh, and those motions which are so pleasing to our nature, our understanding is oppressed as by the domination of a tyrant. Wherefore it was necessary for our salvation, who are sojourners on earth, that the WORD OF GOD should become man, and [*faceret propriam*] He should take human flesh upon himself as his own, given up though it was to corruption, and sickly through the allurements of pleasure; and that, as He is the Life of all, He should indeed destroy its corruption, but restrain its innate motions, that is, those which [*praecipitabant*] impelled us headlong to vices and pleasures; for in this manner it was necessary that offenses should be mortified in our flesh. But we recollect that the blessed Paul denominates *the voluptuous motions which art planted within us*, 'the law of sin.' Wherefore, because human flesh became [*propria*] a property of the WORD, it has now ceased to yield to corruption. And because He knew no sin, as God who united Him to Himself, and, as I have already said, who made [human nature] a property [of the WORD], it has now ceased to be sick with vices and pleasures. Neither did the only-begotten Son of God perform this for Himself, (for He is the Word which always exists), but He undoubtedly did it for us. For if we are alike [*subjecti*] brought into captivity through Adam's transgression of the law, therefore the blessings which are in Christ will descend upon us, and which are incorruption and the destruction of sins (*First Epistle to Successus*).

9. MACARIUS THE EGYPTIAN

Macarius the Egyptian

Adam having transgressed the command of God, and having obeyed the impious serpent, sold himself to the Devil; and thus wickedness invested his mind, that excellent creature, which God had formed after his own image, as the Apostle likewise says: 'Having spoiled principalities and powers, and

triumphed over them in his cross.' For the Lord came on this account, that he might expel them, [the principalities and powers], and might receive his own house and his proper temple, which is MAN. The mind, therefore, is called 'the body of darkness and of wickedness,' so long as it has within itself the darkness of sin; because it lives there in a wicked world of darkness, and is there detained captive. As Paul likewise, when giving it the appellation of 'the body of sin and death,' says 'that the body of sin might be destroyed.' And again, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' On the contrary, the mind that has believed in God, is both delivered from the mortified sin of a life of darkness, and has received the light of the Holy Spirit as its life; living in which, from that time it perseveres; because it is there governed by the Light Divine (*Homily 1*).

From this, it is evident, that Macarius understood this passage, as referring to a man who was subjected to the spirit of darkness, the slave of sin, and the captive of Satan, and who, not being yet dead to sin, has not received the light of the Holy Spirit, that is, who is not yet regenerated by the Spirit of Christ.

10. DAMASCENUS

In the Fourth book of his *Orthodox Faith* (cap. 23), he explains this matter very satisfactorily; wherefore, it will not be considered irksome, if at greater length we transcribe his opinion in his own words, as they have been rendered by his Latin translator:

Damascenus

The law of God, when coming to our mind, attracts it to itself, and stimulates our consciences. But our conscience is also called 'the Law of our mind.' But the suggestion [maligni] of the Devil, that is, the law of sin, when coming to the members of the flesh, also commits itself, through the flesh, to us. For, after we have once voluntarily transgressed the law of God, and have admitted the suggestion of the Devil, we have granted entrance to him, being brought into captivity by our own selves to sin: Whence our body is promptly led on to commit sin. Therefore, the odour and feeling of sin is said to be inherent to our body, that is, the lust and pleasure of the body, 'the law in the members of our flesh.' Therefore, 'the law of the mind,' that is, the conscience, feels a sort of condelectation in the law of God, that is, in the commandment which it really wills. But 'the law of sin,' that is, the suggestion through the law which is in the members, that is, the concupiscence, the inclination and motion of the body, by means of the irrational part of the soul also 'wars against the law of my mind,' that is, my conscience, and brings me, consenting to the law of God and not fulfilling it, yet not desiring sin, into captivity, according to contradiction through the enticement of pleasure and the lust of the body, and the brute part of the soul which is devoid of reason; as I have before said, it causes me to err, and persuades me to serve sin. 'But what was impossible to the law, in that the law was rendered weak through the flesh, God, sending

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his own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin' (for he assumed *flesh*, but by no means *sin*), 'condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' For 'the Spirit strives with our infirmity,' and affords strength to 'the law of the mind' in our souls, against 'the law which is in our members.'

11. THEOPHYLACT

Theophylact

He says, 'I am carnal,' that is, human nature universally, — both that part of it in existence before the enactment of the law, and that at the time of the giving of the law, — had a numerous multitude [*affectus*] of passions associated with it. For we not only became mortal through Adam's transgression of the law, but human nature, being 'sold under sin,' receives likewise corrupt inclinations, being evidently subjected to the authority and domination of sin, so that it cannot raise its head (*On Romans* 7).

This weakness, therefore, the law could not cure, though it dictated what ought to be done, but when Christ came, He healed it. This then is the scope or design of those things which the Apostle has said, or will yet say, — to shew that human nature has endured those things which are immedicable, and that it cannot be restored to soundness by any other than by Christ, and by Him alone (*ibid.*).

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?] The law of nature was not able, the written law could not; but the tyranny of sin conquered both of them. Whence, therefore, is the hope of salvation, etc. (*ibid.*).

I yield thanks to God through Jesus Christ.] For he has performed those things which the law was unable to do. For he has delivered me from weakness of body, inspiring into it strength and consolation, that it may no longer be oppressed by the tyranny of sin.

12. AMBROSE

Ambrose

Whether St Ambrose, or some other person, was the author or the interpolator of those *Commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans*, which generally pass under his name, the following are some of his remarks on the Seventh chapter:

That he is sold under sin, is that he derives his origin from Adam, who first sinned, and by his own transgression rendered himself subject to sin, as Isaiah says, 'For your iniquities have ye sold yourselves' (1. 1). For Adam first sold himself; and by this act, all his seed was subjected to sin. Wherefore man is too full of weakness to observe the precepts of the law, unless he be strengthened by divine aids. Hence arises that which he says, 'The law is spiritual, but I am carnal,' etc.; that is, the law is strong, and just, and faultless; but man is frail, and subjugated [*paterno delicto*] by the offense of his progenitor, that he is unable to use his power with regard to yielding obedience to the law. He must therefore flee to the mercy of God, that he may avoid the severity of the

law, and being exonerated from his transgressions, may, with regard to other things, resist his enemy under the favour of heaven.

But to perform that which is good I find not.] Therefore, that which is commanded by the law is pleasing to him, and his will is to do it; but, in order to its completion, power and virtue are wanting; because he is so oppressed by the power of sin, that he cannot go where he would; neither is he able to contradict, because another is the lord and master of his power (*ibid.*).

That he may extol the grace of God, the Apostle expounds these words, concerning the great evils from which it has delivered man; that he might point out what destructive materials he derives from Adam, but what blessings through Christ have been obtained for him whom the law could neither succour nor relieve (*ibid.*).

Let the whole [of the rest of the] passage be perused.

13. JEROME

We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, etc.] Undoubtedly the three Hebrew children had not sinned, neither were they of that [accountable] age when they were led away to Babylon, so as to be punished for their vices. Therefore, as they here speak in the person of their nation at large, so we must read and apply that passage of the Apostle, 'for what I would, that do I not,' etc. (*On Daniel* 9). *Jerome*

7 The opinion of St Augustine

1. But let us approach to St Augustine, and see what was his opinion concerning this passage, since my opinion is loaded and oppressed with the weight of his authority: *Quotations from his Writings*

If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.] The law is indeed sufficiently defended from all crimination. But we must be on our guard to prevent any one from supposing, that, by these words, the free exercise or choice of the will is taken away from us; which is not the fact. For now is described a man placed under the law, before [the arrival of] grace. (*Exposition of certain Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans, cap. 7.*)

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, etc.] He calls that ‘the law of sin’ by which every one is bound who is entangled in [*consuetudine*] the habit or nature of the flesh. He says that this wars against ‘the law of the mind,’ and ‘brings it into captivity to the law of sin.’ From this, the man is understood to be described who is not yet under grace. For, if the carnal habit or nature were only to maintain a warfare, and not to bring into captivity, there would not be condemnation. For in this consists condemnation, — that we *obey* and *serve* corrupt and carnal desires. But, if such desires still *exist* and *do not all disappear*, yet in this case we do not yield obedience to them, we are not brought into captivity, and we are now under grace, concerning which he speaks when he cries out for the aid of the Deliverer, that this might be possible through the grace, of love, which fear was not able to do through the law. For he has said, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death,’ And he added, ‘the Grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ He then begins to describe *man placed under grace*, which is the third degree of those four into which we have distinguished mankind (*ibid.*).

But not being yet content with the past inquiry and explanation, lest I had, with too much negligence, passed by any thing in it (Rom. 7), I have still more cautiously and attentively examined the very same words of the Apostle, and the tenor of their meanings. For you would not consider it proper to ask such things, if the manner in which they may be understood were easy and devoid of difficulties. For, from the passage in which it is written, ‘What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid,’ — unto that in which the Apostle says, ‘I find then a law, that, when I would do good,’ etc., — and, I believe, as far the verse in which, it is said, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death, The grace of God through Jesus Christ our

Lord;’ — you wished me to elucidate or resolve the question first from these passages, in which the Apostle seems to me to have transfigured unto himself, *a man placed under the law*, with whose words he speaks from his own person (*To Simplicianus, the Bishop of the Church of Milan*).

Hence it is evident,

- FIRST, that the Church had at that period prescribed nothing definite concerning the meaning of this passage: For Simplicianus, the Bishop of Milan, indeed, officiating in the very Church in which St Ambrose had formerly discharged the Episcopal functions, would not have earnestly requested to have the opinion of St Augustine, if the opinion to be maintained concerning it had been prescribed.
- SECONDLY. After St Augustine had diligently considered the matter, he openly declares, that the whole passage must be understood as referring to a man under the law.

‘For,’ he says, ‘I was without the law once.’ By this he plainly shows that he was not speaking *properly* in his own person, but *generally* in the person of ‘the old man’ (*ibid.*).

He afterwards subjoins the cause why it is so, and says, ‘For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal,’ in which he shows, that the law cannot be fulfilled except by spiritual persons, who do not become such without the aid of grace (*ibid.*).

Indeed, when he had said — ‘but I am carnal,’ he also subjoined the kind of *carnal man* that he was. For even those who are now placed under grace, and who are now redeemed by the blood of Christ, and born again through faith, are called ‘carnal’ after a certain manner; to whom the same Apostle says, ‘And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal,’ etc. (1 Cor. iii. 1). But that man who is still under the law and not under grace, is so very carnal as not yet to be born again from sin, but to be sold under the law by sin; because the price of deadly pleasure embraces that sweetness by which a man is deceived and delighted to act even contrary to the law, since the pleasure is greater in proportion to its unlawfulness, etc. ‘He consents, therefore, to the law of God,’ inasmuch as he does not what it prohibits, but chiefly by not willing that which he does. For, not being yet liberated by grace, he is conquered [by sin], although through the law he is both conscious that he is acting improperly, and is reluctant. But with regard to that which follows, where he says, ‘Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me;’ he does not, therefore, say it, because he does not consent to commit sin, though he consents to the law by disapproving of the sin which he commits. But he is still speaking in the person of a man placed under the law, who is not yet under grace, and who is indeed drawn, by reigning concupiscence and by the deceitful sweetness of prohibited sin, to perpetrate evil, though, through his knowledge of the law, he partly

disapproves of such bad actions. But this is the reason why he says, 'It is no more I that do it,' because, being conquered, he does it, since it is done [*cupiditas*] by evil desires, to whose conquering power he yields. But grace causes him no longer thus to yield, and strengthens the mind of man against lusts, of which grace the Apostle is now about to treat (*ibid.*).

See also what immediately follows this quotation.

'To will is present with me.' He says this with respect to facility. For what can be more easy, to a man placed under the law, than *to will* that which is good, and to do what is evil, etc. (*ibid.*).

But the whole of this is said for the purpose of shewing to man, while yet a captive, that he must not presume on his own strength or power. On this account he reprov'd the Jews as proudly boasting about the works of the law, when they were attracted by concupiscence to whatsoever was unlawful, though the law, of which they boasted, declared 'Thou shalt not covet,' or indulge in concupiscence. Therefore, a man who is conquered, condemned and captivated, must humbly declare, — a man who, after having received the law, is not as [*victori*] one that lives according to the law, but is rather a transgressor of it, must humbly exclaim, 'O wretched man that I am,' etc. (*ibid.*).

2. That man who will compare these passages from St Augustine with my arguments concerning Romans vii, will perceive that we entirely agree in sentiment, and that I subscribe to this opinion of St Augustine. From these extracts, it likewise appears that nothing had, at that period, been prescribed by the Church concerning this portion of the Apostolical writings, but nothing towards that part especially, — *that it was to be understood about a man who is regenerate and placed under grace.*

But I am here met with this objection:

St Augustine, in subsequent years, gave a different explanation to this chapter, that is, as being applicable to a regenerate man placed under grace, as he has done in the 43rd, 45th, and 47th of his *Discourses on Time*, and in several other passages.

I confess, that the fact was as it is here stated; and we will afterwards examine those passages; we shall perceive how much they are able to contribute towards the establishment of the opinion that is opposed to mine.

'But,' the same objectors say, 'St Augustine retracted and condemned that very opinion which he had first explained in his treatise, entitled, *An Exposition of certain Propositions in the Epistle to the Romans*, and in his book addressed to *Simplicianus, Bishop of Milan*; his authority, therefore, cannot be adduced in confirmation of that opinion.'

To this I might reply,

These passages confirm the interpretation of the author. It is objected, that St Augustine afterwards gave a different Explanation, and retracted his former Opinion; to this the Reply is, it appears that his Interpretation of this Chapter was free from any such Change.

- FIRST, from the fact of St Augustine having first entertained the same opinion about this passage as I do, and afterwards a different one, it is evident that neither of these opinions had been considered by the Church in the light of a catholic or universally admitted doctrine.
- SECONDLY. It is possible that St Augustine may, in the beginning, have held a more correct opinion than that which he subsequently maintained, especially when, in the first instant, he followed his own judgment, which had been formed from an accurate inspection of the entire chapter, and from a diligent comparison of different sentiments on the subject; but he was afterwards influenced by the authority of certain interpreters of Holy Writ, as he informs us in his *Retractions* (lib. I, cap. 23), though he adds, that he had with much diligence considered the subject; for he did not consider it without some of that prejudice which he had imbibed from the authority of those expositors.

3. But though I might make those preliminary replies, yet the answer which I will give is this: St Augustine never trusted or condemned that opinion by which he had explained this chapter as applicable to *a man placed under the law*; but he only retracted this part of his early opinion,

These words must not be received as uttered in the person of the Apostle himself, who was then spiritual, but in that of a man placed under the law and not yet under grace.

For he had made two assertions,

- FIRST, that this chapter must be understood as relating to a man placed under the law.
- SECONDLY, that it must neither be understood as relating to a man placed under grace, nor as relating to the Apostle himself who was then spiritual.

The former of these assertions was never retracted by St Augustine; the latter he has retracted, as will most clearly appear to any one who will examine the passage, which it will be no trouble to transcribe on this occasion, since the Works of this Father are not in the hands of every one. In the first book of his *Retractions* (cap. 23), he says:

‘While I was yet a Priest, it happened that the Epistle of the Apostle to the Romans was read among us who were at that time together at Carthage, and my brethren made inquiries of me about some passages in it, to which when I had given as proper replies as I was able, it was the wish of my brethren that what I spoke on this subject should be written out, rather than be uttered [*sine literis*] in an extemporaneous manner; when, on this point I had acceded to their request, another book was added to my *Opuscula*. In that book I say,

But when the Apostle asserts, *For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin*, he shows in a manner sufficiently

What St Augustine properly retracted is shown by quotations from his Writings.

plain, that it is impossible for the law to be fulfilled by any persons, except by those who are spiritual, and are made such by the grace of God.

This I wished not to be received in the person of the Apostle, who was at that time spiritual, but in that of a man placed under the law, and who was not yet under grace. For that was the manner in which I first understood these words; which I afterwards considered with more diligence, after having perused the productions of certain [*tractatoribus*] commentators on the Divine Oracles, by whose authority I was moved; and I perceived that, when he says *for we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin*, the words may also be understood as referring to the Apostle himself. This I have shown, with as much diligence as I was able, in those books which I have lately written against the Pelagians.

‘In this book, therefore, I have said that, by the words, *But I am carnal, sold under sin*, through the remainder of the chapter to the verse in which he says, *O wretched man that I am!* a man is described who is still under the law, but not yet placed under grace, who wills to do that which is good, but who, conquered by the desires of the flesh, does that which is evil. From the dominion of this concupiscence the man is not delivered, except by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, through whom love being diffused, or shed abroad, in our hearts, overcomes all the desires of the flesh, that we may not consent to those desires to do evil, but rather that we may do good. By this, indeed, is now overturned the Pelagian heresy, that will not admit that the love by which we live good and pious lives is from God to us, but that asserts it to be from ourselves.

‘But in those books which we have published against the Pelagians, we have shown, that the words of the Apostle in Romans vii, are better understood as those of a spiritual man who is now placed under grace

- on account of the body of flesh which is not yet spiritual, but which will be so in the resurrection of the dead,
- and on account of carnal concupiscence itself, with which the saints maintain such a conflict, not consenting to it for evil, as not to be without its opposing motions in this life which yet they resist.

But the saints will not have such motions to evil in that world in which death will be swallowed up in victory. Therefore, on account of this concupiscence and those motions to which such a resistance is given as they may still be in us, [or as suffers them yet to be in us], every holy person who is now placed under grace can utter all those words which I have here said are the expressions of a man who is not yet placed under grace, but under the law. To show this, would require much time; and I have mentioned the place where I have shown it’ (*ibid.*)

‘Of the books which I wrote when a Bishop, the first two were addressed to Simplicianus, Bishop of the church of Milan, who was successor to the blessed Ambrose; in them I discussed diverse questions. Two of the questions on which I treated in the first book, were from St Paul’s Epistle to the Romans. The first of them was on what is written in vii. 7, *What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid!* down to the 25th verse in which it is said, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* In that book, I have expounded these words of the Apostle, *The law is spiritual, but I am carnal*, and the other expressions by which the flesh is shown to contend against the Spirit. In it I have explained them in such a manner as that in which a man is described who is still under the law, but not yet placed under grace. For a long time afterwards elapsed, before I discerned that they could also be the words of a spiritual man, and this with a stronger semblance of probability’ (*Retractations*, lib. 2, cap. 1).

His Modesty in the Explanation of this Chapter. He understands this passage to refer, not to actual Sins, but to the internal Motions of Concupiscence.

4. These are the passages transcribed with verbal accuracy, in which St Augustine retracts the opinion which he had previously explained, from which it is apparent that he neither rejected his former opinion, nor convicted it of falsehood, error or heresy; but that he only said,

This passage in the Apostle’s writings may also be understood as referring to a man who is regenerate, spiritual, and placed under grace, and this much better and with more probability than concerning a man placed under the law.

Yet he says that this [his first] opinion is opposed to the Pelagian heresy. But the very words which he employs in his *Retractations* teach us, that this chapter in the apostolical writings may likewise be understood concerning a man who is placed under the law, but [according to his latest judgment] not so well, and with less probability.

We see therefore, that the modesty of St Augustine was at an immense distance from the vehemence of those who assert, that ‘this part of Holy Writ must be understood concerning a man who is placed under grace, nor can it by any means be explained as referring to a man placed under the law without incurring the charge of Pelagian heresy.’ Let the reader examine, if he pleases, the works of St Augustine (tom. 10), *Concerning the words of the Apostle* (Sermon 5, on Romans vii. 7, fol. 59, col. 3), ‘Speak to me, holy Apostle, about thyself, when no one doubts that thou art speaking about thyself.’

And in the same sermon (col. 4), ‘If, therefore, I say that the Apostle speaks of himself, I do not affirm it.’

But it is improper for this last, whether it be an explanation or a retractation of St Augustine, to be urged by those who reject the cause of this change, by which, he openly declares, he was moved to suppose that this passage might likewise be explained in reference to a man under grace, and this much better

and with greater probability. He says that the cause of it was, because he perceived that this man might be called ‘carnal’ on account of the body of flesh which is not yet spiritual, and because he has yet within him the desires of the flesh, though he does not consent to them. This is also the opinion of those expounders whom St Augustine says he followed.

But our divines who oppose themselves to me on Romans vii, do not explain that chapter in this manner, as,

- *to will that which is good*, is to will not to lust or indulge in unlawful desires,
- and *to do evil*, is to lust;

but they explain it, actually *to do or to commit that which is evil*. The authority, therefore, of St Augustine ought not to be produced by them; because, as we shall afterwards more clearly demonstrate, his judgment was this: *If this chapter be explained as referring to actual sins, it cannot be explained concerning a regenerate man. But if it be explained respecting a regenerate man, it must necessarily be understood only concerning the inward motions of concupiscence or lust.*

Wherefore, I have St Augustine *in his first opinion*, fully agreeing with me, and *in his latter* not differing greatly from me; but those who are opposed to me have St Augustine contrary and adverse to them in both these his opinions.

8 Our opinion is supported by several writers of the middle ages

1. VENERABLE BEDE

For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal.] Perhaps, therefore, it is some other person, or perhaps thyself. Either thou art the person, or I am. If, therefore, it be some one of us, let us listen to him as if concerning himself, and, divesting our minds of angry feelings, let us correct ourselves. But if it be he, [the Apostle], let us not thus understand what he has said, ‘What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I’ (*On Romans* 7).

Venerable Bede

Therefore, because he thrice intreated the Lord, that this thorn might be taken away from him; and because he who was, not heard according to his wishes, was heard according to that which was for his healing; he perhaps does not speak in a manner that is unbecoming when he says, ‘The law is spiritual, but I am carnal’ (*ibid.*).

2. ST PAULINUS

And I am perfectly aware that this blessed man prefers to employ my weakness; and, lamenting concerning my afflictions, he cries out, instead of me, ‘O wretched man that I am I’ (*Second Epistle to Severus Sulpicius, Priest at Tours*).

St Paulinus

3. NICHOLAS DE LYRA

For we know that the law is spiritual] and [*ordinans*] placing men in right order to follow the instigation of the Spirit or of reason (*On Romans* 7).

Nicholas De Lyra

But I am carnal,] that is, I follow the impulse of the flesh or of sensuality; and the Apostle speaks, as was before observed, in the person of the fallen human race, in which there are more persons who follow the impulse of sensuality than that of reason.

After the inward man] that is according to the natural dictates of reason; because *reason* is called ‘the inward man,’ and *sensuality* ‘the outward man.’

O wretched man that I am!] In this passage, he consequently begs to be delivered, speaking in the person of all mankind, ‘O wretched man that I am’ through the corruption of nature!

So then, with the mind, I serve the law of God] that is, according to the inclination of reason.

8 Writers from the Middle Ages Support our Opinion

But with the flesh, the law of sin] by following the inclination of the flesh.

4. ORDINARY GLOSS

Ordinary Gloss

‘For we know that the law is spiritual,’ etc., quoted to the end of the chapter. It is not perfectly clear whether these things are better understood as spoken in his own person, or in that of all mankind (*On Romans* 7).

5. INTERLINEARY GLOSS

*Interlineary
Gloss*

But I am carnal] unable to resist [*vitio*] the corruption of my mind or the Devil (*On Romans* 7).

Sold under sin] in my first parent, that I may be really under sin as a servant.

Now then it is no more I that do it] under the law before the times of grace.

Evil is present with me] with my reason; it is near to my inward man.

I see another law] the fuel or flame, which reigns.

Warring against the law of my mind,] the law and my reason united together in one.

Bringing me into captivity] through consent and working, because it governs [*consuetudine*] by habit or custom.

To the law of sin] for sin is the law, because it has the dominion.

The grace of God] not that the law, nor my own powers, but that the grace of God delivers.

So then with the mind] the rational and inward man, having, as before, fuel.

6. HUGH THE CARDINAL

*Hugh the Car-
dinal*

For we know that the law is spiritual.] This is the third part of the chapter, in which he shows, that those things which were commanded in the law of Moses, cannot be fulfilled without the law of the Spirit, that is, without grace.

But I am carnal] that is, frail and weak to resist the Devil and the lust of the flesh.

For what I would] according to reason, that is, I approve.

But what I hate] that is, evil. But from this it is inferred that he wants the spiritual law, by which he may do that which he wills according to reason.

There is, therefore, now no condemnation.] The preceding things have been expounded concerning the captivity of mortal sin under which man was carnally living, and concerning the captivity of the venial sin of the man who is in grace; and that the law of the Spirit, or grace, delivers from the captivity of death; and he draws this inference: ‘There is, therefore, now no condemnation,’ that is, no mortal sin through which is condemnation.

7. THOMAS AQUINAS

But I am carnal.] He shows the condition of the man: And this expression may be expounded in two ways. In one way, that the Apostle is speaking in the person of a man who is in sin. And St Augustine expounds it thus in the 83rd book of his *Questions*. But, afterwards, in his book against Julian, he expounds it, that the Apostle may be understood to speak in his own person, that is, of a man placed under grace. Let us proceed, therefore, in declaring what kind of words these are, and those which follow them, and how they may be differently expounded in either manner, though the second mode of exposition is the best (*On Romans* 7).

Thomas Aquinas, who thinks that Romans vii. 14 may be explained in both ways, but he refers its application to a regenerate Man.

8. I am fully aware that the same Thomas has marked out two passages in this chapter, which he asserts it to be impossible to explain concerning an unregenerate man except by a distorted interpretation. But it will repay our labour if we inspect those passages, and examine those reasons which moved Thomas to hold this sentiment. The first passage is the 17th verse: 'Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.' The second passage is the 18th verse: 'For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.'

He is of Opinion, that the 17th and 18th verses can only be considered by a forced Construction to relate to a man under Sin. His Reasons for advancing this last Assertion are examined and answered.

- a) He says 'that the first of these passages cannot, except by a distorted interpretation, be understood concerning a man who is under sin; because the sinner himself perpetrates that sin, while he is one who, according to the principal part of himself, that is, according to his reason and mind, consents to the perpetration of sin. But this must properly be attributed to a man, which belongs to him according to what is man; but he is a man by his mind and his reason.'

But I answer, FIRST, It is said, not only respecting a man who is under sin, that he does not perpetrate sin except with his mind and reason, which dictate, that sin is forbidden by the law, which yet are conquered through the lust of the flesh, and by the consent of the will, but it is likewise said respecting the regenerate and those who are under grace; for these persons do not actually commit sin except with a mind that is conquered, and through consent of the will; and, therefore, it is a vain attempt to be desirous to distinguish, in this manner, between him, who is under sin and him who is under grace.

SECONDLY. I deny that all those who are under sin commit iniquity with the consent of their mind, that is, without any resistance of conscience. For when those persons who are under the law, sin, they do this against conscience and with a mind that is reluctant, because they are overcome by the tyranny of sin and carnal concupiscence.

THIRDLY. Though the matter really were as he has stated it, yet it would not follow that it cannot be said of this man by any interpretation,

except a distorted one: ‘It is no more he that commits this sin, but it is sin.’ A reason is produced by Thomas himself; for the man does this through the motion and compulsion of sin which dwelleth in him and has the dominion. But effects are usually ascribed to the principal causes; therefore, this verse may be understood, without any distorted meaning, to relate to a man who is under the law.

If any one, according to the judgment of St Augustine, declare,

It cannot be attributed to a man who actually gives his consent to sin, *that he does not himself commit it, but sin*, and, therefore, the perpetration of it must be understood as relating not to the consent to evil and the commission of it, but to concupiscence or evil desire, and thus this act belongs to a man under grace,

to this objection, I reply that I deny the antecedent, as I have previously observed; but I confess that if it be understood concerning concupiscence alone, and not concerning *the consent to sin and the actual perpetration of it*, the expression contained in this verse can by no means, not even distortedly, be employed concerning a man who is under the law and under sin.

- b) Thomas says ‘that the latter of these passages, the 18th verse, cannot be explained, except in a distorted manner, concerning a man under sin, on account of the correction which is added, and which it was unnecessary to adduce if the discourse were about *a man under sin*, as being one who has no good thing dwelling either in his flesh or in his mind.

To this, I reply that the antecedent is false; for we have already demonstrated, in the remarks on this 18th verse, that, in the mind of a man who is under the law, some good exists and dwells, as Thomas here employs the word *to dwell*, nay, that it also reigns and has the dominion, as the word ought properly to be received. Therefore, the ignorance of Thomas about this matter, caused him thus to think and to write.

9. But let the entire comment of Thomas on this passage be perused, and it will then appear, that all these things in the two verses may be explained in the plainest manner concerning *a man under the law*, but with much perversion and contortion about *a regenerate man who is placed under grace*, I show this in the following brief manner, having united together, in a compendious summary, those things which he has treated with greater prolixity, as any one may perceive on referring to his pages:

- ‘If the man or the reason be called *fleshly* or *carnal* because he is attacked by the flesh
- if *to do* signifies the same as *to lust* or desire
- if *to will good*, and not *to will evil*, be taken for a complete volition and nolition, which continue in the election or choice of a particular operation;

An Abbreviation of the Comments which Thomas has given on these two verses; with a Conclusion deduced from them, that they may be appropriately understood to relate to a man under the Law, but in no other than a forced manner to a man under Grace.

- but if to commit evil, and not to do good, be understood according to an incomplete act, which consists only in the sensitive appetite, not reaching so far as to the consent of reason
- if this captivity be produced solely at the motion of concupiscence
- if deliverance from the body of this death be desired, that the corruption of the body may be totally removed,

then the expression in this passage of Scripture must be understood concerning a regenerate and just man, who is placed under grace.

- ‘But if this man or reason be called *fleshly* or *carnal* because he is in subjection to the flesh, consenting to those things to which he is instigated by the flesh
- if *to do* be the same thing as *to execute by actual operation*
- if to will that which is good, and not to will what is evil, be taken in the acceptance of an incomplete volition and nolition, by which men will good *in general* and do not will what is evil, and if they do neither of these *in particular*;
- but if to commit evil, and not to do good, be understood according to a complete act, which is exercised in external operation through the consent of reason
- if this captivity be produced through consent and operation or doing, and, lastly, if deliverance from the body of this death be desired or asked, that the corruption of the body may not have dominion over the mind, drawing it to commit sin,

then the expressions in this passage must be understood concerning a man who is a sinner, and who is placed under the law.’

But let us now subjoin:

- A man who is attacked by the flesh, yet who conquers it in the conflict, is not called *fleshly* or *carnal*;
- but this appellation is bestowed on the man who, by yielding his consent, is brought into subjection to the flesh. The Apostle is here treating about a volition and a nolition that are incomplete and imperfect, and about the actual perpetration of evil and the omission of good, and not solely about the act or motion of lusting or desiring; (for this is declared by the matter itself, for the man wills and does not, therefore the volition is imperfect). This captivity is not at the motion of concupiscence alone, but it is by consent and operation; for either concupiscence itself, or the law of the members, brings a man into captivity through the waging of war against the law of the mind; and the deliverance which is required is from the corruption of the body, that it may not have dominion over the

8 *Writers from the Middle Ages Support our Opinion*

mind, and not that it may be totally removed; for the Apostle presents a thanksgiving to God for having obtained that which he had desired.

- THEREFORE, this passage must be understood, not about a man under grace, but about one who is under the law; not about a man who is already restored by grace, but about one who is yet to be restored.

Our PROPOSITION is taken from Thomas Aquinas. We have added the ASSUMPTION from the text itself.

9 The favourable testimonies of more recent divines

Let us now likewise examine some of the more modern divines of the church.

1. HAEMO

O wretched man that I am.] He speaks in the person of the human race, or in the person of those who are departing from their sins. *Haemo*

2. BRUNO

Observe that St Paul significantly speaks about all men under his own person, assuming to himself the person of one who is sometimes *before* the law, and at other times *under* the law. *Bruno*

3. FABER STAPULENSIS

St Paul transfers to himself a carnal man, and one who feels the weakness of the flesh, when he was by no means a person of that description, but was living entirely after the Spirit. But he transfigures himself into a weak person to those who are weak. *Faber Stapulensis*

4. ERASMUS

Since I have now, for the purpose of instructing you, taken upon myself the person of a man who is still liable to vices and affections (*Paraphrase on Romans 7*).

5. WHITAKER

But I am carnal, sold under sin etc.] They interpret the whole of this passage so as to say that St Paul does not speak concerning himself, but is the person of a man who is not yet born again (*Controversy respecting the Interpretation of Scripture*, Quaest. v. fol. 508). *Whitaker*

6. BUCER

The QUESTION is, 'Which of these agrees: *Bucer*

- that we will what is good, yet do it not,
- or that we do what is evil, and yet do not will it, but hate it

nay, that we commit evil, and that we do not commit it?' For the Apostle affirms both these things.

The SOLUTION is this: We shall be able to understand these things as truly and properly spoken, from this circumstance, — if it be evident of what description of man St Paul is here speaking under [*exemplo*] the instance of himself, and then what original sin is capable of producing.

But if we consider what the Apostle confesses about himself in this chapter, it is, I think, abundantly evident that he proposes, in himself, the example of a man to whom the law of God is known, and by whom it is loved. For he says, ‘I consent unto the law that it is good; I will that which is good, and I hate evil. To will, is present with me. With the mind, I myself serve the law of God.’ These undoubtedly are not the traits of a wicked or profane man, and of one who is not yet approaching to God; but they are those of a holy man who loves God and who trembles at his words. For God rescues us by certain degrees from that death into which we are all born. FIRST, he suffers us, for some time, to live in ignorance, [*securos*] disregarding his judgments. At this period, ‘sin is dead,’ etc. But when it has pleased God to terminate this ignorance, he sends forth his law, and gives us to see that it is ‘holy, and just, and good.’ From this, it necessarily arises that ‘we consent to the law,’ that we will what it commends, and that we are abhorrent from those things which it condemns. But if the Spirit of Christ do not afford unto us powerful succour, this love of God and consent to his law remain so weak, and the force of sin which is still within us prevails so strongly, that, through the correction and command of the law, the depraved lusts become the more inflamed, and we occasionally do, not only by lusting or desiring, but also by actually committing, that which we ourselves detest, and we neglect those things of which we are not capable of doing otherwise than approving and willing. But these things cause the dread of the Divine judgment to increase within us, by which we are completely unnerved, and deprived of sensation.

All these effects are produced by the law, but through [*vitio*] the corruption of our depraved nature; and it is the condition of the period now mentioned, which the Apostle describes in himself in the present chapter. But whilst God, who is the Father of mercies, resolves more fully to impart himself to us, and vouchsafes more bountifully to bestow the Spirit of his Son upon us, by this, his Spirit, he represses and subdues that power of sin which otherwise impels us against the law and [*jus*] authority, how much soever we may consent to the law itself; he implants within us a true judgment concerning things, and a solid love [*honesti*] for that which is upright and honourable, so that now, with pleasure, and with a confirmed and perpetual [*studio*] inclination or purpose, we live the life of God. This condition of holy people is described by the Apostle in the subsequent chapter, in which he declares that ‘the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death’ (Rom. viii. 2).

As, therefore, the Apostle in this place begins to declare what the law, of itself, effects in holy people, and from this begins to commend it when it

is so exceedingly beneficial, yet he asserts that it cannot render a man just before God, but that it drives him to Christ who alone can justify. And he brings forward in this place, and points out, the condition of a man of God, which is that of the middle age of holy people, in which the law is indeed already known, but not yet fully inscribed on the heart; that is, when the mind of man consents to the law of God, but the appetite of nature still offers resistance, and impels to act in opposition to the precepts of the law. I repeat it, in this condition, the Apostle has proposed himself for an example, that he might point out in himself what power the law possessed, and how all things are death, until the Spirit of Christ [*penitius movet*] obtains greater influence within us. But St Paul did not still contend with his nature after the manner which is described in this passage, for he soon afterwards declares that ‘the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death,’ and that through the Spirit of Christ, ‘the righteousness of the law was now fulfilled in him, as he walked, not after the, flesh, but after the Spirit’ (*On Romans* 7).

7. WOLFGANG MUSCULUS

The law, indeed, has righteousness and justification, by commanding those things which are just. But it is impossible that it should have that by which to justify; for it is hindered and rendered inefficacious through the flesh, that is, through the corrupt and depraved inclinations of the flesh, through which it comes to pass that a man who is carnal, and the slave of sin, is incapable of obeying those commands which are holy, and just, and good (*Common Places in the Chapter on the Laws, under the title of the Power and Efficacy of the Law*).

Musculus

We say that the power and efficacy of the law, which is called ‘the Letter,’ is two-fold. The one is that which it produces of its own, and may be called *proper*. The other is *improper*, which it does not bring from itself, but which it performs through the corruption of our flesh. The first is proper, because it produces the knowledge of sin. On this subject, the Apostle speaks thus: ‘I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, *Thou shalt not covet*’ (Rom. vii. 7). He also says, ‘By the law is the knowledge of sin’ (iii. 20) (*ibid.*).

He afterwards not only speaks about ‘the knowledge of sin,’ which consists of the understanding, but he also speaks principally about that knowledge of it which is received by [*vivo*] a lively feeling of sin in our flesh; that is, the law causes me not only to understand, but likewise with gnawing remorse of conscience to feel and to experience that sin is within me. It is *proper*, because it convinces us that we are inexcusably guilty of sin, subjects and condemns us to malediction (Gal. iii. 10), and, through a feeling of sin, and when terrified of condemnation, it renders us anxious, and desirous of the grace of God. Hence, arises that which is the subject of the Apostle’s investigation in Romans 7,

when at length he cries out, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ’ (*ibid.*). After the Apostle, in Romans vii, has disputed about the power and efficacy of the law, which works in carnal and natural men, speaking in the next chapter of the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is bestowed on those who believe in Christ, he subjoins, ‘for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death,’ etc. (*ibid. under the Title of The Law of the Spirit*).

St Paul understands ‘the law of sin’ to be the power and tyranny of sin reigning in our flesh, by which we are violently dragged and impelled to commit sin. ‘The law of death’ is that by which sinners are adjudged to death eternal. Therefore ‘the law of the Spirit of life’ not only produces this effect in us, that we are not condemned on account of the imputation of righteousness which is through faith in Christ; but it likewise extinguishes the power of sin in us, that sin may now no longer reign in us, but [*virtus*] the strength and grace of Christ, and that we may no more serve sin, but righteousness, nor be obnoxious to death, but challenged and claimed for the true life (*ibid.*).

For the more lucid explanation of this matter, we must observe the three degrees of the Saints, by which they are divinely led to the perfection of piety:

- The FIRST is of those who resemble drunken men, and who, having for some time lulled to sleep all judgment and every good inclination, live in sins, the law of God not having yet produced its effect in them.
- The SECOND DEGREE is of those who, by what way soever they may have returned to themselves, the judgment of their reason being now illuminated, and their inclinations changed, desire that which is good, and thus consent to the law of God and delight in it, and really abhor that which is evil; but the tyranny of sin still prevailing, they are reluctantly drawn to evil things; and, therefore, the good of which they approve, and which they desire and will, they perform not; but the evil which they hate and avoid, they perpetrate, though their consciences exclaim against it, and though the judgment of their minds dictate something far different, etc. To this Second Degree must be referred those things of which St Paul here treats in his own example.
- The THIRD DEGREE is of those who have been rescued into the liberty of righteousness, after having, through the Spirit, subdued and conquered the power and wickedness of sin, that they do not now obey the law of sin, but the law of the Spirit that reigns in their members, and possesses the double faculty of willing and doing. About this degree, the Apostle will treat in the subsequent chapter (*Comment on Romans 7*).

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.] A most wonderful and sudden turn of the affections. He had just before deplored himself as *a wretched man* and *a captive*, and almost immediately he gratefully returns thanks. From this,

we perceive that St Paul now uses his own person, not that which he sustained when he wrote these things, but that which he had formerly represented (*ibid.*).

There is, therefore, now no condemnation.] As he had previously described the condition of the man who was living in a legal spirit, so now he describes and points out the condition of him who is endued with the evangelical Spirit (*On Romans 8*).

The mutual and unanimous agreement of the witnesses whom I have here produced, will, according to my judgment, very easily liberate my opinion from all surmise and suspicion of novelty.

Part III
Third Part

10 This opinion is neither heretical nor allied to any heresy

THESIS. — No heresy, neither that of Pelagius nor any other, can be derived or confirmed from this Opinion. But this Opinion is, in the most obvious manner, adverse to Pelagianism, and affords a signal and professed Confutation of its grand and leading Falsehood.

1. This thesis contains two parts. The FIRST is, that this opinion is neither heretical, nor allied to heresy. The SECOND that it is directly contrary to the Pelagian heresy, and professedly refutes it.

With regard to the FIRST of these parts, because it consists of a negation, those who maintain the affirmative of it must destroy it by the proof of the contrary. I am desirous, therefore, to hear from them what heresy it is which this opinion advocates and favours. They will undoubtedly announce it to be that of Pelagius. But I require a proof of the particular point in which there is the least agreement between this opinion and Pelagianism. Let us shew, however, *ex abundanti*, that this opinion is not favourable to Pelagianism.

The following heads of doctrine are those which St Augustine has laid down in his Book *On Heresies* and his *Hypognosticon*, as belonging to Pelagianism:

- a) Whether Adam had sinned, or had not sinned, he would have died.
- b) The sin of Adam was injurious to no one except to himself; and therefore,
- c) Little children do not contract original sin from Adam; neither will they perish from life eternal, if they depart out of the present life without the sacrament of baptism.
- d) Lust or concupiscence in man is a natural good; neither is there any thing in it of which man may be ashamed.
- e) Through his free will, as *per se*, man is sufficient for himself, and is able to will what is good, and to fulfill or perfect that which he wills. Or even, for the merits of works, God bestows grace on every one.
- f) The life of the just or the righteous in this life has in it no sin whatsoever; and from these persons, the church of Christ in this state of mortality are completed, that it may be altogether without spot or wrinkle.
- g) Pelagius, being compelled to confess grace, says that it is a gift conferred in creation, is the preaching of the law, and the illumination of the mind, to know those things which are good and those which are evil, as well as

In this Third Part, two things are contained: the FIRST is a Negative, — that this, my interpretation of Romans vii is not favourable to the Pelagian Heresy. The principal Dogmas of the Pelagian Heresy are recounted from St Augustine.

the remission of sins if any one has sinned, excluding from this [definition of grace] love and the gift and assistance of the Holy Spirit, without which, he says, the good which is known may be performed, though he acknowledges that this grace has also been given for this purpose, — that the thing may be the more easily done, which can indeed be otherwise done by the power of nature, but yet with greater difficulty.

2. These are the principal dogmas of the Pelagian heresy, to which others, if any such there be, may be referred. But none of these dogmas are patronized by the opinion which explains Romans vii, as applicable to a man placed under the law, and in the manner in which we have explained it, and as St Augustine has declared it in his book entitled *The Exposition of certain Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans*, and in his first Book *To Simplicianus*. This will be proved thus by induction:

It is proved by Induction and by Comparison that this Interpretation agrees with none of these Dogmas.

- a) Our opinion openly professes that sin is the only and sole meritorious cause of death, and that man would not have died, had he not sinned.
- b) By the commission of sin, Adam corrupted himself and all his posterity, and rendered them obnoxious to the wrath of God.
- c) All who are born in the ordinary way from Adam, contract from him original sin and the penalty of death eternal. Our opinion lays this down as the foundation of further explanation; for this original sin is called, in Romans vii, 'the sin,' 'the sin exceedingly sinful,' 'the indwelling sin,' 'the sin which is adjacent to a man, or present with him,' or 'the evil which is present with a man and' the law in the members.'
- d) Our opinion openly declares that *concupiscence*, under which is also comprehended *lust*, is an evil.
- e) The Fifth of the enumerated Pelagian dogmas is professedly refuted by our opinion; for, in Romans vii, the Apostle teaches, according to our opinion, that the natural man cannot will what is good, except he be under the law, and unless the legal spirit have produced this willing in him by the law; and though he wills what is good, yet it is by no means through free will, even though it be impelled and assisted by the law to be capable of performing that very thing. But it also teaches that the grace of Christ, that is, the gift of the Holy Spirit and of love, is absolutely necessary for this purpose, which grace is not bestowed according to merits, (which are nothing at all), but is purely gratuitous.
- f) The Sixth of the enumerated dogmas of Pelagius is neither taught nor refuted by our opinion, because it maintain, that Romans vii does not treat about the regenerate. But, in the mean time, the patrons and advocates of our opinion do not deny that what is said respecting the imperfection of believers in the present life, is true.

- g) The Seventh of the enumerated dogmas of Pelagius is refuted by our opinion; for it not only grants, that good can with difficulty be done by the man who is under the law, and who is not yet placed under grace; but it also [*simpliciter*] unreservedly denies that it is possible for such a man by any means to resist sin and to perform what is good.

3. But some one will perhaps rejoin, and say

Your interpretation of this chapter is favourable to Pelagianism, on two accounts. FIRST, because it attributes something of good to a man who is not yet regenerated and placed under grace. SECONDLY, because it takes away from the church a passage of Scripture, by which she is accustomed to prove the imperfection of the regenerate in the present life, and the conflict which is maintained between the flesh and the Spirit as long as man lives upon earth.

Two Rejoinders to the contrary. An Answer to the First of them, that every good Thing must not be taken away from the Regenerate.

With regard to the FIRST of these objections, I reply that we must see,

FIRST, what kind of good it is that our interpretation attributes to a man who is unregenerate. For, it is certain that every good, of what kind soever it may be, must not be entirely taken away from an unregenerate man and one who is not yet placed under grace; because the knowledge of the truth (Rom. i. 18, 19), the work of the law written in his heart, his thoughts accusing or else excusing one another, the discernment of what is just and unjust (ii. 15, 18), the knowledge of sin, grief on account of sin, anxiety of conscience, desire of deliverance, etc., (vii. 7, 9, 13, 24) are all good things, and yet they are attributed to a man who is unregenerate.

SECONDLY. We must know that this, our opinion, which explains Romans vii as relating to a man under the law, does not bring forth these good things from the storehouse of nature, but it deduces them from the operation of the Spirit, who employs the preaching of the law and blesses it.

THIRDLY. We must also consider that this was not a subject of controversy between the Church and the Pelagians: 'May something of good be attributed to an unregenerate man who is not yet under grace, but who is placed under the law; or may it not?' But the question between them was 'Can something of good be attributed to man, without grace and its operation?' He who receives some operation of grace is not *instantly under grace or regenerate*; for grace prepares the will of man for itself, that it may dwell in it. Grace knocks at the door of our hearts; but that which has occasion to *knock* does not yet *reside* in the heart nor *has it the dominion*, though it may knock so as to cause the door to be opened to it on account of its persuasion. But we have frequently treated on topics similar to this in the First Part of this our Treatise.

An Answer to the Second. The Truth must be confirmed, and Falsehood refuted, by solid Arguments.

4. With respect to the SECOND of these objections, I reply,

FIRST. This passage of Holy Writ was not produced by the Church, in her earliest days, for establishing the imperfection of the regenerate in this life, and the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit such as that which is maintained in regenerate persons; for we have already shown that the most ancient of the Christian Fathers did not explain Romans vii in reference to the regenerate, or those who are placed under grace; though it subsequently began to be employed, by some divines, to establish this dogma.

SECONDLY. It is inconsequent argumentation to say that 'the opinion by which some passage is otherwise explained than it is by the many, nay which has been quoted by the church herself to destroy some heresy, is therefore or can be judged to be allied to heresy, because it takes away from the church a passage which has been usually employed to prove a true doctrine, and to refute a heresy.' For if this be not inconsequent reasoning, there will scarcely be one of our divines who will not thus be deservedly judged to be allied to some heresy or other, and sometimes indeed to a very enormous one. By such a law [of criticism] as this, Calvin is called 'an Arian' by the Lutherans, because he openly avows in his writings, that 'many passages of Scripture, which have been adduced by the Ancient Church (both Greek and Latin) to establish the doctrine of the Trinity, do not contribute in the least to that purpose,' and because he gives to them such a different interpretation.

THIRDLY. No detriment will accrue to the Church by the removal of this passage, from the support of the imperfection of the regenerate in this life as she is furnished with a number (which is sufficiently copious) of other passages to prove the same doctrine, and to weaken the contrary one. This is abundantly demonstrated by St Augustine, when he professedly treats *Upon the Perfection of Righteousness in this life in opposition to Coelestius*.

FOURTHLY. We must well and carefully examine by what passages of Scripture, and by what arguments, the truth may be proved, and falsehood refuted, lest, if *weak* and *less valid*, and in some degree *doubtful*, passages and arguments be adduced, the hopes of Heretics should be elevated, after they have demolished such weak bulwarks as those, and they should suppose it possible to disprove and confute the remaining [more suitable and valid] arguments on the same subject. For that man inflicts no slight injury on the truth who props it up by weak arguments; and the rules of art teach us, that a necessary Conclusion must be verified or proved by necessary Arguments; for the Conclusion, follows that part [of a syllogism] which is the weakest. But it has been already shown, that this portion of Scripture has not been devoid of controversy even among the catholic commentators on the Holy Scriptures.

FIFTHLY, In what manner soever this chapter, as thus explained according to my mind, may not be able to serve the church to prove the imperfection of the regenerate in the present life, yet it serves her for the confirmation of another

doctrine, and one of a far greater importance, against the Pelagians; that is, the necessity of the grace of Christ. and the incapability of the law to conquer or to avoid sin, and to order or direct the life of a man according to its rule.

5. But we may discover, from various passages in the writings of St Augustine, the vast difference which the Ancient Church put between the necessity of the former of the two questions or doctrines, [specified in the preceding paragraph], and the latter. For instance:

But in that which Pelagius argues against those who say, ‘And who would be unwilling to be without sin, if this were placed in the power of man?’ he in fact disputes correctly, that by this very question they own that it is not impossible, because either many persons or all men wish to be without sin. But let Pelagius only confess [*unde*] from what source this is possible, and peace is instantly established. For the origin of it is the grace of God through Jesus Christ, etc. (*On Nature and Grace, against the Pelagians*, cap. 59).

There may be some question among real and pious Christians, whether there has ever been in this world, is now, or can possibly be, any man who lives so righteously as to have no sin whatsoever. Yet he is assuredly void of understanding who entertains any doubt whether it is possible for a man to be without sin after this life. But I do not wish to enter into a contest about this question. Though it seems to me that in no other sense can be understood what is written in the Psalms, and in similar passages, if any such there be: ‘In thy sight shall NO MAN LIVING be justified’ (cxliii. 2); yet it may be shown that even these [*testimonia*] expressions may be better understood in another sense, and that even perfect and complete righteousness, to which there may be no addition, was yesterday in an individual, while he lived in the body, is in him to-day, and will be in him to-morrow while there are still far more persons, who, while they do not doubt that it is necessary for them truly to say, even to the last day of [their continuance in] this life, ‘Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us,’ yet these persons [*confidant*] are firmly persuaded that their hope in Christ and in his promises is real, certain and firm, yet in no way except by the aid of the grace, of the saviour, Christ the crucified, and by the gift of his Spirit. I do not know whether that man can be correctly reckoned in the number of Christians of any description, who denies either that any persons attain to the most complete perfection, or that some arrive at any degree whatever of proficiency in true piety and righteousness (*ibid.* cap. 60).

Besides, though I am more inclined to believe that there is not now, has not been, and will not be, any one who is perfect with such a purity as this; and yet when it is defended and supposed, that there is, has been, or will be such a perfect man, as far as I am able to form a judgment, they who hold this opinion do not greatly or perniciously err, etc. But those persons are most strenuously and vehemently to be resisted, who suppose it possible either to

It is proved from St Augustine that the doctrine which relates to the Necessity of the Grace of Christ, and to the Impossibility of the Law for the Conquest of Sin, was accounted by the Ancients to be of far more Importance than that which proves the perpetual Imperfections of the Regenerate in this Life.

fulfill or to perfect the righteousness of the human will, by its own power, without the aid of God, or by aiming at it to make some proficiency (*On the Spirit and the Letter*, cap. 2).

Consult likewise his treatise *On Nature and Grace*, cap. 42, 43, 58, and 63; in which he briefly says — ‘It is no question at all, or not a great one, what man is perfected, or the time. when he becomes so, as long as no doubt is entertained that it is impossible for this to be done without the grace of Christ.’

See also his treatise *On the Demerit and Remission of Sin*, lib. 2, cap. 6, 14; and lib. 3, cap. 13.

To this, the Fathers of the Council of Carthage seem to give their Assent, in their Epistle to Pope Innocent.

6. But in order that we may know this to have been the opinion not only of St Augustine, but also of the Church Universal, let us listen to the Bishops assembled together in the Council of Carthage, who write in the following manner to Pope Innocent:

‘But in what manner soever this question turns itself, because though a man is not found in this life without sin, yet it may be said to be possible by the adoption of grace and of the Spirit of God; and that [such perfection] may be attained we must urge most importunate intreaties and use our best endeavours. Whosoever is deceived on this point, ought to be tolerated. It is not a diabolical impiety, but it is a human error, to affirm that it must be most diligently pursued and desired, though it cannot shew that which it affirms; for it believes it possible for that to be done which it is undoubtedly laudable to will.’

We perceive, therefore, that Romans vii, when explained according to my mind, is serviceable to the church in establishing a doctrine of far greater importance than that which is declared from the other opinion.

‘But,’ some one will say, ‘it is possible to establish both these doctrines, [the imperfection and the perfection of the regenerate], From that opinion which explains the chapter as relating to a man who is under grace.’

I reply, granting this, yet I deny that it is possible to establish both in a direct manner; for, one doctrine, that of the imperfection of the regenerate in this life, will be directly proved from this passage, and the other will be deduced from it by consequence. But it is a matter of much importance, whether a doctrine be confirmed by a passage of Scripture properly explained and according to the intention of the Scriptures, or whether it be deduced from them by the deduction of a consequence. For some passages of Scripture are like certain seats, out of which controversies ought to be determined; and those which are of this kind are usually employed in a very stable and safe manner for the decision of controversies.

11 Our opinion is directly opposed to the Pelagian heresy

1. I now come to the Second Part of the Thesis, in which I said, that this chapter, when explained as referring to a man who is under the law, is directly and professedly contrary to the Pelagian heresy. Though I have already proved this in part, on the occasion of replying to the preceding Objection, yet I will now at somewhat greater length teach and confirm it.
2. We have just seen that the article of the Pelagian heresy which is by no means either the last or the least, is that in which it is asserted that a man is able through his own free will, as being of itself sufficient for him, to fulfill the precept of God, if he be only instructed in the doctrine of the law, so as to be capable of knowing what he ought to perform and what to omit.

It appears that this dogma is not only firmly refuted, but that it is also plucked up as if by the roots and extirpated, according to the very design and purpose of the Apostle, by means of this chapter, when it is understood as referring to a man under the law. This is apparent from the opposition of the dogma to the context of the Apostle. The Former says, 'Man, instructed by the teaching of the law, is capable, by the powers of his free will alone, to overcome sin and to obey the law of God.' But the Apostle declares that this cannot be effected by the powers of free will and of the law. He says, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace' (Rom. vi. 14), from which it is manifest that, if they were under the law, sin would have the dominion over them, — a consequence upon which he treats more copiously in the Seventh Chapter. Pelagius says, 'Man is able, without the grace of Christ, and instructed solely by the teaching of the law, to perform the good which he wills, through his free will, and to omit the evil which he does not will;' but the Apostle declares that this man 'consents indeed to the law that it is good, but that to perform what is good he finds not in himself; he omits the good which he wills, and he performs the evil which he wills not.' Therefore, the doctrine of the Apostle is, independently of its consequence, *directly* repugnant to the Pelagian dogma, and this, indeed, from the scope and end which the Apostle had, in the same chapter, proposed to himself.

But, from passages of this description, heresies are far more powerfully convicted and destroyed, than they are from passages accommodated to their refutation beyond the scope and intention of the writer, though this also be done according to the correct meaning of the same passages.

The SECOND Thing contained in this Third Part is an Affirmation, that our Interpretation of Romans vii is professedly adverse to the Pelagian Heresy. This is proved from the Fact, that the principal Dogma of that Heresy is professedly confuted through this very Interpretation.

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In some Passages of his Works, which are here cited, St Augustine confesses with sufficient plainness that this is true.

3. ST AUGUSTINE himself confesses that, when this chapter is explained in reference to a man under the law, it is adverse to the Pelagian heresy:

‘But,’ says Pelagius, ‘why should I thus exclaim, who am now baptized in Christ? Let them make such an exclamation who have not yet perceived such a benefit, and whose expressions the Apostle transferred to himself, if indeed this is said by them?’

But this defense of nature does not permit them to cry out with this voice. For nature does not exist in those who are baptized; and, in those who are not baptized, nature has no existence. Or, if nature is granted to be vitiated even in baptized persons, so that they exclaim, not without sufficient reason, — *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* And if succour is afforded to them in that which immediately follows, *The Grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord*, let it now at length be granted, that human nature requires the aid of a Physician (*On Nature and Grace*, cap. 54).

From these remarks it is apparent, according to the mind of St Augustine, that this passage, even when it is understood in reference to a natural man, is destructive to that dogma of Pelagius, in which he asserts that the natural man is able, by the powers of nature, to perform the law of God.

Thus also in a passage upon which we have already made some observations from his *Retractations*, lib. 1, cap. 23, St Augustine openly affirms that this chapter, when explained as relating to a man under the law, confutes the Pelagian heresy. These are his words: ‘By this, indeed, is now overturned the Pelagian heresy, that will not admit that the love, by which we live good and pious lives, is from God to us, but that asserts it to be from ourselves.’

Besides, if we can obtain from them even this admission, that those who are not yet baptized implore the aid of the Saviour’s grace, this will indeed be no small matter against that false defense of nature, as being sufficient for itself, and of the power of free will. For he is not sufficient for himself who says, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?* or else he must be said to possess full liberty, who still requires to be liberated (*On Nature and Grace*, cap. 55).

But at this point, on account of which we have undertaken the consideration of these things, the Apostle begins to introduce his own person, and to speak as if concerning himself. In this passage the Pelagians are unwilling that the Apostle himself should be understood, but assert that he has transferred to himself another man who is yet placed under the law, and not delivered through grace, in which passage they ought indeed to concede ‘that by the law no man is justified.’ as the same Apostle has declared in another part of his writings, but that the law is of force for the knowledge of sin and the transgression of the law itself; that, after sin has been known and increased,

grace may be required through faith (*Against the two Epistles of the Pelagians to Boniface*, lib. 1, cap. 8).

4. 'But,' some man will say, 'the Pelagians have interpreted that chapter as applicable to a man who is unregenerate, not without good reason. They undoubtedly knew that such an interpretation was peculiarly favourable to their sentiments which they defended against the church.'
- OBJECTION *and*
an ANSWER *to*
it.

To this I reply, FIRST. It has already been shown, both in reality, and by the testimony of St Augustine, that this chapter, even when understood as applicable to a man under the law, and not yet regenerate, is adverse to the Pelagian doctrine.

SECONDLY. It may have happened that the Pelagians supposed the chapter might be explained in reference to a man placed under the law, and not under grace, without any consideration of the controversy in which they were engaged with the orthodox.

THIRDLY. It cannot favour the sentiments of the Pelagians, that the Apostle is said in this chapter to be treating about a man under the law; but this might be favourable, that they adduced *such a description of a man who is under the law, as they knew was accommodated to strengthen their sentiments.* For they said that

a man under this law is he who, by the power and instinct of nature (which was not corrupted in Adam), is able to will that which is good, and not to will what is evil; but who, through a depraved habit, was so bound to the service of sin, as in reality, and actually he was not able to perform the good which he would, etc.

This false description of the man might also be met, not by denying that the subject of this chapter is a man under the law, but by refuting that description. For heretics are not heretical on all subjects and in every point; and it is their usual practice to intermix true things with those which are false, and frequently on true foundations to erect a superstructure of falsehoods, — I repeat it, *on true foundations*, which, by some artifice, or by manifest violence are perverted to the support of falsehoods.

Another OBJECTION —
 that Prosper Dysidaeus, the Samosatene, explains this Chapter in the same Manner.
 ANSWER — No Heretic is in Error on every Point. The Jesuits, those Myrmidons of the Pope, explain this Chapter as referring to a Man placed under Grace.

5. It is objected, besides,

‘It is impossible for this opinion not to be heretical or allied to heresy, when we see one PROSPER DYSIDAEUS, a Samosatene, who is deeply polluted by a multitude of heresies, interpreting Romans vii in reference to a man who is not yet under grace, but under the law, which he undoubtedly would not have done, had he not understood that through it he had a mighty support for his own heresies.’

REPLY. — This objection is truly ridiculous; as if he who is a heretic ought to err in all things, and can speak nothing that is true, or if he does utter any truth, the whole of it must be referred to the confirmation of his heresy. Even the very worst of heretics have, in some articles, held the same sentiments as those of the Church. It is a well known fact that the ancient heretics endeavoured, and indeed were accustomed, to interpret many passages of Scripture against the orthodox, in such a way as they could not injure their several heresies. Yet these very passages are, even at the present time, explained by our theologians against the sense of the ancient orthodox, and in accordance with the interpretation of those heretics. But such persons are not, on this account, to be denominated ‘the favourers of heresies.’

But I am desirous to have it demonstrated to me what affinity my explanation of Romans vii has with Arianism or Samosateneism. If the same person, who is either an Arian or a Samosatene, is likewise earnest about the perfection of righteousness in this life, he will deny that this chapter ought to be understood as relating to the regenerate, not as he is either a Samosatene or an Arian, but as he is a Pelagian or a follower of Celestius.

If it be allowable to reason in this manner, then the opinion which explains this chapter as referring to a man under grace, will itself labour under great prejudices, from the fact that it is generally so interpreted by the Jesuits, and by their leaders, who are the sworn enemies of the church of Christ, and of the Truth, and, at the same time, the most able retainers of the Popish church, that is, of a church which is idolatrous, tyrannical, and most polluted with innumerable heresies. Away, then, with such a mode of argumentation as this, about the explanation of any portion of Scripture! Let it never proceed from the mind or the lips of those persons who, with a good conscience, have undertaken the defense of the Truth. Who does not perceive that arguments of this kind are employed for the purpose of abashing and unsettling the minds of ignorant and inexperienced hearers; that, being blinded by a certain fear and stupor, they may not be able to form a judgment on the Truth, nay, that they may not dare to touch the matter under controversy, through a vain fear of heresy! Such artifices as these are notorious; and all men of learning and moderation are aware of them. Nor are they capable of proving injurious to any persons except to the unlearned and the simple, or to those who have

spontaneously determined to wander into error. For we have shewn that this chapter has been understood in the same sense as we interpret it, by many Doctors of the Church, who declared and proved themselves to be the most eminent adversaries of Arianism, Samosatenianism, and other heresies, and the most strenuous defendants of the true doctrine concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Gracious Lord! What a wide and ample plain is here opened for those persons who feel a pleasure in thrusting out the most able and efficient assertors of Catholic Doctrine into the camp of heretics, under this pretext, that they Interpret certain passages of Scripture which have been usually adduced for the refutation of heresy, in such a manner as not to enable other persons to attack heresies with those passages so interpreted.

6. LASTLY. This, my explanation is burdened with another objection — that ‘it differs from the Confessions of all the Reformed Churches in Europe, for the establishment of which such a multitude of Martyrs have shed their blood.’

This argument likewise, I assert, is employed, not for teaching the truth, but to inflame and blind the minds of those who listen to it, [*prae furore*] through the indignation which they conceive. For I deny that, in any Confession, — whether that of the French, the Dutch, the Swiss, the Savoy, the English, the Scotch, the Bohemian, or the Lutheran churches, or of any other, — there is extant a single article that is contrary to this interpretation, or that is in the least weakened by this interpretation of Romans vii. It may, indeed, possibly have happened that some portion of this chapter has been used in some Confession for the establishment of a doctrine which cannot be confirmed from it, unless it be explained as relating to a regenerate man who is under grace. But how does this circumstance militate against him who approves of the very same doctrine, and defends it in an earnest and accurate manner, by adducing several other passages of Scripture in its support, Such a man affirms this alone, — that the true doctrine, in whose defense it has been cited, is not sufficiently well defended by this passage of Holy Writ. And what man ever shed his blood, or was compelled to shed it, because he was of opinion that this chapter ought to be explained in reference to a regenerate man, and not to a man who is under the law?

I speak with freedom, and frankly declare that, while I am listening to such reasons, I am scarcely able to govern and restrain myself from openly crying out, through grief, that God would have mercy on those who teach these things, and would put within them a good mind and a sincere conscience, lest, while rushing headlong against conscience, they at length receive due punishment for the demerit of malignant ignorance, or that he would be pleased to hinder their attempts, or at least, that he would render them abortive, lest they should injure the Truth which has been Divinely manifested, and the church of Christ! For I cannot put any milder construction on such expressions, when they proceed from men that are endued with knowledge and

A Third OBJECTION — That his Interpretation differs from the Confessions of the Reformed Churches, which have been framed and established by the Blood of Martyrs. ANSWER — No Article of any Confession is contrary to this Interpretation: No man ever shed his Blood for the contrary Interpretation. Numbers of Martyrs were not even interrogated about this Article on the Perfection of Righteousness.

11 *Our Opinion is Opposed to the Pelagian Heresy*

understanding.

All those matters contained in Confessions are not equally necessary. All the particulars in any Confession are not confirmed by the blood of those who are dragged away to the stake not for the whole of that Confession, but on account of some part of it. And we know that many thousands of Martyrs have sealed the truth of the Gospel with their blood, who were never questioned respecting this article of *the perfection or imperfection of righteousness*, and who never expended any thoughts upon it. I refer now to this Question: ‘Are those who, through Christ, are justified and sanctified, able in this life to fulfill the law of God without any defect, through the assistance of Christ and the Spirit of grace?’ For all Christians are well assured, that, without the grace of Christ, they are not able to do any good whatsoever. Wherefore, the use of this kind of argument must be laid aside by those who are good and conscientious inquirers after the truth, and who endeavour to preserve her when she is discovered.

Part IV

Fourth Part

12 The opposite opinion is approved by none of the ancient doctors of the church

THESIS. — The meaning which the greater part of our modern Divines ascribe to the Apostle in this chapter, is not approved by any of the Ancient Doctors of the Church, not even by Augustine himself; but by many of them, it was repudiated and rejected.

1. In this thesis, I do not assert that none of the Ancient Doctors has interpreted this chapter as relating to a man who is regenerate and placed under grace; for I have already confessed that St Augustine and some others give it that interpretation. But I affirm that the interpretation of our divines differs from the explanation of those Ancients in a point of great moment; and so great is this difference, that, except by a forced construction and a meaning contrary to the mind of those old authors themselves, the Moderns are unable to confirm their opinion on this subject by the authority of the Ancients. This will, I think, be proved with sufficient accuracy, if it be shewn that those things which the Apostle attributes to this man, are received by our divines in a widely different acceptation from that in which they were understood by those among the Ancients who explained the chapter as relating to a man under grace. Indeed the Moderns receive it in a sense so far different and dissenting from this explanation of some of the Ancients, that these very Ancients have entertained the opinion that these attributes [in Rom. vii], when received according to their modern construction by our divines, do not agree with a man who is regenerate and under grace, but with one who is placed under the law.

The truth of this affirmation I will now proceed to point out in the following manner: That GOOD which the Apostle says he indeed wills but does not, and that EVIL which, he says, he wills not and yet does, are interpreted by most of our divines as referring to ACTUAL GOOD AND EVIL. And they explain the evil by that very deed which is committed, with the consent of the will, through the lusting of the flesh against the lusting of the Spirit; in like manner, they explain the GOOD by that very deed which a man indeed lusts or desires to do according to the Spirit, but which he does not actually perform, being hindered by the lusting of the flesh. let the Commentaries of our divines be examined, and it will at once be evident that this is their interpretation of the chapter; and this is openly declared by those who, on this subject, are opposed to me in opinion.

The Ancients who have interpreted this Chapter as relating to a Man under Grace, and the Moderns who give it a similar Interpretation, differ very materially from each other; because, by the GOOD which the Apostle says he wills and does not, and by the EVIL which he says he wills not and does, the Ancients understand only the NOT-INDULGING IN CONCUPISCENCE, and the INDULGING in it; while the Moderns understand GOOD and EVIL actually performed.

But when St Augustine, and all those ancients whom I have had an opportunity of perusing, interpret this chapter as referring to a man who is regenerate and placed under grace, they assert that the EVIL which the Apostle says he would not, but did, is *to lust* or desire; but they interpret the GOOD which he says he would, but did not, by *not lusting* or coveting; yet they make a distinction between these two

- *lusting* and *going after their lusts*,
- and *not lusting* and *not going after their lusts*.

In a manner nearly similar, the Apostle St James denotes this difference in his Epistle, i. 14, 15, 'But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin,' that is, actual sin; 'and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.'

That such was the Opinion of the Ancients is proved by Citations from Epiphanius, Augustine, Bede, and Thomas Aquinas.

2. That this was the meaning of the ancients, is proved by

a) EPIPHANIUS

For, that which is said, 'What I do I allow not, but what I hate that I do,' must not be received concerning that evil which we have performed and completed, but concerning that about which we have only thought (*Heresy 64th, against Origen, lib. 2, tom. 2*).

Otherwise, how should the Apostle have indeed chiefly done the evil which displeased him, but not the good which was pleasing, if he had not spoken about extraneous thoughts, which we have occasionally thought, and not willing them, not knowing from what cause they arise? (*ibid.*).

For this good is perfect, not only to abstain from doing, but likewise from thinking; and the good is not done which we will, but the evil which we will not (*ibid.*).

Wherefore, this is placed within us: to will, that we will not think about these things. Yet this is not placed within us: to gain our end, that they be dispersed so as not to return again to our minds, but only that we may in some degree use them, or not use them; as is the sentiment in the subsequent passage: 'For the good that I would I do not;' for I will not to think on those things which hurt me, because this is a good and immaculate employment, and devoid of reprehension, according to the common saying [in reference to another affair], 'a square may be formed either in the mind, or by the hands, without any blame.' Therefore, 'the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do;' I will not to think, and yet I think on those things which I will not (*ibid.*).

In a subsequent passage, when refuting those who interpreted this passage as descriptive of the deeds performed by the Apostle himself, his words are:

But now, if any venture to dispute these words by objecting,

The Apostle teaches us this, by these words, — *For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do,* — that they are to be referred not only to *our thinking evil in our minds* from which we are averse and which we avoid, but likewise to our actually doing and performing evil,

we therefore request the man who reasons thus, if what he says be correct, to explain to us what that Evil was which, though the Apostle hated and nilled to do, yet he did it. Or, on the contrary, let him inform us what good that was which he willed greatly to perform, but which he was not able to do, etc. (*ibid.*)

Consult the remaining portion of this passage.

b) AUGUSTINE

And it follows, ‘I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me;’ that is, I find a law to be within me when I will to do the good which the law wills; because ‘evil is present,’ not with the law itself which says, ‘Thou shalt not covet’ or lust, but ‘evil is present with me,’ because I likewise unwillingly lust (*On Marriage and Concupiscence*, cap. 30, tom. 7.)

To ‘the body of this death,’ therefore, is understood to belong, that ‘another law in the members wages war indeed against the law of the mind;’ while the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, although it does not subjugate the mind, because the Spirit also lusteth against the flesh; and thus, though the law of sin itself holds some part of the flesh in captivity, by which it may resist the law of the mind, yet it does not reign in our body, though it be mortal, if we do not obey it in the lusts thereof (*ibid.* cap. 31).

But the Apostle subjoins this expression: ‘So, then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin,’ which must be understood in this manner: ‘With my mind I serve the law of God, *by not consenting to the law of sin*; but with the flesh, I serve the law of sin *by having desires of sin*, to which, though I do not yield my consent, yet I am not totally free from them’ (*ibid.*).

Or perhaps we are afraid of those words which follow: ‘For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.’ Are we afraid that, from these words, any one should suspect the Apostle of consenting to the concupiscence of the flesh to evil works, But we must take into our consideration that which the Apostle immediately subjoins: ‘If, then, I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.’ For he here says that he consents to the law more than to the concupiscence of the flesh because he bestows on this latter the appellation of ‘Sin.’ Therefore, he said that he does and performs not with an [*affectu*] inclination of consenting and fulfilling, but with the very

motion of lusting or coveting. Hence, therefore, he says, 'I consent to the law that it is good.' 'I consent,' because I will what it does not will. He afterwards says, 'Now it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.' What does this mean, 'Now then,' except that he is now under grace, which has delivered the delighting of the will from consenting with lust, Neither is the other part of the clause any better understood: 'It is no more I that do it,' than that he does not now consent to 'yield his members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin.' For if he both lusts, and consents, and performs, how is it 'no more he that does it,' though he is grieved at his doing it, and grievously groans on account of having been conquered? (*Against the two Epistles of the Pelagians*, cap. 10).

For this is 'to perform that which is good,' that a man do not indulge in concupiscence or lust. But this good is imperfect when the man lusts, though he does not consent to concupiscence for evil (*ibid.*).

And from these things he afterwards concludes, 'So, then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin,' that is, 'with the flesh, the law of sin' by indulging in concupiscence, 'but with the mind, the law of God' by not consenting to such concupiscence (*ibid.*).

He does not say, how *to do* or *to perform*, but 'how to *fulfill* or *complete* that which is good;' because to perform or to do what is good, is, not to go after lusts; but to *fulfill* or to *perfect* what is good, is not to lust or to indulge in concupiscence. That, therefore, which is said to the Galatians (v. 16), 'ye shall not fulfill or perfect the lusts of the flesh,' is said about a contrary object in this passage of the Epistle to the Romans, 'but how to fulfill or perfect that which is good, I find not.' Because those lusts are not perfected or fulfilled in evil, when the assent of our will is not added to them; nor is our will perfected or fulfilled in good, so long as the motion of those lusts continues, though we do not consent to such motion. But this conflict, in which even those who are baptized struggle as in an agony, when 'the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh,' in which the Spirit also *does* or *performs* a good work, by not consenting to evil concupiscence; but it does not *fulfill* or *perfect* such work, because it does not consume or remove those evil desires or lusts. The flesh, likewise, *does* or *performs* an evil desire; but it does not *fulfill* or *perfect* it, because, the Spirit not consenting to it, the flesh also does not [*pervenit*] come so far as to the condemned works. This conflict, therefore, is not that of the Jews nor of any other description of men whatsoever, but it is evidently that of Christian believers, and of those who live good lives and labour hard in this contest, as is briefly shewn by the Apostle, in Romans vii. 25, where he says, 'then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin' (*Against Julian the Pelagian*, lib. 1, cap. 26).

Be unwilling, therefore, to do that which you are not willing to suffer; and do not say, that we allure you to sweet deeds, about which we cite the Apostle as thus declaring himself: 'For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing.' For, though 'they do not *perfect* or *fulfill* the good which they would' in not indulging in concupiscence; yet they *do* or *perform* good, in not going after their lusts (*ibid.* lib. 5, cap. 5).

Be it far from us, therefore, to assert what you pretend, that we affirm that,

the Apostle spake these words as though he was desirous to be understood by them, that he was in the act of fornication, struggling hard against it, whilst he was led away by some hand of a pestiferous voluptuousness,

when the Apostle himself says, *It is no more I that do it*; thus shewing that the lusts of the flesh did work only a libidinous impulse without a consent to the sin (*ibid.* lib. 6, cap. 11).

He likewise refrains himself from every evil thing, who has sin which he does not suffer to reign within him, and into whom secretly creeps a reprehensible thought which he does not permit to arrive at the end [intended] of a deed or performance. But it is one thing *not to have sin*, and it is another *not to obey its desires or lusts*. it is one thing to *fulfill that which is commanded*, 'Thou shalt not covet or lust,' and it is another at least, *by a certain attempt at abstinence, to do that which is also written*: 'Thou shalt not go after thy lusts.' Yet it is impossible for us to know any of these things correctly, without the grace of the Saviour. To do or perform righteousness, therefore, in the true worship of God, is to fight by an internal conflict against the inward evil of concupiscence, and not at all to have, to perfect, or fulfill [*adversarium*] that which is its opposite. For he who fights, is still not only in great peril, but is also sometimes smitten, though he is not utterly cast down. But he who has no adversary, rejoices in full peace and tranquillity. He also is most truly said to be without sin, in whom no sin dwells, but not he, who, through abstaining from an evil work, says, 'It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me' (*On Nature and Grace*, cap. 62).

Therefore, the Apostle 'does that which he would not,' because he wills not to lust or indulge in concupiscence, and yet he lusts; therefore, 'he does that which he would not.' Did that evil concupiscence draw the Apostle into subjection to concupiscence to commit fornication? Far from it. Let not such a thought as this arise in our hearts. He struggled hard, and was not subdued. But because he was unwilling also to have this against which he was struggling, therefore, he said, 'I do that which I would not;' I am unwilling to indulge in concupiscence, and yet I lust.

Therefore, 'I do that which I would not,' but yet I do not consent to concupiscence. For otherwise he would not have said, 'Ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh,' if he himself fulfilled them (*On Time, Sermon 55*, tom. 10).

How do I *perform* that which is good, and not *perfect* what is good, I *do* or *perform* good, when I do not consent to evil concupiscence; but I do not *perfect* or *fulfill* what is good, in not entirely refraining from concupiscence. Again, therefore, how does my enemy *perform* that which is evil, and not *perfect* what is evil? He *does* or *performs* evil, because he moves an evil desire; and he does not *perfect* what is evil, because he does not draw me to evil (*ibid.*).

'With the mind, I myself serve the law of God,' by not consenting, 'but with the flesh, the law of sin,' by not indulging in concupiscence (*ibid.*).

Hence, also this expression, 'I do that which I would not;' 'for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit' and I am unwilling that it should lust. I account it a great matter if I do not consent, for I wish to abstain from it; therefore, 'I do that which I would not.' For I will that the flesh lust not against the Spirit, and I am unable; this is what I have said, 'I do that which I would not' (*Sermon 13th, On the Words of the Apostle*).

If, therefore, 'the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,' that in this very thing you do not what you would, because you will not to indulge in concupiscence and are not able, [to refrain from such indulgence], at least hold thy will in the grace of the Lord, and persevere by its assistance. Repeat before him that which you have sung, 'Direct my steps according to thy word; and let not any iniquity have dominion over me' (Psalm cxix. 133). What is this, 'Let not any iniquity have dominion over me'? Listen to the Apostle: 'Let not sin reign in your mortal body.' What is this reigning, 'By obeying it in the lusts thereof.' He has not said, Do not have evil desires. For how have I not evil desires 'in this mortal body,' in which 'the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh'? This thing, therefore, 'Let not sin reign,' etc. (*ibid.*).

c) VENERABLE BEDE

But if it be himself, (that is, the Apostle), let us not so understand that which he has said: 'What I would, that do I not, but what I hate, that I do;' as if he willed to be chaste and yet was an adulterer, or willed to be merciful and was cruel, or willed to be pious and was impious. But what are we to understand, I will not to indulge in concupiscence, and yet I do indulge in it (*On Romans 7*).

Though I do not consent to concupiscence, and though I do not go after my lusts, yet I still indulge in concupiscence (*ibid.*).

What is it that *I hate*? To indulge in concupiscence: I hate to indulge

in concupiscence, and yet I do so from my flesh and not from my mind (*ibid.*).

But *that which I do*, is to indulge in concupiscence, not to consent to it; that no one may now seek in the Apostle an example for himself of sinning, and afford a bad example. ‘What I would, that do I not.’ For what says the law? ‘Thou shalt not lust or covet.’ And I would not lust, and yet I do lust, although I do not yield up my consent to concupiscence, and though I do not go after it. For I offer resistance, I turn away my mind, I give a denial to the instruments, I repress my members; and yet that is done within me which I will not. That which the law likewise wills not, I nill with the law. What it would not, that I would not. Therefore, ‘I consent to the law.’ I am in the flesh, I am in the mind; but I am more in the mind than in the flesh. Because, when I am in the mind, I am in that which governs; for the mind governs; the flesh is governed. And I am more in that by which I rule or govern, than in that by which I am governed. Therefore, I rule more in the mind (*ibid.*).

d) THOMAS AQUINAS

To will is present with me] That is, to me who am now recovered by grace. It is through the operation of Divine grace, by which indeed I not only will that which is good, but I also perform something that is good, because I offer resistance to concupiscence, and under the guidance of the Spirit, I act against it. But I do not find in my power the manner in which I may perform that which is good, that is, in order entirely to exclude concupiscence (*On Romans 7*).

3. But these two explanations of those attributes are, in the judgment of those very ancients who have explained this chapter as relating to a regenerate man, so vastly diverse and dissentient, that the same things cannot agree with a regenerate man according to both these explanations; nay, that, according to the First of these explanations, they can agree with *a regenerate man*, but according to the Second they can agree only with *a man who is under sin and under the law*. This I will now proceed to prove from the testimonies of those ancients themselves:

a) AUGUSTINE

For in no better manner is this understood, ‘*It is no more I that do it,*’ than that he does not consent ‘to yield his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.’ For if he both lusts, and consents, and does, how is it ‘no more he that does it,’ though he is grieved that he does it, and groans grievously at being conquered (*Against the two Epistles of the Pelagians*, lib. I, cap. 10).

On two of these three passages we have before disputed, and which say, ‘But I am carnal, sold under sin:’ And this is the third: ‘Bringing me into

The Difference between these two diverse Explanations of Good and Evil is so great, in the Judgment of the Ancients, that, according to both Explanations, they cannot agree with a regenerate Man. This is proved by Citations from Augustine, Bede, Thomas Aquinas, and Hugh the Cardinal.

captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.' On account of all the three, the Apostle may seem to be describing him who is still living under the law, and not yet under grace. But as we have already expounded the two former of them to be spoken in reference to the flesh which is yet corruptible, so may this third passage likewise be understood; as if it said that I was brought into captivity by the flesh not by the mind, by motion not by consent; and that it therefore brought me into captivity, because in my flesh itself there is no other than our common [sinful] nature (*ibid.*).

He is spiritual because he lives according to the Spirit; but still, on the part of mortal flesh, the same man is spiritual and carnal. Behold the spiritual man: 'With the mind I myself serve the law of God.' Behold the carnal man: 'But with the flesh I serve the law of sin.' Is, then, this same man both spiritual and carnal? He is evidently so, as long as he is a dweller on earth. Whosoever thou art, be not surprised if thou yieldest and consentest to any lusts whatsoever, since thou either supposest them to be good for fulfilling libidinous excess, or thou undoubtedly seest them now to be so evil, that yet by yielding to them thou consentest, and followest whither they lead, and dost perpetrate those things which they wickedly suggest; thou art entirely carnal, whosoever thou art that dost correspond with this description, — thou art totally carnal. But if indeed thou lustest or desirest that which the law forbids when it says: 'Thou shalt not covet,' yet if thou dost also observe that other thing which the law likewise says, 'Thou shalt not go after thy lusts,' in thy mind thou art spiritual, and in thy flesh carnal. For it is one thing, not to lust or not to indulge in concupiscence; and it is another, not to go after its lusts. The non-indulgence in concupiscence is the property of one who is entirely perfect; not to go after his lusts, is that of one who is fighting, engaged in a struggle, and labouring. Let me be allowed, likewise, to add what the thing itself requires, that it is also the property of him who does not walk after his lusts; it is the property of a man who is conquering and overcoming. For the first of these [the non-indulgence in concupiscence] is obtained by the battle, the struggle and the labour, but not till after the victory has been secured (*On the Words of the Apostle, Sermon 5*).

It is apparent, therefore, from the mind of St Augustine, that, if this chapter be explained as relating to consent and to the actual perpetration of evil, it can by no means be understood concerning a regenerate man, but concerning a man who is under the law, and 'is merely carnal,' as he expresses himself.

b) VENERABLE BEDE

We know that the law is spiritual] There is, therefore, perhaps, some other; probably thou art the man; either thou art he, or I am. If, then, he be some one of us, let us listen to him about himself, and, not being

offended, let us correct ourselves. But if it be himself, (that is, the Apostle), let us not so understand that which he has said: ‘What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do;’ as if it was his will to be chaste and yet he was an adulterer, or to be merciful and yet was cruel, or to be pious and yet was impious. But what are we to understand? My will is, not to indulge in concupiscence; and yet I do indulge in it (*On Romans* 7).

c) THOMAS AQUINAS

Of all these writers, Thomas Aquinas most plainly places the two explanations in opposition to each other; and he declares that the things which are in this chapter attributed by the Apostle to the man about whom he is treating, according to one of these explanations agree with a regenerate man, but, according to the other they agree with a man who is under sin:

Man, therefore, is said to be carnal, because his reason is carnal. It is called ‘carnal’ on two accounts:

- On the FIRST, because when the reason consents to those things to which it is instigated by the flesh, it is brought into subjection to the flesh, according to the declaration in 1 Corinthians iii. 3: ‘For, whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal?’ In this manner, it is also understood about a man not yet restored by grace.
- On the SECOND account, reason is said to be carnal from the circumstance of its being attacked by the flesh¹; according to that declaration in Gal. v. 17, ‘The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.’ And, in this manner, the reason even of a man who is placed under grace is understood to be carnal. But both these carnalities proceed from sin, etc.

Hence he says, ‘For that which I do I understand not,’ [or ‘allow not,’] that is, that it ought to be performed. This may indeed be understood in two ways:

- In the ONE mode, it may be understood concerning him who is subjected to sin, who knows in general that sin must not be committed, yet, being conquered, by the suggestion of the Devil, or by passion, or by the inclination of a perverse habit, he commits it, and is, therefore, said to perform that which he understands ought not to be performed, doing this against his conscience, as it is said in

¹Arminius has the following marginal note on this passage: “This [*notatio*] argument deduced from the supposed original signification of the word is absurd; nor is it to be understood that ‘*reason* is called *carnal* because it is attacked by the flesh.’ For according to this mode of argumentation, St Paul will be *diabolical* because he was assaulted by *the Devil*.”

Luke xii. 47, 'That servant, who knew his Lord's will, and did not according to his will, shall deservedly be beaten with many stripes.'

- In the OTHER mode, it may be understood concerning him who is placed in grace, who indeed does that which is evil; not indeed by executing it in operation or with a consenting mind, but only by indulging in concupiscence according to [*passionem*] the feeling of the sensual appetite. And that concupiscence is on account of the reason and the understanding, because it precedes his judgment, at this approach of which such an actual operation is hindered, etc.

FIRST, therefore, he says, in reference to the omission of good, 'for the good which it is my will to do, I do not.'

- This may indeed be understood, in one mode, about a man who is placed under sin; and thus that which he says in this place, 'I do,' must be received according to a complete act, which is exercised externally, through the consent of reason. But when he says, 'It is my will,' it must be understood not indeed in reference to a complete will which is preceptive of a work or operation, but in reference to a certain incomplete will, by which men will in general that which is good, as they also have in general a correct judgment concerning one thing; and such a will is corrupted in particular because it does not what it understands in general ought to be done, and that which it wills to do.
- But according to its being understood respecting a man recovered by grace, we must, on the contrary, understand by this which he says, 'It is my will,' a complete will continuing throughout in the election or choice of a particular operation, that by this which he says, 'I do,' may be understood an incomplete act which consists only in the sensual appetite, and does not extend to the consent of reason. For a man who is placed under grace, *wills* indeed to preserve his mind from corrupt lusts; but he *does not perform* this good, because of the inordinate motions of concupiscence which rise up in his sensual appetite. Similar to this is what he says in Gal. v. 17, 'so that ye do not the things which ye would.'

SECONDLY, he subjoins, in reference to the perpetration of evil, 'But the evil which I hate, that I do.' If this be indeed understood concerning a man who is a sinner, then by this which is said, 'I hate,' is understood a certain imperfect hatred, according to which every man naturally hates evil. But by this which he says, 'I do,' is understood an act perfected by the execution of a work according to the consent of reason; for that hatred in general is taken away in a particular which is eligible through the inclination of a habit or passion. But if it be understood concerning a man placed under grace, then by this which he says, 'I do,' is,

on the contrary, understood an imperfect act, which consists solely in the concupiscence of the sensual appetite; and by this which he says, 'I hate,' is understood a perfect hatred, by which any one perseveres in the detestation of evil, until the final reprobation of it, etc.

But the law of sin brings a man into captivity in two ways: By the ONE mode, through consent and operation, it captivates a man who is a sinner; by the OTHER mode, it captivates a man placed under grace, with respect to the motion of concupiscence.

Grace delivers from the body of this death in two ways:

- By the ONE mode, that the corruption of the body may not have the dominion over the mind, drawing it to summit sin.
- By the OTHER mode, that the corruption of the body may be totally removed.

Therefore, with respect to the FIRST, it appertains to the sinner to say,

Grace has delivered me from the body of this death, that is, it has delivered me from sin, into which my soul was led through the corruption of the body.

But from sin a righteous man has been already delivered; wherefore it belong, to him to say,

The grace of God hath made me free from the body of this death, that is, that there may not be in my body the corruption of sin or of death,

which will occur in the resurrection.

Afterwards when he says 'so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God,' etc., he infers a conclusion, which is inferred according to these two premised expositions, in different ways, from the premises. For, according to the exposition of the preceding words in the person of a sinner, the conclusion must be inferred thus:

It has been said that the grace of God hath made me free from the body of this death, that I may not be led away by it to sin. Therefore, since I shall now be free, with the mind I serve the law of God; but with the flesh I serve the law of sin, which indeed remains in the flesh with respect to the fuel, by which the flesh lusts against the Spirit.

But if the preceding words be understood [as proceeding] from the person of a righteous man, then the conclusion must be thus inferred:

The grace of God through Jesus Christ hath made me free from the body of this death; that is, so that the corruption of sin and death may not be in me.

d) HUGH THE CARDINAL

There is, therefore, now no condemnation] The preceding words have been expounded concerning the captivity of mortal sin, under which the man was carnally living; and concerning the captivity of venial sin, of the man who is in grace. But he gives the appellation of 'mortal sin' to that which is exercised in operation itself, and 'venial' to that which consists in the act and motion of lusting or indulging in concupiscence, without the consent of the will.

Part V
Fifth Part

13 The opposite opinion is injurious to grace and hurtful to good morals

THESIS. — The Opinion which affirms, that this Chapter treats about a Man who is regenerate and placed under Grace; and which also interprets the Good which this Man would and does not, and the Evil which he would not but does, as referring to actual Good and Evil; is injurious to Grace, and inimical to good Morals.

1. That this modern Opinion is injurious to Divine Grace, I demonstrate in the following manner:

An injury is inflicted on grace, not only by him who attributes to nature or to free will that which belongs to grace, that is, having taken it away from grace; but likewise by him who attributes to it less than is its due, and than ought truly to be ascribed to grace. In the last of these modes, this modern opinion is inimical to grace: For it attributes less than, according to the Scriptures, ought to be ascribed to grace. The Scriptures ascribe to Divine Grace, that, in the regenerate, it worketh not only to *will* but also to *do* (Phil. ii. 13); that, by its power, our old man is crucified, and the body of sin is destroyed or enervated, so that henceforth we should not obey it in the lusts thereof; that, through grace, the regenerate are dead indeed unto sin, and are raised up again to walk in newness of life, in which they serve not sin but God, neither do they yield their members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but as instruments of righteousness to God (Rom. vi. 2–13); that, through the efficacy of the Spirit, they mortify the deeds of the body (viii. 13); and that grace not only supplies to the regenerate strength to resist the world, Satan, and the flesh, but, likewise, power to gain the victory over them (Ephes. vi. 11–18; James iv. 4–8; 1 John iv. 4; v. 4; etc., etc.).

But this modern opinion attributes to grace, that its only effect in the regenerate is *to will* and *not to do*, that it is too weak to crucify the old man, to destroy the body of sin, or to conquer the flesh, the world and Satan. For the regenerate man, according to this opinion, is said to obey sin in its lusts, and to walk after the desires of the flesh; though he is said to do this, compelled by the violence of sin, in opposition to conscience, and with a reluctant will. For the interpretation and addition alter the mode of obedience by which men obey sin; it does not deny obedience itself. This was also the cause why St Augustine interpreted the chapter in reference to concupiscence; for he perceived that if he interpreted it concerning actual sins, he would be inflicting an injury on grace.

It is First shewn, that the Interpretation of Romans vii, which prevails in the Present Day is injurious to Grace, by attributing to it less than is proper.

a) *The Contest which is described in that Chapter, cannot be attributed to the Holy Spirit dwelling in a man, without manifest contumely to the Holy Ghost.*

a) I am desirous that it should be made the subject of diligent consideration, and that it should be frequently and deliberately pondered, whether the contest which is said to be described in this chapter can be ascribed to the indwelling Holy Spirit, without manifest contumely and dishonour to the grace of Christ and of His Spirit, if this be laid down as the issue of the contest, that the man works from the will of the flesh, not from concupiscence of the Spirit. This is the result of the battle, which is laid down by those who interpret the chapter concerning actual good and evil. To any who earnestly peruses the passage, it will indeed appear evident that such a contest cannot be ascribed to the Holy Spirit, without enormous disgrace to Him. For, what is it? It is said to be a contest, and a waging of war between ‘the law of the mind,’ that is, the Holy Spirit dwelling within, and ‘the law of the members;’ and the victory is assigned to the law of the members against the law of the mind; for it leads the man away, as a captive, to the law of sin, the Holy Spirit, who dwells within vainly resisting and warring against it. Under these circumstances, is not the Holy Spirit represented as being much weaker than the law in the members, that is, than the lust of the flesh and indwelling sin, The man who denies this, will deny that the sun shines when he is to be seen in all his meridian splendour. For, in this place, no mention is made of his spontaneous yielding or surrender, of desisting from the combat, or the casting away of his weapons, which we have declared to be the cause why he who begins to fight in the Spirit is conquered by the flesh. But no mention of such circumstances can here be made; for it is said to be a battle, and a waging of war not between ‘the law of the members’ and a man who uses ‘the law of the mind,’ but to be between ‘the law of the mind’ and ‘the law of the members;’ to which law of the mind the *casting away of its weapons* cannot be attributed, for it is itself engaged in the battle and not by proxy. Neither can a *desisting from the combat* be ascribed to the law of the mind before it has actually been conquered and overcome. Much less can a *spontaneous* surrender be attributed to it, because this can by no means occur between these two combatants. For ‘the law of the mind’ must necessarily lose its life, and cease to have any existence, before it willingly and spontaneously yields to the rebellious flesh.

b) *An Objection and Reply.*

b) Some one, however, may reply,

This is a metaphorical kind of speaking or discourse, and through a Prosopopoeia, a person and the properties of a person are attributed to the law of the mind and to that of the members. But, properly and without any trope or figure, this man is said to fight with himself; that is, the man, as *he is regenerate*, fights with himself as *he is unregenerate*.

My answer to this is, there is nothing to prevent the thing from being

done in the manner now specified; for a regenerate man, *as such*, fights in the power and strength of the grace and the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, if *while fighting* he is conquered, the grace and the Spirit of Christ are overcome, which would be a fact most ignominious to the grace and Spirit of Christ. But if he be conquered *while in a state of nonresistance*, and not during the conflict, but after he has cast away his weapons or has desisted from the combat, then this is not the case which is the subject of the present investigation; for, in the case stated by the Apostle, the man is made prisoner *while in actual combat*, not after he has ceased to be a belligerent; because *the effect and accomplishment of this bringing into captivity* is joined to *the act of waging war* and that indeed immediately. But these two are properly joined together, and in a manner that is agreeable to the nature of parties fighting against each other, if ‘the law of the mind,’ that is, the conscience, convinced of the equity and justice of the law, be said to contend with ‘the law of the members;’ for the former is conquered while fighting and in the very midst of the conflict, because it is too weak to be capable of withstanding the impetuosity of the shock against ‘the law of the members,’ that is, the lusts of the flesh and the desires of sin, though it earnestly strives to bear away, by every exertion and with all its powers, the palm of victory from the field of battle.

2. But matter of fact teaches that this opinion is inimical and hurtful to good morals. For nothing can be imagined more noxious to true morality than to assert that ‘it is a property of the regenerate *not to do the good which they would, and to do the evil which they would not;*’ because it necessarily follows from this that those persons flatter themselves in their sins, who, while sinning, feel that they do so with a reluctant conscience and with a will that offered some resistance. For they conclude themselves to be regenerate from this circumstance, — because it is not one of the properties of the unregenerate *to do the evil which they would not, and to omit the performance of the good which they would;* the unregenerate being those who omit the good, and perpetrate the evil, with a full consent of the will, and without any resistance. I truly and sacredly affirm that this has, in more instances than one, fallen within the range of my experience: When I have admonished certain persons to exercise a degree of caution over themselves and to guard against the commission of some wickedness which they knew to be prohibited by the law, they have replied

that it was indeed their will so to refrain, but that they must declare, with the Apostle, *We are unable to perform the good which we would.*

‘I speak the truth in Christ and lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,’ that I have received this very answer from a certain individual, not after he had perpetrated the crime, but when he was previ-

It is SECONDLY shewn, that the modern Interpretation is hurtful to good Morals; because it draws along with it, as a Consequence, that a Man flatters and encourages himself in his Sins, provided only that he commits them with a reluctant Conscience. This is illustrated by some Instances.

ously admonished not to commit it. I am also acquainted with a lady, who on being admonished and blamed for a certain deed which she knew she had perpetrated against the law of God and her own conscience, coolly replied

that as she had done that deed with a reluctant will and not with a full consent, in this she experienced something similar to what the Apostle Paul endured when he said, *The evil that I would not, that I do.*

I have known both men and women, young persons and old, who, when I have explained this Seventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans in the sense in which I defend it in this treatise, have openly confessed to me

that they had always previously entertained the opinion that, if they had actually perpetrated any evil with a reluctant mind, or had omitted the performance of any good when their conscience exclaimed against such omission, it was not necessary for them to care much about the matter or deeply to lament it, since they considered themselves in this respect to be similar to St Paul.

These persons, therefore, have returned me hearty thanks, as they have declared, because, by my interpretation, I had delivered them from that false opinion.

It is likewise confirmed by St Augustine and by the Venerable Bede.

3. But, lest it might appear that I alone make this assertion, and, without any witness or supporter, declare that 'the opinion which interprets this chapter as referring to actual good and evil, is adverse to good morals and to piety,' let us now see what judgment some of the ancients have formed about this matter.

AUGUSTINE

When discussing these words of the Apostle, 'For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do;' this Father makes the following remarks:

As often as the Divine words which have just been recited from the Epistle of the Apostle Paul, are read, it is to be feared that, when they are incorrectly understood, they furnish an occasion to men who are seeking one; because they are inclined to the commission of sin, and with difficulty restrain themselves. Therefore, when they have heard the Apostle declaring, 'For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I hate, that I do,' they commit evil; and, as if displeased with themselves because they thus do evil, they suppose that they resemble the Apostle, who said, 'For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.' For this passage is sometimes read, and at present imposes on us the necessity of admonishing, that, when men take it in a wrong acceptance, they convert salutary food into poison (*On Time, Sermons* 43 and 45, tom. 10).

But lest, in this battle, these Divine words when read should seem, to those who have not a good understanding of them, as the trumpet of the enemy's army and not that of our own ranks, by which we may be incited, and not by which we may be conquered, pay attention, I beseech you, my brethren, and, you who are in the contest, contend manfully. For, you who have not yet begun the combat, will not understand what I say; but you who are now contending, will easily understand my meaning. I speak openly; your words will be in silence. Recollect, in the first place, what the Apostle has written to the Galatians, from which this passage may be well expounded; for, speaking to believers who had been baptized, he says, — speaking to them as those to whom all sins had been remitted in the sacred laver; — but speaking to them as to those who are still fighting, he says, 'This I say then: Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.' He has not said, *Ye shall not do or perform*, but, *Ye shall not fulfill or perfect*. And why does he say this, He proceeds to say 'for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary, the one to the other, that ye may not do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.' *If ye be led of the Spirit*: What is 'to be led of the Spirit'? To consent to the Spirit of God which commands, and not to the flesh which lusteth. Yet it lusts, and resists, and wills something, and thou wiliest not. Persevere in not willing [that which the flesh wills]. And yet thy desire to God should be of this description, that there may not be any concupiscence for thee to resist. Consider what I have said. I repeat it: Thy request unto God should be of this kind, that no concupiscence whatever may remain which it may be necessary for thee to resist. For thou dost resist; and, by not consenting, thou dost overcome; but it is far better to have no enemy than to conquer one. The time will arrive when that enemy will have no existence. Apply thy mind to the notes of triumph, and see if it will be 'O death, where is thy *contest*?' It will not be 'O death, where is thy *sting*?' Thou shalt seek its place, and shalt not find it (*ibid.*).

In a subsequent passage on the same treatise, when explaining still more plainly the meaning of the Apostle, lest his words should prove hurtful to those who seek occasion, St Augustine writes in the following manner:

The Apostle, therefore, does not what he would, because he wills not to lust or indulge in concupiscence; yet he lusts; therefore he does the evil which he wills not. Did this evil concupiscence draw the Apostle into subjection to lust for fornication? By no means. Let not such thoughts as these arise in thy heart. He contended against it; he was not subdued. But because he willed not, and had this against which he might contend, therefore he said 'What I would, that do I not;' I will *not to lust*, or to indulge in concupiscence, and yet *I do lust*. 'Therefore, what I would, that do I not;' but yet I consent not to concupiscence. For, otherwise, he would not have said, 'Ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh:' if he fulfilled them himself. But he has placed for

thee, before thy eyes, the combat in which he was engaged, that thou mayest not be afraid concerning thine own. For, if the blessed Apostle had not said this, when thou hast perceived concupiscence in motion within thy members to which thou wouldst not yield thy consent, yet, since thou hast perceived it to be in motion, perhaps thou mightest despair concerning thyself, and say, *If I belonged unto God, I should not have such motions.* Look at the Apostle engaged in the battle, and be unwilling to fill thyself with despair. He says, ‘But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind; and because I am unwilling that it should wage ware for it is my own flesh, I am myself the person, it is a part of myself, —‘that which I would, I do not; but the evil which I hate, that do I,’ because I lust. Therefore, the good which I do in not giving consent to my evil concupiscence, I perform it, but I do not perfect it. And concupiscence, which is my enemy, performs evil, and does not perfect it. In what way do I perform good and not perfect it? I perform good when I do not consent to evil concupiscence, but I do not perfect good so as not to indulge the least concupiscence. Again, therefore, in what way does my enemy perform evil, and not perfect evil? It performs evil, because it puts evil desires in motion. It does not perfect evil, because it does not draw me to evil (*ibid.*).

VENERABLE BEDE

But the thing which I do or perform is to lust, not to consent to lust; lest any one should now seek in the Apostle an example for himself, and should himself afford a bad one. ‘That which I would, I do not.’ For what saith the law, ‘Thou shalt not covet.’ And it is not my will to lust, and yet I lust, though I give no consent to my lust, and though I go not after it (*On Romans 7*).

14 Various objections in favour of the common interpretation answered

1. But some one will say, in defense of this modern opinion, and in order to wipe away this double stain,

By this interpretation, no injury is inflicted on Divine Grace, and no harm is done to good morals.

Some other man, possessed of still greater vehemence in defending the opinion which he has once conceived, will bring against me the charge of calumny, [and will say],

It is a well-known fact that they who give this interpretation to the chapter, do not take away from the regenerate the performance of all actual good, and the omission of what is evil, and consequently, [the work of] the grace of regeneration; but this is all that they affirm: *Sometimes, nay, very often, those men who are regenerated by the Spirit of Christ do the evil which they would not, and, far more frequently, omit or do not perform the good which they would; and the same regenerate persons never perform so perfectly the good which they do as they will to perform it, and they never omit evil so perfectly as they will to omit it.* But neither of these assertions can be denied by those who acknowledge the imperfection of righteousness in this life, and who accurately consider the examples of the most holy of mortals which are depicted in the Holy Scriptures.

I reply, this subterfuge affords no defense or excuse for the modern explanation of Romans vii. For (as the phrase is), in this instance the gloss is contrary to the text. For that chapter does not treat about that which *occasionally* befalls the man who is the subject of discussion, but about what *generally and for the most part* is accustomed to happen to him; and it contains a description of the continuous state of the man about whom it treats. This is openly declared by the words themselves and by the mode of speech employed. The Apostle says, 'The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.' This is said without any distinction or contraction of the general saying to its being specially understood as though he *sometimes* did not the good which he would, and *sometimes* did the evil which he would not, or as though he *many times* abstained from the evil which he hates, and performed the good which he would. But the Apostle simply and indefinitely enunciates concerning the

An Objection for the Common Interpretation; it is possible for this to be the Meaning of Romans vii, 'that the Regenerate do not so frequently and so perfectly perform what is good, and omit what is evil as they wish.' Reply: The Gloss is contrary to the Text, because this Chapter describes the continuous State of the Man about whom it treats.

detested evil *that he perpetrates it*, and concerning the good which he willed *that he performs it not*.

But if this indefinite enunciation be said to mean

that the good which has been willed is more frequently performed than omitted, and that the detested evil has been more frequently avoided than committed,

which must necessarily be affirmed by those who explain the chapter in reference to a regenerate man, for a regenerate man walks not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, — then I say, the Apostle did not know how to enunciate his own meaning. For *indefinite* enunciations possess equal force with those which are *universal*, or they approach as near as possible to them; they enunciate, concerning objects, those attributes which are in every one of them and at all times, or most usually and according to the more excellent part. Thus it is said concerning the Cretians, that they are liars (Tit. i. 12). The Athenians are said to be light and frivolous, and to take pleasure in ‘hearing some new thing;’ and the Carthaginians are called perfidious. The Scriptures speak thus, that the Jews have been rejected on account of the greater part, (for ‘God doth not cast away his people whom he foreknew’), and that the Gentiles were received into their place. For power was given, and a command enjoined on the Apostles, to preach the Gospel to all nations, and most of them have now long since been converted to Christ, or will yet be converted. Neither in this chapter is the Apostle treating about a perfect and, in every respect, complete performance of good and omission of evil, but simply about the performance of the one and the omission of the other. For he says that the man commits evil, but not perfectly, if he is regenerate; otherwise, he would sin with an entire and full will. But this will be subsequently treated at greater length.

2. But if St Paul intended in this chapter to convey such a meaning as those interpreters ascribe to him, then he must have spoken in the following manner, if he was desirous of saying thing, in accordance with himself:

‘We know that the law is spiritual, and requires from us an obedience perfect in all its parts, and continuous without any intermission or interruption. But I have not yet so far conquered the flesh, I have not yet such a complete dominion over sin, neither have I broken or subdued the lusts of the flesh so much, as to be able to perform that perfect and uninterrupted obedience to the law. For it occasionally happens to me, that I do the evil which I would not, and omit the good which I would; nay, I perceive that I never perform what is good in such perfection and with so much zeal as it is in my will to perform; nor have I omitted what is evil in such perfection as I have wished. For in both cases, even while I am performing what is good and omitting what is evil, I feel the concupiscence of the flesh

The Manner in which St Paul would have spoken, if had intended to convey the Meaning that generally obtains, and this in Conformity with the Style and Modes of Speaking which he usually adopts in other Passages when writing concerning himself.
...

struggling and resisting; and I consider myself to have experienced admirable success if I come victorious out of the combat, that is, if I do that which the Spirit lusteth, and not what the flesh lusteth.'

Such a declaration as this would have been suitable to the sense which they attribute to the Apostle, and this is properly the index and interpreter of that meaning. But many passages of Scripture, in which the Apostle treats about himself, teach us that he ought to have spoken thus, if he had spoken things that were consistent with himself: 'For I am conscious to myself of nothing; yet am I not hereby justified' (1 Cor. iv. 4). 'I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so perform I my part as a combatant, not as one who beateth the air; but I beat down and keep my body under, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a reprobate' (vi. 26, 27). 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ' (xi. 1). 'While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but those which are not seen are eternal' (2 Cor. iv. 18). 'Giving no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience,' etc. (vi. 3–10). 'For I through the law am dead to the law, that I may live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me' (Gal. ii. 19, 20). 'But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world' (vi. 14). Many other passages of a similar import might be cited.

Since, therefore, this interpretation does not agree with the chapter, it cannot, by this opinion, be excused from the two crimes which are objected against it, [as being injurious to Divine grace, and noxious to good morals]. Wherefore I persist in preferring the same accusation, and I declare,

- The opinion which attributes to a regenerate man 'that he generally does the evil which he would not, and that he most commonly omits the good which he would,' is injurious to the grace of regeneration and hurtful to good morals;
- But the opinion which explains Romans 7 as referring to a regenerate man, attributes these things to one who is regenerate;
- THEREFORE, this opinion is injurious to the grace of regeneration, and hurtful to good morals.

The light of the Major Proposition is so great as not to require either proof or illustration. The Minor is in the text. For, as has already been shewn, to the man about whom the Apostle is treating it is attributed, that he most commonly commits what is evil and omits what is good; therefore, the Conclusion properly follows.

... *An Argument against the usually received Opinion, taken from those Things which have been previously spoken, and which are here reduced into the Form of a Syllogism.*

It appears, therefore, that I have not through calumny affixed this objection to the opinion which is opposed to my own; and I can sacredly affirm, now, that prior to the act of taking the pen into my hands, I had made a vow before God that [in the discussion of this subject] I would indulge in no calumny. Wherefore, though the objection were false, it would in that case have escaped from me through ignorance and not through malice.

3. Some one, however, who is desirous of pertinaciously keeping and retaining the Thesis which has been once laid down, will here reply:

Let it be granted, that this explanation is deficient in those things which the Apostle attributes to this man; let it likewise be granted, that the interpretation produced by other persons is not suitable to the passage; yet it does not become disadvantageous to good morals, nor is any injury inflicted on grace through this opinion, provided that the whole together be excepted, as it equitably should be, and that one part be not separated from another — this also being granted, that, though this interpretation be unsuitable for Romans vii, yet it is agreeable to the rest of the Scriptures and to the analogy of faith.

- a) That I may not seem to be too rigid, I am willing to grant the former of these; about the latter we shall see something further. For I own, that the opinion of St Augustine, which interprets the chapter as relating only to the act and motion of concupiscence, neither proves to be detrimental to grace, nor injurious to good morals, though he explains the passage concerning a regenerate man.

But I say that, after it has been impressed and inculcated on the minds of hearers or readers that *the Apostle is treating about a regenerate man in Romans vii*, it is not in our power to hinder such persons from understanding the rest of those things which are attributed to this man in a different manner from that in which they ought to be understood, that is, from receiving them in an acceptation which is not agreeable to the text and design of the Apostle, and as they are not received when they are explained as relating to a man who is under sin, and under the law, especially when the inclination is a persuasive to such an interpretation, and when the concupiscence of the flesh gives a similar impulse. This, as I have already related, has been actually done by many people, and certainly not without blame attached to the opinion itself, though ‘the whole of it be received together.’ For this is not the only thing declared by that opinion,

The regenerate sometimes commit sin; and they never perfectly perform what is good, and omit what is evil, while they continue in the present life;’ but this is likewise added: ‘It is a property

Another Objection in Favour of the Common Interpretation, and this in two Members. An Answer to the First Member. An Answer to the Second, ‘that when the Regenerate sin, they sin with Reluctance.’ Every inward Struggle against Sin is not a Sign that the Man is Regenerate.

of the regenerate, to commit sin *not with a full consent of the will*, and [*inter peccandum*] while in the act of sinning to will *not to sin*; since the unregenerate sin with a full consent of the will, and without any reluctance on its part.

Those persons who wish to excuse themselves by this chapter, and who, while engaged in sin, feel some resistance of the will and remorse of conscience in the act of sinning, conclude from the preceding assertion, that they commit sin *not with a full consent of the will*, and, therefore, that the very fact itself of their thus committing sin is a sign of their regeneration. Such a Conclusion as this is both injurious to grace and inimical to good morals.

- i. *It is injurious to grace*, because it lays that down, *as a sign of regeneration*, which is alike common to the regenerate and to the unregenerate, that is, to those who are under the law.
 - ii. *It is inimical to good morals*, because sin is neither so much avoided by that man who holds such an opinion as this, nor does its perpetration produce deep sorrow in him who is its author, because *from the mode of the deed* he still concludes that he is regenerate.
- b) But let us now consider, whether those things which have been adduced to liberate their opinion from this two-fold criminal charge, be conformable to the rest of the Scriptures and to the analogy of faith, or not. I confess it indeed to be a very great truth, that, while the regenerate pass their lives in this mortal body, they neither perfectly perform what is good, nor omit what is evil. But I add, that, while in the present life, they never perfectly will what is good, or perfectly hate what is evil. I likewise confess, that even the best of the regenerate offend in many things, and sometimes actually sin, by doing what is evil and omitting what is good; for the regenerate do not always act from the principle of regeneration.

But I deny that, when they sin, they sin unwillingly, though they may do so with a struggle in their mind and conscience. For, while the contest and struggle continued between the mind and the flesh, how much soever they might nill the evil to which the flesh incited them, and will the good from which it dehorted them; yet they do not proceed onward to the deed itself except when the battle is terminated, the mind or conscience is overcome, and after the will has yielded consent to the flesh, — though such consent be not without stinging remorse of conscience. Then I deny, that it can be concluded from this opposition of the mind, that he is a regenerate man who sins in this manner. For, as we have often previously shewn, the commission of sin with a reluctant mind and conscience belongs to many of the unregenerate. Besides, as we have also previously taught, that resistance which immediately preceded the perpetration of sin, was not from the Holy Spirit who regenerated and inhabited, but

from the mind which was convinced of the righteousness and equity of the law. For the life of the conscience continues; and from its life, action and motion remain, when the Holy Spirit is either wholly departed, or is so grieved as to employ no motion and act for the hindrance of sin. It is a well known fact, that the soul in man which is vegetative, performs the first and the last offices of life, while the rational soul ceases its operations as in the case of lunatics and maniacs, and the sensitive soul desists from acting in lethargic persons. I wish these observations to receive a diligent consideration; for they have a great tendency to induce a man to enter upon a serious and sure examination respecting himself, to attain a correct knowledge of *the state of regeneration*, and sedulously to distinguish between it and *the state BEFORE the law*, and chiefly between it and that UNDER *the law*.

4. Yet some person will here rejoin, and, for the sake of excusing or defending his opinion, will say,

It cannot be denied that the regenerate *will* more good than they actually *perform*, and perpetrate more evil than they will.

My answer is, This, when correctly understood, may be conceded; for it is stated with some ambiguity. ‘*To will* and *not to will* this thing,’ may be understood concerning either a complete or an incomplete volition and nolition, (to use the words of Thomas Aquinas), though in a sense a little different.

- a) I give the appellation of *a complete will* to that which is borne to a particular object that is *particularly* considered, approving or disapproving of that object according to the prescript or direction of the last judgment of the reason that is formed concerning it.
- b) I give the appellation of *an incomplete will* to that which is borne towards the same object *generally* considered, approving or disapproving of it according to the prescript or direction not of the last judgment of the reason which is formed concerning it.

The former of these, which is indeed complete, may be called simply *a volition* and *a nolition*. But the latter, which is incomplete, is otherwise expressed by the words, *desire* and *wishing*, and ought to be called *velleity* rather than *will*.

Having premised these things, I now say, It cannot be affirmed with truth, ‘that a regenerate man wills more good *with a complete will* than he actually performs,’ unless without any fault of his own, he be hindered by necessity or by some greater force, or ‘that he actually does more evil than it is his will to do.’ For he does it *not through coaction*. A merchant who, for the sake of avoiding shipwreck, throws his heavy bales into the sea, willingly performs that act, having followed this last judgment of his reason, — that it is better for his bales of goods to be destroyed, than for himself to perish with them. Thus, *with a complete* (I do not say with *a full*) *volition*, David willed his adulterous

Another Objection, and a Reply to it. Remarks on a complete and an incomplete Will. The Regenerate will not, with a complete Will, more Good than they perform, neither perpetrate more Evil than they will.

intercourse with Bathsheba. Willingly, and *with a complete volition*, Peter denied Christ.

But if this be understood concerning *an incomplete will*, then I grant it may be said ‘that the regenerate will to perform more good than they really execute, and to omit more evil than they omit.’ This, however, is not an exclusive property of the regenerate; for it belongs to all those who are *so under the law*, that in them the law has discharged all its functions, and (the Holy Spirit employing it for this purpose) in them has produced all those effects which it is possible and usual for the law to produce. Both the regenerate, and those who are under the law, might indeed will, that there was not in them such a vast force and efficacy of sin yet existing and reigning in them; and might wish, that they were not solicited and impelled to evil deeds through concupiscence and the temptation of sin; nay, they might also will that they did not lust or indulge in concupiscence; but those evil acts to which they are solicited by sin which either is in them, or dwells in them and reigns, they do not perform, except through the intervention of the consent of the will that has been obtained by this temptation of sin. For lust does not bring forth sin, unless it has conceived; but it conceives through the consent of the will *tanquam ex marito*. But as long as the will remains in a state of suspense, inclining to neither part, so long no act is produced: As we behold in a just balance, or true scales, of which neither part verges upward or downward prior to one of them receiving an accession of weight which depresses that scale and elevates the opposite one. All motion reclines or depends on rest as on a foundation. Thus, the will does not move towards the part of sin unless when acquiescing in its temptation.

5. These remarks are exceedingly plain, and capable of being fully confirmed by experience itself, if any one will only accurately ponder within himself all the motions of his own will. But the greatest part of us avoid this duty; for it cannot be performed without [inducing] sorrow and sickness of mind, which no man willingly brings upon himself. But it is by no means probable, that sin should obtain a full consent from the will of that man who is generally well instructed in the righteousness and unrighteousness of actions, before he has ceased to feel any sorrow or regret: Wherefore, the difference between a regenerate and an unregenerate man must not be placed in this particular when both of them commit sin. For, in that particular deed, they equally yield to the temptation of sin, both of them sin from the same principle of depraved nature, and in both instances the resistance is one and the same when sin is perpetrated, that is, on the part of the mind and conscience convicted of the justice or the injustice of the deed. For if the Spirit were itself that resistance, then sin would not be perpetrated in the very act.

Each of us must institute a serious Examination into self and into all the Motions of his Will.

‘Is there then no difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate, when they commit sin?’ That I may not deny this, I say that such difference must

14 Common Interpretation Answered

be brought forward from plain passages in the Holy Scriptures; otherwise, that man will deceive himself to his great peril, who follows some other rule of judging.

15 The Conclusion

Let us now briefly compare these three expositions of Romans vii, FIRST, that which St Augustine gave not long before his death; SECONDLY, that which he taught in early life, which is likewise my interpretation, and that of many Doctors of the Primitive Church, as I have already proved, and that of some even among our own divines; and, LASTLY, the exposition of those persons who assent to St Augustine in this particular, — *that in common with him they explain it as relating to a regenerate man*, but who dissent from him on another particular, — *that they interpret GOOD and EVIL, not as relating to the act of CONCUPISCENCE, but as referring to ACTUAL GOOD AND EVIL.*

1. That St Augustine might be able to interpret this chapter as relating to a regenerate man and one placed under grace, (which he supposed would be serviceable to him in his disputes with the Pelagians), he was compelled to put a forced construction on the apostolical phraseology, and to interpret many things in opposition to the express meaning and intention of the Apostle.
 - a) He has interpreted *a carnal man* to mean one who yet bears about with him mortal flesh, who is not yet become spiritual in the flesh, and who still has and feels within himself the lusts of the flesh. But about the first of these two descriptions of men the Apostle is not here treating: It is, therefore, quite beyond the purpose; and I beseech St Augustine to point out to me a single passage of Scripture, in which the regenerate are called carnal because they still have within them the lusts of the flesh. If they are called *spiritual* in the Scriptures, ‘because by the Spirit they mortify the deeds of the flesh’ and do not go after carnal lusts, but walk according to the Spirit, then indeed they cannot be called *carnal* from the fact of their still having those lusts. They may be called ‘those who are not perfectly spiritual’ on account of the presence of sinful lusts; but they can by no means be styled carnal, because the dominion of sin is taken away from them.

In a similar manner he was under the necessity of distorting another attribute of this man, *sold under sin*, when this phrase properly signifies ‘one who is the slave of sin, and who serves sin,’ whether he does this willingly without any resistance of conscience, or in opposition to his mind and so far unwillingly. It is not allowed to us to frame petty distinctions, and, according to these, to attribute to persons certain words, which the Scriptures do not employ, in that sense, and which are not usually ascribed to those persons in Holy Writ.

An Examination and Comparison of each of the three Interpretations of this Chapter.

The FIRST, which is the latest of the two Opinions embraced by St Augustine, and which interprets this Chapter concerning a Man under Grace, has various Disadvantages.

a) *In the Meaning of the Word CARNAL, and that of the phrase, ‘Sold under Sin.’*

b) *In the Explanation of the Evil which, the Apostle says, he did; and of the Good which he omitted.*

b) Then he interprets the evil which the Apostle says he did, by the word *to lust* or *to indulge in concupiscence*; and the good which he says he omitted, by the word *not to lust*. A most absurd and distorted application of those terms!

FIRST. Because the words, Κατεργαζεσθα, Πρασσειν and Ποιειν ‘to do,’ cannot have the same signification as *concupisco*, ‘to lust.’ At least, so far as I know, the Scriptures have in no passage, explained ‘to lust’ by any of those three words. And St Augustine himself, in the definition of *sin*, when distinguishing between these things, says, ‘Sin is every thing which is spoken, done, and lusted or desired against the law of God.’

BUCER, in his ‘Comment on Romans vii,’ says, ‘Some persons receive the three verbs here rendered ‘to do,’ in the acceptation, ‘to lust,’ but that is not St Paul’s mode of speaking. He understands by the word, the deed itself which is actually committed at the impulse of concupiscence, in opposition to that which the law dictates, and which the mind, consenting to that law, approves. *Concupitio*, ‘to lust’ or desire, is in reality, an internal act of concupiscence in the mind, which indulges in such concupiscence. But these verbs ‘to do,’ in this chapter do not signify an internal act of lusting, but, properly, the external act of doing those things which have been lusted or desired’ (Fol. 369).

SECONDLY. ‘Sin is said *to do this evil*, and, by the perpetration of the evil, *to slay the man himself*.’ Sin does not slay him through concupiscence. St James speaks thus: ‘Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished [or completed by action], bringeth forth death’ (i. 15). But it slays the man through actual sin. This is declared by the Apostle in the fifth verse of this very chapter, when he says, ‘for when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.’ I am now speaking, not according to the rigor of the law, but according to the grace of the Gospel in Jesus Christ.

THIRDLY. The Evil and the Good, the former of which, he says, he perpetrates, but the latter he omits, are so opposed to each other, that EVIL is what is forbidden by a prohibitive law, which law is usually proposed by a negative; but GOOD is what is commanded by a preceptive law, which is usually propounded by an affirmative. A sin is perpetrated against a prohibitive law by commission, but against a preceptive law by omission. On this account they are called sins of omission and of commission. If a prohibitive law be observed, Evil is said *to be omitted*, but if a preceptive law be observed, Good is said *to be performed*.

Now, *to lust*, and *not to lust*, are not thus opposed to each other. For though *to lust* be forbidden by a prohibitive law, yet *not to lust* is not commanded by a preceptive law; neither can it be commanded by such a

law; for *not to lust* consists of a negative or the omission of an act; but by omission, an offense is committed against a preceptive law. But, by the omission of concupiscence, no offense is committed against a positive or preceptive law, but a prohibitive law is fulfilled; and by obedience, which consists in not lusting, Good is not performed, but Evil is omitted. That we may point out this absurdity [of St Augustine's exposition], we will invert in the following manner what the Apostle has said: 'The good that I would, I do,' that is, *I do not lust*; 'but the evil which I would not, I do not,' that is, *I do not lust*. For I will *not to lust*, and I do not lust; I will *to lust*, and I do not lust. Therefore, in this case, the very same act is the performance of Good and the omission of Evil, — a complete absurdity. And that is called *the PERFORMANCE of a good action* which is *the OMISSION of an evil one* — an equal absurdity! O Augustine, where was thy usual acumen? Let the expression be pardoned; for a GOOD Philosopher is not always a Philosopher, and our Homer himself will sometimes nod.

FOURTHLY. It is an illogical mode of expression to say, 'I will *to lust*,' and 'I will *not to lust*,' because *actual concupiscence* is prior to volition and nolition, and *the act of concupiscence* does not depend upon the choice or determination of the will. According to the trite and true saying, 'first motions are not in our power, unless they be occasioned by some act of the will,' as the School-men express themselves. But we must say, 'I could wish *not to lust*,' that is, 'I could wish to be free from the impulse of concupiscence.' And this is an expression of desire, not tending to or going out towards the performance or omission of *our act*, but earnestly demanding *the act of another person* for our liberation from that evil which impels us to an *evil act*, and which hinders us from a good act, — we approving of the good act and disapproving of the bad one.

- c) He was compelled, when expounding what the Apostle says in the 18th verse, 'But to perform that which is good I find not,' to interpret it by 'completing what is good,' that is, 'I find not perfectly to do what is good,' as is evident from those passages which we have cited from St Augustine. This interpretation is absurd, distorted, and contradictory to the sentiments and meaning of the author; for,

c) *In the Explanation of the word TO DO or TO PERFORM.*

FIRST. The word, Κατεργαζεσθαι does not signify 'to perfect,' that is, 'perfectly to do any thing;' but it signifies 'to operate, to perform, to effect, or to do,' as this word is most commonly used, not for 'doing any thing perfectly,' but for 'producing an effect.' My observations on this point are evident from the text itself; for the same Greek word is employed in the first clause of the 15th verse, when the Apostle says, 'For that which I do, I allow not,' yet he does not *perfectly perform* the evil of which he disapproves. It is also used in the latter clause of the 20th verse, 'Now then it is no more I that *do* it, but sin that dwelleth in

me.' But sin does not *perfectly perpetrate* evil in this man, especially if he be regenerate, as St Augustine supposes; and he openly says himself the contrary to this, as is evident from the passages which we have already cited in the Fourth Part of this Treatise.

SECONDLY. The synonyms of this verb which are promiscuously used in the seventh chapter, *πρασσειν* and *ποιειν* prove the same thing. For the Apostle says that he does and performs the evil which he would not, (verses 15, 16, 19), yet he does not *perfectly perform* that evil; this is obvious from what he adds, '*which I would not.*' Therefore he performs it *not with a full consent of his will*. For this is confessed by St Augustine, when he explains the passage about the regenerate; but he does it *not with a full consent of the will*, that is, he does it not perfectly.

THIRDLY. 'The GOOD which the Apostle would, but which he does not' (19), is, according to St Augustine, *not to lust*. But how is it that the Apostle indeed does this 'good,' [by willing it, but does not perfect it, Therefore, a two-fold *omission of concupiscence* must be laid down [by those who adopt St Augustine's argumentation], one, under the term *to do*, is called an *imperfect* omission; the other, under the word *to complete*, receives the appellation of *perfect*. According to St Augustine's sense, the Apostle says in this verse (19), 'I will *not to lust*, and this good I indeed *do*, but I do *not perfect it.*' From this remark, the absurdity which I have mentioned is most manifest.

FOURTHLY.

- More Good is attributed to the will of this man, than to its capability and powers or efficacy.
- But the *perfect* volition of Good is not attributed to his will, neither can it be attributed.
- THEREFORE, from its capability and efficacy not only can the *perfect* performance of good be taken away, but the *imperfect* performance is likewise taken away from them.

That is, it is denied respecting this man, not only that he *perfects* good, but that he even *performs* it. Wherefore, this passage must not be understood concerning perfection, that is, the perfect performance of good.

d) *In the Interpretation of 'In-dwelling Sin.'*

- d) He was forced to interpret 'sin that *dwelleth* or inhabiteth within me,' by 'sin *existing* within,' and to create a distinction between it and 'sin *reigning* and *exercising the dominion* over a man,' while the phrase, 'dwelling within me,' denotes dominion, and the full and supreme power of him who is the resident, as we have previously shewn in its proper place. But it is apparent that sin *reigns* in this man; for it commits that sin in him which he himself would not, and leads him away as a captive under its power.

- e) He was under the necessity of interpreting ‘the law of the mind’ by ‘the law of the Spirit,’ though in contradiction to the great contrariety subsisting between the attribute which is given to ‘the law of the mind,’ and that which is ascribed to ‘the law of the Spirit.’ For, in Romans vii. 23, ‘the law of the mind’ is said to be overcome in combat by ‘the law of the members,’ from which event, the man ‘is brought into captivity to the law of sin.’ And in Romans viii. 2, ‘the law of the Spirit’ is said to make the man ‘free from the law of sin and death;’ that is, it is stronger and superior in the conflict against ‘the law of the members;’ and, when the latter is conquered and overcome, ‘the law of the Spirit’ delivers the man from the captivity into which he had been brought by the force of ‘the law of the members.’
- e) *In the Explanation of ‘the Law of the Mind.’*
- f) St Augustine was compelled to pervert the phrase, ‘captivity to the law of sin,’ and to give it the meaning of *our primeval state in Adam*, from whom we are born corrupt and under the captivity of sin and Satan, when, in this passage, the Apostle is not treating on that captivity, but on another, which is produced from it, that is, by ‘the law of the members’ which we have contracted from Adam, waging war against ‘the law of the mind,’ overcoming it, and bringing man, *by his own act*, under captivity to the law of sin. For we have the former captivity originally from Adam, but we bring down the latter upon ourselves *by our own act*. Even if the discourse of the Apostle had referred to our primeval state, yet, because the regenerate have received remission of sin and are endowed with the spirit of the grace of Christ, they cannot be said to be captives under sin. For, though the fuel has not been extinguished, yet the power of commanding, and of subjecting us to itself, is taken away from sin by the power of regeneration.
- f) *In Explaining the Captivity of Man under the Law of Sin.*
- g) He is forced to torture the votive exclamation in the 24th verse, to a desire different from that on which the Apostle is here treating, and with which the thanksgiving in the 25th verse does not correspond. For, in this passage, St Paul treats upon the desire by which the man requests to be delivered from the dominion of sin, which he calls ‘the body of death;’ and St Augustine is compelled [by the scheme of interpretation which he had adopted] to explain in reference to the desire by which he desires to be liberated from this mortal body, and when that event occurs, he will at once be free from the concupiscence of sin. A thanksgiving, however, seems [in this case] to be most unadvisedly subjoined to the votive desire, before the fruition of the thing which is said to be wished; yet this is done in this passage, according to the interpretation of St Augustine.
- g) *In the distorted Meaning given to the votive Exclamation.*

h) *In assigning to a regenerate Man a double Servitude, and in interpreting 'the Mind' for 'the Spirit.'*

h) Lastly, St Augustine is forced to assign a double servitude to a regenerate man

- *the one*, as he serves God
- *the other*, as he serves sin;

and this in contradiction to the express declaration of Christ, 'No man can at one time serve two masters.' It is objected, 'that in a different respect, and according to his different parts, man is said *to serve God*, and *to serve sin*;' but this remark does not clear this opinion from the stain with which it is aspersed.

- i. Because the Scriptures are unacquainted with that distinction, when they are speaking about regenerate persons; let a passage to the contrary be produced.
- ii. Because, if even the flesh war against the Spirit or the mind by lusting; yet a man cannot be said, solely on account of this resistance and warfare, 'with his flesh to serve' sin, or 'the law of sin;' for, with St Augustine, these two are the same things.

He is likewise compelled to use the word, 'the mind,' for *the regenerated part of man*, for the man so far as he is regenerate, in opposition to Scripture usage and phraseology, as we have explained in the First Part of this Treatise.

These Eight Inconveniences are sufficient to induce a Rejection of this FIRST INTERPRETATION.

These appear to me most equitable reasons for rejecting the latter opinion of St Augustine, and for appealing from him when asleep to St Augustine in his waking moments. I have no doubt that he would also have abandoned this his second opinion, had he taken into his consideration the arguments which are now adduced, especially when he had perceived the explication of the whole chapter to be so suitable and proper, and impossible to be wrested in any point by the Pelagians for proving their doctrine.

The SECOND, which is that of modern Divines, and which also explains the Chapter concerning a Man under Grace, in Addition to the Inconveniences that it has in common with the FIRST, has likewise some which are peculiar to itself.

2. Our Divines have fallen into some of these errors with which we have charged the opinion of St Augustine, such as the following:

- They are forced to interpret 'to be carnal,' and 'to be sold under sin,' in a manner very different from that which the meaning of the Apostle will allow;
- they call 'sin that *dwelleth* in a man,' 'sin *existing within*,' thus distinguishing it from *reigning* sin;
- they assert that 'the law of the mind' signifies 'the law of the Spirit;'
- they explain in a corrupt manner *the votive exclamation*;
- and, lastly, they attribute a two-fold servitude to a regenerate man.

In addition to these mistakes, they fall into others which are peculiar to their interpretation, but which are agreeable neither to the meaning of the Apostle in this chapter, nor to the rest of the Scriptures, for,

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| <p>a) They are compelled to interpret that which, according to the meaning of the Apostle, belongs to <i>the continuous state</i> of this man, as if it happened to him <i>only occasionally</i>, in contradiction to the express phraseology of the Apostle, who says, ‘The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.’ This phraseology is by no means in accordance with the signification by which any one is said occasionally to perpetrate evil and to do good, as we have already rendered very manifest.</p> | <p>a) <i>In saying, What permanently belongs to the continuous State of this Man, sometimes only happens to him.</i></p> |
| <p>b) They are under the necessity of interpreting the phrase, ‘The Good that I would, I do not’ by ‘I do not Good in the perfection in which I ought,’ or, ‘I do not so much Good as it is my will to do;’ yet neither of these explanations is agreeable to the meaning of the Apostle, as we have previously seen.</p> | <p>b) <i>In giving a rash Explication of ‘performing that which is good.’</i></p> |
| <p>c) They broadly assert, that while the regenerate are actually committing sin, they are unwilling to commit sin in the very act of sinning, in opposition to the whole of the Scriptures and to the nature of actual sin itself, which, if it be not voluntary, ceases to be sin.</p> | <p>c) <i>In asserting, that the Regenerate commit sin unwillingly.</i></p> |
| <p>d) They are compelled to say contradictory things about this man. For they take away from sin, which exists within him, the dominion over him; and yet they attribute to it a habitation or indwelling, and they ascribe such force and efficacy to it, that it perpetrates evil itself in the man in opposition to his will, and brings him into captivity to the law of sin. These are most undoubted effects indeed of sin reigning and exercising dominion.</p> | <p>d) <i>In predicating contradictory Things concerning this Man.</i></p> |
| <p>e) Lastly, as there are many passages of Scripture, which attribute to the regenerate <i>the willing of Good, a delight in the law of God</i>, and things of a similar kind, they are compelled to interpret those passages by this restrictive particle, ‘after the inward man,’ while, in the rest of the Scriptures, such attributes are simply ascribed to a regenerate man, because they have the predominance in him. But it is not necessary, at this time, to repeat all those things which we have before written and proved against that opinion.</p> | <p>e) <i>In predicating with Restriction those Things concerning the Regenerate, which the Scriptures simply attribute to them.</i></p> |

The THIRD, which is *St Augustine's First Opinion*, as well as that of *Arminius*, and which understands this Chapter as relating to a Man who is under the Law, is plain and perspicuous, and not at Disagreement either with *Apostolical Phraseology* or with other passages of Scripture; this Fact is rendered obvious even from this Circumstance, — that this Man is said at once to be 'placed under the Law' and 'under the Dominion of Sin.'

3. But the opinion which I have undertaken to explain, is plain and perspicuous, under no necessity to affix any thing to the phraseology of the Apostle, or to impinge against any other portions of Holy Writ. This may be perceived at one glance, by him who will cast his eyes upon these two things, that the man who is the subject of the present investigation, is said to be placed *under the dominion of sin* and *under the law*, that is, he is one in whom the law has discharged its entire office.
 - a) For, *as he is placed under the dominion of sin*, the following affirmations are correctly and without any contortion made concerning him: 'he is sold under sin; he does that which he wills not, and omits that which he wills; sin dwells in him, and in his flesh dwelleth no good thing; he cannot attain to the performance of that which is good; he does not perform that which is good, but he perpetrates evil; evil is present with him; the law of his members wages war with the law of his mind and overcomes it, and renders the man a captive under the law of sin which he has in his members; and, being thus entangled and bound down, he is detained by the body of this death, (that is, by the body of sin), and required with his flesh to serve the law of sin.'
 - b) But, *as he is said to be placed under the law*, the following affirmations belong to him correctly and without any contortion: 'He allows not (he approves not) that which he does; he *wills* that which he does not, and he *wills not* that which he does; he consents to the law of God that it is good; it is no longer he who commits evil; he has good dwelling in his mind; the good that he wills he does not, but the evil which he wills not, that he does; he delights in the law of God after the inward man; with the law of his mind he wages war against the law of his members; he is exceedingly desirous of deliverance; and with his mind he serves the law of God.'

Nay, these two united classes of attributes, joined as they intimately are, in the text of the Apostle, cannot belong to any other man than to this as he is placed *under the law*, and at the same time *under the dominion of sin*. So far from these two relations not being capable of belonging at once to the same man, that he who is *under the law* necessarily endures *the dominion of sin*, that is, the law is too weak to be able to release and liberate the sinner from the tyranny of sin. This is the subject upon which the Apostle treats through the whole of this chapter, and points it out in the person of that man who is placed under the law in a mode the most excellent of all, that is, one in whom the law has fulfilled not only some part of its office, (for that did not serve the purpose which he had in view), but in whom the law had discharged all its offices and acts; for this was required by the necessity of the cause about which the Apostle was treating; because 'the weakness of the law' could not be taught by the example of him who had not within himself

all those things which are usually effected by the law. For the Jews might have always objected that some other persons had made still further progress through the power and efficacy of the law.

If this observation, as well as many others, be diligently considered, it will be of great potency in effecting a persuasion that the present chapter must be understood as relating to a man who is under the law. And I feel fully persuaded within myself, that if views similar to these had entered into the minds of our expositors, when they explained this portion of Scripture, they would undoubtedly have interpreted it in this manner; for such were their *piety* and their *learning*, that I cannot bring myself to feel any other persuasion than this concerning them. But it frequently happens, that the fear of falling into error or heresy, if any passage be explained in a manner different from that generally received, hinders those who are under the influence of such a fear from venturing the more diligently to inspect such passage, and to consider whether it may not be explained appropriately and agreeably to the analogy of faith, even by that mode which is said to be favourable to heresy.

I likewise believe, that this interpretation of mine is rejected by many persons who have never once thought on the mode in which the Scriptures define that man whom I assert to be described in this chapter. If they had earnestly endeavoured to ascertain this point, they would assuredly have discovered that all these things may be most commodiously explained concerning a man *who is under the law*. I will add, as the result of my own experience, that I have found multitudes who have not only not considered with sufficient diligence, but who also have not exhibited any desire to consider, what these names and epithets properly signify, and how they must be accurately distinguished from each other:

- *The natural man, the carnal man, the outward man, the old man, the [animalis] sensual man, the earthly man, the worldly man*
- *Also, the spiritual man, the heavenly man, the inward man, the new man, the illuminated man, the regenerate man, etc.*

The same persons also have not manifested any inclination to distinguish in an accurate and suitable manner between the acts and operations of the SPIRIT,

- *when making use of the Law, and when employing the Gospel;*
- *when preparing a home or abode for himself, and when actually the Inhabitant of his own temple;*
- *of his enlightening, regenerating and sealing;*
- *of his bringing men to Christ, uniting them to Christ and communicating to them the benefits of Christ;*
- *of his operating, co-operating, exciting, aiding, assisting, and confirming or strengthening;*

- *and of his infusing habits, and producing good actions.*

All these things seem to me to be of such a description that if any person were, without a consideration of these matters, to attempt a serious and solid explanation of those things of which the Apostle is treating in this chapter, his conduct would appear to me like that of a man who should endeavour to construct a large and splendid edifice without stones and lime.

- This Treatise is closed with an Address, by Arminius, to his Brethren in the Ministry, in which the Author offers himself for Examination, with a most serious Entreaty for them to admonish him, in a fraternal Manner, if he has erred; but to yield their Assent to the Truth, if he has in this Work written such Things as are in Accordance with the Scriptures and with the Meaning of the Apostle.*
4. These remarks I offer, with a sincere and candid mind, to those pious and learned men, and those eminent servants of Christ, my beloved brethren in Christ and fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord, who ought ever to receive from me all due honour and deference, to be read, known, judged, and approved or disapproved; and I request and most earnestly beseech of them only one thing, in the name of our common Saviour, — that, if they shall discover me to have written anything, in the preceding Treatise, which is either contrary to the analogy of faith or contrary to the sense and meaning of the Apostle, they will admonish, teach and instruct me about it in a fraternal manner. If they find any such matter, I testify, before God, that I will not only lend an attentive and patient hearing to their admonitions, teaching and instruction, but will also yield them full compliance. I likewise protest, that if, in the present instance, any things of this description have escaped from me, (for we all know but in part), I consider them as not written and as not spoken.

But if they shall perceive that these very things are agreeable to the rest of the Scriptures and conformable to the mind of the Apostle, then I may be permitted to request and intreat from them that they will grant a place to the Truth, thus pointed out, in the Church of Christ, which is the pillar and ground of the Truth.

I solemnly engage, that there is no cause for them to be afraid lest disturbances, quarrels, dissensions, or the occasions of such great evils, in the Christian Church, should arise from such an examination and conference. They will have to discuss the subject with one

- who knows in part how to distinguish between those doctrines which are simply necessary and fundamental, and those which have not in them an equal necessity, but are as the parts of a superstructure raised on a foundation
- who, next to the necessity for Truth, thinks all things should be yielded to the Peace of the churches
- who can, with Christian charity, bear with those that differ from him, provided they do not attempt ‘to have dominion over the faith of other persons’

- who is not desirous with an officious hastiness to obtrude on the public either his own admissions, or those of other persons, which had been confided to each other for the sake of a mutual conference, but who knows how to retain them faithfully, and has skill enough to revolve them in his mind for nine long years, according to the ancient proverb,

One day is the disciple of another; our later meditations are wiser and more accurate than our early ones; we daily grow old and yet are learning many things.

- Lastly, they will have to discuss the subject with one who may be in error, but who cannot be a heretic, and whose will assuredly it is *not to be one*.

Amicable, fraternal, and placid conferences of this description, instituted between professors of the same faith and of the same religion, are not only useful, but likewise necessary to the churches of Christ, for the further investigation of the truth, for retaining it firmly when discovered, and for boldly defending it against adversaries. From these friendly conferences, we may discover Truth, since they are not undertaken through a desire for victory, or for the sake of defending some topic which had been formerly conceived and adopted. But from those others, which are not so much *Christian conferences*, as *vehement, bitter and vexatious altercations*, and which we perceive to be agitated by the followers and defenders of different religious professions, generally ensues the result that is comprised in the vulgar proverb, ‘Truth is lost in the midst of their wrangling.’ Such an issue is no ground of surprise when the very method and circumstances of the altercation very often declare that the whole affair was at its commencement undertaken, and afterwards prosecuted, without the spirit of Truth, Charity and Peace; and that, as a necessary consequence, it has been conducted to a sad catastrophe, most lamentable to the churches of Christ.

And let no man rashly persuade himself, that as long as the [visible] church shall be a sojourner in this world, and shall have, in the midst of her, unskillful, infirm and wicked persons, she will maintain the doctrine of Christ so correctly,

- as not to require a still further investigation of the Truth from the Scriptures, which are the inexhaustible fountain of Divine Wisdom,
- as to be able to dispense with the examination of those dogmas which are built up as a superstructure on the foundation of the Scriptures,
- and as not to be under the least necessity of confirming and defending Christian Doctrine, by the force and weight of solid arguments, against ancient heresies which have been polished up after a new method, and against novel heresies which are daily springing up and becoming still more prevalent.

It is not an act of *Arrogance* to enter upon such an exercise and employment

15 *The Conclusion*

as this, but it is an act of *true and solid Piety towards God*, which commands and prescribes that, as ‘a dispensation of the Gospel has been committed to us,’ we ought to ‘stir up the gifts of God which are in us,’ to study and strive to augment the talents which have been Divinely granted to us, and, with a pure conscience and in the fear of the Lord, to discharge the duties of this sacred ministry, to the sanctification of his name, the building up and edification of the church of Christ, and to the demolition and extirpation of the kingdom of Satan and of Antichrist. Which may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ vouchsafe to grant to us, through and for the sake of his only-begotten Son, and in the power and efficacy of his Spirit. Amen.